

RCC in the Word
Week of September 23
1 Timothy 3:14-16

“I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.”

This week we are reading the Apostle Paul's pastoral epistle to Timothy. Paul spent three years of ministry based in Ephesus, planting other churches during this time. Paul invested much time, energy, and love into the church at Ephesus, discipling its leaders and forming its doctrine, he was passionate about this church. He must have been heartbroken to see it go so wrong. Paul had discipled Timothy and he had walked with Paul and suffered with Paul. Paul was writing this letter to Timothy to give him instruction about how to behave in and run the household of God. In chapter one Paul deals with doctrine - specifically the false teachers that had infiltrated the church. In chapter two Paul addresses how to worship and pray rightly in the house of God. In chapter three Paul is addressing the leadership issues within the church. In the section of scripture we are looking at today Paul is addressing Timothy directly with how he ought to behave in the household of God. As a leader in the church Timothy is expected to provide an example for everyone else, living a life exemplified by a holy and godly character. Many times we tend to believe the traits outlined by Paul in the pastoral epistles are for Elders and Deacons only, when the reality is that we all should be striving to live lives in accordance to what is expected of Elders and Deacons. The reason for this is laid out in the passage above, which is the mystery of Godliness - the incarnation, the life, the death, the resurrection and the person of Christ himself.

Brethren we are part of the household of God - Ephesians 5:1 says, "Walk in love as dear children of God." We are to walk as He walked, gentle yet zealous for God's glory, loving all the brethren, behaving as a child of God in His household, the church of the living God. The church is designed to proclaim and support, through our lives, the truth of God. We are called to live simple and holy lives standing firm for the Truth. The Truth is Christ Himself - the gospel proclamation we make with our voices and our actions are what we are about as members of

the household of God. We are called to behave a certain way not because we are to blindly follow rules, but because of what we are, because of what we identify as. We are the children of the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. We were bought at an infinitely great price and are called out of the world to serve an infinitely worthy God. We love one another because we are loved by God, we can forgive one another because of what we've been forgiven by God. Brethren, let us be about walking in a manner worthy of our calling; exemplifying the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). May we stand for the truth and be recognized as the living church active in being about the business of the great commission (Matthew 28:16-20).

The standards by which we are to hold our leaders are given to us to protect and glorify the name of Christ. We are called to be Christ's ambassadors to the dying and the lost. We are not called to be perfect, but to live in accordance to the character of Christ. We will fail, but praise be to God for the gift of repentance. May we model what it means to be children of the living God behaving as we ought in the household of God, all because of Christ. God help us to hide ourselves in the character and being of Christ, who is our life, so that we may behave as we ought in the household of God. I leave you with these words from Paul.

Colossians 3:1-17

"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your

hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”

-Written by Calvin Patrick