

1 Timothy 3:15-16

LESSON 16

God Manifest in the Flesh

1. 1 Timothy 3:15 – The Pillar and Ground of the Truth

- a. Paul talks about behavior, order, integrity, purity, because... we are Christ's body
- b. Three names for the same thing:
 - i. "house of God" – Eph 2:19-22; Gal 6:10; (family)
 - ii. "church of the living God" – Eph 1:22-23; 1 Cor 10:32, 3:16 (body)
 - iii. "pillar and ground of the truth"-to uphold and be fixed -Eph 3:14-18; Col 2:7
- c. 3 warnings:
 - i. 1) The house is not a physical building – see Acts 16:31, Acts 17:24-26
 - ii. 2) The "church" is not the Roman Catholic Church – it is the body of Christ
 1. The church is not the truth but the pillar and ground of it 2Th 2:13-15
 2. Truth is not Tradition it is the doctrine of Christ – Eph 1:13,4:15, 4:21,
 - iii. 3) We uphold and affirm the truth – 1 Cor 3:11; 1 Tim 2:4; 2Tim 3:16-17
 1. Not holding the Head = days, false unity, philosophy, world – Col 2:19
 2. Stand fast – no compromise, hiding – 1Co 6:13; Gal 5:1, Phil 1:27, 4:1

2. 1 Timothy 3:16 – God Manifest in the Flesh

- a. "without controversy" – is now a fundamental controversy: Islam, Unitarians, etc.
- b. Textual critics say no major doctrine is affected, but this is the deity of Christ!
 - i. On the deity of Christ there can be no question – Col 2:9; John 1:14
- c. Translations matter – They change "God" to "He" or "Who" or "He who"
 - i. They say, the oldest uncials don't have, but others do! (lectionaries, versions, 99% of cursives, Christians in the 1-5th centuries)
 - ii. They say, it was added later, but the heresies were all early!
 - iii. If God promised to preserve his word then the evidence is there
 - iv. If he lost it and we must recreate it, then doubt overwhelms the evidence
- d. Spiritualization/misapplication - Stam and others teach this is not Christ, but you!
 - i. They say, this must be the church, but the verse says "WAS manifest"
 - ii. They say, godliness refers to your good behavior (but that is not a mystery!)
 - iii. They say, Christ could not be justified, but Rom 3:4; Luke 7:29; Rom 1:3-4
 - iv. They say, the order is wrong, but it is not in order, but in parallel!
 1. 1) Flesh/Spirit, 2) angels/Gentiles, 3) in the world/up to glory
 - v. At least this is bizarre, at most this opens the door to heresy if it isn't already
- e. The context – offices in the church are not like offices in world religions/institutions
 - i. Those in office have a great responsibility and position, but they are to exhibit the mind of Christ = the mystery of godliness – 1Cor 2:16
 - ii. Philippians teaches the mind of Christ – Phil 2:5-11;
 - iii. The mystery is always about Him (Phil 3:8-11): God manifest in the flesh!