

I Timothy 3, Sermon #28
(The Message to the Church – Jubilee Sunday)

Turn in your Bibles to I Timothy 3

We learned last week that believers are to **conduct themselves in the Church** according to the instructions of this book.

The Church is the Pillar of the Truth. (I Tim. 3:15) That is the fundamental purpose of the Church

What are we? The pillar and the ground of the Truth

If there is one thing the local church must support—that it must hold up—it is the truth of this Book!

So, the Church is to be the pillar and basis for what? The Truth (3:15c)

That means the Church is God's chosen institution for holding up the Truth in the world. Vs. 16 tells us what that truth is.

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I have entitled our 50th Anniversary Sermon, "Our Message to the World"

I Timothy 3:14

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word

I Timothy 3:14-16

Let us pray

You may be seated

Our Message to the World

Verse 16a – and without controversy – that means this is something we can all confess to

This is a common confession – a creed of the Church – these two words are one word in the original language - *homologeō*, which means “to say the same thing.”

All churches should be repeating the same message – delivering the same truth – the Word of God

These are truths upon which everyone agrees; it is the unanimous conviction of all believers.

Great is the mystery of Godliness – now, before I explain mystery of Godliness - back in verse 9 – we saw the mystery of the faith

We said that the mystery is what?

Something that was once hidden but now revealed by revelation of His Word

The faith – New Testament revelation, New Testament books

Verse 9 – in a pure conscience

Verse 16 – Mystery – something hidden now revealed – Godliness – how can I be Godly?

This refers to the great truth of salvation – we cannot be godly apart from Jesus Christ and righteousness in Christ – imputation to our account.

Godliness, then, refers to those who are saved and receive the righteousness of God.

How God produces Godliness in us – how does He do that? – vs. 16 tells us.

This is a very interesting little verse

This is a poem – it doesn't show up in our English Bible, but the phrases are matched,
even though there is no rhyme

Two lines – contrasting in a sense

Six lines – three sets – this verse is believed to be an early hymn in the church

This poem is going to tell us the truth of which every church is to preach and teach.

This poem tells us how we get our Godliness.

Our Godliness is based on these great truths that we confess in this poem

First - "God was manifest in the flesh." **The First Truth**

What do we call that? What is the technical doctrinal terminology for that?

The incarnation of Jesus Christ – He took flesh

First of all, who became flesh? Deity became flesh.

Jesus Christ is God. Any religion, any church that denies this, denies this Book and
denies our God.

Jesus Christ was **revealed in the flesh**.

God became man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

The word *manifest* does not mean "to bring into existence," or "to create or invent," but
"to make visible."

It thus affirms Christ's preexistence. (Phil. 2:6-7) Jesus Christ has always been. He is
from everlasting to everlasting. He was and is and is to come.

John 14:9, "*Jesus saith unto him, 'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou
not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest
thou then, 'Shew us the Father'*"

Jesus Christ was God *manifest in the flesh*, not only at His birth, but during His entire earthly ministry.

Secondly – vs. 16, Jesus Christ **was justified in the Spirit. The Second Truth**

Mary was a virgin and that which was conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit,

Matt. 1:20, “And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water and lo the Heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him.”

This reality is why the Father said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased” (Matt. 3:17). This was Jesus led up by the Spirit into the wilderness.

His resurrection by the Spirit proved His sinlessness.

If He had any sin of His own, He would have stayed dead as the penalty for that sin.

The affirmation of His perfect righteousness came when the Holy Spirit raised Him from the dead and the Bible says – no corruption. Lazarus died and the Bible says he stank.

Though His own people as a nation rejected Him, Jesus Christ was *justified in the Spirit*; for the Spirit empowered Him to do miracles and even to raise Himself from the dead

Romans 1:4, “*declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*”

Thirdly – He was seen of angels – **The Third Truth** - observed by angels – they watched Him.

Jesus Christ was **beheld by angels**.

Throughout our Lord’s earthly ministry, the **angels** observed Him, and attended to Him.

They were there at His birth, announcing it to Joseph and the shepherds.

They ministered to Him at His temptation, and strengthened Him in Gethsemane. At His death and resurrection, **angels** observed Him.

The holy angels were involved.

An angel rolled away the stone at the door of His tomb (Matt. 28:2).

Angels appeared to the women, affirming that Jesus had risen (Luke 24:4-7).

Finally, two angels attended Christ's ascension (Acts 1:10-11).

Angels were involved in our Lord's earthly life from beginning to end.

That signifies divine approval of Jesus Christ.

Seen of angels suggests the many times the angels were associated with the life and ministry of our Lord.

However, Christ did not die for angels, but for lost sinners; and so He was *preached unto the nations*.

Fourthly – vs. 16, preached unto the Gentiles. **The Fourth Truth**

He was preached– the preaching of Jesus Christ should be in the foremost position in the local church.

Jesus Christ was proclaimed amongst the nations.

Before His ascension, Jesus commanded the disciples to “go.”

He told them in Acts 1:8, *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”*

There was to be no nation left without the Gospel message.

Preach Jesus to the Gentiles

Fifthly – vs. 16, Jesus Christ was **believed on in the world** – that would be faith in Christ. **The Fifth Truth**

The plan of God was fulfilled as the preaching resulted in saving faith in many lives.

At the first public preaching of the gospel after Christ's resurrection, 3,000 people were saved (Acts 2:41).

In the days that followed, thousands more **believed on** Him.

The Gospel was preached throughout Judea, then to the Samaritans, to an Ethiopian eunuch, to Cornelius the Gentile, and ultimately across the world by Paul and his associates.

Jesus has been believed on in the world as we can attest.

Sixthly – received up into Glory – that is the ascension of Christ – He was *received up to glory*. **The Sixth Truth**

Jesus Christ was taken up in glory.

Acts 1:9-10 describes the event, *“And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel.”*

What is the common element to all six of these truths? Jesus Christ

The subject of every line is Christ

That is the core of what we teach and preach.

The Apostle Paul, made Jesus Christ the central theme in his preaching.

To the Corinthians he wrote, “we preach Christ crucified” (I Cor. 1:23), and, “For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified” (I Cor. 2:2).

Our Godliness is founded entirely on the Person and work of Christ.

All the way from His birth to His Ascension and everything in between

In His character and righteousness – our only hope is Jesus Christ

We are a family of a God who lives – we must be the pillar and ground of the Truth – holding these truths up before the world.

There is no other God ordained organization given this responsibility.

In six short stanzas, this hymn summarizes the Gospel. God became man, died for our sins, triumphed over death, was honored by angels and preached on in the world, believed by people, and ascended into heaven.

The church's existence is to proclaim this message.

I Corinthians 15:3-4, *“For I delivered unto you ‘first of all’ (of utmost importance) that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”*

The main truth to which a church should bear witness is the person and work of Jesus Christ

What an exciting challenge it is for our local church to witness of Jesus Christ to lost sinners at home and around the world!

This is an emphasis on fundamentals.

The church at Ephesus was starting to drift away from the basic truths of the Christian faith.

Like the Ephesians, we need regularly to be reminded of the foundational truths of our faith.

The church today sponsors a bewildering variety of highly specialized ministries and teachings.

God writes this passage as a reminder that the church must give its attention to the essential truths, core truths.

Our Message to the World

Let us stand for closing invitation

Every eye closed

The mystery of Godliness is that God in the person of Jesus Christ entered the world in which we live.

Paid the penalty of sin and He is making men and women godly through faith in Him.

The gospel of Jesus Christ – Have you accepted it by faith?

Jesus Christ died for your sins. He was buried and He rose again.

Medora people – would you commit with me in keeping as a priority of this church, these **Six Cardinal Truths**?

That we don't drift, compromise or walk away from the Holy Scriptures.

Hold fast to the Truth.

Would you pray for our Church?