

1 timothy

Home Group Discussion Guide

The High Priority of the Church

1 Timothy 3:14-15

ICEBREAKER: What's something that people do in traffic that bothers you?

OVERVIEW: All of us have priorities, or things that matter to us. In 1 Timothy 3:14-15 we discovered 5 reasons why the church should be one of our top priorities. But just knowing that is easy. Actually arranging our lives around our priorities is another matter altogether. Everyone knows what it's like to have a priority in theory but not in practice, such as your health, your relationship with God, or your relationships with family. In this discussion we will go deeper with Sunday's sermon to learn why and how to truly make the church a high priority in our lives.

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:14-15. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday's message?)
2. Read Ephesians 5:21-30.
 - a. What truths and principles does this passage teach about the church?
 - b. What is the church's responsibility to Christ?
 - c. What is Christ committed to doing for the church?
 - d. What does Christ want for the church?
 - e. What does this passage teach about the importance of the church to God?
3. Which of the following best describes your attitude toward the church before you heard the sermon on Sunday? Explain.
 - a. The church isn't important at all. Being a Christian doesn't require church involvement.
 - b. It's important, but not a high priority. Go if you have time, but it's not necessary to make the time.
 - c. It's a high priority, even though my actions don't show it.

4. Think about how the Bible describes the church — the family of God; the bride of Christ; the body of Christ; the temple of God. And consider how Christ treats the church — He is building it; He loves, cares for, protects, and makes His church holy. In light of all this, is it possible to love God wholeheartedly and be a fully devoted follower of Jesus without pursuing active participation and contribution in the church? Explain.
5. One of the reasons we know that God wants the church to be a high priority in our lives is that He has given us many commands in the Bible that cannot be fulfilled unless we are actively involved in the church. Give an example of one or more of these commands.
6. We know that God wants the church to be a high priority in our lives because He refers to it as His household, which means that we are responsible for its health. What are our four responsibilities as members of God's household mentioned in the sermon? Which one do you need to get better at?
7. Another reason the church should be a high priority in our lives is because the church gathered is where God tends to show up in the biggest ways (for more see 1 Cor. 3:16-17 and Eph. 2:19-22). What are some things that God has done in your life at church gatherings? How can you make sure that you have powerful and meaningful experiences with God when you meet for church?
8. A final reason that the church should be a high priority in our lives is that the church is God's plan for redeeming the world (it is "the pillar and foundation of the truth"). How is the church's mission unique from all other organizations and institutions?
9. What changes do you need to make so that the church is a high priority in your life?

The Last Word: Ask yourself, "Is the church as important to me as it should be?" How can you tell? The more we value something, the more we invest in it with our time, effort and money.