

March 1/2, 2025

**Spiritual Leadership Matters**  
*God's Design for the Church in 1 Timothy*  
**1 Timothy 3:1-13**  
Pastor Bryan Clark

As we've been learning, the church in Ephesus was a mess. There were people there teaching strange doctrines. There was dissension and wrath; there was chaos and disorder, and all because the elders weren't doing their job. That's what we want to talk about this morning. If you have a Bible, turn with us to 1 Timothy, Chapter 3. We've been working our way through Paul's letter to Timothy, and there's lots of good stuff in there. So, let's just say we're going to stir up the pot a little bit more again this morning. The logic, the flow of the text, is you have the things I talked about: strange doctrines and disunity and wrath and dissension. All these issues come down to the fact that they simply did not have biblically qualified elders doing their job. This should not have been allowed to go on. So that's the logic of where we find ourselves in chapter 3, verse 1:

**It's a trustworthy statement:** (\*NASB, 1 Timothy 3:1a)

It's the second time he's used that phrase, **trustworthy statement**. Contrary to the foolishness of the false teachers, this is from God. It's something you can trust.

**...if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.**

The fact is he identifies it as a **work**. (Ryan talked about this last week.) Becoming an elder is not a promotion. It's not about power; it's not about control; it's not about a title. It's about a calling; it's about a work; it's about a desire to serve the people, to create an environment where people can know Jesus and flourish together. So he says, "That's a good thing **to aspire to**," and then he refers **to the office of overseer**. That's a literal translation of the word. It means to *oversee*, to oversee the congregation.

Sometimes this Greek word is translated (really transliterated) into the word **bishop**. Some of the older translations still use that term. So it starts to get confusing, because today for us, a bishop tends to mean someone that's over a region or a district, and kind of another level above. So it's helpful to understand that concept is not found in the New Testament. That's not what the word bishop means. As a matter of fact, if you're going to use that term, a local church would have had a group of bishops overseeing the local church. So those are basically synonyms. You add the word **elder**, which comes out of the synagogue, which is a reference to maturity and authority, and then you have the word **pastor**, which is a reference to the role. It describes the role as to shepherd or care for the sheep. Those four terms: *overseer, bishop, elder, and pastor* all describe the same person. Ultimately, whatever title you want to use as an overseer, an elder in a local church.

Here at Lincoln Berean, we believe it's correct that every pastor is an elder. It's just two sides of the same coin, and every elder, whether they're paid or not, is a pastor in terms of that's how an elder should function. So that's how we view it here.

### **An overseer, then, must be...**

I just want to call your attention to the fact that **must be** is a present tense verb. These qualifications have nothing to do with who you've been in the past. It's who you have become today, in Christ. That's the whole point. It's a celebration of God's grace. So, don't think of this as a checklist. There's another list very similar to this in the book of Titus that also lists qualifications for an elder, but it's slightly different, which just helps us understand this isn't an exhaustive checklist. Rather Paul is painting a picture that this is the kind of person that's qualified to be in spiritual leadership. And the first one:

#### **...must be above reproach,**

Now, above reproach, I think, is like the paragraph heading. It's describing, this is the paragraph, and then everything that follows are the qualities that describe what above reproach means. Now this doesn't mean perfect, or we would have no spiritual leaders. We all mess up; we all make our mistakes. That's not the standard, but the standard should be people who live their lives with character and integrity before God. The word literally means not to have a handle. So the idea is this: when the accusations come, and they will come, that there's no handle for the accusations to hold on to. In other words, we'd probably say they don't stick.

Anybody that's been in a position of leadership knows that you're going to get accused of things. I think that's ramped up quite a bit when we're talking about spiritual leadership, because you're just dealing with so many messy private areas of people's lives. You add to that the fact that we live in a culture that's become so hostile toward Christianity. Add to that social media, which has just ramped everything up times 10. There's never going to be a shortage of accusations. In my four decades as a pastor, I couldn't begin to count all the accusations that have been made toward me. I can't do anything about that. I can't change that. The more you try to defend yourself, the messier the whole thing gets. Ultimately, what I can do is seek to live my life with character and integrity and entrust my reputation to God. We have a saying here that time and truth go together—that over time the truth becomes evident—and you just have to trust God with that. That's the idea of **above reproach**.

So some of the specifics then after that, the first one is

#### **...the husband of one wife.**

This is actually a rather strange Greek phrase. Literally it means a one-woman man. It doesn't appear anywhere else in the New Testament. It doesn't appear anywhere else in Greek literature, which always then makes it difficult to zero in on what exactly does Paul mean? The closest we get is in chapter five when he's talking about a group of widows called **widows indeed**. And there are qualifications for a widow to become a widow indeed. This same phrase is used but just reversed. So a widow indeed is a one-man woman. So it's helpful, because whatever we conclude here has to be the same in chapter 5, just reversed.

So one thing to start with is, if you were here last week, Ryan did a great job with a very delicate text. The biblical conclusion is that God intended elders to be male. In this case, we're talking

about qualifications for an elder, so it's helpful to know all of the adjectives are masculine, which is consistent with that conclusion from last week. So what does Paul mean? Over the years, there's been a variety of opinions. Most of them really don't make sense, and they're very difficult to sustain biblically. I think for us with our fundamentalist roots, it was very common that this phrase was interpreted as divorce. So an elder can't be someone who's been divorced, and certainly not divorced and remarried. I'm going to suggest to you this morning, I don't think that's correct. As a matter of fact, I don't think it makes sense. One reason is, there is a perfectly good Greek word for divorce. If that's what it is, then just say it. Why use this really abstract phrase? Also, for the widows indeed in chapter 5, in a first century culture, a woman had no say in a divorce. There's nothing she could do about it. So why would something that she had no say in disqualify her from something? That certainly doesn't make sense. Divorce is messy and it's confusing and it's complicated. I'm sure there's plenty of you in the room this morning who have been down that path. And I know people who have gone through divorce, who with complete integrity would say, "I do believe I did everything possible to make this work, but I was married to someone who just didn't want to make it work," and I think that can be a very honest description of what happened. So why, then, would you be held accountable, disqualified from something that you really couldn't do anything about? But probably the most troubling part of it is, "Why is there something from your past that now disqualifies you in the present? Why is there just this one thing that remains?" The apostle Paul said he was the foremost sinner of all, and I think he meant that. He was a murderer. So, are we willing to say, "Hey, murder is okay for an elder, but by golly, you better not be divorced." There's just nothing about that that makes sense. It's a present tense, "Who are you today?" And I think the simple understanding of the phrase is that to qualify as a spiritual leader, you must be totally devoted to the woman you're married to today. I think that's what Paul is saying.

### **...temperate**

carries the idea of vigilant or alert or watchful. That's why what happened in chapter 1 shouldn't have happened.

### **...prudent**

carries the idea of being reasonable, of someone who's calm, someone who's not offended by everything. Everything is not a crisis. It's not constantly coming unraveled. You think in a culture where there's so much chaos, the last thing you need from a spiritual leader is a constant message that the sky is falling. It's not falling. God is in control. He's got this. There should be a certain calming effect. That's the idea of prudent.

### **...respectable**

means someone who has their life in order. I think we would say today, *someone who has their act together*. Their life is not defined by continual chaos.

### **...hospitable**

is a little bit odd for us. In the first century world, public inns were dangerous and very immoral places. So when Christians traveled, the expectation was that these spiritual leaders would open

their homes to Christians so they didn't have to stay in those kind of environments. I think for us today it would just be more the idea that we genuinely care about the people around us and are doing what we can to help them. I think it would be that.

### **...able to teach.**

So what does that mean? Ryan talked about this last week. The word **teach** is a big word with a very broad definition, which can get really confusing. So what specifically does that mean? Does it mean to be an elder you have to be able to stand on this stage and teach? The answer would be, “No,” it's a very contemporary concept. Does it mean you have to be able to stand in a classroom and teach? “No,” that's a very contemporary concept. I think what it means is how he defined it last week: *to define and defend doctrine*. That is the primary role of an elder. That's why this should not have been happening in Ephesus, because it's the elder's job to be vigilant, to be alert, to define and defend doctrine.

So that creates an opportunity for me to just make a few comments that I hope are helpful. So, sixty some years ago, there was a group of people that gathered together to launch this church. Curt Lehman was the founding pastor. They had a founding elder board, and they were so committed to the authority of Scripture and rightly dividing the word of truth, they chose the name Berean, which comes from Acts 17:11. *The Bereans were a noble-minded people, searching the Scriptures to see whether what they were being taught was so*. That is what the Church was founded on, and Curt and those elders were fiercely committed to that value that defined this church. I came in 1993, and when I came to interview, it was made very clear to me: “This is who we are; this is our value system; this is what matters to us; this is what we expect from you.” And I understood that, and I was on board with that, because I share that passion and commitment. And I think I can say with integrity that over the last 30 plus years, I've done my absolute best to rightly divide the word of truth and to call us, as a congregation, to submit ourselves to the authority of Scripture. I think those of you that have been here for a while would acknowledge you do believe that's true. You have trusted me with that, and I'm very appreciative of that. So, as we have gone through this process of transitioning the elder board and transitioning the senior leadership, that was the high value. That's a non-negotiable for us. I am very pleased with the transition we've made with our elder board and this group of men are fiercely committed to rightly dividing the word of truth and calling the congregation to submit to the authority of Scripture. I am very confident in this elder board...specifically identifying Ryan.

When we were looking for the next senior pastor, the lead pastor, that was a non-negotiable value. You may or may not know this, but it's become very common for preaching pastors, especially in larger churches, to adopt what's often referred to as a progressive theology. That's just kind of a nice way of saying they tend to be more influenced by the culture than the Scripture and for us, that was unacceptable, which is what makes me so thankful for Ryan. Ryan is a young lead pastor. He lives his life with character and integrity. He's very smart, and he's got a wonderful theological mind, which I consider to be a gift from God. He is absolutely committed to rightly dividing the word of truth and calling us as a congregation to submit our lives to the authority of Scripture. I am absolutely confident that Ryan and this elder board will continue to lead us down the path to be consistent with who we have been for 60 years. I think we should understand that and be thankful for that. You have loved me; you have trusted me, and I would wish that for this elder

board and for Ryan as the lead pastor. Every once in a while, I hear people say, “Well, I think Berean Church is going a different direction.” If you're talking about theology or doctrine, that is absolutely not true. I don't know what you've heard. I don't know where you get that, but it is not so. The next one, verse 3:

**...not addicted to wine.**

So addiction is nothing new. As long as there have been people on planet earth, there have been addictions. It's a problem in the first century; it's a problem today. So what does the Bible say on this topic? It's a very complicated topic. In our fundamentalist roots, it was common that we were taught that the Bible prohibits any use of alcohol, but I cannot in good conscience, tell you that's what the Bible teaches. It simply doesn't. There are people that want it to say that, but that's not what it says. As a matter of fact, for the first readers in the first century, that would have been nonsensical to them. You'd have to understand all the dynamics in their culture. So what does it mean? There are certain things that are clear. From Genesis to Revelation, there is a consistent message that drunkenness, intoxication, is always wrong and always sin. That's not unclear. I like to use the legal limit as a measurement for intoxication. I have literally had conversations with people that were so intoxicated they couldn't even put together a sentence, but they're sure they're not drunk, and it's like, “What is wrong with you?” But here's the deal. As soon as you've reached that level of intoxication, every qualification on the list is now suspect because you've lost your judgment. You're not the same person. It doesn't matter whether you have a designated driver, doesn't matter whether you're in public or at home. There's a lot of research that goes into, “At what point do you begin to lose good judgment?” So that's very clear. I also think we as spiritual leaders, are called to freedom in Christ, but freedom in Christ, whether you're a Christian or an elder, never means free to do as you please. It always means free to genuinely love the people around you. So it always requires a degree of judgment and understanding as to how my behavior affects people around me that I genuinely care about, and there are times when I give up my freedoms because I think it's in the best interest of the people around me. If you're not willing to do that, then you shouldn't be a spiritual leader, because it is part of the calling.

**...or pugnacious.**

I think *pugnacious* fits with the *not addicted to wine*. It literally is a *brawler*, a *puncher*, a *striker*. I think it's talking about people that have had too much to drink become a bully. They just start to act in ways that are very inconsistent with everything else on the list.

**...but gentle,**

It's the word that means to be *kind*, to be *generous*. Some have defined it as *sweet reasonableness*. What if that defined our culture? “Hey, let's just kindly work this out.” That's kind of the idea there.

**...peaceable**

is an interesting Greek word. It literally means someone who is not combative, not argumentative, not overly opinionated. One of the things that I have observed far too much over the years is how

many churches have been held hostage by elders or pastors that are simply way too opinionated, way too argumentative, and you can't get anything done because they hold the church hostage. In my 40 plus years, I've been in two churches. I'm very thankful that hasn't been my experience, but I will say I have counseled dozens of pastors struggling in churches with way overly opinionated elders that hold everybody hostage. That's what peaceable means.

**...free from the love of money.**

That one is fairly obvious. Jesus said, “You either love God or you love money, but you can't love both.” So a spiritual leader isn't in love with their money; they're in love with Jesus. Jesus said, “*Where your treasure is, that's where your heart is.*” It's fairly obvious that's what you need in a spiritual leader. But one of the interesting things I've observed over the years—it's not uncommon—that churches will identify someone who has been very, very successful in the marketplace, and make them elders or spiritual leaders, not so much because they're biblically qualified, but because they're very successful out there. Whether you have lots of money or little money has nothing to do with your qualifications. It's whether or not you love Jesus. Verse 4:

***He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), (Vs. 4-5)***

To state this simply, it's the job of all of us as husbands and fathers to basically function as a pastor at home, to shepherd my wife and kids. We talked about this in Ephesians 5: *to rightly represent Jesus, in how I shepherd the people under my care.* How I do that is going to be indicative of how I will do it as a pastor. In other words, how I pastor at home is an accurate picture of how I will pastor here. So that's the basic idea there. Now the reality is that as a husband and a dad, I can't control my wife. I can't control my children. It would be foolhardy to try to do that. What I can do is seek to create an environment where they can flourish under my care, which is the same responsibility an elder has. We can't control anyone here this morning. All we can do is seek to create an environment where you can seek and love Jesus and we can flourish together. Verse 6:

***...and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.***

Now you have to define **new convert** carefully, because you have to remember, this was the early church. None of these people had been Christians very long. It hadn't been that long since Jesus rose from the dead. So we're not talking about 40 or 50 years, or there would have been no leaders. It's not so much an issue of age; it's an issue of maturity. I've known 20-year-olds who are very mature spiritually, and I've known 50-year-olds that aren't mature spiritually at all. It isn't an age thing. It's a maturity thing. The concern with a new convert is giving someone too much influence too soon. When someone's capacity exceeds their character, that almost always ends in a disaster. It's worth noting that throughout this list, there is no mention of talent and there's no mention of skill and capacity. It's all about character qualities. The last one, verse 7:

***And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.***

This one isn't really any different for an elder than any of the rest of us. When we're out in the community, in our neighborhood, in school, wherever we find ourselves, we're representing Christ; we're representing our church. We need to be aware of that. It doesn't matter where I go, I represent Jesus and Lincoln Berean Church, and I need to be aware of that in every interaction I have with people. That's the idea there. Verse 8:

### **Deacons likewise...**

So what is a deacon? That's a really good question; I'm glad you asked, and it's kind of complicated. Some people refer to *the office of deacon*, but the New Testament doesn't use that language. It's just **deacons**. A Greek word translated deacon is a very common term. It's used over 100 times in the New Testament. It just means *a servant, a table waiter*. Some people look at Acts chapter 6. I think that's a good example of people serving people that have a need. It doesn't necessarily mean that's the office of deacon. It's not called that there. I think it's very likely that this is simply defining people that serve in some sort of an official capacity in the church. That's why he says **likewise**. It's like we're all in this together. So, whether you're an elder or whether you're part of the congregation that serves, the expectation is that we will live our lives in such a way to rightly represent Jesus. It's really raising the bar and the value of what we all do. Lincoln Berean Church is run by hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people that plug in and serve in all kinds of different capacities to make it work. I think that's what he's referring to.

### **Deacons, likewise, must be men of dignity.**

It's a word that means *above reproach*. It's pretty much the same thing.

### **...not double-tongued.**

We would say, *doesn't speak out of both sides of his mouth*. It's the idea that any time you're dealing with people, people are messy, and you get into all kinds of messy situations. What we don't need are people that say one thing to this group of people, something different to that group of people or someone who says one thing to my face and something different behind my back. That's only going to create disunity and dissension. It's like, "Hey, we're a team here. We're all in this together. We don't need that from people that serve."

### **...or addicted to much wine (I already talked about that),**

### **...or fond of sordid gain (That would be love of money.) Verse 9:**

### **...but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.**

These now are not the elders, so they do not define and defend doctrine but the **mystery** is the truth that God has revealed. **The faith**, as we've said several times, is the body of doctrine we believe. So everyone that serves still must understand, believe, and seek to live out the truth. That's what he's saying there.

These men must also first be tested. Let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. That word *tested* means *to prove*. For years, we have taught here that the best way to prove yourself is through service. If somebody shows up and says, “Hey, I want to be a leader.” “Good, roll up your sleeves and serve. That’s the proving ground. Let’s get a look at your character and integrity and how you conduct yourself.” That becomes the fishing pond, then, for leaders and those that God has called to more. That’s the basic idea there. So here’s the deal: It’s easy to stand on the sideline and criticize. It’s easy to stand on the sideline and throw stones. If you genuinely care about what’s happening here, roll up your sleeves and get involved. If you don’t care enough to get involved, then it must not really matter to you. And if that’s the case, then stop criticizing. How do you like that? (*laughter*) All right, verse 11:

**Women...**(Oh, boy, here we go.) (*laughter*)

So part of the challenge here is the same Greek word that’s translated **women** can be translated **wives**. So some people think this is referring to the deacon’s wives. I don’t think that makes any sense. If that’s the case, then why didn’t we talk about the elder’s wives? I think it’s **women**, and here’s what I think Paul is saying. This idea of serving isn’t limited to men. This would have been quite a shocker in the first century Roman world. He is saying, “Women, this is just as true of you too.” That’s why he says **likewise**. Elders and then deacons, **likewise**. Women, **likewise**. We’re all in this together.

Ryan talked about this last week. I want to reemphasize the issue is not leadership. There’s no question God has gifted many women with very strong leadership gifts, as strong as any man, and God calls you to use that leadership gift in the local church. The issue at play with elders is the issue of authority, the authority to define and defend doctrine. We have highly gifted, talented women that lead all kinds of things at Lincoln Berean. What Paul is doing is again raising the bar and saying, “Ladies, just the same, you need to be qualified, because what you’re doing really matters to God.”

**...must likewise be dignified,**

That’s the same word we’ve seen before. It means *above reproach*.

**...not malicious gossips,** literally *slanders*, similar to talking out of both sides of your mouth.

We’re going to find out later in chapter 5, this was a problem in Ephesus, and Paul is going to deal with it. We’ll get into the specifics when we get into that chapter. But just like being double-tongued, that doesn’t create unity. It’s the same concept.

**...but temperate**

We’ve already defined that of being alert, faithful or trustworthy in all things. Verse 12:

**Deacons must be husbands of *only one wife*, and good managers of *their children and their households*. (We’ve already talked about all that.) **For those who have served well as deacons** (I think that’s men and women.) **obtain for themselves a high standing****



(a good reputation) **and great confidence in the faith** (which is our body of doctrine, our beliefs) **that is in Christ Jesus.** (Vs. 12-13)

So here's what I think he's saying to end that conversation. There is no such thing as a clergy class, and then the rest of the people. We're all equal before God, just called to different roles. Elders have a specific role and responsibility, but we're all called—men and women—to come together to be part of what it means to be the church. Therefore, what he's saying is, “If we do that, we establish a good reputation.” And when we understand and believe and live out the truth we believe in Christ Jesus, then we gain this confidence that this is who we are as the people of God. Actually, if you put all this together it sounds a lot like our vision statement. What are we doing here? *Well, we come together as family to know Jesus and become like Him.* That's all these qualifications, the character. And then we roll up our sleeves and *we serve and help others do the same.* That's what we're doing here.

*Our Father, we're thankful for the truth that has changed our lives. Lord, may we together be committed to understanding, believing, and to living out this truth, that we might rightly represent Jesus to our community and around the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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**WINTER 2025 // WEEK 8****Life Group Questions**

1 Timothy – What Are We Doing Here? // March 1/2, 2025

Spiritual Leadership Matters // 1 Timothy 3:1-13



We'd love for you or several from your Life Group to join us on the Life Group Silence & Solitude Retreat that is coming up during the break between Life Group Sessions. More information can be found on the Lincoln Borean app or webpage. Go to events and search for "silence" to sign up! Registration Deadline: March 7, 12:00 pm.

## Introduction

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God's design for the church comes into clearer view as we move into chapter 3 of 1 Timothy this week. Paul describes the qualities that make for reliable leaders in a church setting. We learned that this makes for flourishing in the church as well as in our personal lives.

**We invite you to look over all the questions on the following pages and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group. Some people even use these questions to take notes during the sermon. The questions are meant to stir your thinking and prompt open discussion, and we do not expect you to cover every question each week.**

## Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

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- 1) When you were a kid were you more of a leader or a follower? How did you come to know this?
  
- 2) Would you rather be able to speak any language, or be able to communicate with animals?

## Getting Started

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Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
  - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
  - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
  - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
- 2) Choose someone to read the passage aloud for the group.

## Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

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1. **How would you sum up the main idea of this week's sermon in 3 words or less?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In 3:1 Paul has to remind Timothy (and us) that aspiring to the role of spiritual leader is a good and noble pursuit. **Why is this an important message to communicate to the next generation?**

Part of the reason the church in Ephesus was being written to in this letter was because they had been led astray by false teachings. **What kinds of things can be done to ensure that qualified spiritual leadership is upheld for the next generation of believers?**

3. This text focuses on the fact that a spiritual leader must be above reproach which means there's no reason for someone to question their integrity. It does not mean perfection, but it does mean a lifestyle of integrity. **Describe people you have known who were above reproach.**

**How did their character affect your desire to follow them?**

4. Read the list of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 together. **What makes these qualifications important in a spiritual family?**

**How does this compare to the way our culture assesses and chooses qualified leaders?**

Ultimately these qualifications should describe all of us as serious followers of Jesus. **Which of these qualifications seem like the most challenging to you? How might your Life Group help you grow in this area?**

## Personal Spiritual Exercises

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Just like physical exercises help strengthen and stretch our bodies for healthy living, these spiritual exercises are meant to move us spiritually in ways that may be new so we might experience inner growth. Since God longs for us to experience Him with our whole selves—mind, body, spirit—we invite you along each week to strengthen your souls with suggestions and prompts.

**Scripture Focus:** Throughout the passage this week, there are many different qualities listed by Paul that spiritual leaders should display. As we are all engaged in the mutual leading of each other in the church, take some time this week and read through Psalm 139 which is a beautiful and vulnerable prayer inviting God into our lives, to know us, love us, and grow us into the people that He desires us to be.

**Prayer Focus:** Paul lists many high standards that leaders in the church must uphold. Take a few moments throughout your week to pray for the various spiritual leaders at our church and in your life, that they are continually being transformed by Jesus' love and displaying the qualities described in this passage. If you don't know what to pray for, try praying through this passage in Proverbs 2:

*For the Lord gives wisdom:  
from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.  
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;  
He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,  
guarding the paths of justice,  
and He preserves the way of His godly ones. (Proverbs 2:6-8)*

## **Prayer** *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

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A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?