

How To Behave In Church (Part 2)

1 Timothy

Introduction:

1. In the book of 1 Timothy, Paul is writing a letter to his son in the faith, Timothy. Timothy was a young pastor that needed the instruction and encouragement of Paul.
2. As the churches increased in number, questions of church order and soundness in the faith became important. Churches had to have guidance, and the book of 1 Timothy is written for this purpose.
3. A key passage is 1 Timothy 3:14-15. Paul is saying, "I'm hoping to come and see you real soon. But, in case I cannot, I'm writing these things so you and your church members know how to behave and know what is expected."
4. Some of this book is directed to Pastor Timothy. But other times Paul will say something like, "*exhort therefore,*" or, "charge them to do this or that." These were things the people were to do.
5. We're going to look at some of these and see how we should behave in church. As church members, what should we be doing?

First, every church member should be laboring in prayer. 2:1-2, 8

Second, every church member should be seeking to live a godly life. 4:7-11

Third, every church member should maintain a good testimony outside the church. 6:1-12

1. Paul addressed the issue of church members that work for others (vs. 1-4). They should:
 - Show honor and respect for their employers. When you don't, it brings reproach to God. vs. 1
 - Never get bitter at your employer ("*let them not despise them*"). vs. 2
 - Work hard. ("*but rather do them service*"). vs. 2
 - A good cross-reference with this passage is Titus 2:9-10. This passage teaches that, when believers have a good work ethic and are respectful and honest, they literally beautify ("*adorn*") the gospel and the teachings of Scripture.
 - On the other hand, what happens when a believer is disrespectful, disobedient, contentious, deceitful, underhanded, and dishonest? cf. Romans 2:17-24
 - In your work and business dealings, always remember, Christian, that you represent your Savior, Jesus Christ. You also represent your local church.
2. Paul then addresses the issue of people who are money-centered. vs. 5-11
 - There were people that were teaching that the more money you have, the godlier you must be (vs. 5). Paul describes this kind of teaching by using words like "*perverse,*" "*corrupt,*" and "*destitute.*"

- Yet this kind of teaching is still being propagated today, either through direct teaching (prosperity theology), or through indirect ways (the wealthy people in the church get the attention, the positions, the power, respect, etc.).
 - Paul then gives to us the perspective of a Spirit-filled believer. vs. 6-8
 - The focus of Spirit-filled believers is that they are never satisfied with where they are spiritually. They are constantly striving to grow and mature in their faith and become godlier. vs. 6a
 - But when it comes to the material things of this world, they are content with simple provisions. vs. 8
 - Their focus is on that which is eternal, not temporal (vs. 7), whereas a lost person's focus is completely opposite. They are consumed with the temporal and think little of the eternal. Can believers act this way too? It can happen so quickly and easily – thus the warning of verses 9-10. Read also James 2:2-5.
 - When people look at us as Christians, may they not see money-hungry people, consumed with material things. It will destroy our testimony. vs. 10
 - May they see an honest, hard-working person who is consumed with the things of verse 11. May they see our lives following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.
 - Can you imagine how our homes, marriages, churches, and relationships would be enriched if we were fervently following after these things?
 - You say, “How do I follow after these spiritual fruits?” It begins by getting serious about the first point in this message – prayer! When was the last time you truly sought the Lord over a desire to have these fruits in your life?
3. Your testimony outside the four walls of the church is so important. When people at work find out that you go to church and that you are a Christian, it should confirm their suspicions, not surprise them.
 4. As church members, what does God expect from us? It begins with prayer, which in turns leads to a godly life, which leads to having a good testimony outside of the church.

Fourth, every church member should possess a heart to give and minister to others. 6:17-19

1. When Paul mentions those that are rich, we are tempted to think, “This isn't for me. I'm not rich.”
2. Yet most of us (compared to the rest of the world) fall into this category. Most of us would be considered rich by believers in other countries. Let's be honest. Most of us have more than we really need, and we are rich in this world.

3. Remember, Paul already warned in this chapter that wealth and riches carry with them potential temptations and snares. What should be the believer's response?
 - Don't trust in your riches, but in God.
 - Think about it. People fight, kill, steal, gamble, sell their bodies, and cheat to get something that says, "In God we trust." Seems kind of ridiculous. If that inscription should be true of anybody, it should be Christians.
 - Realize where it came from.
 - Enjoy what God gives you.
4. Do you know what the best way to enjoy your riches is? vs. 18
 - Share it with others! Use it to be a blessing to others and for the cause of Christ. Jesus said, "*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" This is so true. I truly feel sorry for people who have never grasped this.
 - It is so easy to get sticky fingers. The more we have, the more we want. We become greedy and miserly, only concerned with accumulating more wealth.
 - Paul teaches that we should not view our riches as something to selfishly cling to, but rather see ourselves as a channel for God to work through to be a blessing to others.
5. Sometimes people think, "What can the church do for me?" The primary question to ask is, "What can I do for my church? How can I serve God, minister to others, and be a blessing to someone else?"