

## The First Priority: Leaders

### Where to Begin?

- Appoint leaders
  - Overseer, elder, pastor, shepherd

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” Acts 20:28

“...shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.” 1 Peter 5:2-3

### What kind of leaders?

#### One of CHARACTER

- **Above Reproach**
  - “For an overseer, as God's steward, **must be** above reproach.” Titus 1:7
  - Above “shame” “disgrace” “rebuke” “accusation”
  - There is no charge or accusation that can honestly be brought against
  - Lifestyle free from sinful habits or behaviors
  - Their life is of a moral quality that does not bring shame or disgrace to Christ
- Above Reproach does not mean sinless
  - “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23
  - “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” 1 John 1:8
- Being above reproach is resting in the work of Christ
  - “And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.” Colossians 1:21-23
- Being above reproach is the summary of all other qualities of a leader
  - *“Being above reproach in your marriage means you are ‘the husband of one wife.’ Being above reproach in your thought life means you are ‘sober-minded.’ Being above reproach in your actions means you are ‘self-controlled.’ What we see is that this is a kind of summary attribute and that the blameless Christian is the one who upholds all of God’s revealed will.” -Tim Challies*

- Being above reproach must start in the home
  - Husband of one wife
  - His children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.
    - “He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?” 1 Timothy 3:4-5
    - *An elder must be a godly husband and father. If his home life is not in order, don't expand his responsibilities over the family of God. A man who is not devoted to his wife and whose children are rebellious should not be put into office as a steward of God's household. -Steven Cole*
  
- Being above reproach flows into all realms of the leader's character

He is	He is not
Hospitable	Arrogant
A lover of good	Quick-tempered
Self-controlled	A drunkard
Upright	Violent
Holy	Greedy for gain
Disciplined	

### What kind of leaders?

#### One of COMPETENCY

- **He must** hold firm to the Word
  - Be able to give instruction in sound doctrine
  - Be able to refute those who contradict sound doctrine

*“The pastor ought to have two voices: one, for gathering the sheep; and another, for warding off and driving away wolves and thieves. The Scripture supplies him with the means of doing both; for he who is deeply skilled in it will be able both to govern those who are teachable, and to refute the enemies of the truth.” -John Calvin*

#### SOUND DOCTRINE

- Healthy and robust doctrine
- Free from infirmity or disease
- Feeds the soul for people to grow in Christ-likeness
- Doctrine is teaching from God about God that directs us to the glory of God.
  - Source: God
  - Object: God
  - End: God
- The Word: Given by the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit

“...preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.” 2 Timothy 4:2-4

#### Signs of Unhealthy Doctrine

- The Gospel is only taught in part. Aspects are ignored or altered.
- Only certain parts of the Bible are taught. Others are ignored.
- Parts of the Bible are labeled as out of date or open to new interpretation.
- Man centered instead of God-centered
- The character of the teacher does not accord with sound doctrine
- Teaching does not lead to godliness and is not God-glorifying

### **Good Leaders Lead the Flock**

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.” Hebrews 13:7

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.” Hebrews 13:17-18

### So where do we begin?

- Praying for our elders, pastors, overseers, and shepherds:
  - To be above reproach
    - In the home with their wives and children
    - In the church with their character
    - In the community with their reputation
  - To hold firm to the Word
    - To be able to teach sound doctrine
    - To be able to refute false doctrine

Bruce Stallings: Executive Pastor

Benny Parks: Ministries Team Pastor

Matt Moore: Church Administrator

#### Current Briarwood Elders

Steve	Adams	Ken	Friday	Don	Murphy
Jon	Adcock	Chris	Frost	Jeff	Olin
Bill	Armistead	Steve	Gathings	Kirk	Petty
Billy	Ball	Jim	Gewin	John	Phillips
David	Battles	Craig	Gilbert	Chuck	Powell
John	Bentley	John	Goolsby	Lance	Radbill
Lance	Black	Beau	Green	Drew	Ricketts
Jim	Blackmon	Kevin	Gush	Bob	Roark
Ken	Blackmon	Clay	Hamblen	Mike	Sanders
Jim	Bradford	Louie	Haynes	Tim	Scott
Bill	Brazeal	Gene	Head, Jr.	Dale	Sitton
Hucks	Buchanan	Don	Hendry	Warren	Smedley
Billy	Buck	Bruce	Herrington	Albert	Smith
Stephen	Bunn	Mark	Hess	Bob	Sproul
Todd	Carlisle	Stephen	Hodges	Ed	Stakes
Jim	Carlson	Charlie	Hoke	Terry	Steelman
Leon	Chadwick	Todd	Johnson	Scott	Stewart
Wes	Cline	Josh	Jones	Mark	Thompson
David	Cooper	Mike	Lanier	Tim	Townes
Jason	Crowe	Dave	Mace	Bob	Turnbull
Matt	Denard	Lee	McCarty	Dave	Wood
John	Donaldson	Andy	McGehee	Charles	Woodall
Sam	Duffey	Keith	Miller	Bryan	Word
Bruce	Evans	David	Moore	Will	Worrell
Jeff	Flannery, Jr.	Bryant	Moore	Frank	Wright

Week 3

Titus 1:5-9

Briarwood Women of the Covenant

Amanda León