

## Christian Leadership

**August 17, 2025**

Today we are going to look at the importance of Leadership.

When it comes to leadership, the Bible is very clear of its importance:

**Proverbs 11:14 - Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory.**

Leadership matters—at home, in school, in business, and especially in the church. Sadly, America has a deep concern about the quality of leadership in our country.

In one U.S. News & Harris Poll, over 75% of Americans agreed: *“There is a leadership crisis in corporate America.”* Another poll showed that more than 40% of Americans believe *neither political party* is producing strong leaders.

What is alarming about this is that when this last question was asked in a 2006 poll, only 10 percent of respondents said, “neither party.” That is a 3 fold increase.

Leadership is important because it plays a critical role in achievement and success. Leaders are needed in all areas of society, including families, businesses, communities, and governments.

- Parents and grandparents are crucial for providing guidance, stability, and a sense of direction, ensuring the well-being and healthy development of all family members.

- Leaders in schools and universities are needed to create a positive learning environment so students achieve and schools succeed.
- Leaders are needed at the local level to address community needs, provide direction, mobilize resources, and build a stronger communities.
- Leaders in businesses, from startups to large corporations, are essential for setting strategic direction, motivating employees, and improving performance.
- Students you are called to be a leader in the locker room, in the classroom, in band room, to foster teamwork, motivate individuals, and build a positive team culture. They ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities, encourage open communication, and help navigate challenges and celebrate successes.
- Christian leaders are essential for the church to fulfil its mission of providing spiritual guidance, discipling, maintaining unity, and sharing the Gospel with our neighbors and the nations.

Now you can find thousands of books on parenting or leadership. But we are going to the book of 1 Timothy as our reference because the Bible is final source for faith and

practice, and our sermon today is going to take a different approach.

Our pastor is the master of Expository Preaching: This method involves teaching through a specific passage of the Bible verse-by-verse, allowing you, the congregation, to understand the author's intended message.

Since we are dealing with a theme – leadership. Our approach will be Topical Preaching: This method focuses on a specific subject. And we will be drawing from multiple texts rather than sticking to a single passage. I would compare it to mining for a specific precious nugget of truth within a field full of multiple valuable jewels.

Paul wrote to Timothy to encourage him in his responsibility for overseeing the work of the church in Ephesus. 1 Timothy is a leadership manual for church organization and administration. And this is to challenge God has given us through His word today:

### **WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR JESUS.**

**First, we can make a difference for Jesus: By standing for Truth.**

**1 Timothy 1:3-5 - <sup>3</sup>As I urged you <sup>[a]</sup>upon my departure for Macedonia, <sup>[b]</sup>remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, <sup>4</sup>nor to <sup>[c]</sup>pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather**

than *furthering*<sup>[d]</sup> the administration of God which is by faith. <sup>5</sup> But the goal of our <sup>[e]</sup> instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Paul urged Timothy to stay in Ephesus to stop the spread of false doctrines and heresies. False doctrine led only to division in the church, not godly transformation.

In contrast, Paul reminded Timothy that the goal of sound instruction is not intellectual speculation or self-promotion, but love. This love is not mere sentimentality; it is an active, selfless commitment to God and others, rooted in three spiritual qualities:

**A pure heart** – The heart is the moral and spiritual control center of a person and it must be cleansed from sin and selfish motives so that a sacrificial love comes out of it.

**A good conscience** – This means living morally upright rightly discerning between good and evil and living with integrity.

**A sincere faith** – Faith that is genuine is rooted in God's revealed truth and produces obedience and trust.

Christian leadership requires guarding doctrinal purity and fostering spiritual maturity. Leaders must be willing to confront error directly and to "instruct" those straying from truth.

**1 Corinthians 16:13 - Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.**

**2 Thessalonians 2:15 - So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word *of mouth* or by letter from us.**

- Parents can stand up for what is right by grounding their homes in God's truth and refusing to let false ideas, harmful influences, or moral compromise take root. This means teaching their children biblical values and correcting wrong behavior in love.
- A business professional can stand up for what is right by refusing to compromise their integrity for profit or advancement. They should operate with a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith, treating clients, employees, and competitors with fairness and respect
- A student can stand up for what is right by refusing to follow ideas or behaviors that go against God's truth, even if these truths are popular among peers. This means rejecting gossip, dishonesty, and harmful trends, and instead focusing on actions that reflect love, integrity, and sincere faith.

**We can make a difference for Jesus: By standing for Truth.**

**We can make a difference for Jesus: By Being Above Reproach**

**1 Timothy 3:1-7 - 3 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of <sup>[a]</sup>overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. <sup>2</sup><sup>[b]</sup>An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not addicted to wine <sup>[c]</sup>or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. <sup>4</sup>*He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity* <sup>5</sup>(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), <sup>6</sup>*and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation <sup>[d]</sup>incurred by the devil.* <sup>7</sup>And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.**

Here Paul outlines the qualifications for overseers—leaders in the church. The overarching requirement can be summed in 3 words: “*be above reproach.*” A leader’s character and conduct must be able to withstand impartial scrutiny. This does not mean they are sinless, but they would be found blameless.

#### **Leadership traits from this passage:**

- Faithful in marriage
- Self-controlled, wise, and respectable

- Hospitable and able to teach
- Not violent or greedy, but gentle and peaceable
- A good family manager
- Well respected both inside and outside the church

Certain disqualifying traits are also noted. A leader must not be given to drunkenness, violence, quarrelsomeness, or love of money. These reflect a lack of self-control, an attitude of self-interest, or susceptibility to corruption—all of which undermine moral authority.

These qualifications apply not only to pastors but to all who wish to lead with integrity.

**1 Peter 2:12 - Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe *them*, glorify God in the day of visitation.**

So how does this relate to be a parent, a business professional, or even a student.

- A parent who is above reproach lives with integrity, modeling godly character both inside and outside the home. They lead their family with love, wisdom, and consistency, managing their household in a way that fosters respect, obedience, and harmony.

- A businessman who is above reproach is trustworthy in managing resources, free from greed, and not driven by dishonest gain.
- A student who is above reproach avoids cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty in any form. They are respectful toward teachers and peers. They show self-control in speech, attitude, and behavior.
- Christian leadership “above reproach” calls for a life marked by integrity, faithfulness, wisdom, self-control, hospitality, sound teaching, gentle strength, and proven leadership at home. It requires spiritual maturity, a clean public witness, and a heart devoted to serving Christ over self-interest. Such leaders safeguard the church’s testimony, model godly living, and foster trust both within the body of Christ and before the watching world.

### **We can make a difference for Jesus: By Being Above Reproach**

### **We can make a Difference for Jesus: By Being an Example**

**1 Timothy 4:12 - <sup>12</sup>Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example <sup>[a]</sup>of those who believe.**

You may be thinking to yourself, how is setting an example different than being above reproach.

Being above reproach means avoiding blame—your behavior is clean, ethical, and without fault. It’s often about not doing wrong.

Setting an example is proactive—it's about doing right in a way that inspires others. You're not just avoiding bad behavior; you're demonstrating best behavior.

Paul uses the word *typos* (“example” or “pattern”), which in the ancient world described a model to be imitated. For Timothy, this was not about outward performance but about living a life shaped by the gospel so fully that others could confidently follow his example. Godly influence flows not from age or position but from spiritual maturity and consistent character.

**Matthew 5:16 - Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.**

Paul identifies five key areas where Timothy’s example must shine:

1. **Speech** – Words reveal the heart (Matt. 12:34). Christian leaders must avoid harmful, careless, or deceptive talk. Instead, their words should be truthful, edifying, and reflective of Christ’s wisdom.
2. **Conduct** – When we live with integrity, humility, and faithfulness it gives credibility to the impact Jesus

has had on our lives. Our behavior is often more persuasive than their words.

3. **Love** – *Agapē* love is the deliberate, sacrificial care for others that reflects God’s own heart. It is more than emotion, it is service, patience, and kindness even toward those who are difficult to love.
4. **Faith** – Leaders must be dependable, holding fast to biblical truth and demonstrating unwavering confidence in God’s promises.
5. **Purity** – Purity includes sexual integrity and purity of motive. Especially for younger leaders, moral failings can quickly discredit their witness. Holiness in thought, relationships, and actions is essential to preserving influence.

Our spiritual influence will not be measured by theological knowledge alone but by a transformed life that is on display for the world to see.

### **We can make a Difference for Jesus: By Being an Example**

### **We can make a Difference for Jesus: By Showing Respect**

**1 Timothy 5:1–2 - Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but *rather* appeal to *him* as a father, to the younger men**

**as brothers, <sup>2</sup>the older women as mothers, *and* the younger women as sisters, in all purity.**

In **1 Timothy 5:1–2**, Paul gives Timothy practical guidance for relating to people in the church with respect. As a young pastor in Ephesus, Timothy led a congregation of different ages and genders, and showing respect was key in how Timothy related to his church.

Paul first instructs, “*Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father.*” The Greek term for “rebuke” suggests a sharp verbal strike. While correction is sometimes necessary, it must be delivered with gentleness and the honor due to age. Older men should be approached with the affection and respect of a son toward his father—upholding the biblical call to honor elders while still speaking truth.

Older women, likewise, are to be treated “as mothers.” Harsh speech toward older women is incompatible with the love and honor God’s household should display.

Younger men are to be treated “as brothers,” emphasizing equality, mutual respect, and camaraderie. Leaders must avoid condescension or authoritarianism toward peers, instead working alongside them with humility.

For younger women, Paul adds a vital safeguard: treat them “as sisters, with absolute purity.” Purity here involves more

than avoiding sin—it's a lifestyle marked by holiness, self-control, and integrity in relationships.

This family framework presents the church as God's household, where every interaction is guided by love, dignity, and respect.

**Philippians 2:3 - Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves.**

Parents:

- Speak honorably even when disagreeing.
- Treat others as equals, don't be arrogant.
- Work for collaboration rather than domination.

Business Professionals:

- Offer constructive feedback with courtesy and humility.
- Avoid dismissive attitudes.
- Treat coworkers as teammates, not competitors to be undermined.
- Give credit to others.
- Build up rather than belittle.

Students:

- Toward teachers – Show courtesy, use respectful language, keep your attitude humble and receptive.

- Toward classmates– Treat peers as equals, avoid arrogance, gossip, or social exclusion.
- Be an encourager, offering help without condescension

Whether in the home, workplace, or school, respect means more than politeness; it is about recognizing each person's God-given worth and treating them accordingly.

**We can make a difference for Jesus: By showing others Respect**

**We can make a difference for Jesus: By living like Jesus**

**1 Timothy 6:9–11 - <sup>9</sup>But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is a root of all <sup>[a]</sup>sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**

**<sup>11</sup> But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, <sup>[b]</sup>perseverance and gentleness.**

In 1 Timothy 6:9–11, Paul warns Timothy about the dangers of greed and the love of money, then calls him to actively pursue a life that reflects our Lord Jesus. It should be a life marked by righteousness and godliness.



There is a sharp contrast in this 2 step process. Fleeing involves an intentional separation from the sins and values of the world, especially greed, pride, and selfish ambition. It is not passive avoidance but decisive rejection.

Pursuing, on the other hand, is an active, ongoing chase after virtues that reflect God's character. Both actions are necessary: turning away from sin without moving toward holiness leaves a spiritual vacuum, while pursuing goodness without renouncing sin leaves a person vulnerable to compromise.

The six virtues Paul lists form a portrait of practical holiness:

1. **Righteousness** –living in line with God's commands.
2. **Godliness** – a devotion to God that blends right belief with obedient action.
3. **Faith** – steadfast trust in God, remaining loyal to His truth in all circumstances.
4. **Love** – sacrificial service and benevolence toward others, rooted in God's love for us.
5. **Perseverance** – steadfast endurance through trials, holding firm in faith even when opposed.
6. **Gentleness** – strength expressed with humility and compassion, especially toward those in error or conflict.

Paul's pairing of "flee" and "pursue" reflects a consistent biblical pattern

**Eph. 4:22–24 - That, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup> and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup> and put on the new self, which in *the likeness of God* has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.**

Just as people eagerly chase success, recognition, or wealth, believers must run after holiness with even greater zeal.

Holiness is not merely avoiding wrongdoing but passionately seeking to be conformed to Christ's character.

**We can make a difference for Jesus: By living like Jesus**

**We can make for Jesus here in Collierville**

Parents In every home from Houston Levee to Collierville Arlington, from the Wolf River to the Mississippi state line – we can make a difference for Jesus.

Business Professionals - From the FedEx hub to the FedEx world headquarters, from International Paperwork to the AutoZone Headquarters - we can make a difference for Jesus.



Students and teachers - From Tara Oaks elementary to West Collierville Middle school, From Collierville High School to Briarcrest - we can make a difference for Jesus.

**But we can't make a difference for Jesus until he has made a difference in us.**

We can't make a difference for Jesus until we realize we are sinners.

**Romans 3:23 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

We can't make a difference for Jesus until we understand the consequences of sin.

**Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

We can't make a difference for Jesus until we believe in him.

**Romans 10:9 - that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

We can't make a difference for Jesus until we obey him.

**John 14:15 - "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."**

Obedience should be reflected in the application of the truth in First Timothy that we have looked at today. But it is also reflected in how you spend your time – are you too

busy for God? It should be reflected in how you spend your money – are you giving God back the 10% that he asks. It should be reflected by guarding your heart and eyes and focusing them on the truth of God.

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**We can make a Difference for Jesus: By Being an Example**

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**But we can't make a difference for Jesus until he has made a difference in us.**

Our staff and worship team are coming forward:

You may need come down and have a staff member talk with you about confessing your sin and following Jesus.

God may be calling to come and be a part of this church, come see one of our staff members.

Pray