

IS THE HOUSE STRONG? (1 Timothy 3:15)

I. It takes a Christ-centered foundation.

- A. The foundation of a house is the most important element because if it is unstable the whole house is unstable.
- B. Spiritually speaking, Christ must be the foundation of the local congregation or it will fail.
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 3:11.
 - 2. If it is built on anything or anyone else, it is not the church about which we read in the New Testament.
 - 3. Any other foundation is faulty and will collapse.
- C. Jesus should be at the center of our preaching.
 - 1. He was in the first gospel sermon (Acts 2:22-41).
 - 2. He was what Philip preached in Samaria (Acts 8:5, 12).
 - 3. Jesus was all that Paul wanted the Corinthians to know (1 Corinthians 2:2).
- D. Jesus is to be the centerpiece of the local congregation.
- E. He is what motivates our work, worship and life or we will fail.
- F. It is simply Him or nothing.

II. It takes sound doctrine.

- A. If the local house of God is not built with the doctrine found in the New Testament it will not be pleasing to God.
- B. This is the message that was preached by the inspired men of the first century.
 - 1. They did not preach themselves but Christ only.
 - 2. They condemned any other type of preaching (Galatians 1:6-9).
 - 3. It is only the gospel message that saves (Romans 1:16).
- C. This is the message that must be believed and obeyed.
 - 1. Romans 6:17.
 - 2. 1 Thessalonians 2:13..
- D. This is the message that molds people's lives into the image of Jesus.
- E. A local congregation will not stand if it is built upon a perverted message.
 - 1. The church at Pergamos was told this by Jesus (Revelation 2:14-16).
 - 2. False doctrine is like termites in the wall of a home - the home is eaten away from the inside and the weakness is not seen until it is too late.
- F. Congregations that are strong have sound doctrine to strengthen them.

1. Peter said to desire the sincere milk of the word in order to grow.
2. Anything taught that is not from God's word does not allow for growth.

III. It takes a platform of unity.

- A. Unity must be extremely important because Jesus prayed for it hours before His death (John 17:20-23).
- B. Paul exhorted the Corinthians to be united (1 Corinthians 1:10).
- C. Paul preached the attitudes and beliefs that are necessary for unity (Ephesians 4:1-6).
- D. Growth of a local congregation demands unity.
 1. If everyone is in an agitated state, they will be too busy being agitated to study and grow.
 2. If everyone is in an agitated state, they will be too busy being agitated to evangelize.
 3. We can't lead others to Christ in a divided state, because we are separated from our brethren, which means we are separated from God.
- E. The early church was united and that brought about results (Acts 2:47).
- F. When we give our all to the Lord and to one another, people will see that and be attracted to it.

IV. It takes an aggressive and militant spirit.

- A. The Lord's church is compared to an army (Ephesians 6:13f.)
- B. Paul told Timothy to be a good soldier because we are at war with Satan and sin (2 Timothy 2:3-4).
- C. We are engaged in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:12).
- D. Every military unit has orders to follow.
 1. Jesus gave us the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-16).
 2. Jesus gave us the command to remain faithful (Revelation 2:10).
- E. We will aggressively seek the lost if we are strong.
 1. Souls are at stake.
 2. We want others to be saved like us when we are strong.
- F. We will militantly stand for that which is right if we are strong.
 1. We won't allow false doctrine to be taught in our congregation.
 2. We will let others know in the best way possible that error should not be tolerated.
- G. While we do this, we do it with love and meekness, seeking to win souls and not arguments.
 1. Ephesians 4:15.
 2. 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

H. When we see the lost converted and error defeated, both out of love, our congregation will be stronger than ever.

V. It takes a worshipping people.

A. We discussed last week reasons that should motivate to attend the worship services of the local congregation.

B. When we empty ourselves of things of the world and enter into worship with one another to lift up the banner of the cross, we can't help but be motivated to service.

C. Until a congregation learns to worship properly and attend properly, Jesus will not be the central point of its existence.

1. We can't build a strong house without nails.

2. Christians, when coming together, are like nails that attach us to Christ firmly and deeply.

3. We draw towards Jesus and one another all at the same time.

From an article by Glenn Posey