

# The Dearest Place On Earth

## Household of God

### 1 Timothy 3:14-16

BIG Idea: God has given His people the privilege and responsibility of living in such a way that people can see the gospel at work while upholding its truth.

### Introduction:

*The dearest place on earth. The church is not an institution for perfect people; but a sanctuary for sinners saved by grace, who, though they are saved, are sinners still, and need all the help they can derive from the sympathy and guidance of their fellow believers. The church is the nursery for God's weak children, where they are nourished and grow strong. It is the fold for Christ's sheep; the home for Christ's family. —C.H.*

*Spurgeon*

The church seems to have fallen on hard times. According to a recent Barna report, one in five churches will close over the next eighteen months. To some professing Christians, the church appears to be un-

necessary and unimportant. Is the church moving toward obsolescence?

1 Timothy 3:14-16 reminds us that the church matters to God. God has given His people the privilege and responsibility of living in such a way that people can see the gospel at work while upholding its truth.

## Key Points

### Household of God

Our household operates in specific ways — rules / schedules / expectations / relationships

### Church of the living God

Jacob meeting God — Bethel / tabernacle / temple

The church, the corporate body of Christ-followers, is the place where God lives and dwells and manifests His presence.

### Pillar and buttress

This would have been a powerful image for Timothy and the church he cared for because Diana's temple was in Ephesus. It was one of the World's Seven Wonders, with one hundred massive pillars, each over eighteen meters high, lifting its massive marble roof. As well as supporting the roof, the pillars also served to hold it high so that it could be seen from a distance.

### He was manifested in the flesh,

"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,"

Colossians 2:9 ESV

### vindicated by the Spirit,

"and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord," Romans 1:4 ESV

seen by angels,

Birth / temptation / resurrection / ascension / proclaimed in heaven / will return with his angels

proclaimed among the nations,

The disciples and even now

believed on in the world,

Saving people all over the world

taken up in glory.”

The King of the universe

## Why it matters:

### **How we feel about the church matters because the church matters to Jesus.**

- Christ founded the church (Matt. 16:18-19)
- Christ died for the church (Eph. 5:25)
- Christ identifies with the church (Acts 9:4-5)
- Christ calls the church his bride and his body (John 3:29; Eph. 5:30)

### **How we treat people matters because we represent Jesus.**

To live above with the saints we love,

Oh, that will be glory.

To live below with the saints we know,

Well, that's another story!

"But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you."

1 Corinthians 14:24-25 ESV

### **How we recognize what is unseen when we gather matters because it affects the way we worship.**

"and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places." —Ephesians 3:9-10 ESV

- Consider how significant this makes our weekly gatherings: the church gathers, and the Lord, the living God, is among us.
- We are His house, worshiping in His presence, listening to His Word, and partaking of the elements at His table.
- How awesome is the privilege of being the dwelling place of God's presence!

### **How we honor God's word matters because it is where we find truth.**

"if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister."

Colossians 1:23 ESV

### **How we preach Jesus and his gospel matters because he is the key to the mystery of godliness.**

## Application

1. Prioritize church and participate in family life.
2. Expect to experience God's presence differently when we gather.
3. Recognize what is unseen.
4. Trust God's word.
5. Stay amazed by the grace found in Jesus.

## Questions

1. Would an unbeliever who visits The Orchard be convinced that God is here? Why?
2. Why is the Bible so important to The Orchard?
3. How does Jesus unravel the mystery of godliness?