

ECCLÉSIA

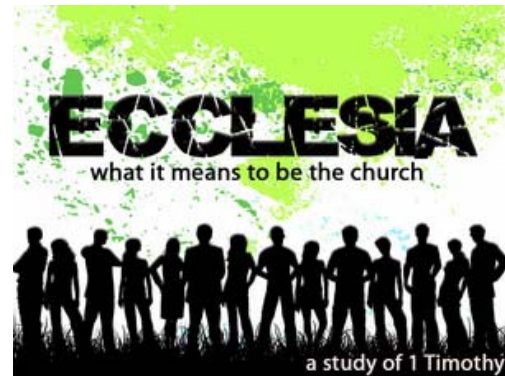
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THE CHURCH: 1 Timothy 1:1-2

SHARINGSTORIES

We are in new territory as a church. TCBC is now independent of Christ Chapel, has elected its first elders, and is in the midst of purchasing a permanent facility. Any one of these three events is enough to give pause, but encountering all three at once demands we stop what we are doing and spend some time with God to ensure we are responding to all of this properly. This is a time to celebrate, to thank Him, and to seek his guidance and wisdom. This is also the time to think about who we are as a church, both as the specific church known as Trinity Chapel and the universal church as the body of Christ. This is why Ted decided to teach through 1 Timothy. Paul wrote this letter to Timothy to remind him what it means to be the church.

What does the word "church" mean to you? What are your first thoughts when you hear this word?

Share your experiences in the church with the group (good and bad).



DIGGINGIN

Read the first two verses of chapter one and the outline of the entire book Ted provided Sunday morning. Try to get a feel for the message Paul delivered to Timothy.

1:1-20, Embracing Your Story Of Grace

2:1-15, Knowing Your Role In The Body

3:1-16, Building Strong Leaders

4:1-16, Taking Personal Responsibility

5:1-6:2, Caring For Each Other

6:3-21, Relating To The Material World

What are the major themes Paul addresses in this book? What picture is presented of the church?

Which of the six themes stands out to you as an area in which you need to grow? Why?

Which areas do you think Trinity Chapel needs to work on? What needs to happen?

GOINGDEEPER

Read this quote from John Stott and interact with his comments. "Most readers find Timothy a very congenial character. We feel that he is one of us in all our frailty. He was very far from being a stained glass saint. A halo would not have fitted comfortably on his head. No, the evidence is plain that he was a real human being like us, with all the infirmity and vulnerability which that entails."

Why does Stott make a point of Timothy being a real person? What stereotype is he addressing?

What kind of extra-biblical, cultural, and worldly expectations does the church put on its members?

How do we guarantee we are being the church God wants us to be rather than the one the world wants??

PRAYER

Spend this time discerning how best pray for one another. Praise God for one specific item and petition Him for one request on their behalf.

We have lots of changes facing us right now as a church. Ask the Father to give us guidance, wisdom, courage, and humility as we move forward. Ask Him to give us an awareness of who He wants us to be.

REFLECTION

What one idea has the Spirit impressed on your mind and heart from this passage?

What challenges do you personally face in living out your calling to "be the church"?

How can you begin to relate to God as your Father? As your master? Be specific . . .

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