

Values Matter Discovery Starters

We Are a Global Missions Movement

7. BE DECENTRALIZED

YWAM is a Christ-centered, faith-based global volunteer movement, united by shared vision, core beliefs, foundational values and relationships. We do not have a centralized structure. Every YWAM ministry has the privilege and spiritual responsibility to develop and maintain healthy relationships with appropriate authorities and circles of elders.

[Exo 18:13-26](#); [Num 1:16-19](#); [Num 11:16-17,24-30](#); [Deu 29:10-13](#);
[Jos 23:1-24:28](#); [Act 14:23](#); [Act 15:1-31](#); [1Co 3:4-11](#); [Tit 1:5-9](#); [Heb 13:7,17](#)

Belief #7 – Be Decentralized: Appoint Elders

Biblical Foundation:

I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint elders in each town as I instructed you.

An elder must live a blameless life.

- *He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. A church leader is a manager of God's household, so he must live a blameless life.*
 - *He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money.*
 - *Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life.*
- *He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong (Tit 1:5-9).*

Discovery Starter:

In his letter to Titus, Paul skipped the prayer of blessing which was characteristic of first century correspondence. With urgency, he got straight to the point. Titus had been slow in appointing elders and Paul wanted that situation to be corrected as quickly as possible! What should these leaders look like? They should be "blameless." It is the only word repeated in these brief instructions. Paul outlines three major points:

A. Blameless in relationships. Paul talks about family issues: monogamous marriages and well-disciplined children. It's in the home that the rubber meets the road. If the

person can live out their faith in the day-to-day challenge of family life, they can be trusted with caring for God's family, the church.

B. Blameless in character.

1. First Paul details 5 things a leader must not do. These are best understood in the light of the "Law of the King" found in Deu 17:14-20. The king is told to not multiply for himself horses, wives or gold. These were emblematic of power, sex and money. A godly leader must stand against authoritarianism (the love of power), hedonism (the love of pleasure) and materialism (the love of things). Paul's list of 5 "must nots" expand on these three points from Moses. Arrogance, temper and violence are related to authoritarianism; drunkenness to hedonism, and financial dishonesty with materialism. God's solution? Instead of power, servanthood. Instead of pleasure, purity. Instead of materialism, generosity. These are the hallmarks of godly leaders.

2. Next Paul describes 6 things a leader should do. The first two are about activating godly passion, to love the stranger and to love that which is good. The last four are about keeping your passions under control. Self-control is a high virtue for a godly leader.

C. Blameless in cultivated leadership skills. Not only must the leader be rooted in the Scriptures. The leader must know how to encourage AND correct those being led. Some of us love to encourage others, but avoid correcting them. Others of us love to correct, but find it hard to encourage others. Godly leaders develop the skill to do both – all based on God's Word.

Keep Going:

Paul did not expect Titus to lead all the churches in Crete, but to raise up other leaders who would do so. Take time to read the whole letter – it only takes 7 minutes! What do you most like about this book? Why? What implications are there for how we do leadership today?

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