

Let the Church be the Church

“The Church and Its Members”

I Timothy 2-3

In chapters 2 and 3 of I Timothy, the Apostle Paul identifies certain members of the church and describes some of their responsibilities before God. He sends a clear signal to Pastor Timothy that he is to relate to all these members giving oversight to their character as well as their conduct. Paul's counsel is about (1) praying men, (2) modest women, (3) dedicated officers and (4) genuine godly believers. Notice some of the characteristics of church membership.

- I. Church membership calls for PRAYER and PURITY (2:1-15)
 - A. The importance of the church's PRAYERS (vv.1-8, esp. v. 1 “First of all...i.e. of first importance.”)
 - I Thessalonians 5:17 “pray without ceasing”
 - B. The importance of the church's PURITY (vv.9-15, uses “women” to illustrate this:)
 - I Timothy 4:12 “...In speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.”
- II. Church membership calls for RESPONSIBILITY and LEADERSHIP(3:1-13)-Church leaders must possess character and competence (not perfection)
 1. Consider the responsibility of the PASTOR (cf. 15 qualities, vv. 1-7)
 - He is to SHEPHERD the church (i.e. feed and lead)
 2. Consider the responsibility of the DEACON (cf. 10 qualities, vv. 8-13)
 - He is to SERVE the church (i.e. tend and mend)
- III. Church membership calls for CONFESSION and CONDUCT (3:14-16)

-notice the seven points of common confession regarding Christ:

 1. We confess to the INCARNATION of God in Christ (v.16a “He who was revealed in the flesh...”)
 - John 1:14
 2. We confess to the RESURRECTION of Christ from the dead (v.16b “He was vindicated in the Spirit...”)
 - Matthew 17:22-23
 3. We confess to the EXALTATION of Christ the Lord (v.16c “...beheld by angels...”)
 - Luke 24:4
 4. We confess to the PROCLAMATION of Christ to the world (v.16d “...proclaimed among the nations...”)
 - II Corinthians 4:5
 - Mark 16:15
 5. We confess to the SALVATION of Christ offered to every believer (v.16e “...believed on in the world...”)
 - Romans 10:9-10,13
 6. We confess to the ASCENSION of Christ back to the Father (v.16f “...taken up into glory...”)
 - Mark 16:19
 7. We confess to the SECONDCOMING (return) of Christ for His Church
 - John 14:1-6 esp. v.3
 - I Thessalonians :13-18, esp. v.17

Church membership is very important. As faithful followers of Christ, we are compelled to (1) prayer and purity, (2) responsibility and leadership and (3) confession and conduct. The Lord will “let the church be the church” when we exhibit these “member characteristics.”