

How Do Spiritual Leaders Become Leaders? **1 Timothy 3:1-7**

Introduction:

1. **Illustration:** We were in Dandee Donut, and a lady asked Clayton what he wanted to do with his life. He told her he wanted to go into the ministry. The ladies in the shop couldn't believe it. They gasped and then said, "Isn't that wonderful?" As I was leaving, I heard them still talking saying, "They must be proud."
2. How does a person decide to enter ministry full time? How do pastors become pastors? How do leaders in the church become leaders?
3. You hear people talk a lot about a "call" to the ministry. They will say something like, "God has called me into the ministry." I used to wonder what in the world that meant.
 - It was always presented as kind of a spooky, mystical thing that you had no control over. You never know when it might happen, and when this zap from God comes, you'd better obey or end up like Jonah.
 - It didn't happen this way for me at all. 1 Timothy 3:1
4. What about the young man who Paul wrote this book to? Timothy. We know he was Paul's close co-laborer (Philippians 2:20, 22). Two books of the Bible are named after him.
5. How did Timothy end up in the ministry and end up being a preacher of God's Word? Look at Acts 16:1-4. There is no lightning bolt, nothing spooky, mystical, or earth-shattering there.
 - Timothy loved God and the Word of God, he had a solid testimony, and Paul asked him to go into the ministry with him. Timothy simply surrendered and made a choice with his life.
 - But why did Timothy surrender so readily? It's because he obviously had a strong spiritual desire in his heart. Where does that kind of spiritual desire come from?
6. Here in 1 Timothy, Paul discusses leaders in the local church – bishops (pastors) and deacons. But how do leaders for God become leaders? How does it happen?
 - Is it something that God all of a sudden zaps you with?
 - One morning you wake up and say, "I want to be a pastor. I want to be a deacon. I want to go into ministry and spend my life teaching God's Word to others and impacting their lives for Christ." No, this is not how it happens. How do leaders for God become leaders?

It begins with a desire for God's Word.

1. Why would anybody want to go into the ministry or be a leader for God in the church if they didn't love the Bible? If you have no spiritual desire for God's Word, why would you want to go into the ministry and teach people the Bible? This would be like somebody flunking every math class and hating math, and then saying he wants to be an accountant. 1 Peter 2:2; Titus 1:9
2. The reason why more young people are not choosing a life of service to God is very simple. Satan has cleverly gotten teens to desire the things of this world more than they

desire God's Word (computer games, video games, surfing, cars, TV, music, etc.). With adults it is other things (house, money, job, hobbies, etc.).

3. As teens and adult believers **give their lives** to these things, it totally quenches their hunger and thirst for God's Word. They have no spiritual appetite. Mark 4:19
4. As believers who have God's Spirit living inside of us, there **should** be a spiritual desire for God's Word. But did you know Satan has a desire for you too? Luke 22:31
5. The Bible is your only source of divine revelation. There is no other way that God has of communicating His truth to you. Without God's Word actively working in your life, you are not going to make good decisions, and you surely won't choose a life of ministry.
6. True leaders for God have something in common – they love and desire God's Word. Timothy is such a great example. 1 Timothy 4:6; 2 Timothy 3:14-15

It continues with a desire to teach God's Word to others.

1. In 1 Timothy 3:2, notice that a pastor is "*apt to teach.*" cf. 2 Timothy 2:24-25a
2. When the Word of God is making a difference in your life, it is only natural for you to want other people to understand it, so it can make a difference in their lives too. 1 Timothy 4:16
3. There are so many people out in this world that need the knowledge of God. How are they going to get it unless somebody goes and shares God's Word with them?
 - "*How can I, except some man should guide me?*" **Acts 8:27-31**
4. There are people all over this world that want to know God, and they want to understand the Bible, but there has to be somebody with a desire to tell them and show them the truth of God.
5. Romans 10:1 speaks of "*my heart's desire.*" We need some believers with a heart's desire for others to know the truth of God - a burning passion to share God's truth.
 - **Illustration:** Jeremiah 20:8-9

It culminates with a desire to provide godly leadership for others.

1. The Word of God gets in you and burns like a fire. As you begin to get a little taste of teaching God's Word to others, you begin to think, "I would like to spend my life doing this."
2. Notice in 1 Timothy 3:1, it talks about somebody **desiring** the office of a bishop (spiritual leader). The word "*desire*" means "to reach out after; to long for."
3. Why do I do what I do? It's very simple. I love God's Word, I love to teach it to others, and I love to see lives impacted by it.
 - **Illustration:** Many lives here at CrossRoads have been impacted and many have gone into ministry, and I thank God for the way he has used me. It all started because a 16-year-old teenager desired to serve God with his life. It's a choice. 1 Kings 19:19-21
4. The word used for "*desire*" in 1 Timothy 3:1 is also used in 1 Timothy 6:10 as "*coveted.*"
5. There are two groups of people with two different desires:
 - One desires a life of service unto God, impacting lives with God's Holy Word.
 - The other desires the wealth this world gives.

6. I could have pursued wealth, but I made a decision at 16 years old that I only had one life to live, and I wanted to spend it telling others about God's Word, and about the gospel of Christ, and seeing lives eternally changed.
7. I will not see the full results of that choice until I get to heaven (1 Thessalonians 2:19). What a day that will be! I know I won't regret my decision.
8. How about you? Do you have that desire to be a leader for God - to impact others? You can! God can use you in mighty ways. It begins by desiring God's Word more than anything else.