A Pattern that Matters: How the Collection Is Used (1 Timothy 3:15)

Tony Mauck · 1 Timothy 3:15

INTRODUCTION

- We established in the very beginning a truth that we all should understand, and that is that Christ is the head of his church.
- God knows things that we don't. God sits at a vantage point where he can see things that we cannot see.
- Following God's arrangement will yield the results that he desires. We don't need to improve upon it.

1 The Need to Accept God's Limits

- I want to talk about the need to accept God's limits.
- If the patterns and the parameters that God has set for how the church is to function, if they don't matter, the sky is the limit in regard to what we can do and how we can do it.
- Well, who has declared it good? Where in Scripture has it been declared good? Where is it authorized?
- I think it's good. I feel good. But does it match biblical instruction and patterns?

2 Funds Used in Just Two Areas

1 Timothy 3:15

- Funds that were dedicated to the local church to be used by her, primarily related to just two areas.
- Funds were used to advance the message of salvation throughout the world.
- Funds were used to meet material needs, benevolence, but under a limited scope.
- The church is the pillar and support of truth. We read that in 1 Timothy 3, verse 15.

3 Benevolence Is a Ministry to the Saints

2 Corinthians 9:1; 2 Corinthians 9:12–14; 1 Timothy 5:16

- There is a key word that runs throughout these two chapters, and it's the word fellowship.
- Because of this common fellowship, we should have concern about needs of brethren in other places.
- This limit of benevolence is for other sanctified ones in Christ. It is a ministry to the saints.
- Paul first talks about families stepping up to the plate first to take care of needy fellow family members, so that the church may not be burdened.

- What a stretch it is to take a verse like this and say, I've got a pattern for using these funds to take care of the needy of the world.

4 Doing Something Without Authority, We Need to Stop

1 Corinthians 11:22

- If we're doing something without authority, we need to stop that immediately.
- The command to assemble requires the securing of a location, and of course, prudence.
- While something may be a small departure from the pattern, once you depart, you have opened the door to even larger departures from the pattern.
- I would say it is wrong to build a building for the purpose of eating.
- You need to recognize spiritual activity and keep it separate from social activity.

5 Patterns We Don't See in Scripture

Galatians 6:10; James 1:27; 2 Corinthians 8:14

- We do not see anywhere, and I challenge you to find it, a pattern of ministry to non saints from these special funds that are collected.
- Galatians 6:10 is not spoken of in relation to something we do corporately as a church, though the term we is used.
- He's speaking in regard to individual responsibility as he talks about keeping oneself unspotted from the world.
- We do not see the establishment of a missionary society or some adjunct or institution or a superchurch to carry out the work of evangelism. Nor do we see expenditures for recreation and other social activities.
- I need to be content with the pattern. It'll do what God wants done.

THE CHALLENGE

Respect his patterns. Appreciate our high, our noble and obedient calling, and be steadfast.

MY NOTES