

"These Things Write I Unto Thee"

Ron Roberts

1 Tim 3:14-15 says, "*These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*"

Paul begins by referencing "these things" he had written to Timothy in this first epistle. Any student of the Bible needs to ask himself, "**what things** is Paul talking about?" They must have been important things. Although Paul hoped to come to the young preacher soon, circumstances could prevent him from doing so. Timothy needed to know "these things" in case the Apostle was delayed or was unable to come altogether.

The epistle reveals that Timothy was in Ephesus (1:3). He was told early that he needed to be there to **oppose false doctrines** (1:3-7). Chapter two begins with encouragement to **pray** for all people (1-8) and concludes with the need and reason for the **submission from women**. Just prior to our verse in chapter three the Apostle gives the **qualifications** for elders, deacons, and their wives.

The young preacher needed to know how to behave himself (3:15), but he also had to teach others how to behave. **Women** could not take charge. **False teachers** could not be tolerated. **Elders** and **deacons** could not be appointed by popular vote or by the powerful few. They needed to meet the qualifications that the Holy Spirit revealed through Paul. The power of **prayer** needed to be employed consistently.

Paul says much more about himself and the Gospel in the first three chapters but this list will suffice for our discussion.

The church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth. This means that the church will uphold and support the word of God. The church does not make rules, change rules, or ignore rules. It teaches the truth God has already revealed. It enforces the true doctrine of Christ and does not make modifications based on society's whims or trends.

If Paul did come quickly, or was delayed, or did not come at all; by this written document he provided what Timothy needed. Paul died about 2000 years ago, but what he wrote by the Holy Spirit remains to guide all of us in the true church today.

Every time I write a bulletin I need to remember that these words may go where I cannot go. They may be read long after I am dead. *These things* I write unto you need to be consistent with what God wants us to hear. I need to write about how we all need to behave and continually support the truth of the Gospel from generation to generation.

False doctrines will always come up (4:1-2, 6:3-4). Men will attempt to seduce the church into following them. They will preach what people want to hear. 2 Tim 4:3 reads, "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*" Men will soften the Gospel into whatever popular opinion is. These doctrines and teachers need to be resisted by faithful churches and teachers.

Women have been encouraged by the world to leave their God given roles. They are told to take charge. They are told the place God put them in is demeaning. It makes them stupid. It denies them of being all that they could be. These lies have led to more infidelity, neglected children, family conflicts, and molested ideas of marriage than anything else.

God had a design for the family as well as for the church. Qualified leaders and servants need to be placed in office. **Elders** provide a congregation with spiritual leadership. These men add stability. Preachers can be inexperienced, young, or briefly at one place and then moved to another. They were not intended to be the consistent leadership in the church. Older proven men were to be appointed and then the preacher could devote himself to preaching and moving on to other places if needed.

Deacons are the servants of the church. They are the reliable workers. They take care of spiritual matters as well as physical ones. They submit to the eldership and see that the tasks assigned to them are carried out in a diligent manner. In too many congregations the preacher is doing the elder's job, the elder is doing the deacon's job, the deacon is doing the member's job, and the member is doing nothing at all. Once a congregation is scripturally organized it needs to see that each person fulfills his assignment in the church's arrangement.

Perhaps more of a problem to the church than false doctrines, unqualified elders, and liberated women; is our failure to **pray**. How many of these other issues gain strength and momentum because we do not ask for God's help?

Public and private prayer strengthen the members of the church. It helps us to keep our focus. The church belongs to God. It needs to be run His way. It requires His guidance and help. How many churches have lost their focus along the way? How many are no longer the pillar and ground of the truth? How many are health clubs, day care centers, recreation halls, and welfare offices with non-profit status? They are churches in name only as they have departed from God's truth.

Paul wrote "*these things*" to Timothy so he could know how he *ought to behave* and what he ought to teach others. I write *these things* with the same intentions. May God be praised and His word faithfully followed and supported by His people.