

“The Household of God”, 1 Timothy 3:14–16
Pastor Shawn Newberry, April 19, 2026

I. The Identity of the Church (v.14–15)

“The household of God... the church of the living God”

- The church is not an institution—it is a **family under a gracious Father**
- Our behavior flows from **identity, not obligation**
- Leadership qualifications reveal the **standard for all believers**

Key Truth:

When we forget we are family, the church becomes:

- Cold instead of compassionate
- Rigid instead of restorative
- Legalistic instead of loving

Application:

- Are we acting like **children of God** or merely **religious people**?

II. The Character of the Church (v.15)

“How one ought to behave...”

A. Leadership as the Model

- Elders & Deacons reflect **mature Christian character**
- These are not elite standards—they are **family standards**

B. Marks of God-Shaped Character:

- Above reproach, faithful, self-controlled
- Gentle, not quarrelsome
- Free from greed
- Faithful in home and relationships
- Honest, dignified, trustworthy

C. The Root Issue:

- Sinful behavior = **spiritual immaturity**
- Christlike behavior = **formed by love**

Application:

- The church should be marked by:
 - Grace over criticism
 - Mercy over nitpicking
 - Humility over arrogance

III. The Purpose of the Church (v.15)

“A pillar and buttress of the truth”

A. Architectural Picture:

- **Pillar** = supports weight (truth upheld)
- **Buttress** = resists pressure (truth protected)

B. Meaning:

- The church **holds up truth** in a collapsing world
- The church **stands firm** against cultural pressure

C. How We Uphold Truth:

- Not just by proclamation
- But by **embodying Christ's character**

Truth is most powerful when **lived**, not just spoken.

Application:

- Does our life **reinforce** or **undermine** the gospel?

IV. The Mystery of Godliness (v.16)

“Great indeed... is the mystery of godliness”

A. What is the Mystery?

- Godliness is a **supernatural work of the Spirit**
- Transformation cannot be manufactured—it is **produced by Christ in us**

B. Evidence of Transformation:

- Harsh → Gentle
- Proud → Humble
- Legalistic → Gracious
- Bitter → Compassionate

Christ in you looks nothing like who you were before.

V. The Message of the Church (v.16 Hymn)

The Gospel in Six Movements:

1. **Manifested in the flesh** → Jesus became one of us
2. **Vindicated by the Spirit** → Justified, righteous, victorious
3. **Seen by angels** → Declared in the heavenly realm
4. **Proclaimed among the nations** → The gospel spreads
5. **Believed on in the world** → Lives are transformed
6. **Taken up in glory** → Our future hope

In 1 Timothy 3:14–16, Paul reminds us that the church is not merely an institution but the household of God, a family whose identity shapes its behavior. The qualifications for elders and deacons reveal the kind of character that should mark all believers: lives formed by grace, integrity, and love. As the “pillar and buttress of the truth,” the church is called not only to proclaim the gospel but to embody it, standing firm in a shifting world. This is only possible through the “mystery of godliness,” a supernatural transformation produced by Christ in us. The early hymn Paul includes centers everything on Jesus: His incarnation, vindication, proclamation, and glory. This hymn shows that true godliness is not about striving harder, but about a life changed by the gospel and lived out in both truth and love.