



We'd love for you or several from your Life Group to join us on the Life Group Silence & Solitude Retreat that is coming up during the break between Life Group Sessions. More information can be found on the Lincoln Berean app or webpage. Go to events and search for "silence" to sign up! Registration Deadline: March 7, 12:00 pm.

Introduction

God's design for the church comes into clearer view as we move into chapter 3 of 1 Timothy this week. Paul describes the qualities that make for reliable leaders in a church setting. We learned that this makes for flourishing in the church as well as in our personal lives.

We invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Some people even use these questions to take notes during the sermon. The questions are meant to stir your thinking and prompt open discussion, and we do not expect you to cover every question each week.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

- 1) When you were a kid were you more of a leader or a follower? How did you come to know this?

- 2) Would you rather be able to speak any language, or be able to communicate with animals?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
 - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
 - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
 - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
- 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.

Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

1. How would you sum up the main idea of this week's sermon in 3 words or less?

2. In 3:1 Paul has to remind Timothy (and us) that aspiring to the role of spiritual leader is a good and noble pursuit. **Why is this an important message to communicate to the next generation?**

Part of the reason the church in Ephesus was being written to in this letter was because they had been led astray by false teachings. **What kinds of things can be done to ensure that qualified spiritual leadership is upheld for the next generation of believers?**

3. This text focuses on the fact that a spiritual leader must be above reproach which means there's no reason for someone to question their integrity. It does not mean perfection, but it does mean a lifestyle of integrity. **Describe people you have known who were above reproach.**

How did their character affect your desire to follow them?

4. Read the list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 together. **What makes these qualifications important in a spiritual family?**

How does this compare to the way our culture assesses and chooses qualified leaders?

Ultimately these qualifications should describe all of us as serious followers of Jesus. **Which of these qualifications seem like the most challenging to you? How might your Life Group help you grow in this area?**

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts.

Scripture Focus: Throughout the passage this week, there are many different qualities listed by Paul that spiritual leaders should display. As we are all engaged in the mutual leading of each other in the church, take some time this week and read through Psalm 139 which is a beautiful and vulnerable prayer inviting God into our lives, to know us, love us, and grow us into the people that He desires us to be.

Prayer Focus: Paul lists many high standards that leaders in the church must uphold. Take a few moments throughout your week to pray for the various spiritual leaders at our church and in your life, that they are continually being transformed by Jesus' love and displaying the qualities described in this passage. If you don't know what to pray for, try praying through this passage in Proverbs 2:

*For the Lord gives wisdom:
from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,
guarding the paths of justice,
and He preserves the way of His godly ones. (Proverbs 2:6-8)*

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?