

Qualifications for Church Leaders - Godly Character and Sound Doctrine

By Ariel Presswood

1 Timothy 3:1-7 - "Here is a trustworthy saying: whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money."

Setting the Scene

Key Concept:

Godly leaders are called to live lives of integrity, humility, and faithfulness, serving as examples of Christ-like character. These qualities are not only vital for leaders but also inspire every believer to pursue a life rooted in God's truth and love. Leadership in the church is not about power or prestige; it's about service, sacrifice, and a commitment to sound doctrine. When leaders reflect Christ, they build a community of trust, love, and faithfulness.

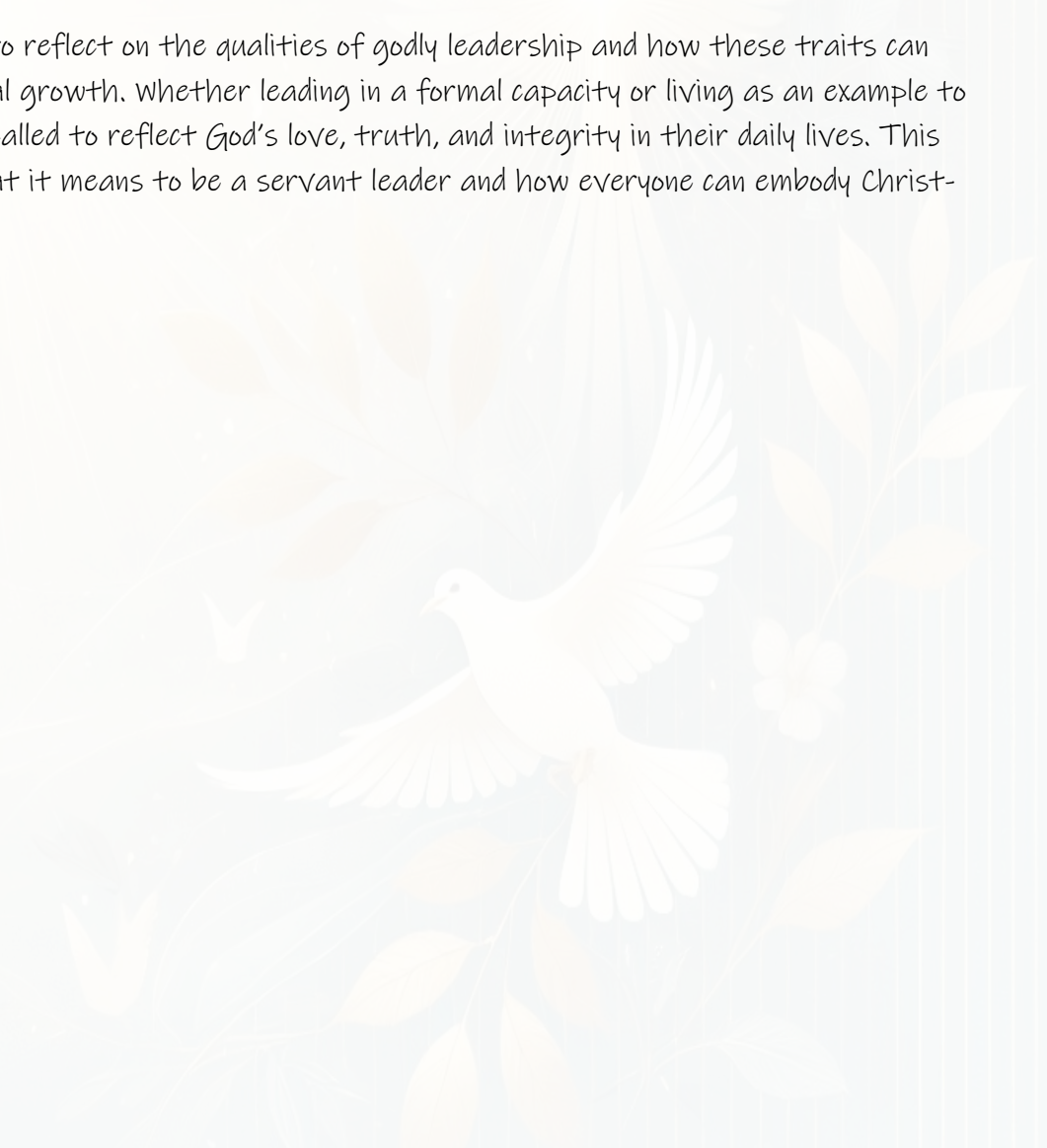
Engaging Analogy:

"Church leaders are like shepherds watching over a flock. Just as a shepherd protects, guides, and provides for the sheep, leaders care for their congregations with wisdom, compassion, and integrity. Similarly, the traits of a godly leader are like the strong foundation of a house—they provide stability, support, and shelter for the community of faith to grow and thrive."

Invitation:

Encourage participants to reflect on the qualities of godly leadership and how these traits can inspire their own spiritual growth. Whether leading in a formal capacity or living as an example to others, all believers are called to reflect God's love, truth, and integrity in their daily lives. This activity set explores what it means to be a servant leader and how everyone can embody Christ-like character.

CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER AND SOUND DOCTRINE



Section 1: Reflect and Discuss

Reflection Questions

1. What are some qualities of a godly leader? Why are these traits important for guiding others?
2. How does sound doctrine help leaders build a strong and faithful community?
3. Why is it essential for leaders to set a good example through their words and actions?
4. How can we support and encourage our church leaders as they serve?
5. How can developing these qualities help us grow as individuals, even if we're not in formal leadership roles?
6. What does it mean to lead by serving? How can this approach inspire others?

Family or Group Discussion

- **Biblical Examples:** Explore stories of godly leadership in the Bible, such as:
 - **Moses** leading the Israelites with patience and reliance on God (Exodus 18).
 - **Nehemiah** rebuilding Jerusalem's wall with prayerful determination (Nehemiah 2).
 - **Paul** mentoring Timothy and guiding the early church with wisdom and encouragement (1 Timothy 4:12).
 - **Jesus** as the ultimate servant leader, washing His disciples' feet (John 13:12-17). Reflect on how these leaders relied on God's guidance and displayed humility, courage, and faith.
- **Living with Integrity:** Discuss how everyone, not just church leaders, can develop godly traits like kindness, patience, and hospitality. Share examples of how these qualities make a difference in daily life, from acts of service to simple kindnesses that reflect God's love.

Section 2: Hands-On Activities

Activity 1: Leadership Shield Craft

Objective: Create a shield representing the qualities of godly leadership.

Materials Needed:

- Cardboard or cardstock
- Markers and crayons
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Decorative items like stickers, glitter, or ribbon

Instructions:

1. Cut out a shield shape from cardboard or cardstock.
2. Divide the shield into sections and write a leadership quality in each (e.g., "Integrity," "Gentleness," "Hospitality," "Wisdom," "Patience").
3. Decorate the shield with symbols of faith, such as crosses, doves, or scripture verses.
4. Reflect on how each quality strengthens leaders and inspires others to grow in faith.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to add a personal prayer or Bible verse on the back of their shield, asking God to help them develop these traits in their own lives. Share the shields as part of a group discussion about leadership and service.

Activity 2: Tree of Godly Character

Objective: Design a tree symbolizing the traits of godly leadership and sound doctrine.

Materials Needed:

- Poster board or large paper
- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Decorative items like stickers, glitter, or paper flowers

Instructions:

1. Draw or cut out a large tree trunk and branches from construction paper.
2. Cut out paper leaves and write a leadership trait or godly quality on each leaf (e.g., "Patience," "Self-Control," "Kindness," "Humility").
3. Attach the leaves to the branches, creating a tree that represents the fruit of godly character.
4. Decorate the tree with symbols of faith, such as hearts or scripture verses, to emphasize its foundation in God's Word.
5. Reflect on how these traits grow and flourish when rooted in faith and sound doctrine.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to add new leaves throughout the week, representing additional qualities or actions they observe in others or strive to develop themselves. Share updates with the group to celebrate growth and progress.

Activity 3: Leadership Qualities Timeline

Objective: Create a timeline of key moments from the Bible or personal life where godly leadership was demonstrated.

Materials Needed:

- Large paper or poster board
- Markers or crayons
- Sticky notes or index cards
- Tape or glue

Instructions:

1. Draw a horizontal timeline across the poster board and label key moments from the Bible that highlight godly leadership, such as:
 - Moses receiving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20).
 - Jesus washing the disciples' feet as a model of servant leadership (John 13:12-17).
 - Paul encouraging Timothy to set an example for others (1 Timothy 4:12).
2. Write short reflections or lessons from each event on sticky notes or index cards and attach them to the timeline.
3. Add personal reflections or moments where participants witnessed or practiced godly leadership in their own lives.
4. Reflect on how these moments demonstrate the importance of humility, wisdom, and reliance on God.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to share their timeline moments with the group, fostering mutual reflection and inspiration. Create a communal timeline to display in a shared space as a visual reminder of God's work through leadership.

Section 3: Music and Creativity

Memory Verse Song

Set 1 Timothy 3:1-7 to the tune of a familiar children's song, such as "This Little Light of Mine":

"A leader must be faithful, / Patient, kind, and true. / Above reproach in all they do, / God's love will guide them through."

Encourage participants to create hand motions or additional verses to personalize the song and make it more engaging.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to write their own songs or poems celebrating the qualities of godly leadership and share them during a group worship session.

Creative Writing Prompt

Ask participants to write or draw about a church leader they admire. What qualities do they display that reflect God's calling for leadership? How have they inspired your faith?

Extension Idea: Combine participants' stories and drawings into a group "Book of Godly Leadership," celebrating the impact of faithful leaders in their lives and communities.

Section 4: Closing Reflection and Prayer

Reflection Questions:

1. How can I grow in godly character and integrity in my own life?
2. What are some ways I can encourage and pray for the leaders in my church?
3. How does understanding the qualities of leadership help me serve others better?

Prayer:

Lead a prayer thanking God for church leaders and asking for wisdom, strength, and guidance for them. Pray for hearts that are humble, compassionate, and focused on serving God and others. Include a moment of silence for participants to pray individually for their leaders.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to write personal prayers of commitment to growing in godly character and living as examples of Christ's love. Share these prayers with the group or keep them for private reflection.

