

Unpacking the Preach

Date: 4th July 2021
Sermon Title: In seeking Elders
Bible Passage: 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Recapping the Preach

- Who do you think is the greatest leader of all time? What made / makes them a great leader?
- Make a list of qualities you would look for in a leader?
- Matt Hancock, a married man and prominent political figure, recently made headlines because of his inappropriate relationship with his aide. Why do you think there was such a public outcry?

Take a moment to read the passage, as well as Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4.

- What stands out to you about these passages?
- Why do you think these passages focus heavily on character and not on the function of elders?

Stu summarised the purpose of elders is to govern, rule and caretake the church, with a servant, caring and shepherds heart, guarding the church and its doctrine, teaching the truth of the gospel which matures us to be the men and women that God intends for us to be.

- What do you think it means to govern / rule?
- How does the image of shepherd (1 Peter 5:2) inform your understanding of the role of elders (compare Psalm 23 and Ezekiel 34)?
- Why do you think it is important for an elder to be able to teach?
- The goal of elders could be summarised as working to present everyone mature in Christ (Colossians 1:28). What is our role as disciples in this?

Stu went on to speak about the privilege that it is to be an elder and to be served by elders in the church.

- Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 and Hebrews 13:17. How do these verses shape the way you relate to leaders?
- Why do you think it is a privilege to be served by Elders?

Stu then reflected on each of the characteristics Paul mentions in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 which speaks to the character of Elders.

- Out of the list - which characteristic is the most important for you when looking for a leader?
- Pick out a few of the characteristics and take time to reflect on each one: why is this important in a church setting?
- If someone shows great eldership potential but is young and a recent convert, would you call them as an elder? Why (not)?

Stu closed by outlining the complementarian and egalitarian view and response to the questions: can women be elders?

- Take time to listen and share with one another your views on women in eldership / ministry?
- Stu shared that he believes this is a secondary issue, do you agree? Why?

Response

- Is there anything from the preach and passage that you will be taking away to reflect on or work on?
- Looking at the characteristics Paul lists - are there any on this list that you need to work on?

Prayer pointers

- Take time to share prayer requests and pray for one another.
- Pray for the current elders.
- Pray that God would raise up new elders to serve His church.
- Pray that we would have a spirit of humility and unity as we seek elders for the church.

Additional resources:

If you need some additional resources the below websites are useful:

- <https://www.gotquestions.org>
- <https://enduringword.com>
- <https://www.biblica.com>
- <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/>