



PREPARATION

Welcome: *Icebreaker* – Can you think of an example of a **leader** in your life?

Study Context: This specific section on leadership in 1 Timothy is home to some of the most controversial passages in all of scripture having to do with the role of men and women in leadership. As you engage with this study guide, here are some potential “land mines” that you may encounter and suggestions about how to navigate them well!

- **Historical Truth or Timeless Truth?:** Underneath the debated passages in 1 Timothy are whether Paul’s words are meant for a specific historical moment, or whether they are timeless in nature. As students of God’s word, we ought to uncover the context to see what Paul is trying to say to Timothy and the church at Ephesus as well as us as the church today! Two ways you can unpack this is by analyzing the [historical context](#) (to see if the truth is historical) and analyze whether the concepts are [found in other places in scripture](#) (to see if the truth is timeless).
- **Quiet, submissive, no teaching, and no authority over a man?:** These passages seem degrading to women. However, each one can be explained considering the grounding principle of Adam and Eve. (1) *Quiet* – In 2:2 Paul advocates that ALL should lead quiet and dignified lives. Additionally, the fact that women *learn* would have been countercultural. In the same way Eve was deceived, Satan allures via false doctrines attracting the women of Ephesus motivating them to undermine core human authority structures. (2) *Submission* – Submission implies authoritative structure. These structures are seen all throughout God’s order of humanity like the institution of marriage (Eph. 5:21-29; Col. 3:18), human-divine relations (Js. 4:7), interpersonal relations (Tit. 3:1), and the church herself (Heb. 13:7). This is not to say that submission is a denigration of women, but something that is so core to who God is that it is even embedded into the Trinity (Phil. 2:3-8). From creation, men and women are **equal** in worth, yet possessing of **differing roles**; just as The Father, Son, and Spirit are **equal** in essence but are revealed to be **different** (i.e. Father, Son, Holy Spirit). Women submit to husbands in marriage and to the men inside church leadership structures just as the Son humbly submits himself to the Father’s will (Jn. 14:28). Men likewise submit to their wives by laying down their life for their brides. How much more so for the bride of Christ: the church (Eph. 5:25). (3) *No Teaching and No Authority over man* – This is not to say women could never teach in different contexts (Rom. 16:1-7, Acts 18:26), but hopefully you can see the subversion of God’s ordained roles within the church structure and within the Trinity Himself. In Genesis 3, it was Satan’s tactic to undermine this structure by deceiving Eve, but Adam was held responsible for the entire ordeal.
- **Saved through Childbearing?:** This statement probably counteracts false teaching in the church at Ephesus. Yet the timeless truth here is for men and women to embrace the roles given to them. This isn’t to say that the Women’s role is *exclusively* childbearing, but childbearing represents *the* most distinct differences between sexes. It was the beauty of differences between Adam and Eve that brought life to the world and eventually salvation through the promised seed!
- **Overseers, Elders, and Deacons?:** The one role that is gender specific is the Overseer. At 3Crosses, we consider the term Overseer as synonymous with *Elder* and *Pastor*, meaning that all *Pastors* at our church are considered Overseers. This also means that the *Pastor* title is designated for men. The primary role of the Overseer is to authoritatively teach and shepherd the flock. Women, under the authority of the *Elders*, are then able to aspire to ALL things in the church EXCEPT the role of Overseer. If they do teach, they do so under the *oversight* of the elders.

What’s Going on This Week

This week, guest speaker Eric Yata, Pastor of San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church, brought us into the third week of our series titled *A Church that Pleases God*. Eric shifted our attention to *1 Timothy 2-3* to discuss healthy leadership in the church. As you wrestle with this topic, remember that *humility* is at the core of the discussion whether you are in the position of leadership, or you are checking out the church for the first time.

“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is who you really are whereas your reputation is only what other people think of you.” – John Wooten *Famous Basketball Coach*



Godly Church Leadership (March 6th, 2022)

GROUP MEETING (60 – 90 minutes)

Worship (10 – 15 minutes)

Take time with your group and prepare your hearts as you enter into the presence of God for this meeting.

Option 1: Worship Music Have someone share their favorite song. You can find it online, play it, and even sing along with your group! Have them explain why the lyrics have impacted them!	Option 2: Proclaim the Gospel The Gospel is not just something for the point of salvation, it is something we need to remember every day! Ask one of your group members to define the gospel and share its implications.	Option 3: Healthy Leadership Jn. 13:12-16; Mk. 10:35-45 – Meditate on Jesus' teachings on leadership here. As you look at your own life and involvement in the church, consider where you need the humility of Jesus.
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Word #1: Survey Paul's Correctives and Identify Impact Points (15 – 25 minutes)

Primary Text: 1 Timothy 1 – 2 – In the letter to Timothy, Paul outlines the various ways the church has strayed in its organizational structure and its doctrine. Paul exhorts Timothy to confront these misguided behaviors and beliefs in order to replace them with organizational authoritative structure and sound doctrine which finds its roots in the message of the gospel. **What stands out to you about these two chapters and the problems being addressed by Paul in the local church? If you had to write a letter to your local church leadership in the East Bay Area, what topics do you think you would include that you feel like need to be addressed? Where do you consider yourself to be in the conversation of church leadership?**

Host Tip: There are so many ways this conversation can go. Your job as a facilitator is to protect the integrity of the conversation. Watch out for the theological landmines that can derail the conversation and continue to steer the conversation to something that is making a **personal** impact. If you have any theological disputes, do not hesitate to reach out to AJ or another pastor on staff.

Word #2: Encourage Your Elders and Lead By Serving (15 – 25 minutes)

Primary Texts: 1 Timothy 3, Hebrews 13:7-18 – These passages outline the qualifications for an Overseer or an Elder. Here, Paul is concerned for the humble and respectful character of the individual while recognizing that any overseer needs a team of deacons/servants around him to help the church flourish. These authoritative structures and roles within the church are what make the church a pillar and buttress of the truth in our society as we continue to proclaim the beauty of the gospel message! **As you think about the weight of being an overseer in the local church, what are the ways you and your group can encourage and work to align with your leaders? How is this conversation about leadership and teamwork in the church challenging you to “get in the game” and find your place on this team? How might you take your first step toward fulfilling your role on the team of the church and who in your Life Group might help keep you accountable?**

Host Tip: Challenge your group to (a) acknowledge and submit to the leadership of the church so long as it is healthy leadership and (b) consider stepping into servant leader roles around the church body!



Witness (20 – 25 minutes)

- **Pray for the Unfolding Events in the Russia – Ukrainian crisis.**
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would help us navigate the tensions of gender roles in the church.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would open our eyes to ways we can step up as the church body.
- Pray for any individual prayer request that comes up in your group.
- **Pray for the entire group and how they may be able to participate in future group meetings.**
- **Pray for an interaction with someone who you can invite into your next group meeting!**
- **Pray for God's hand in the multiplication and revival of your group!**

Stay up to date with our Prayer Ministry by signing up to be an intercessor online at 3Crosses.org/pray!

Throughout the Week

-Follow up between group members: Have each member of the group pick one other group member to follow up with about how they are growing in their faith as they learn to keep in step with the Holy Spirit

-Join relief efforts locally and around the world: Looking to contribute to what is going on both locally and around the world? Visit our website and volunteer in our [neighborhood resource center](#) or help sponsor an [indigenous missionary](#)!

-Life Groups 2022: For more information about joining a group, hosting a group, or general inquiries, contact AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org or Carmela at carmela@3crosses.org