

Principle Things in Teaching your Church

1 Timothy 2:1 “I exhort therefore, that, first of all...”

Paul said to Timothy that there are principles that need to be taught “first of all,” principles of primary importance. If our churches are to be what God designs them to be, then these principles must be in place. In the first chapter of Timothy, Paul talks about Timothy’s responsibility and what Paul had left him in Ephesus to achieve. Timothy was to guard who taught and what they taught. The young man was left to organize and to create stability in these new churches.

Later in chapter 3, Paul talks about deacons and pastors, and later in the book, he talks about doctrines of devils and proper treatment of older men, women, and younger folks.

What should be taught “first of all?” Chapter 2:1-8 talks about teaching the men to pray.

1 Timothy 2:1 “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;:

There is nothing more important in a new church than getting men to be men of prayer; spiritual men who depend on God and know that God is their refuge, and that wisdom, guidance, and help all come from God. Men tend to be independent and lean on their own understanding. Teaching men to pray will create stability, a reliance upon God, and personal holiness; it is very difficult to become a man of prayer with a life filled with compromise.

What else did Paul say was “first of all” when it came to principles that need to be taught? The rest of 1 Timothy 2 talks about very unpopular subjects. In verse 9, women are to dress modestly:

1 Timothy 2:9 “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;”

In verse 11 and 12, women are not to be in leadership, but are to be in subjection.

vs. 11 “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.”

vs. 12 “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”

Paul continues to lay down important issues that are to be taught to this young church.

I Timothy 4:6 “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a **good minister of Jesus Christ**, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”

What makes a pastor a "good minister of Jesus Christ?"

Well, here again is a very unpopular subject to teach. Certain principles are doctrines of devils, and a pastor needs to instruct on these topics: "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:3)

Timothy was to identify "doctrines of devils" as those that forbid marriage for religious reasons, and also those that urge people to eat strictly vegetarian foods. Religious doctrines concerning food may be varied around the world, but the only one I know is Seventh Day Adventist. The only religion I am aware of that forbids marriage is Catholicism. Teaching that these things are doctrines of devils makes one a "good minister of Jesus Christ."

If we were to pick the topics that are to be taught “first of all” in a church, these would be on the list:

1. Teach men to pray.
2. Women should dress modestly.
3. Women should leave leadership and authority to the men.
4. Marriage or meat should never be forbidden for religious reasons.

Sadly, few churches teach all four; according to Apostle Paul, these topics should be taught “first of all.”

May we, as leaders, in the ministry examine ourselves and our instruction and ask if we are honestly teaching the things that God wants us to teach to our people.

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