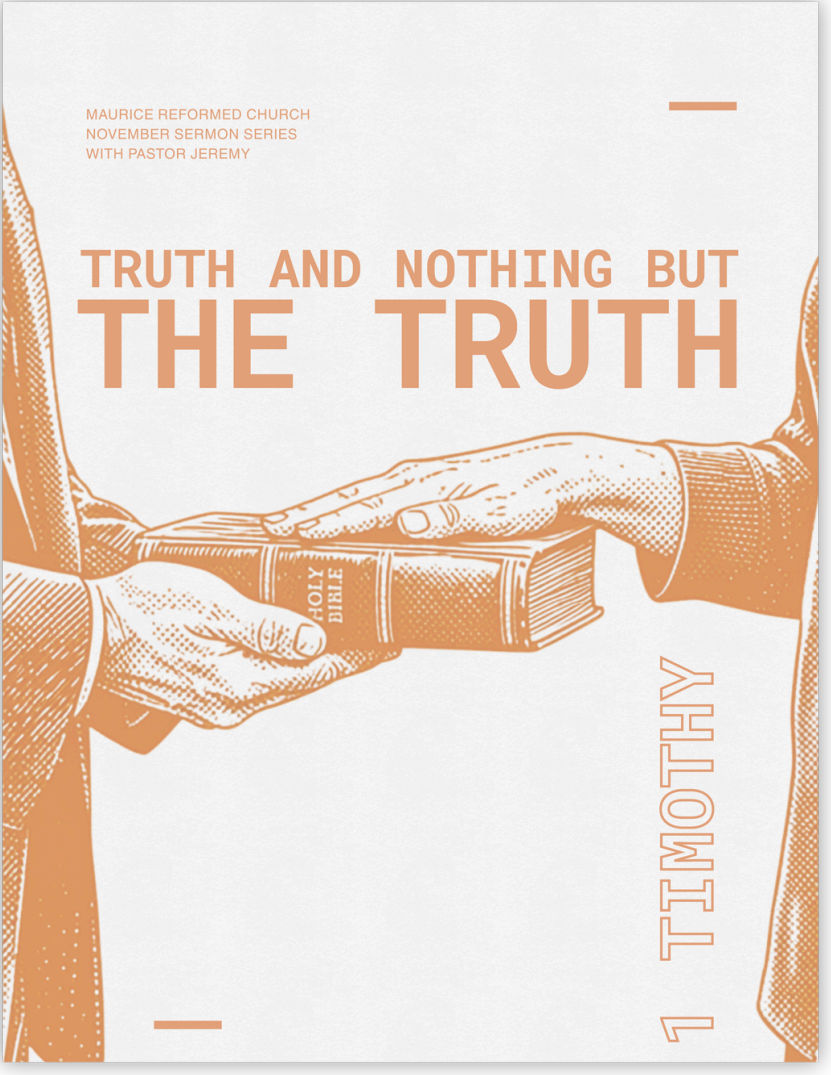
-WELCOME TO-

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DAILY DEVOTIONALS

NOVEMBER 8-14

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

Study of 1 Timothy
Truth & Nothing But The Truth
1 Timothy 3: Leadership

Q_____ T___ L_____ B___

1. A_____ R_____
2. S_____ U_____ N____ D_____
3. L_____ W_____ A_____ R_____ R_____
4. H_____ W__ O_____ T__ B_____ A__
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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16

1 TIMOTHY 3:1 | A NOBLE TASK

As we walk through chapter three this week we are going to focus on leadership, specifically the offices of Elder and Deacon. These offices have been passed down throughout history and we still hold on to these offices at Maurice. Our leadership team at church, the Consistory, is made up of 9 Elders and 9 Deacons. The Pastor is often seen as the head Elder and the official tie breaker on votes if the vote ended in a tie. Join me as we look at the roles of Elder and Deacon and the importance of each position and who is in them.

Today I invite us to sit with just one verse about the aspiration to be a leader in the church. The Greek word gives a picture of someone reaching as far as they can to grab something. It's clear to see in the picture that someone would desire to reach that thing and try as hard as they could to get it. The word "overseer" is often associated with Elder and Pastor throughout the New Testament and used interchangeably. The last word I want to point out in this verse is "noble". In the Greek it means good or distinguished. It is an important task and should be taken with high respect and reverence.

I'm wondering if we as leaders see this position as important and set apart as they did back in the days of Paul? This position was highly regarded, respected, and taken seriously. Being an overseer meant that there was a lot of responsibility that was given and expected from the person in that position. Take some time this week and talk to our current elders. Ask if they desired the position and how they view the position of elder. Each of our leaders truly has an important position and I pray, sees it as such.

SONG:

"Above All" - Paul Baloche

KID'S QUESTION:

What do you think makes someone a good leader at church?

YOUTH/ADULT QUESTION:

What is a position you desire to have? Why do you desire that position? Is it a good or noble position to desire? Why or why not?

PRAYER:

Lord, we know that You expect those in leadership in Your body to take it seriously and to live out the high calling that You have called them to. Please, work through each leader today and every day.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

1 TIMOTHY 3:2-5 | QUALITIES OF AN OVERSEER PT. 1

The next two days we are going to cover a list of things that are qualities of an Elder. The first quality we see is that they must be above reproach. This means that they are to live lives in such a way that people cannot accuse them of any wrong doing. They are to be an example to others in how they live. Next up is being a husband to one wife. This is often understood as a faithful husband. The next phrases are sober minded and self-controlled, which means to not overindulge with wine and be able to overcome one's worldly desires. The rest of verse 2 finishes out with respectable, hospitable, and able to teach. These words often mean to be modest in behavior, to be fond of guests, and to be ready to teach the truth of the word of God.

The next verse continues the long list of characteristics for Elders and Pastors. These leaders should not be drunk, violent or quarrelsome, which could all be paired together in certain circumstances. If someone is addicted to alcohol they can easily become violent and quarrelsome to gain more. They are also to not be greedy for money, but to be patient in how they act towards others. It is easy to see how this list of negative characteristics could easily point people away from Jesus. If someone was addicted to alcohol, always running their mouth and looking for a fight, it would be hard to see the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ in those actions.

Finally, the overseer must manage his own household well, with dignity. This verse says that how the kids of an elder treat and interact with him will show what kind of leader he will be. Do his

kids respect him and show him honor as the leader of the household? Do they do so begrudgingly or in fear? This verse doesn't mean that the children will be perfect, but even in their mistakes will children respect the leadership of their father? We know that elders are going to be leading a church that may include some people struggling in sin, and how will they handle those situations?

Wow, what a list and there are still more to come tomorrow. What are some characteristics that stood out to you from this list? Why do you think Paul gave such a long list?

SONG:

"Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me" - CityAlight

KID'S QUESTION:

If you were a leader at church, how would you show people that you care about them and that you love Jesus?

YOUTH/ADULT QUESTION:

Why do you think Paul gave such a long list for the elder position?

PRAYER:

God, thank you for expecting a high standard for Your followers. Help us to strive for that as we strive to honor You.

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

1 TIMOTHY 3:6-7 | QUALITIES OF AN OVERSEER PT. 2

Welcome back to day number two about the characteristics of an Elder and a Pastor. This time Paul says that someone in this position should not be a recent convert. Even Paul himself took time to learn and grow in his faith and understanding of Jesus Christ as he grew as a leader. This recommendation seems to be for the good of the person desiring to be a leader, so that they do not fall into temptation of thinking it is all in their power rather than God's power.

The second verse for today focuses on what the watching world sees in this person. Those outside the body of Christ must also think well of this person and their leadership in general. If this person has already caused walls to be built up in relationships they have with unbelievers it will create more difficulty in sharing the gospel. The character of the leader is not just for those in the family of God, but it is also vitally important for their connection outside the church for the expansion of the gospel.

Many of these characteristics come with a testimony. Some of these characteristics are testified through the life of the family. Others are testified by what is said by those outside the church. Still others are testified by the brothers and sisters that see this leader in action. All of these things take time and intentionality and show the heart of the leader over time. What a high calling and a higher expectation.

SONG:

"I Will Follow Jesus" - Circuit Rider Music

KID'S QUESTION:

Why do you think we need to keep learning and growing in our faith, even when we've followed Jesus for a long time?

YOUTH/ADULT QUESTION:

Why are references important to companies when they hire someone?

PRAYER:

Father, I pray that our leaders lead by example in how they minister inside and outside the walls of the church.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

1 TIMOTHY 3:8-9 | QUALITIES OF A DEACON PT. 1

For the next few days we will be looking at the office of Deacon. In our church, the office of Elder focuses specifically on the spiritual leadership in the church and the Deacons focus on the financial and service part of leadership. One difference that shows the difference of position is that Elders are to have the ability to teach, while that specific characteristic is not in the list here.

Our list starts out with the word dignified, which means to have an honorable character. Next up is that they are not to be double tongued, which means that they are not to agree with the last person they were with. Instead, they are to speak the truth and only the truth with the help of God. Next Paul makes another statement about alcohol and this one specifically says that they are not to have an addiction to alcohol or be addicted to needing more and more money.

Finally, Paul says that even though Deacons are not mandated to teach, they are expected to have a very clear understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and be able to believe it completely. Understanding the gospel clearly will make a major impact on how they live and how they interact with others. As Paul said in his 2nd letter to Timothy, we all ought to be ready in season and out of season to declare our understanding of the gospel.

SONG:

"Take My Life And Let It Be" - Tommy Walker Ministries

KID'S QUESTION:

How can knowing Jesus help us make good choices and treat others well?

YOUTH/ADULT QUESTION:

What similarities and differences did you recognize between deacon and elder?

PRAYER:

Father, You could have left us alone and helpless, but You chose to do what we could not. Thank you, God, for desiring to save us!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

1 TIMOTHY 3:10-13 | QUALITIES OF A DEACON PT. 2

As we look through this second list of qualities for a Deacon I invite you to continue to look for the differences and similarities compared to Elders. Paul urges that each Deacon must be tested before they are allowed to serve. This will once again testify to the character of the person desiring to be in leadership. The character that must be shown to continue on is one that is unable to be accused. I know we all fall short of the glory of God, but it should be our desire to work towards being blameless and I believe that can even be shown in how we handle our shortcomings.

Paul next talks about the behavior of the wives and children of the Deacons and that they are to reflect the qualities mentioned above as well, which makes sense that they would follow the example of the person leading the family. All of these qualities and characteristics are a reflection of God and should be passed on to those whom God has put in relationship with the leaders.

It's important for us to see that these characteristics are because of a relationship with God and are gifts from the Holy Spirit that dwells within each believer. On our own we will fall short of each of these qualities, and so when we are able to live up to these standards, it is a testimony of the Holy Spirit in us. The reason these qualities are so important is that they will be a testimony to those inside the body of Christ and those outside the body of Christ. What we do and what we say in ALL situations will be a declaration of who God is in our lives. What does our lives say about God?

SONG:

"I Have Decided" - Elevation Worship

KID'S QUESTION:

If someone watched how you acted all day, what might they learn about Jesus?

YOUTH/ADULT QUESTION:

What does your life say about God?

PRAYER:

Lord, may we testify to others about You with all that we are.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21

1 TIMOTHY 3:14-16 | HOW TO BEHAVE

As we finish our week together we are going to take a look back at what Paul says about the behavior of the church. If you had to describe the behavior of the church, what would you say? Why should the people of God act that way? What words should the church be known for using? What cause should the church be known for supporting?

Paul says that he hopes to come to Timothy soon, but is writing these things so that Timothy and the church might know how to behave as the body of Christ. Paul goes on to say that the church should be a pillar and buttress of the truth. Looking at the Greek it means that the church should be a place that is firm and holds up the truth like the ground holds up a building. The core truth that the church needs to be firm on is what Paul ends the chapter with. That God came in flesh and His righteousness was shown through the resurrection, proclaimed by the Spirit and witnessed to by the angels. Now it is our job to proclaim this truth of Jesus to all nations and plant the seeds of truth in the lives of others and watch God grow the faith of people as we await to be taken up into glory.

This last section of the chapter pushes these characteristics beyond just the leaders of the church, but this is how all of the people of the household of God ought to behave. We ought to reflect God in word and deed each and every day. If you were taking a sigh of relief thinking that these qualities are just for the leaders, I challenge you to think again. As Christians we are called to be set apart and different from the world around us. May our lives be a testimony of the mystery of godliness.

SONG:

"I Have Decided To Follow Jesus" - Brandon Lake

KID'S QUESTION:

How does it feel knowing that how Elders and Deacons act is also how you should act?

YOUTH/ADULT QUESTION:

How does it feel knowing that these characteristics are to be displayed by all believers?

PRAYER:

Lord, we confess again that we are unable to do this on our own. Guide us by Your Spirit to live and speak in a way that reflects the gospel!