

Introduction

The theme of our conference this year is **Becoming Men of Character with Ability**. Our goal is to equip our men to be leaders in their homes, neighborhoods, at work and certainly at church. We are building leaders, and the teachings that have been planned will help all of us to become men of character and ability.

The main text of the conference is from 1 Timothy 3, which is a passage that gives the qualifications for an elder. Paul gives Timothy some specific qualifications for overseers, so that he can set the bar for men aspiring to be pastors. The basic qualifications of a pastor or overseer are: 1) A man must be above reproach in his family, his character, and his reputation. 2) He must be able to teach. 3) He must also be a good manager.

I have the privilege of giving the opening message to the Men's Conference. I will be introducing the topics covered, but I will not be speaking on 1 Timothy 3. Instead, I will be using 1 Peter 5:1-3, a passage that the Apostle Peter directed towards elders. In the Scriptures, overseers, pastors, and elders all refer to the same office. In 1 Peter, he exhorts elders to shepherd or pastor the flock.

In his instructions, he uses three different comparisons that teach us how God's flock should be shepherded. He speaks about the mind set of a pastor, the motive of a pastor, and the method of a pastor. The method of a pastor is to lead by example, not by lording over those allotted to their care. The elders are to be an example to the flock.

Why are we looking at the qualifications of an elder? Because elders are examples to the flock. The character and behavior that elders are required to have is that same character and behavior that the flock needs to have. The elders merely model it for them. Whether you aspire to be an elder or not, **the qualifications given in 1 Timothy are the character qualities that all of us need in our lives.** God wants all of us to be above reproach in our character. God wants all of us to be above reproach in our family life. God wants all of us to be men of the word. God wants all of us to be good managers. Therefore, the topics that are taught this weekend by the various pastors apply to every one of us, not just those aspiring to be pastors.

Tonight, I will be giving an overview and why we are looking at this passage. It is called, "Following the Example of the Elders." Tomorrow morning Larry Toledo will be sharing about being above reproach in your character, with your family, and with outsiders. Then, Perry Floyd will be teaching on being good managers. Finally, tomorrow afternoon, Jack Sullivan will be sharing how we can learn how to teach. It promises to be a great conference.

As we look at these various character qualities, we are not using these character qualities to find elders. We are not looking at these qualities as a hoop to jump through. We are looking at these qualities as God's standard for us as men. God has given these various character qualities to establish a standard or example for us to pattern our lives after. In our session tonight, we are going to be looking at this pattern or example.

Our passage tonight is from 1 Peter 5, verses 1-3. Peter exhorts the elders to shepherd the flock of God. He does not just encourage the flock, but he proceeds to tell them how to shepherd the flock. Let's read the passage.

(1 Peter 5:1-3) "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, {2} shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; {3} nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock."

The first way that pastors are to shepherd the flock is with the right Mind Set. Pastors are to exercise oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily. There is a contrast of compulsion and voluntary. Compulsion means that you are being forced to do it. Someone is making you do it. Peter is saying that shepherds need to shepherd the flock because they want to. They have a desire to pastor. When Paul wrote Timothy about the qualifications of an elder in 1 Tim 3, he opens with "if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do." The word aspires in the Greek is oregomai and it literally means to stretch oneself or to reach out after something, to covet or to desire. The picture of a man literally stretching his arms out for something in order to reach it signifies a yearning desire for it. This is consistent with what Peter says about not under compulsion but voluntarily.

(1 Tim 3:1) "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do."

The second way that pastors are to shepherd the flock is with the right Motive. A pastor's motive must not be for sordid gain; he must pastor with eagerness. Many in the church believe that pastors should be paid a minimum salary. On the other hand, there are some pastors who believe that they should fly in their own private \$65 million dollar jet. In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul teaches that an elder who rules well should be given double honor, or paid well. Pastors need to have their needs adequately met. They are not to be in financial hardship while they are threshing. But, they should not be pastoring a church for sordid gain. They need to have the right motive for pastoring.

(1 Tim 5:17-18) "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. {18} For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages.'""

Peter goes on to contrast sordid gain with the word eagerness or a ready mind as the KJV reads. The word in the Greek is prothumos. Pros means towards and thumos is the word for passion. It means to breathe hard. That can be from being angry or riled up. It is used for being passionate about something. When you are passionate about something, the money doesn't really matter. I have found that those who are passionate about something usually go the extra mile and do a great job. No one has to motivate them. When a pastor is prothumos or passionate about what he does, it will not be a grind to go into the office. He will love what he does. He loves to pray with people. He loves to teach people. He loves to counsel people. He loves to be with people. He loves to worship. He loves to study God's word. It is this passion that will help him weather the storms that he will go through. So, a pastor should shepherd with the right mindset, doing it voluntarily. He should also pastor with the right motive, not for money, but because he is passionate about it.

The third way that pastors are to shepherd is with the right Methods. He contrasts lording versus being an example. It is a contrast in the method a pastor uses to lead the flock.

(1 Pet 5:3) "nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples (tupos) to the flock."

Peter charges the elders to rule by example instead of by lording. He is reiterating something that he heard Jesus say many times. Jesus taught the apostles that they were not to be like the rulers of the Gentiles and lord over the people. Instead, they were to be humble, and serve the flock. Notice what Jesus told the disciples in Matthew 20.

(Matt 20:25-28) "But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. {26} "It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, {27} and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; {28} just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.""

This evening, I want to spend my time talking about this last charge to the pastors, to lead by example. Larry will talk about the character of pastors; they need to be above reproach. They need to be temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, etc. Perry will talk about the abilities of a pastor to manage. And Jack will talk about the ability to teach. But, everyone of us is called to be man of character and ability. Pastors merely lead the way and set the example for all of us. Tonight, I want to talk about leading by example. Specifically, I want us to look at the Greek word that is translated as example. It is the word, tupos, and it has five different meanings.

1. A die

Tupos means a die. It comes from the word tupos, which means to strike. The rendered meaning is that it is a die. There are different kinds of dies, but they are used to create an identical image in another piece of material. **The lives of leaders must be worthy of being used as a mold for others.** The metal used in the die must be harder than the metal being shaped. Leaders must be strong spiritually, and must not be influenced by those they are molding. When we help a man with pornography or lust, we must be stronger than those temptations. When we help a person with gossip, we must not be spreading gossip ourselves. The scriptures speaks to this in Galatians 6.

G5179. tupos, too'-pos; from G5180; a die (as struck), i.e. (by impl.) a stamp or scar; by anal. a shape, i.e. a statue, (fig.) style or resemblance; spec. a sampler ("type"), i.e. a model (for imitation) or instance (for warning):--en- (ex-) ample, fashion, figure, form, manner, pattern, print.

(Galatians 6:1) "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted."

Leadership is to leave an impression on your life and mine. They have to be men of character and strength who will not be swayed by the world. They have to be made of harder material and leave an impression on the world. **Leaders are influencers.** Guys, the significance of this is that we need to be the influencers in society today. We need to be the influencers at the ball fields. We need to be the influencers at the base. We need to be the influencers in the business community. We need to be stronger than the culture we live in so that we are impacting it, rather than being conformed to its image.

How do we become the die or mold that God wants us to be? God gives us some ways and examples of how to do it. First, **leaders must first be molded to Christ's image**. He tells us not to be squeezed into the mold of the world. Instead, He tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We have to fill and saturate our minds with the word of God. We have to meditate on the word of God. We have to submit our lives to God and to His Word. We have to allow God freedom to change our lives.

(Rom 12:1-2) "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. {2} And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

James tells us three things that will help us get our die casting or mold correct. First, he says that we have to receive the Word of God in humility. **Leaders must receive the word of God in humility**. It is easy to work with soft, pliable clay. Hard or proud clay is not very workable.

(James 1:21-25) "Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. {22} But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. {23} For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; {24} for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. {25} But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does."

Second, **leaders must be doers of the word of God**. Transformation is not just in the mind, but in our actions. We must not only change the way we think about things, but it must change the way we do things. Change of mind is validated by change in behavior.

Third, **leaders must look intently at the Word of God**. When we are casual in our time in God's word, we become a forgetful hearer and forget what kind of person we were. When we look intently, our lives are transformed into the mold of Christ. In the first couple chapters of Daniel. Nebuchanezzar wanted to squeeze Daniel and his three friends into the world's mold. Daniel had stronger material and resolve. The King's food, literature, language, and customs were not going to influence him. Instead, he was going to be the influencer and mold for his generation. God is wanting to use this weekend to help perfect our mold.

2. A figure or statue

A second use of the word tupos is as a figure or statue. In Acts 7:43 we find that the word tupos is translated as images (NASB), figures (KJV), or pattern (NIV). This was something that people could look up to, observe and emulate. Most of the time, these figures are military or political heroes. In Greek culture many of them were figures of the false gods they believed in.

(Acts 7:43) ""YOU ALSO TOOK ALONG THE TABERNACLE OF MOLOCH AND THE STAR OF THE GOD ROMPHA, THE IMAGES (tupos) WHICH YOU MADE TO WORSHIP THEM. I ALSO WILL REMOVE YOU BEYOND BABYLON.""

Some of you may remember the Iraq invasion a number of years ago. At the entrance of the city was a large statue of Saddam Hussein. When Saddam's army was defeated, the statue of Saddam was taken down, which was shown around the world on TV. The statue of Saddam is not unusual. In fact, it is quite common, particularly in other parts of the world. In Iran, where I grew up, there were statues of the Shah of Iran in every city. Leaders and military heroes have statues of themselves displayed in prominent places of the city. This is how the word *tupos* is used in Acts 7:43.

Leaders need to be visible to the people. They can't just show up at church on Sunday. They have to be before the people so that the people can look up to them and see the example of Christ at all times. A leader's example needs to remind people of how to live.

In Matthew 5:15-16, Jesus says that lamps need to be put on lampstands so that they give light to all who are in the house. He goes on to say that we need to let our light shine before men in such a way that they may see our good works, and glorify God in heaven. The significance of us being examples of men of godly character is that other people can see the light of Christ. They can look up to us and see our good works and glorify God in heaven.

(Mat 5:15-16) ""Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. {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."

In 1994, I had to go through the PGA Tour Qualifying Tournament to regain my PGA Tour card. The final stage was held at the Jack Nicklaus course at the La Quinta Golf Resort in Palm Springs, California. It was a six round final where the top 35 golfers earned their PGA Tour card for the next year. On the very last hole of the tournament, I thought that I needed a birdie to gain my card. My normal game plan was to hit a long iron or fairway wood off the tee. However, to make birdie on the hole required a shorter iron into the tucked pin position. Therefore, under the circumstances I hit driver. Unfortunately, my shot barely missed the fairway and hit the edge of a bunker. It careened to the right and went into the edge of the water. I had to take a drop. Then, another unfortunate thing happened, the ball plugged where I dropped it. I ended up making a 7 on the hole and missed by one shot. If I had known that I only needed a double bogey to get my tour card, I would have played to my normal game plan.

God gave me an incredible joy and peace as I came off the course. One of the reporters from Sports Illustrated was watching my reactions and my post interviews. A few months later, he called me and asked if SI could do a story on me and my family. They did a three page article. I was able to share our life with the world.

Sometimes it is during difficult circumstances and our darkest hours that our light will shine before men. When we have these opportunities, it is the character of Christ that must shine through us. The significance is that we must be the role models for people around us. We must be the lamp on the lampstand that causes people to glorify our Father in heaven.

A few weeks ago the car door slammed shut on my thumb. It turned purple immediately. It hurt really badly. It throbbed for a couple of days. I could not even sleep the first night because it hurt so badly. My son watched it happen. He did not see any swear words. He saw a leader handle a painful situation with much strength and poise. It was an opportunity for my light to shine.

In Psalms 67, we pray for God to be gracious to us, to bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. Why? Because when God blesses us and causes His face to shine upon us, people take notice of what God is doing in our lives. It broadcasts God's ways on the earth. It testifies of God's salvation among the nations. It causes people to praise God.

(Psa 67:1-3) "(For the choir director; with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.) God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us-- Selah. {2} That Thy way may be known on the earth, Thy salvation among all nations. {3} Let the peoples praise Thee, O God; Let all the peoples praise Thee."

Guys, do not be afraid for God to raise you up. Pray for God to raise you up and to bless you. Pray for this so that others can see the light set on a lampstand. Pray that others will see God's ways through your life. Pray that this visibility will be for His glory, not for your glory and comfort.

3. Imprint or Scar

Tupos also means an imprint or scar. When Thomas doubts Jesus' resurrection from the dead, he says he will not believe unless he sees the (tupos) imprint in his hand.

John 20:25 "The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint (tupos) of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

Paul speaks of sharing in the sufferings of Christ. He bore the scars or marks of Christ. He said in Galatians 6:17 "From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus." (The word for brand-marks is stigma, not tupos.) Brothers, as we stand up for the issues facing our generation: abortion, euthanasia, fornication, adultery, public prayer, freedom to preach the gospel, etc., we may get a few scars of Christ. Am I ready and willing to be scarred? Are you willing?

One important thing to remember about a scar is that it is a wound that has been fully healed. Men, you and I will go through some things in our lives. There will be some wounds. But, we must be men who get over it. We need to get healed up. Sometimes we have to confess our sins to others to get healed up. Sometimes, we have to take some time out for rest and to get healed. Sometimes, we just have to forgive and forgive and forgive. We have to let God deal with the other person(s). Our part is to forgive and let go. If we hold on to the sins of others, it can turn into bitterness and cause many to be defiled. **If we are going to lead other people, we must be healthy.** Sometimes we need to take time off to get healed. Sometimes we need a spiritual hospital to get healed up. If we want to lead effectively, we must be healed and healthy.

In the Old Testament, any priest who had an open wound (scab) was not allowed to serve as a priest until his wound was healed. (See Leviticus 21:20.) The purpose of this was that nothing with a defect was to go into the presence of the Lord. Also, it was to prevent the spread of infection or disease. However, in the spiritual realm, we cannot effectively minister to people while we have open wounds. We must get healed up. The significance of this is that we must be men of courage who will stand up and suffer for what is right. We must also be men who are healed and whole so that we can effectively minister to others.

Many people are not aware of the scars on our lives. Sometimes we are too proud to discuss the failures in our lives. We are too proud to discuss the hurts that we have gone through. **For us to effectively lead others, we must be willing to be transparent and vulnerable.** We must allow the Thomas' in our lives to feel the imprints in our hands. The imprints and scars of Christ in our lives are there for people to touch, feel and see. Are we willing to let others see the hurts in our lives? Are we willing to let people see the areas that we have been wounded? Are we willing to let people see God's grace in our lives?

4. A form or manner

Tupos also means a form or manner. When the commander wrote to Felix in Acts 23 telling him about why he was sending Paul to him, it says he wrote a letter having this form. We use form letters all the time in the business world. The form is like a style that is used. It is an example of what to write for a certain occasion or matter.

(Acts 23:25) "And he wrote a letter having this form (tupos):"

At our work, I have a folder on the network called MDS forms. In that folder I have templates for creating memos, meeting notes, business letters, etc. The templates include our logo and key ingredients for that particular form. Any employee can access these forms and use them. It helps our business have consistency. It ensures that key items and components are included in our communication. It also helps our staff work efficiently.

In addition to the forms, we have some form letters for our staff to use. There are two well control certifications that are required around the world. One is the International Well Control Forum (IWCF) and the other is the International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC). Our company offers both certifications. The IWCF tests are not very easy to pass. If a person fails the test, he has 60 days in which to re-test in the portions that he failed. We are required to send out a letter to the unsuccessful candidates to inform them of their results and their options. We had the challenge of writing a business "Dear John" letter. It needed to be truthful, clear, and helpful. Truth can be difficult for people to swallow sometimes. Therefore, this letter needed to be worded carefully. As the manager, I took time to carefully draft this form letter. Once it read just right, then I made it available to our staff. They simply put in the unsuccessful candidate's name and address, and send it off to him.

In the same way, **people need to be able to take the form letter of our lives and plug in their own names.** Our lives must be carefully drafted so that they read just right. Who is the one that is drafting the letter of our life? In Hebrews 12, we are told how to run the race that is set before us. We are told to fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. Guys, the letter of our life is being written by Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. We need to be an open slate before God so that He can write whatever He wants on our pages. We need to keep our eyes and our focus on Him. That is the only way that the form letter of our life is going to be accurate and useful to others.

(Heb 12:2) "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

As individuals, all of our lives are going to be different. We have different gifts, abilities, talents,

callings, etc. However, when people see our lives, they need to see a form letter. They need to be able to put their name and life into that form letter and be able to use it. Our wives need this form letter. Our children need this form letter. Our business associates and employees need the form letter. The letter of their lives should be able to be written using our lives as their form letters. The significance of this is that people should be able to use the letter of our life to write the letter of their life.

5. A pattern

The final meaning of tupos is a pattern. In Acts 7:44, Luke refers to an account of Moses meeting with the Lord. During that meeting with God, he was given a pattern for the sanctuary. He was to build this sanctuary according to the pattern. The Greek word for pattern that is used here is the word tupos.

Acts 7:44 "Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern (tupos) which he had seen."

When I was in high school, I was an excellent tennis player. I could easily beat anyone on the tennis team in high school, but I could not play both golf and tennis. I had already made a decision to play professional golf, not tennis. Therefore, I only played recreational tennis. When I went to college and met Karen, I discovered that she was an excellent seamstress. At that time in her life she made all of her own clothes. When she saw that I needed some tennis shorts, she bought a pattern and made me some white tennis shorts. I watched her pin the white material onto the pattern, cut it out, and then sew it all together. Seamstresses use patterns all the time. I have watched Karen making her own clothes, costumes for plays, nativity scenes, and other things. She used different patterns for each different outfit. The costume was going to look like the picture on the pattern package if she used the pattern correctly. The significance of this is that people need to be able to pin the fabric of their lives up against us, cut it out, sew it together, and be clothed with Christ.

I used to work at a Graphic Design firm as a Project Manager. We designed environmental graphics, such as wayfinding and identification signs. We showed clients a virtual representation of their proposed signs. Then, we produced contract drawings for vendors to create that sign. Men, you and I are called to be the virtual drawings and renderings of the character of a man of God. If the world today is going to buy into Christianity, they need to be convinced by the virtual renderings that they see in our lives. If our children are going to follow after God in their lives, they are going to have to see a product in our lives that they want in their lives.

God had a design in mind when He gave Moses the pattern. He had a design in mind when He gave Noah the dimensions for the ark. He has a pattern in mind for your life and my life. The pattern that He has for our character is what we are going to be looking at this weekend. It is the pattern for elders. You and I are to hold up this pattern and pin our lives to it. Anything that does not fit the pattern needs to be trimmed off. We want our lives to be made according to the pattern He has given us. Guys, why look so intently at the passages of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1? Because our lives ought to be built according to the pattern of elders and this passage gives the pattern.

Let's pray.

Introduction (1 Peter 5:1-3)

- The qualifications given in 1 Timothy are the character qualities that _____ of us need in our lives.
- The first way that pastors are to shepherd the flock is with the right _____. (1 Tim 3:1)
- The second way that pastors are to shepherd the flock is with the right _____. (1 Tim 5:17-18)
- The third way that pastors are to shepherd is with the right _____. (1 Pet 5:3, Matt 20:25-28)

1. **A die**

- Tupos means a _____.
- The lives of leaders must be worthy of being used as a _____ for others. (Gal 6:1)
- Leaders are _____.
- Leaders must first be molded to _____. (Rom 12:1-2)
- Leaders must receive the Word of God in _____. (James 1:21)
- Leaders must be _____ of the word of God. (James 1:22)
- Leaders must look _____ at the Word of God. (James 1:23-25)

2. **A figure or statue**

- A second use of the word tupos is as a figure or _____. (Acts 7:43)
- Leaders need to be _____ to the people. (Mat 5:15-16, Psa 67:1-3)

3. **Imprint or Scar**

- Tupos also means an _____ or scar. (John 20:25, Gal 6:17)
- If we are going to lead other people, we must be _____. (Lev 21:20.)
- To effectively lead others, we must be willing to be _____ and vulnerable.

4. **A form or manner**

- Tupos also means a _____ or manner. (Acts 23:25)
- People need to be able to take the form letter of our lives and plug in their own _____. (Heb 12:2)

5. **A pattern**

- The final meaning of tupos is a _____. (Acts 7:44)