

Part 2, Chapter 2 – The Local Church

Days One and Two:

Paul wrote what are commonly called the “Pastoral Epistles” of I, II Timothy and Titus to the young pastors of the same names. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus and Titus in Crete to lead and care for the believers as he continued his ministry as the Apostle to the Gentiles. Both Timothy and Titus traveled extensively with Paul previous to being assigned these churches. Paul’s letters give encouraging, practical instruction to these young men regarding the structural organization of the local church body and teaching topics to be addressed for the benefit of the church. The Pastoral Epistles form the basis for our church leadership selection to this day.

Begin your study with prayer. Ask God to prepare your mind and heart. Then read and observe **1 Timothy 3** asking the 5 Ws & H.

Who is described?

What character qualities must be found in an overseer? A deacon? Wives/Women?

Where must these qualities first be observed?

When should someone *not* be selected?

Why does Paul write these instructions to Timothy?

How will an overseer avoid the devil’s trap?

Ask/Answer your own questions below:

From **1 Timothy 3:1-7** make a check list of qualities to be sought and avoided in an *overseer*. You will be adding to this list as you study different passages.

Desirable	Undesirable

Read and observe **Titus 1:5-9**. Add to your checklist above.

Make a similar list for *deacon* qualities from 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Desirable	Undesirable

1. Using your word study tools, look up and note what you learn. Remember to take the definitions back to the Scriptures for the following:

A. **Overseer** (episkopos - Strong's #1985: ἐπίσκοπος)

B. **Deacon** (diakonos - Strong's #1249: διάκονος)

C. **Elder** (presbyteros - Strong's #4245: πρεσβύτερος)

2. Looking at both **1 Timothy 3** and **Titus 1:5-9**, what reasons does Paul give Timothy and Titus for these character quality lists? What do these qualities protect the overseer from? What does Paul want for the churches under their leadership?

3. What is the job of the overseer? How is it described in 1 Timothy 3:1 and 5? In Titus 1:7?

4. In **Titus 1:9** what must the overseer do? What are the benefits to the church?

5. Read and observe **1 Peter 5:1-4**. Add what you learn to the **overseer** chart above, if you have room. Use your own paper as needed.

6. Look up “*Shepherd*” (poimainō - Strong’s #4165: ποιμαίνω) and note what you learn below.

7. Paul addresses the character qualifications of an overseer. What is Peter addressing?

8. How are overseers to serve? Who does the flock belong to? Who is their example? What will their reward be?

9. Read Acts 20:28 – Note what you learn.

10. Obviously the job of an overseer is not an easy one. They have many responsibilities for the church under their care. God holds them accountable for their leadership and care of His church. Does the church body have any responsibilities toward overseers? Look up the following Scriptures and note what you learn:

1 Timothy 5:17-20

Hebrews 13:7

1 Peter 5: 5-7 – Be sure to note the context. What does this follow immediately after? What attitude is to characterize young men? Is this “normal” in our world today? What needs to change?

11. Take a few moments right now to stop and pray, reflecting on what you have learned. Ask the Lord to impress upon your heart how you should respond. Write down your impressions below.

At McLean Bible Church we use the title “Elder” rather than “Overseer.” Have you considered how you personally can give “double honor” to our Elders? Have you submitted to their leadership in humility so it is a joy for them to serve us? As you seek to make disciples are you modeling humble “followership?” If not, what changes should you make? Be specific.

Take time to pray for our Board of Elders. Please keep them on your regular prayer list that they may continue to provide godly oversight of our church.

You can learn more about our church structure and the members of our Board of Elders and their selection on our website at [www.mcleanbible.org](http://mcleanbible.org) under “About: Our Leadership.” A brief bio for each Elder is available at: http://mcleanbible.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=81675 As you go through the process of becoming a formal member of MBC, an elder will meet with you to get to know you and encourage you in your walk with the Lord. You can encourage them by becoming a member and participating in the quarterly congregational meetings.

Day Three:

Now that we have a better understanding of biblical church leadership and “followership,” what should characterize the local church body? What sets it apart from the rest of the world?

1) Read and observe **Matthew 5:1-16**. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your Teacher!

2) Fill in the following chart for verses 1-12:

Who is blessed?	How?

- 3) As you observe verse 13, consider the inherent properties of salt. What is its purpose? How much is needed? Or how far do its effects extend? What happens when salt loses its saltiness? What is the warning?

- 4) In verses 14-16, what is the next comparison made? What are you? What other comparison is made? What is the purpose of light according to this passage? How far do its effects extend?

- 5) What is Jesus' conclusion? What two results is He expecting according to verse 16?

- 6) In this context, what "*good works/deeds*" does Jesus want to be seen? Where does He begin this discourse (see your chart above)? With actions or something else?

Although we are stopping here today, Jesus does not. He continues to define "good works" and godly heart attitudes through the end of Matthew 7. Scan through it just to get a sense of the scope of the change affected by individual believers and the church as a whole. This is Christ's heart for His church!

Read p. 65-66 of **multiply** and consider question #1 from your book.

Day Four:

1. **Known by Our Love.** Jesus was asked, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” Read **Mark 12:28- 31** to discover His answer and note it here. Begin with prayer.

2. To get the context of this dialogue, read **Mark 11:27 – 12:34**. Summarize the paragraph events below. As you read, note who is asking Jesus questions and why? What did they understand about Jesus’ parable?

Mark 11:27-33

Mark 12: 1-11

Verse 12

Verses 13-17

Verses 18-27

Verses 28-34

3. Looking again at **Mark 12:28-34**, what do you observe from this dialogue? With whom is Jesus speaking? With what does He answer? What is the scribe's response to Jesus' answer? Then what happened? Or rather, what didn't happen?

4. Read the following and note what you learn:

Deuteronomy 6:4-6

Leviticus 19:18

What did God want from His people? What does He want now? Has it changed?

5. Love – Of all things, why is love so important to God? Where does it come from and how can we possibly love Him this way? Is it even possible to love God and our neighbors this way? *Pray* that the Lord will open your eyes to see wondrous things in His word. (Ps. 119:18)

Read and observe **1 John 4:7-21** on the next page using 5 Ws & H. Mark "*God*," "*love*," and "*one another*."

1 John 4:7-21 NASB

- 7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.
- 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.
- 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.
- 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
- 12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.
- 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.
- 14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.
- 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
- 16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.
- 17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.
- 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.
- 19 We love, because He first loved us.
- 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.
- 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

Caution: Dear Friends, as you study, take time to respond to the Lord and His word with prayer and thanksgiving (even at the risk of not finishing your study). Please, please don't let this become an "academic exercise" or you will miss God. We are asking the Holy Spirit to burn these truths into our hearts. We want God's love to transform us so He will be our daily experience. Worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Love Him with all your heart!

6. Note what you learn from marking "God."

7. What is love? Note the verse(s) where you find your answer. What else do you observe about love?

8. List what you learn from marking "one another."

9. Read also 1 John 3:16-18, 23, earlier in John's letter. Add to your observations. Is love just emotion, thoughts, or words? If not, what is it? Who are we to love?

10. What admonition does John give in verse 18? Does this mean that we are not to speak words of love and affirmation? What is John's point about words? Should love stop at words?

11. What does this say about the times we don't "feel" like loving someone? In other words, do I have to "feel" a certain way in order to "act" with God's love? Ask the Lord to give you His perspective and power to address your personal situation. Write out your prayer below.

Read p.67-72 from **multiply** and answer questions #3-7 from the perspective of our whole MBC church body, not just individually. Pray for our church as you reflect.

Day Five:

A Kingdom of Priests. After beginning your time with prayer, read *p. 73-74* from **multiply**. Then read and observe **1 Peter 2:4-12**, provided below. Save question #8 on *p. 74* of **multiply** until after you study the passage.

1 Peter 2:4-12 NASB

- 4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God,
- 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- 6 For this is contained in Scripture:
- “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER STONE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”
- 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve,
- “THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER STONE,”
- 8 and,
- “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”;
- for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.
- 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
- 10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.
- 11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.
- 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.

1. Ask/Answer 5 Ws & H. Be sure to add your own questions/answers as the Holy Spirit leads.

Who is it about? Who else?

What is Christ compared to? What are you built into?

Where was the cornerstone laid? Where should you trust?

When did you become the people of God?

Why are you a royal priesthood? Why live good lives?

2. Mark "*Christ*" and "*cornerstone*" and their synonyms the same way. Note what you learn.

3. What are the two responses to the stone? Who is the stone?

4. Mark “*you*.” Who are “*you*” according to this passage? List the descriptions. Note the “before and after” transformation.

5. According to verses 5 and 9 what is “your” purpose? Is this an individual or corporate (church body) calling? Both? Explain your reasoning from the Scriptures.

6. In verses 11-12, how does Peter urge the priesthood to interact with the world? What does it look like? What will the results be? When?

Answer question #8 on *p. 74* of **multiply**.

Conclude your time in prayer as you read *p. 74-76* of **multiply** and consider question #9.