

## 2. Healthy Churches Develop and Select Leaders – Part 1

In our last topic, we talked about the fact that healthy churches reproduce themselves. This will only happen if the church develops a godly leadership team. In Titus 1:5, we read, “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.” Paul and Titus had preached the Gospel in the cities on the island of Crete (the island is a hundred and sixty miles long and thirty-five miles wide). However, Paul had to leave before those churches were organized and established. As a result, Paul left Titus to complete that ministry. Here, we see that Titus had two primary responsibilities:

1. He was to set in order the things that are lacking.
2. He was to appoint elders in every church.

The thing the churches were lacking was qualified spiritual leadership to lead them. As a result, Titus was first to develop that leadership, and then, second, appoint elders in every church. We will talk about the first of these two today. This meant that every church had men who would become qualified if they were helped to mature in their spiritual lives. The responsibility of Titus was to help them become qualified before he appointed them as elders. This brings us to a list of the qualifications for elders, in Titus 1:6-9, which says: “If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.”

Most of the things in this list are character qualifications. Just as Christ developed these character qualifications in His disciples by taking the disciples with Him, so they could see His example, Titus would also help men develop these qualifications by taking them with him. We might summarize these qualifications by saying that the primary responsibilities of Titus were to:

- help potential leaders develop a respected life
- help potential leaders develop a healthy marriage
- help potential leaders develop a healthy family relationship
- help potential leaders become Christ-centered, not self-centered
- help potential leaders deal with former sinful habits
- help potential leaders learn to use their homes for ministry
- help potential leaders develop godly character
- help potential leaders learn to teach the Word of God
- help potential leaders learn to correct those who contradict

The reason Titus was given this list of qualifications was to help him understand how to qualify men for the leadership team, not disqualify them. These things are all taught by example, because most of them are character qualifications. It takes two things to develop these things in others: time and example. Christ spent about twenty-one months with His disciples before choosing the twelve to become the leadership team. Luke 6:12-13 says, “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was

day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.” We see that Christ had a larger group of disciples, but He chose to select a smaller group to show them how to walk, so they could become the leadership team of the early church.

Then, He spent about that much more time focused on their character development and the development of their ministry skills. The night before He was crucified, Christ could say, in John 17:4, “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” The work He had finished was the development of qualifications in eleven of those men to qualify them to lead the early church. Christ was also modeling for us how we develop a godly leadership team today.

I often share this list, of nine things from Titus, with pastors who say they do not have enough leaders in their church, or pastors who say they have no leaders. I have them list their men one-by-one and tell me the areas they are not yet qualified. Usually, with each man, they will list two or three areas the person is not yet qualified. In the case of a new Christian, the person probably will not be qualified in any of the areas. When we have discussed each man, I tell the pastor that he has just defined his primary responsibility to each of those men we mentioned. He is to take that person with him and show him by his example. He is to show that person how to become qualified in those areas where that person is not yet qualified. In a larger church, each of the men on the leadership team can focus on taking a few men with them and showing them how to live. Titus was to model these things for the men in Crete.

Titus had to have three key attitudes to be an effective developer of others. First, he had to have the attitude of a godly servant leader, which caused him to serve others by showing them how to develop a godly life, so they would make Biblical priorities their priorities. Second, Titus had to be motivated by the love of Christ, not driven by fear, so that it was possible for him to focus on developing godly reproducing Christians who would produce godly reproducing churches. Third, he had to have a passion to develop those men so they would be equipped to teach faithful men to teach others also (the third and fourth spiritual generation as described by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2). Those attitudes would make it possible for him to bring glory to God, not himself. Those are the same three attitudes we need to have in order to develop godly leadership teams.

As Titus helped the people, in each city, develop character qualifications in their lives, he was also to teach them certain things, and show them, by example, how to practice them. Chapter two gives a summary of the things he was to teach. Titus 2:1-2 tells what he was to teach the older men, “But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience.” He was also to help the older women develop godly character, so they could show the younger women how to develop godly character. Titus 2:3-5 says, “The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things--that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

In Titus 2:6-8, Titus was told to teach the younger men, by his example, how to develop godly

character. Those verses say, “Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.” Finally, Titus was to help the servants learn how to become a godly example to their masters. Titus 2:9-10 says, “Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.” Paul made it very clear to Titus that the thing that would have an impact on the people of the island of Crete was the transformed lives of the Christians.

In the same way, the only way we are going to be able to develop the leaders needed to develop godly reproducing churches is to show people, by our example, how their lives can be transformed by obedience to the Word of God. In fact, Paul emphasized the same things in chapter three of Titus. Titus 3:1-2 says, “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.” Then, Titus 3:8 says, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.” Paul made it very clear, in all three chapters of Titus, that Titus was to develop godly leadership by his own example of a transformed life.

Chapter one tells one other thing Titus was to teach potential leaders by example. Titus 1:9 says, “Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” Titus was to show each man how to teach sound doctrine. He was to show each man how to encourage and strengthen other Christians from the Word of God. He was also to show each man how to answer those who spoke against the Word of God. In 1 Corinthians 14:29-31, Paul explained how to teach men to teach the Word. “Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.” Here, we see that all of the men were to be given opportunities to speak the Word of God, so they could learn how to share the Word of God.

Just as Titus was to help people develop godly character, by following his example, as well as showing men how to teach the Word and giving them opportunities to teach, we are to do the same things. We are to show people how to develop godly character. We are to show each man how to teach the Word of God, and then, give them opportunities to teach the Word. As we do these things, each person will develop godly character, Biblical knowledge, and ministry skills. May the Lord richly bless you as you show people how to have their lives transformed by your example.