

Session Three: The Spiritual Life of Leaders

Class Study Questions
(to be completed before class)

Reading Assignments: Assigned Reading: 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1, Eph. 1-2
John Piper, "Ten Effects of Believing in the Five Points of Calvinism"
Steele & Thomas, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, Appendix E: "The Practical Applications of Calvinism" (pp.187-198), Sande, "Approachability"

Reminder: ***Your testimony is due today at the beginning of class.***

The early church father, Augustine, had a spirited and public debate with Pelagius. Augustine taught "*The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, must be understood as that by which alone we are delivered from evil, and without which we do absolutely no good things.*"

Pelagius countered: if Augustine is correct people will not seek to live godly lives. If God does it all there is no point in us trying to do anything. Pelagius was concerned that preaching grace people would live licentious lives.

Augustine's response: Christian conduct is rooted in a lifelong response of love for God and obedience to his will as thanksgiving and gratitude for His grace.

Pelagius: the church should be like a big monetary, full of super-Christians, all of whom are living perfect or almost perfect lives. If we only chose to do that, then we could.

Augustine: the church is more like a hospital than a monastery. All of us are sick, some of us are seriously sick and injured, but we all are getting better slowly, even painfully. Perfection will only come in heaven.

Pelagius today could be summarized as follows: "The spiritual father of all those who profess the popular American creed of justification by decency."

What is your understanding of justification (being made right with God)?

What is your understanding of sanctification (growing to be more like Christ)?

Spend some time pondering the following questions. Bring concerns and questions to class for discussion.

I. In the Area of Personal Faith

1. Do you believe in the necessity of regeneration? Have you been born anew?
2. Do you know God? Is your trust in Christ? Is your life God-centered?
3. Do you use the means of growth such as prayer and Bible study on your own regularly?

II. In the Area of Support of the Program of the Church

1. Will you attend Sunday School?
2. Will you attend the regular worship services of the Church?
3. Will you attend the regular meetings of the Board of Officers on which you serve?

III. In the Area of Stewardship

1. Do you believe in tithing and make a sincere effort to do so?
2. Will you support the church budget?
3. Will you give of your time as needed to carry on the leadership of the church?

IV. In the Area of Cooperation

1. Are you in good relations with the church and its members?
2. Are you in good relations with the other officers?
3. Are you willing to have others evaluate your performance as a leader in the church?

V. In the Area of Seeking the Purity, Peace and Unity of the Church

1. Will you try to put down gossip and complaining?
2. Can you face people frankly, deal with them fairly, and then stand loyally with the majority in their decision?

VI. In the Area of Family Life

1. Have you any serious domestic troubles?
2. Do you and your wife know how to hold your tongue against needlessly spreading gossip or talking critically about others?
3. Are you involved in financial difficulties that might embarrass the church?
4. Do you make an effort at having family devotions?
5. Do you control your own household as called for in 1 Timothy 3:4, 5?

VII. In the Area of Social Life

1. Have you seriously considered the admonitions in Scripture about the dangers of being a stumbling block and the need for specific caution and exemplary conduct in every area for Church Officers?

Briefly write out the testimony to God's grace in your life.

(Please consider sharing your testimony during the Leadership Class. Bring a copy of this page to Session 3, either to share aloud or, if you prefer, to share as a written testimony with an elder or pastor. We may not have time for everyone to share aloud during this particular class, but we will make time on future evenings so everyone who wishes to share may do so.)