

Life Group Notes 5/28/2023
Pastor Bill Pelletier 1 Timothy 3 Week 2

[If you have observations or questions feel free to send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net.-Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.]

Note: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to facilitate discussion and to discern the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time. BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study. This study is also a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions Pastor Bill Pelletier has raised this week, 5/28. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.** Do not be daunted by the number of pages. As an editorial decision, I include each of the passages mentioned in full to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes, rather than having you, the reader, look up each reference. If your Bible is open beside you, you can transfer and annotate from these pages with ease. This week has several footnotes on people and principles mentioned by Paul in this letter. Footnotes are not meant to distract, but enhance the reading, and to help find answers to questions that arise. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On repetition in worship, false doctrines and altered states of consciousness.](#)
2. [On Timothy \(from last week\)](#)
3. [On the language of verse 15, household, church, pillar and base.](#)
4. [On being the husband of one wife.](#)
5. [On elders/overseers and deacons.](#)

*****New this week:** At the very end, I've included passages that were mentioned for SOAP journaling and further study during the week. ***

Pastor Bill asks, "How do you behave in church?" He begins, "I used to think church should be run like a bank. I didn't like how church worked. Too casual. Touchy feely. I liked everything in a box. As far as the state goes, we need accountability, and we need to report accurately. But as far as the church goes, the goal is not to have a well-run machine, but to glorify Jesus Christ as savior. We don't gather to be a well-oiled machine. We gather to pray and to worship and to glorify our God." **How does that touch on what Richie was saying about worship? (See footnote 1 below.)**

The Household of God

[14](#) I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, [15](#) if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. (See [Footnote 3](#) below.)

1. Pastor Bill begins his message with verse 14. Review: to whom is Paul writing?
2. Why is Paul writing Timothy?
3. Why is it important to note that he's not writing to the Church in general, but to Timothy the Elder and Bishop of Ephesus? Who is responsible for assessing the behavior of a church? If the pastor doesn't do it, who surely will?
4. Why is it beneficial for us who are not elders or bishops to read the instructions to elders and bishops?

Bill says, "I want you to consider what Paul is saying about you and me. We don't just come here once a week and that's it. It goes well beyond that."

5. **Explain.**

He continues, "Your children aren't just in your household to feed and to lecture them on how to do the right thing. There is a big relationship going on. They are part of a household. Paul compares the church, not to an organization, but to a family." He says, "The church is part of God's household that all of us are a part of. God calls us His children. His sons and daughters. We are all related by His spirits."

6. **Look up Ephesians 5::21-6:4** [21](#) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. [22](#) Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. [23](#) For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior. [24](#) Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

[25](#) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her [26](#) to sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, [27](#) and to present her to Himself as a glorious church, without stain or wrinkle or any such blemish, but holy and blameless.

[28](#) In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. [29](#) Indeed, no one ever hated his own body, but he nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church. [30](#) For we are members of His body.

[31](#) "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." [32](#) This mystery is profound, but I am speaking about Christ and the church. [33](#) Nevertheless, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Chapter 6: [1](#) Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2](#) "Honor your father and mother" (which is the first commandment with a promise), [3](#) "that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life on the earth."

[4](#) Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath; instead, bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. **How does this clarify duties in a household? Think of duties in a church. How well does Paul clarify our duties? What questions does this exhortation raise about the family? About the church?**

How are we more than just a "gathering?" Jesus said, "I will build my church on this rock, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." **Whose church is it? Is the church**

man-made? Share again how you found this church. Is it easy for you or difficult to miss a Sunday gathering? A life group meeting? Who is calling us to gather in His name? Have you ever been nagged into going to church? How well did that work?

Bill adds, "One day we will be living together in One House." ***What do you see when you think of that?*** He says, "So let's get to know each other. We're going to be together for a long time. A very long time. If you don't like church, you're not going to like heaven." ***What does this make you think?***

Look up 1 Peter 2: ***1*** So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. ***2*** Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ***3*** if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, ***5*** you yourselves *like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house*, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ***6*** For it stands in Scripture:

How does Peter's exhortation here clarify what Paul is saying to Timothy? How do "living stones" build a household? What does Peter say we become? What does that priesthood do? What is our responsibility? How does this house we are making look at the moment?

Pastor Bill says, "We belong to God. He belongs to us." ***Look at Song of Solomon 6:3*** "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he grazes among the lilies." ***Now look at Song of Solomon 2:16*** "My beloved is mine, and I am his; he grazes among the lilies." ***Look closely again at the difference between chapter 6 and chapter 2. How does the lover's song change as the relationship grows? Is that significant?***

Look again at verse 15: "...if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress (base) of the truth." ***See footnote 3 again. How is the church both pillar and base of the truth?*** Bill says, "God has entrusted us with the truth. You have been made His ambassadors. ***Is our responsibility increasing or decreasing with each passing day? Why? Review last week's message: Where does our knowledge of the Truth come from?*** Bill asks, "What happens if the church is not being the church? What hope does any person have if we are not being His household, pillar and base of the truth?" ***Answer him. How easy is it to get distracted from the truth? How do you avoid getting distracted? Do you have a testimony?*** Pastor Bill again reminds us of the words Paul spoke to the Ephesians at his last meeting with them, years before he sent Timothy to them as bishop/overseer: Acts 20: ***28*** Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ***29*** I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ***30*** and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them." ***Describe how the church slips away from what is essential?***

Bill takes us back to the first verse:

Qualifications for Overseers

1 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ***2*** Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ***3*** not a drunkard,

not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. [4](#)He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, [5](#)for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? [6](#)He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. [7](#)Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Qualifications for Deacons

[8](#)Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. [9](#)They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. [10](#)And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. [11](#)Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. [12](#)Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. [13](#)For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus...

1. Why is it a "noble task" to aspire to the office of elder/overseer/pastor/bishop?
2. What does it take? How must you also change?
3. What types of leaders do we want in the church? What is important in this leadership?
4. See [footnote 5 below](#). Bill says the overseer is as the pastor/teacher/minister of the word. Deacons are the hands and feet. Pastors and teachers see that we're staying on course, protecting us from false doctrine. Deacons are the outreach arm.
5. Bill points out that Moses needed seventy to help him with his task. Look at Numbers 11:" [16](#)[Then the LORD said to Moses, "Bring Me seventy of the elders of Israel known to you as leaders and officers of the people. Bring them to the Tent of Meeting and have them stand there with you. 17](#)And I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put that Spirit on them. They will help you bear the burden of the people, so that you do not have to bear it by yourself." How does the anointing for leadership sustain that leadership? How does this parallel the New Testament wisdom of Acts 6?
6. Look again at the qualifications above. How does each serve to protect the reputation of the church? Why is the reputation of the church important in the community? Have you seen damage when a church's reputation is damaged? Do you have a testimony? Could the church successfully find good standing again after it was lost?
7. Bill points out that none of the qualifications has to do with "talent," but that each has to do with character. Why is that so important today?
8. Bill quotes Pastor Peter Bonanno, "When your talent exceeds your character, disaster follows." Explain. How many pastors have you seen fall? Do you have insights into the fall?
9. On the qualifications, what does "...being above reproach..." protect the church from? Why is "respectable" important?

10. What does it take to be "...able to teach?"
11. How many of the above qualifications are easy to measure? How are you doing with these?
12. Why not appoint a recent convert? Do you have a testimony?
13. Why does the wife's qualifications enter into consideration?
14. Why does his children's behavior enter into consideration? Bill says, "Are you using godly methods to face the difficulties you are facing?" Does that help?
15. Paul asks, "...if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?" Answer Paul.
16. What does a good reputation do for the church? What happens when reputation fails?

Bill says, "This is a household. It's a family. This is a learning process. These qualifications help you understand where you are in the process. This is not the end, but steps toward the leadership you might be called to." (Remember last week's "lesson plan" that Paul outlined: "The goal of my teaching is love from a pure heart, a clean conscience and an unfeigned faith." ***How do these qualifications lead to the fulfillment of that goal?***) Bill asks, "Are there any qualifications listed here that God has not called you to do?"

Pastor Bill points out that we live in a privileged age. For two thousand years people have been asking, "What is the end? When is He coming." We live in an age where his return is closer than ever. The mystery of God has been revealed that God loves us...Here's how Paul put it:

...[16](#)Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.

How much more true is this today than the day Paul wrote it? If He was taken up to glory, what is our hope?

The Follow-up Application

1. Look again at the qualifications for leadership. What do you say to your spouse, your children, your neighbor when you see these qualifications in them? What can you say?
2. Look again at the qualifications: How many of these describe Christlikeness?
3. Look at where you belong in leadership. List the qualifications you will work on. List those where the Holy Spirit will have to do the work, and pray to that end.

Take the time to pray.

Scribes Notes:

1. **On repetition in worship, false doctrines, and “altered states of consciousness”**—There has been a false doctrine in the church that became popular when opposition to the Charismatic arose among some fundamentalist camps. The criticism was made on several fronts, including instrumentation. (A piano is frivolous; the bass guitar touches flesh instincts; the drums evoke pagan worship practice...and these are only the criticisms I had to answer, as I served in Europe, Israel and Morocco and right here in NH.) Books have been written on the subject and practice, and well-meaning critics have been enriched in their sale. The second criticism was made that singing choruses over and over again which, in the heyday of the Charismatic Movement, were drawn directly from scripture, provoked a hypnotic trance and “altered states of consciousness” such as would be found in witchcraft and New Age meditation and practice. These charges were so egregious, and serious sounding, and my own ignorance of witchcraft so deliberate, that I, like Richie, went to the Lord in prayer. He showed me three important moments in scripture: First, He took me to Peter on the roof in Joppa in Acts Chapter 10 and asked me, “What ‘state’ is Peter’s consciousness in?” It’s clearly altered. Then He took me to the Revelation, where John is “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day.” He asked, “What ‘state’ is John’s consciousness in?” It’s likewise altered...and God’s directive is for us to be “in the Spirit.” If we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. This raises questions that this footnote cannot answer, but finally, He took me to Psalm 136, and asked, “How many times is ‘His loving kindness endures forever,’ repeated? At what point do you get hypnotized? After how many repetitions does it become satanic? Worship is repeated because victory comes in agreement. We will repeat what we agree on.” This ended the debate for me. So, when Richie asks, “Why do we take the time in worship every Sunday?” It bears repeating...we have something in this world that we agree on. And the power of God is manifested in that agreement.
2. **On Timothy, the disciple** (from last week)—It appears Paul first met Timothy as a young child on his first trip to Lystra and Derbe, in southern Galatia, where he got stoned in Acts 14. If you remember he got left for dead, and if what he writes to the Galatians in chapter 4 applies, he was not in very good shape when he got up and went to preach the next day. “You have not injured me at all. ¹³ You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. ¹⁴ And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an ¹⁵angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.” On his second trip, he was persuaded to allow Timothy to travel with him. Timothy is mentioned twenty-three times in the New Testament, each in the context of his travels with Paul or in his leadership. We’ll discover, reading these epistles, personal details: that Paul knew his mother and grandmother personally, that Timothy was prophesied over in Paul’s presence with the laying on of hands, which prophecy

gave Timothy extraordinary license to pray. Here is an excellent article on Timothy's relationship with Paul throughout the New Testament.

(<https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/encyclopedia-of-the-bible/Timothy>)

The salient point to remember is that Timothy traveled with Paul and watched the first entrance of the gospel in Europe at Philippi. He saw the planting and growth of the church at Corinth. Timothy was a firsthand witness to the birth of the Christian church, trained in leadership by the best and most effective leader in the history of the church. Timothy knew the church whose faith was not in word nor the wisdom of men but in the power of God. He knew the gospel that Paul preached.

3. **On the language of verse 14, household, church, pillar and base**—The terminology that Paul uses here is worth examining. He says, "15if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in *the household* (οἶκος, *oikos*, house, the material building, e.g. Grace Capital, and also the household or family, the fellowship we create) of God, which is the *church* (ἐκκλησία, *ekklesia*, gathering of those called out, an assembly,) of the living God, a *pillar* (στῦλος, *stulos*. The pillar or support column) and *buttress* (ἐδραῖωμα, *hedraïoma*. The foundation, base, support) of the truth." The nouns Paul chooses are each significant: Paul has been describing the behavior of a gathering within a building...which behavior becomes both the supporting column (which holds the roof), and the foundation/base (which grounds and stabilizes the pillar), for the word that is taught there. This is vital to understand: How we behave toward one another can be THE message a stranger takes away when he sees us in a meeting. The outer building is the "house" in which the church of the called gathers to become the household, in which God the Father is seen and known.
4. **On being the husband of one wife**—Overseers and deacons are to be "the husband of one wife." In many churches today, this verse becomes the exclusionary clause for anyone who has ever had a divorce. Without diminishing the seriousness of divorce, and all the pain and suffering, and even sin that the act might suggest, Paul is not here speaking of divorce. This is not a proof text to show that divorce is the unpardonable sin, and that no leadership can ever be offered to one who has suffered a divorce. In fact, polygamy was not illegal in the Empire, and there were husbands who had more than one wife. As Paul told the Corinthians, "He who is married must occupy himself with the things of the world, how he should please his wife." How much more distraction will he have with two wives, then?
5. **On elders/overseers and deacons**—Paul uses terminology common in the early foundation of the church to designate titles in leadership. In Ephesians and Corinthians, he talks about administrative offices: apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher and evangelist. These hold a place in leadership in the overall church

and are placed in the body to raise up their own replacements. The church will not be without leadership. On the local level, likewise, the local church will be administered by overseers (*episkopas*), elsewhere called elders (presbyters) and served by deacons (*diakonos*). Here Paul instructs Timothy in the qualifications of each. An *episkopas* is “an overseer, supervisor, ruler, especially used with reference to the supervising function exercised by an elder or presbyter of a church or congregation.” The “bishop/overseer” is charged with supervision. Deacons were introduced in Acts 6, when the Apostles were overwhelmed by their oversight. They appointed deacons, defined as a waiter, servant; then of anyone who performs any service, an administrator. Famous deacons include Phillip, who was first to bring the gospel to Samaria, and Stephen, the first martyr.

For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the SOAP (Scripture—Copy the scripture. / Observation—Write what you see. / Application—What is God saying? / Prayer—What is your response?) method to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: Numbers 11:14-17

Tuesday: 1 Timothy 3:16

Wednesday: 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Thursday: 1 Peter 2:1-3

Friday: 1 Peter 2:4-6