

**Sunday January 29, 2023**

## Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church

### Welcome & Prayer

*“As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? <sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?” <sup>4</sup> These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. <sup>5</sup> Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.” (Psalm 42:1-5, NIV)*

Let us pray.... Dear Lord, our soul pants for you this morning. We long to be in your presence. We long to worship you with others in person but today we can't, despite all our good intentions and so we come to you by ourselves this morning or with our family around us. We need you. We need you like we need our food and drink. We need your presence, your forgiveness, your love, your grace, your help and power. So give us more of you today. Let us see more of your glory as we sing our songs. Let us hear more your character as we listen to your word. Let us experience more of your goodness as we pray. And draw us closer to your people as we sing the same song, pray the same prayers, listen to the same sermon, even if we are in different locations today. Help us this day to truly worship you in spirit and in truth. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

### Song – Crown Him with many crowns - [YouTube Video](#)

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|---|--|
| <p>1. Crown Him with many crowns<br/>The Lamb upon His Throne<br/>Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns<br/>All music but its own<br/>Awake, my soul, and sing<br/>Of Him who died for me<br/>And hail Him as my matchless King<br/>Through all eternity</p>                         | <p>4. Crown Him the Lord of Heav'n<br/>Enthroned in worlds above<br/>Crown Him the King to Whom is giv'n<br/>The wondrous name of Love<br/>Crown Him with many crowns<br/>As thrones before Him fall<br/>Crown Him, ye kings, with many crowns<br/>For He is King of all</p> |
| <p>2. Crown Him the Lord of Life<br/>Who triumphed over the grave<br/>And rose victorious in the strife<br/>For those He came to save.<br/>His glories now we sing<br/>Who died, and rose on high<br/>Who died eternal life to bring<br/>And lives that death may die</p>           | <p>5. Crown Him the Lord of Love<br/>Behold His hands and side<br/>Those wounds, yet visible above<br/>In beauty glorified<br/>All hail, Redeemer, hail!<br/>For Thou has died for me<br/>Thy praise and glory shall not fail<br/>Throughout eternity!</p>                   |
| <p>3. Crown Him the Lord of Peace<br/>Whose power a sceptre sways<br/>From pole to pole, that wars may cease<br/>And all be prayer and praise<br/>His reign shall know no end<br/>And round His pierced feet<br/>Fair flowers of paradise extend<br/>Their fragrance ever sweet</p> |  |

## Bible Reading – 1 Timothy 3:1-16 (NIV)

**3** Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. **2** Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3** not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. **4** He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. **5** (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) **6** He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. **7** He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. **8** In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. **9** They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. **10** They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. **11** In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. **12** A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. **13** Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. **14** Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, **15** if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. **16** Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: "He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory."

## Announcements 29/1/23

**Focus for January – Rest & Refresh.** How did the month of January go for you? Was there time to rest and refresh? Are you now ready to take on a new year? If so, it would be great to get involved in the work of the church. It is good to come each Sunday, better to be involved in one of groups (small groups, JOY, family groups) and even better to find a way of serving others. Is that something you might be able to do in 2023? If so, now is the time to talk to Jon, Stephen or one of the elders about how to be more involved.

**Regular Activities of our Church** will start up again this WEEK.

- Kids Church – Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb
- Playgroup – Leader's meeting – Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> Feb – 10am.
- IMPACT – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 7-9pm
- JOY – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 10-11am 16 Footers

**Small Groups.** It would be great if everyone could CONSIDER joining a small group this year for teaching, fellowship and Christian encouragement. Below is a list of all the groups we are running with contact details of those who will be running them.

When	Type	How often	Where	Who
Mon 7:30pm	Ladies	Fortnightly	Eleebana	Sally 0406 937 634
Tue 9:30am	Ladies	Weekly	Hall	Linda 0422 014 250
Tue 10am	Mixed	Weekly	Cardiff	Doug 0419 491 981
Tue 7:00pm	Mixed	Weekly	Charlestown	Ross 0420 934 270
Tue 7:30pm	Men's	Weekly	Cottage	Simon 0404 942 544
Tue 7:30pm	Young Adults	Weekly	Charlestown	Jon 0435 456 701
Tue 7:30pm	Mixed	Weekly	Charlestown	Steve 0407 455 276
Wed 10:30am	Mixed	Weekly	Swansea	Stephen 0426 829 080
Wed 1pm	Ladies	Weekly	Hall	Kaylene 0402 805 014
Thu 7:30pm	Mixed	Fortnightly	ZOOM	Alan 0478 292 107
Fri 10am	Ladies	Weekly	Hall	Kerry 0414 171 642
Sun 4:30pm	Years 9-12	Fortnightly	Hall	Alan 0478 292 107

**Vision Sunday.** Next Sunday we will be painting a vision of what we are hoping to do as a Church. This will involve both our Church services but also, we will be hosting a number of get togethers to unpack what that means for the various ministries of the church. Please come along to the times that you are most interested in. 9:45-11 Vision for the AM Church. 12-12:45 Vision for Kids Work: 2-2:45 Vision for Mission. 3-3:45pm Vision for Pastoral Care. 4-4:45 Vision for Evangelism. 5-5:45pm Vision for Youth Work. 6-7pm Vision for Sunday @ 6.

**CHURCH CAMP.** Theme: Family Reunion. At YWAM, Tahlee. All registrations need to be in today. Payment can come later but if you are planning to go today is the last day. Please see Tom or Sarah Baldwin or Liz Hyslop for more details.

**Family Fellowship.** Stephen and Kaylene are hosting a BBQ and swim at their place, 19 Imperial Close, Floraville for all families that have at least one child in Years 4-9. Please come if you are able to, just let them know that you are coming. It is hoped that there will be a regular social event for these families on the last weekend of each month.

Men's Event. As per last week

**Kids and Families Worker (approx. 8-10 hours a week).** With Suzie leaving our position in January this year, we will be advertising and interviewing prospective candidates for her replacement in Feb/March this year. For more details please see Jon or Stephen.

**Studies in Discipleship:** In 2023 we are starting a weekly home group focussed on discipleship for Christians of any age. If you would like to know more, please chat with Stephen Taylor or John and Miranda Harris.

## Bible Reading – Titus 1:5-16 (NIV)

*<sup>5</sup>The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished & appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. <sup>6</sup>An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. <sup>7</sup>Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. <sup>8</sup>Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. <sup>9</sup>He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.<sup>10</sup> For there are many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision group. <sup>11</sup>They must be silenced, because they are disrupting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for the sake of dishonest gain. <sup>12</sup>One of Crete's own prophets has said it: "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." <sup>13</sup>This saying is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith <sup>14</sup>and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the merely human commands of those who reject the truth. <sup>15</sup>To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. <sup>16</sup>They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.*

## Pastoral Prayer Points

**Pray for our federal leaders:** Pray for God's guidance as they guide us. Pray for them to be wise and discerning.

**Pray for those suffering amongst us:** Pray for them to experience God's wonderful presence. Help them to understand that Jesus, our merciful high priest, has suffered and is therefore able to help us in our suffering.

**Pray for DR Congo:** There was a bombing of a church on Monday Jan 16th and 17 people were killed. Pray God would comfort those grieving and help them to forgive the terrorists. Pray for a stable national government grounded in righteousness. Pray for followers of Jesus to be ambassadors of spiritual and national reconciliation. Pray for the Prince of Peace to heal those traumatised by widespread violence.

**Pray for the Webbs (CMS, Broome)** Thanks to God for the Kimberley Leadership Weekend going ahead on its original dates where they contemplated God's holiness. Pray that the men and women who attended from the Yiyili, Bayilu and Wangkatjunga people's groups can meet together in their own communities to encourage each other in their faith. Pray that God will bring more Broome people to Him.

## Song – Hear the call of the Kingdom - [YouTube Video](#)

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|---|--|
| <p>1. Hear the call of the kingdom<br/>lift your eyes to the King<br/>Let His song rise within you<br/>As a fragrant offering<br/>Of how God, rich in mercy<br/>Came in Christ to redeem<br/>All who trust in His unfailing grace</p>       | <p>3. King of Heaven<br/>We will answer the call<br/>We will follow<br/>Bringing hope to the world<br/>Filled with passion<br/>Filled with power to proclaim<br/>Salvation in Jesus' name</p>  |
| <p>2. Hear the call of the Kingdom<br/>To be children of light<br/>With the mercy of heaven<br/>The humility of Christ<br/>Walking justly before Him<br/>Loving all that is right<br/>That the life of Christ<br/>May shine through Him</p> | <p>4. Hear the call of the Kingdom<br/>To reach out to the lost<br/>With the Father's compassion<br/>In the wonder of the cross<br/>Bringing peace and forgiveness<br/>And a hope yet to come<br/>Let the nations put their trust in Him</p> |

## Sermon – The Gospel & Godliness - Stephen T

I like the story of the two police officers who respond to a call concerning a bad traffic accident. When they arrive on the scene they find a father, mother and two children all unconscious inside a wrecked family car. Almost immediately after the officers arrive, so do the ambulances and they begin to rush all concerned to the hospital for urgent treatment.

Slide 2

That's when the police officers discover that there is a monkey still inside the car and that the monkey is conscious, though a little bruised from the ordeal. Since the monkey is the only conscious passenger in the car and there are no other witnesses to the accident, the police officers decide they'll try to get the monkey to tell them what happened.

So, they ask the monkey, "What was the father doing?" the monkey mimics drinking from a bottle. One of the officers said, "Makes sense." They then ask "What was the mother doing?" The monkey mimics shaking her finger. "Okay, now we are getting somewhere. The father was drinking and the mother was having a go at him." So, they ask "what were the children doing?" The monkey mimics the children fighting in the back seat.

"Well with all that was going on, it was inevitable that they were going to have a crash." Having got the information they needed, the two officers decide to go to the hospital when one of them turns back and asks the monkey, "By the way, what were you doing the whole time?" And the monkey mimics driving!

When we are in a car it important to have the right person driving it, isn't it? And how much more important is it to have the right people driving the Church? According to 1 Timothy 3:15, this is the Church

of the living God. We are to be the pillar and foundation of the truth. We are God's household. So those who are leading us, driving us, serving us can't be monkeys or drunkards or argumentative or people who love to fight.

Slide 3

Which means that Church leaders must have a different paradigm which they follow to government or business leaders. In the words of Chuck Colson, special counsel to US President Richard Nixon, *"Nothing distinguishes the kingdoms of man from the kingdom of God more than their diametrically opposed views on the exercise of power. One seeks to control people, the other to serve people; one promotes self, the other prostrates self, one seeks prestige and position, the other lifts up the lowly and despised."*

So, as we begin the Church year, I want us to look at how leadership works amongst God's family, for it is all about gospel and godliness. And we will see that Paul outlines two leadership positions for God's household, overseers and deacons. And overseers edify the Church through example and exhortation. And deacons demonstrate deeds of love and mercy. Then the members of Gods household heed their godly example & strive to be holy.

Our passage today breaks up neatly into three parts. V 1 to 7 are about overseeing the Church, V 8-13 are about serving the Church & V14-16 are about being the Church. Let's start with

Slide 4

### 1. Overseeing the Church (verses 1-7)

**3** *"Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task."* Notice that first of all, the task of overseeing is a noble one. Now the people who do the task may not always be noble, but the task that the overseer is given is noble. Because they do their work in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the Church and because what they do directly affects the health of the Church, Christ's body.

So leadership is a noble task. It's a good thing to aspire to doing the work of a leader. In fact, if you don't want to do that work, then you shouldn't be a leader. That's interesting, isn't it? For we Aussies are deeply suspicious of people who aspire to leadership, people who want to be in charge. We prefer reluctant leaders, those who are pushed forward, protesting their unworthiness. But God says the opposite. A leader must want to do the job. So, if you have to talk a person into leading, you probably have the wrong person. If you have to talk them into being a Kids Church or a home group leader or an elder, they are not your person!

Slide 5

So what qualities must an overseer possess? <sup>2</sup>*"Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,* <sup>3</sup>*not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money."*

Slide 6

Now let's firstly get our terms right. An overseer. No denomination that I know calls its leaders overseers. Some have bishops, others pastors, or ministers or elders and they all refer to this term overseer or (ἐπισκόπους), episkopous. Actually, it is a little bit more complicated than that because this word overseer is used interchangeably with another Greek word *presbuteroi*, elders. Let me give you just one example.

Slide 7

If you turn to Tit 1:5-7, Paul is writing to his ministry apprentice Titus & he says, <sup>5</sup>*"The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished & appoint **elders (presbuteroi)** in every town, as I directed you."* But what are these elders actually to do? Paul continues, <sup>6</sup>*"An elder (presbuteros) must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe & are not open to the charge of being wild & disobedient."* <sup>7</sup>*Since an **overseer (episkopos)** manages God's household, he must be blameless"* And then Paul goes on to give many of the qualities that he will give to Timothy in 1 Timothy 3.

So, these elders oversee, they shepherd, they bishop, they rule. The words are interchangeable. So here in the Presbyterian church we just call them elders. And we have 6 of them. 4 lay – Ross, David, Steve and Rob and two paid, Jon and I. But back to our passage.

Slide 8

*4 “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.”*

Slide 9

So the qualities of an elder are quite extensive, aren’t it? There is a summary quality “above reproach” followed by 9 positive character traits and 4 negative character traits that must be avoided and only one skill, “able to teach”. But the key **must** when it comes to appointing an overseer, an elder, is godliness. What’s non-negotiable is godliness. It is not primarily about leadership skills, ministry skills, administrative skills, people skills, it is about whether they can edify others by teaching the gospel and whether by example they live the gospel.

Slide 10

Someone once asked Bishop Quail about preaching. He said this *“Preaching is the art of making a sermon and delivering it? ... Why no ... preaching is the art of **making a preacher** and delivering that.”*

Slide 11

The first thing you need to look for in an elder is not skills, or power or influence or policy it is their lifestyle. Has it been changed completely by the gospel? Is he “above reproach”? Someone without any obvious moral blemishes. Not perfect. But no huge gaping moral failures. When we have elections, the opposing parties will troll through a candidate’s past to see if there is anything that disqualifies them for office. In the same way when you look at the life of an elder with a fine-tooth comb, there should be no obvious moral blemishes.

Slide 12

For the gospel has made a **deep impact** on them. There is a stability about them, a maturity about their faith, it’s not superficial or shallow when it comes to **sex** because he is and has always been, faithful to his wife, he is literally a one-woman man. He hasn’t had an affair & he hasn’t had two wives at the same time. He might have been divorced and remarried, there are some Biblical reasons where that is allowed or he might be still single but the gospel has touched him deeply in regard to sex and **speech**.

Slide 13

For when he opens his mouth, he is temperate, self-controlled, not violent but gentle, and not quarrelsome. These qualities are needed if you are going to lead God’s people. You must have some control over yourself and your tongue. As Francois Rabelais, the 16<sup>th</sup> century French satirist, put it, *“how shall I be able to rule over others if I have not full power and command of myself?”*

Slide 14

The gospel must have made a deep impact in regard to sex, and speech and alcohol. The elder must not be given to drunkenness. Now that’s doesn’t necessarily mean total abstinence, Jesus did turn the water into wine and in 1 Timothy 5:23 Paul does say to Timothy *“Stop drinking water only and use a little wine because of your stomach.”* But an elder must be able to control his drinking or he will damage the Church’s reputation.

And elders need to have their finances under control. He can’t be a lover of money. Throughout history men have often tried to make money out of God’s kingdom. In the OT Micah fumed as the judges took bribes, the priests taught for a price and the prophets told the future for cash. The Holy Spirit should control the elder not spirits nor money.

Slide 15

The elder's godliness must be deep and it must be wide. It can't just be evident in the Church but it must be truly seen in the home as well. So not just faithful to his wife but *"He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect"*. The first responsibility of an elder is not the Church but his own home. And if you want to know how he will act when under pressure look no further than how he treats his wife, his children and his parents. And whether he opens up his home and is hospitable. A lover of strangers. That will speak loudly about who he really is.

And what about his workmates and neighbours? *"He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap"* There is no place for someone who rips off their fellow workmates and who is an obnoxious neighbour. The gospel has to truly have touch the whole of their life.

Slide 16

So how deep is the elder's faith, how wide is his godliness & **how long** has been a Christian? *6 "He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil."* Don't give him responsibility too soon. Make sure the gospel has had time to make a real change in his life.

So, in some ways there is nothing special about this list of qualities. Actually, apart from the ability to teach, all Christians should be aspiring to a wide and a deep and a long faith, just like the elder. And I think that's the point. All of us should be showing these character traits, all of us should desire to live a life above reproach. But an elder **must have** these qualities. To be able to teach others, the gospel must have made its mark on you first and foremost.

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Robert Murray McCheyne, the famous 19<sup>th</sup> Century Scottish minister once said *"My people's greatest need is my personal holiness."* All of us need elders who edify and exhort us and model for us the beauty of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. God doesn't give elders to the Church to do the work for us, no they are the ones who will teach us & model godliness for us so that together we all do the work that God is calling us to do as a Church. For the Church needs leaders worth following, those who will oversee the Church & also those who

Slide 18

## 2. Are serving the Church (verses 8-13)

For when you consider how Jesus led his disciples while he was on earth, he taught them and he modelled godliness to them but he also picked up the towel and washed the disciple's feet. He demonstrated how to love one another. And so, Paul also wants to set apart not just Elders but another group called deacons. **A second group of leaders who will demonstrate deeds of love showing the rest of us how we are to serve one another. And when you look at** the qualities required for a deacon you will notice that they are very similar to those required of an elder. And once again it is almost all about godliness.

Like the elder the gospel must have changed the deacon in all parts of their lives. Let's use slightly different categories to relook at the required character traits of the deacons, let's start with the **personal qualities**. *8 "In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain"*. They must have control over themselves, their words, their money, their drinking, their attitudes.

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But not it is not just about their personal lives, it too is about their **family life**. *12 "A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well"*. If he isn't a servant leader at home, how is ever going to be a servant leader at church? If he can't manage his own home, how will he manage the Church's finances, the Church's pastoral needs, the Churches welfare work? If he can't control his tongue at home, how will be able to do that at Church. As Will Rogers once said, a deacon should *"not be afraid to sell the family parrot to the town gossip!"*

But there are a couple of differences, the elder must be able to teach but the deacons have to be people who hang on to the truth like a bulldog. *"They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience."* They might not have to teach it. But they have to stick to the gospel and never let it go. Ever. And...

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<sup>10</sup> *"They must first be tested & then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons"* A while back the Committee of management had to get someone in to test and tag all the electrical equipment in the Church. **Slide 22** The things that failed the test we threw out or got repaired. The ones that passed the test can be used reliably. The same is true of deacons. They must pass the test before put into service.

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And there is a third major difference between the elder and the deacon. V 11 *"In the same way, the women (or their wives) are to be worthy of respect"*. Now the Greek word is "women" so it could mean either deaconesses or deacons' wives. But it is not immediately obvious which is the best translation and different people and denominations have debated this long and loud.

But I think the best translation is deaconess. For why would Paul talk about deacon's wives here and not talk about elder's wives earlier on in the chapter? And why does Paul describe Phoebe, a woman, as a deacon in Romans 16:1? And seeing in the previous chapter that Paul had said that women were not to take the role of the authoritative teacher/leader in chap 2, then it makes sense they should be able to take the servant leader role in chap 3.

The qualities that are required of a deaconess are very similar to that of the male deacons <sup>11</sup> *"In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything."* And so as the men and women serve the church as deacons, they *"gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus"*. As they give out in service, they gain in assurance. They grow in godliness. The gospel is demonstrated to the Church and the world by their good deeds of service.

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In summary then Paul is saying we need people to aspire to the noble task of leadership within the church. We need men and women to look up to, to follow, to show us how the gospel is put into practise in everyday situations & we need people who will teach us that & hold onto that, no matter what is happening in their lives or in our lives. We need people with a deep faith, a wide faith and a long faith, who will teach and model that faith to us.

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### 3. Because we are the ones being called to be the Church. (Verses 14-16)

<sup>14</sup> *"Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, <sup>15</sup> if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct **themselves in God's household**, which is **the church of the living God**, the pillar and foundation of the truth. <sup>16</sup> Beyond all question, the mystery from which **true godliness** springs is great: "He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory."*

The Church is consistently paralleled to family & household relationships. For in every family we need parents that will lead their household & they lead by teaching, by serving & by modelling. Now sometimes these jobs are interchangeable but Paul elsewhere talks about the husband being the one responsible to make sure that these things happen. But he has a complement, a wife that he works with, together, to ensure that that the gospel & godliness is part of their household DNA.

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The gospel and godliness is important in the home and it is doubly important in the Church. In fact it must be on the front line of our evangelism for as the church goes into the world is not our strategy or our



method, or our technique that will convince those who are lost. It is the combination of the gospel and godliness. And so those who are far away from the Lord need to hear the good news of Jesus and then come into the Church and see elders who edify and set an example, deacons who demonstrate God's love and the rest of the household who know what it is like to be holy.

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Now how are we going to put all this into practise today? Well, there is a number of things we need to consider. Firstly, Church leadership will have many facets but at its core there needs to be elders who edify and set an example and deacons who demonstrate God's love through deeds of service. And within our make up as a Presbyterian church it is up to us to ensure that happens.

So, the elders are going to be looking for new elders this year and, in the years, to come. And so, we need to be asking ourselves the question, who do I think fits the criteria of 1 Timothy 3? And we need to be encouraging them to take on this noble task. And we need to support those who are taking on this noble task. Don't just have a go at them when they make decisions you don't like but pray for them, get beside them, join them in their work.

And the elders are also going to ask you this year to consider adding a deacon's court to our Church structure. They are convinced it's a Biblical move. & will be looking for men & women who desire to serve in this way, taking the lead & demonstrating the love of God to people within our congregation, on the fringes of our church & and even outside of our Church.

But can I ask you, do you fit the criteria of being a deacon or an elder? If not why not? How long have you been a Christian? Is the gospel that is preached here having an effect on your personal godliness? Why don't you desire to serve? To lead? To teach? To model? Isn't this something we should all do in some way? For friends this is the household of the living God. We have had good models of teaching and serving in the past. We have the best model of Jesus put before us each week in this place. Now it is up to us to do the work that Christ has called us to do. To shed the light of Christ to our community and to our world.

Slide 28

Here in 1 Timothy 3 we are not told to be perfect, but above reproach, to be godly, to follow the example of people around us and be an example to the people around us. I suppose in some way we are meant to be like a stained-glass window in a cathedral. Those windows are there to inspire people. To teach people and to let the light shine through them to others. Now I know that when you get a bit closer to them you see there are cracks in them and some of the colour has faded. But there they are there to let the light of the world shine through them. And that's what we are called to do together. For we are the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth, as well as God's holy household

## Song – Servants of the Gospel - [YouTube Video](#)

*1:* Though we were undeserving  
Christ died to wash us clean  
He bore the Father's anger  
While nailed upon the tree  
In darkness and in turmoil  
The judgment fell on Him  
Bringing us forgiveness  
That new life might begin

*Chorus:* As servants of the gospel  
Christ's work we carry on  
That through our prayer and witness  
By grace we might win some  
We call on every nation  
To turn to Christ the Lord  
Refuge in His mercy  
And marvel at His love

2: The grave could not contain Him  
From death the Son broke free  
Exalted by His Father  
To rule eternally  
And in His grace He calls us  
To be His chosen church  
As His holy temple  
His priests to all the earth

*Chorus:* As servants of the gospel  
Christ's work we carry on  
That through our prayer and witness  
By grace we might win some  
We call on every nation  
To turn to Christ the Lord  
Refuge in His mercy  
And marvel at His love

3: Marked with His Holy Spirit  
And guided by His word  
Christ gathers us together  
Prepares us for good works  
And so with grace apportioned  
We serve each other's needs  
Sharing in each blessing  
And helping in our grief

*Chorus:* As servants of the gospel  
Christ's work we carry on  
That through our prayer and witness  
By grace we might win some  
We call on every nation  
To turn to Christ the Lord  
Refuge in His mercy  
And marvel at His love

**Closing.** *“Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.” ( 1 Timothy 3:13)*