

12-28-14

Series: The Anatomy of a Church

The Anatomy of a Church (42)

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

[Acts 20:28](#)

(Continuation from 12/21/14)

Fundamental Priorities of a Good Church

A. The Description of the Church, [1 Timothy 3:14-16](#)

[1 Timothy 3:14-16 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴ I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long;

¹⁵ but 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.

¹⁶ 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.

2. [\(1 Timothy 3:15\) Church](#): this verse gives a great description of the church, a description that spells out three great pictures of the church.

[1 Timothy 3:15 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁵ but 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.

This is of all things an irreverent age, utterly irreverent. It is the hopelessly informal age, you've noticed. I was reading an article not long ago that said essentially, "Most people...and I forget the statistics, like 75 percent...most people have never been to any formal event." It's a casual world and for the most part, there is a cavalier and casual attitude toward serious things. And there is a very obvious dumbing down and loss of refinement in the world. And so we take this casual cavalier approach and we adopt it toward God. There's so much of it in the culture.

I read Eric Liddle's biography, pretty fascinating, the great Scottish sprinter, you know, who won the gold medal at the Olympics and wouldn't run on the Lord's day. His mom dropped him off at a missionary school in London and he was seven-years-old, his brother was nine, his brother, Rob. Both of them went back to China as missionaries. He was a teacher, and Rob as a medical missionary, later on. But their parents lived their whole life in China. They brought the two boys home, seven and nine, stuck them in a London boarding school and the mother went away heart-broken, weeping because she wouldn't see them for eight years. We are a long way from that kind of mental preparation.

And so, what happens is this dumbing down of a whole culture gets brought into a dumbed-down church environment and there's very little ability to rise above that,

12-28-14

Series: [The Anatomy of a Church](#)

apparently, and to think great and grand and glorious and profound and compelling and searching things about our God. But that's where everything starts...**a low view of God produces a low view of sin, and a low view of everything else in the Scripture.**

So when you look for a church, look for a church where the preaching centers on God, on His glory, the wonder of His person and not on you or others around you, where God is constantly being exalted, where the music is filled not with just a kind of style that's popular and enjoyable, but it's filled with a profound level of content that helps you grasp what music in the Old Testament was intended to do. If you want to know what it was intended to do, read the Psalms where you feel like you're coming to grips with the greatness of your God.

Nobody can...nobody can make you a worshiper. You worship God at whatever level your understanding of God allows you. If you have a superficial understanding of God, then that's how you worship because the substance of your worship is the content of your belief, right? We could sing a hymn like, "**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,**" and there would be some Christian people that say, "That's not a very cool tune." Well maybe they don't know much about God. But if you find somebody who knows the Bible from cover to cover, "**O God, our help in ages past,**" and all of a sudden into his mind comes the great redemptive history of God unfolded in the Old Testament, and then our..."**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,**" and then his mind sweeps from the past to the future and he knows enough to know that in the future God is going to unfold all His glorious purposes on into eternity.

In other words, you...you...you bring into the content of your worship whatever it is you know to be true. And so this is where it has to start. So as you look for a church, you find one where God is taken very seriously....very seriously. And you know your God and you are confronted with His glory and His majesty and His holiness. And when you know He is the Lord your God and He is holy that compels you then to obey His statutes and His commandments and His precepts as we read in [Leviticus](#).

There's a second, and I think equally critical focus. If you are looking for a church, if you want a church to be what it should be, and if you want to bring to your own church experience what is necessary, not just a high view of God, but a high view of Christ...a high view of Christ. Now I don't know that I need to beg that issue or to say too much about it. It should be pretty apparent to all of us. **Look for a church where Jesus Christ is exalted, not where somehow they sort of sneak Him in here and there.**

I remember seeing a program at a large seeker-friendly church, and during this program there was...there was strange...there was music and there was even some cursing and very kind of non-Christian event. And the idea...this was done in the church, people were brought to this thing, and it was...it was really nothing Christian about it. And at the end, a statement was made, and this is a quote, "**In some way, shape or form, Jesus has touched all our lives. Good night.**"

Well I don't even know what that means. In some way, shape, or form Jesus has touched all our lives? That doesn't mean anything. But I suppose that was some effort to, I don't

12-28-14

Series: [The Anatomy of a Church](#)

know, sanctify the event. One thing you're going to find in the New Testament church is the centrality of Jesus Christ. He is not an addendum. He is not a P.S. He is not a postscript at the end of the program. He is not sort of stuck in at the end after you have been the focus of the preacher's attention.