



Week 7

Sermon Series: Blueprints for Discipleship

Sermon Title: Elders: Ordained Equippers

Sermon Text: 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Group Week of: February 19, 2023

Sermon Date: February 26, 2023

Scriptures for Additional Daily Studies	
Day 1	1 Timothy 5:17-21 – Elders
Day 2	Titus 1:5-9 – Elders are Overseers
Day 3	Acts 19:23-20:6 – Paul Leaves Ephesus
Day 4	Acts 20:13-38 – Ephesian Elders
Day 5	1 Timothy 3:8-13 – Deacons

The Text

- 1) **Read** the text slowly and carefully.
- 2) **Pray** for understanding, insight, and transformation.
- 3) **Observe Everything.** Use pens and highlighters to mark the text. Come up with your own system of symbols, underlines, arrows, highlights, and notes, that will *help you understand and apply*. Only do what is helpful.
- 4) **Answer** the interpretive questions at the bottom.

¹Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Textual Questions

- 1) What is the message that God and Paul are trying to present to Timothy (and us) through this text?
- 2) Why must the overseer possess the characteristics seen in this passage?
- 3) Read 1 Timothy 1:1-7 & 1 Timothy 3:14-15, and write out the purpose of this letter.

Discussion Guide Questions

- 1) As one sent by Paul to instruct the church in Ephesus including its teachers and leaders, Timothy would need to know what to look for in raising up future overseers (elders and pastors are different names for the same office in the New Testament). Because we do not have Timothy or Paul to select faithful men at West Side for the role of overseer, who in our church needs to know what to look for in future elders?
- 2) Read 1 Timothy 5:17-21, and explain from that text and 1 Timothy 3:1-7 what the role or function of an overseer (elder) is.
- 3) How should you be involved in the process of selecting, vetting, and voting on elders (overseers) at West Side Church?
- 4) Should an overseer (elder) fulfill every description found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 perfectly? If there is room for growth in some of these areas, how can we know whether someone is ready or not to be an overseer?
- 5) Are the qualifications of an overseer unique to this office, or are they attributes for every Christian to embody? Go through the attributes and categorize each. Take some time to examine yourself and see where you may need to work on your own growth in your walk with Christ.
- 6) Many of us assume that being an overseer (elder) is going to be a sacrifice on the family's part. We may even expect that being an overseer (elder) will have a negative impact on the unity and strength of the family. Based on what we see here, should being an overseer (elder) have a positive or negative impact on family life? Secondly, how can overseers (elders) ensure that this role makes them better fathers and husbands and not worse?
- 7) There are no term limits or limitations to the number of overseers (elders) a church can have in 1 Timothy 3 and 5. This does not mean its wrong to have term limits; instead, it means that there must be good justification for the practice. When it comes to the work of "directing the affairs of the church" (1 Timothy 5:17), in what ways do our present limitations help the overseers (elders)? In what ways do our present limitations hinder the overseers (elders)?