

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7

What – Paul wrote this letter to Timothy for purpose of instruction. Timothy was one of Paul’s many “ministry leaders in training”. In fact, Timothy was probably Paul’s most successful project. Ministers today are often called “Timothies” by the churches that grow them and send them out. As Timothy was often left behind or sent ahead to manage new churches, Paul gives Timothy some basic instruction in the important area of leadership. This information would have been crucial to the new churches. As church plants full of new Christians, leadership would have been difficult to find and at a premium.

Why – This scripture is important because leadership is important, especially in the church. It could be argued that leadership is still lacking badly in the church today. Strong evidence of this fact resides in the failure of the American church to have much effect on a declining society in the last 50 years. As we review the requirements Paul sets up for church leaders, we see that very few people in the church meet the requirements that Paul laid out. Topping the list is “above reproach”. This means that a leader lives his life in a way that no one can find fault with. This is a difficult task in our society for several reasons, but primarily because our lackadaisical view of sin, even within the church, has made several generations of people who simply do not understand what God’s idea of holiness really is. Most people in our culture used to know something about the bible, but now even believers cannot tell you where the Ten Commandments are to be found. This has led to fewer and fewer people who desire or are able to lead others into the scriptures in a meaningful way. We are simply running out of leaders.

WOW – The real WOW here is not about leaders at all. This scripture, while pointing out leadership qualities, really points to our goal as believers. Paul said to the Corinthians, “Follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). Leaders should be modeling for the rest of us what our walk with Jesus should look like. The list here applies to each and every believer as a set of goals. The Word says God will hold our leaders to a higher standard, (James 3:1) but we should be making every effort to live, grow and know Jesus on the same level as our qualified leaders. Are you making the grade?