

*14I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; 15but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.*

We have been looking here in I Timothy at Paul's instructions for the Church. Paul has had his young companion *remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, 4nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.* 1 Tim 1:3,4 Paul had plans of returning to Ephesus but, *in case I am delayed*, Paul gives instructions for the church, *how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God*. Paul in the first part of this chapter gave Timothy the qualifications for elders and deacons in the church and here is the purpose of Paul's letter that all believers know how they ought to conduct themselves.

Christians have this born again life to live, God has *rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.* Col 1:13,14 Believers are redeemed, bought out of the kingdom of darkness, sin and have the gift of a right relationship with God, *forgiveness of sins*. Paul wants believers to know how they are to act, Timothy is in charge of conveying this truth to the Ephesians believers, *the household of God, which is the church of the living God*. The church of the living God, Paul wants believers to know that the church, the body of believers is something very special. The church is not special because of who believers are but who the God they worship is, He is living, He is the great I Am, the self existent one. The pagans form idols out of wood, clay and stone, inanimate.

The church of the living God is made up of men and women who are *not justified by the works of the Law, not by obeying the law, but through faith in Christ Jesus.* Gal 2:16 The important word here is justified, forgiven of the weight of darkness we were born into because of sin. This was Christ's purpose in coming to earth, this is why we celebrate the resurrection. Because believers can be forgiven of their sin by coming to Jesus, and become part of *the church of the living God*. When we receive God's forgiveness, Christ's blood washes us white as snow and God's Spirit lives in us. Not a wooden idol, not a inanimate force or power but the Spirit of the living God. Paul writes, *what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God;* 2 Cor 6:16. .

This is vital. Christ Jesus, the Son of God came to earth, lived a sinless life and gave His life as an offering for sin. John wrote, *We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* 1 John 3:16

*14He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.* Titus 2:14

Paul gives us a little more insight here into just what this *church of the living God* is. He calls it, *the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth*. Why is Paul so concern that proper doctrine is upheld? Because the church is God's household, His dwelling and temple. The church is where God lives, His family and the church is responsible for reflecting the character of the name of God. *I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* 2 Cor 6:16 Paul writes the church is *the pillar and support of the truth*. Paul is writing this to believers in Ephesus, the third largest city in the ancient GreecoRoman Empire. I have been to Rome and what stood out to me all the ruins. The temples, meeting halls and government buildings, they all had *pillars (columns) and supports*

(bases, pedestals). With these massive columns and bases they supported facades, domes and the beams of the roofs. Paul says these pillars and supports are the church and we know that the foundation of the church was laid by Christ.

*10According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. 11For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 1 Cor 3:10,11*

The Psalmist wrote, *The very essence of your words is truth; all your just regulations will stand forever. Psalm 119:160* Jesus prayed to God that He would, “*Sanctify them (the disciples and in them the church) in the truth; Your word is truth. John 17:17* So on the foundation of faith in Christ, the church supports the truth. *He who has received His testimony (who puts his faith in Christ) has certified that God is true. John 3:33* The church upholds the only truth, the truth of the redemption plan of God.

*11For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, 14who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. Titus 2:11-14*

*3This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. 1 Tim 2:3-6*

*22But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. Heb 12:22-24*

It is true that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth and He is calling a people out of darkness into His marvelous light. *1 Pet 2:9* That people is the church and as the church we must be responsible to stand strong in Christ and uphold the truth of God, the only truth because God’s truth is both living and eternal.

So now let us examine a passage that is most likely an early hymn and creed. It is a very appropriate scripture for Easter since it is a declaration of the mission of Christ

*By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness:  
He who was revealed in the flesh,  
Was vindicated in the Spirit,  
Seen by angels,  
Proclaimed among the nations,  
Believed on in the world,  
Taken up in glory. 1 Tim 3:16*

This passage begins with the phrase, *by common confession*. *By common confession* (homologeo, without controversy, all in the church agree with this statement), great is the mystery of godliness. The mystery of godliness is found in the person of Jesus. Jesus was able to state He was *the Way, the Truth and the Life*. He added to this statement, “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me*. This is the mystery

that has been revealed to the church. God was in Christ redeeming a people, *the mystery of godliness*.

**The Incarnation of the Son of God**, *He who was revealed in the flesh*. The Apostle John wrote, *the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14*

**Justification in His Resurrection**, *Was vindicated in the Spirit*. —The Spirit verified the deity and mission of Christ. *But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Rom 8:11* The Holy Spirit raised Christ from the dead. This a verification of what Jesus had prophesied, *The Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinners, and be crucified, and rise the third day. Luke 24:7*

**Seen of angels**, *Seen of angels*,—God purposed that Christ and this mystery of the church be revealed *to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms*.

*His purpose was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, Eph 3:10*

*22“But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, 23and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. Luke 24:22,23*

*9After He had said this, they watched as He was taken up, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. 10They were looking intently into the sky as He was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. 11“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? Act 1:9-11*

Angels saw and testified of Jesus.

**Preached unto the Gentiles**, *Proclaimed among the nations*,— Paul told King Agrippa that he *did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. Act 26:19,20* Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles but this was part of the whole mission of the church.

**Believed on in the world**, *Believed on in the world*, The Great Commission that Christ gave His disciples was to, *Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15* The mission of the church continues to be go and preach.

**Received up in glory**, *Taken up in glory*. — *And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight Act 1:9* The Apostles creed declared, *Christ ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty*. At a very early date the church established doctrinal creed to would allow the church to hold firm the vital beliefs of the church. Today, as we remember Christ's resurrection let us meditate on these vital truths, remembering, *thy word is truth*.

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to hell.  
The third day he rose again from the dead.  
He ascended to heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.*