

“Our Potentate”

1 Timothy 6:13-16

INTRO:

How big is our God? We used to teach our children to sing, “My God is so big/ So strong and so powerful/ there is nothing my God cannot do.” Do we believe this? When we come on the scene here in this Paul’s first letter to his son in the faith, Timothy, we find Paul issuing a solemn charge to Timothy to carry out the ministry that God has given him to do.

The Apostle Paul cannot begin to think about God, the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the ministry without pausing to praise God. Paul did this because he wanted to, but also to encourage Timothy and us with how big our God really is.

I. Paul’s Charge to Timothy (v.13-14)

II. Why the Charge is Given (v.15-16)

I. Paul’s Charge to Timothy (v.13-14)

A. ***“I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing.” (1 Timothy 6:13–14).***

Paul wanted Timothy to recognize how important all the instruction he gave in this letter was, so he gave Timothy a formal charge to keep these commands.

B. The charge was in the sight of God the Father the source of all light, and Christ who died to give eternal life to others. The point is the ministry is all about what the infinite God has called Timothy and each of us to do. Proclaiming the Gospel to folks to see them saved, and organizing them into churches is vitally important work. It is empowered by God Himself. We do not do it alone. We must do it. It also involves living a godly life (**1 Timothy 4:8-9**).

C. The charge is to be carried out until the Lord Jesus Christ comes again. He will return nothing is more certain.

II. Why the Charge is Given (v.15-16)

A. Why should Timothy obey Paul’s charge? He should obey because the Father Himself, and the Son, the Lord Jesus, are the witnesses of the charge. He should keep the charge because God will cause the appearing of Jesus Christ to happen at the right time.

B. How do we know it will come at the right time? In fact, how do we know it will happen at all? We know because of who our God is. First, He is the supreme potentate.

“He will manifest [Christ’s appearing] in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords.” (1 Timothy 6:15).

1. Phillips translates this phrase, ***“God who is the blessed controller of all things.”*** There are really three descriptive words about our God at the beginning of this phrase. He is the supreme dynastic ruler over all of the earth. This defines our God’s power and authority. He controls all things. God who created everything, works to sustain and act through all things, will bring all things to completion in His time. It brings to mind another word used to describe our God in **Acts 4**. When trouble came, the early church leaders prayed and called God the despot, He who controls all things.

2. He is also the ***“blessed one”***. He deserves all benefits, all the good things, we can give to Him. While our God has all power and is the supreme dynastic ruler over all, He also is blessed. He does good for us and we do good for Him.

3. He is also the only dynastic ruler. He is the only blessed controller of all things. Satan is not equal to God. The Devil cannot win over God. No one and nothing can limit God’s control over the events of life. There is no other god.

4. Because our God is the only blessed controller of all things, He can and does determine when the end of all things will be. He will bring it to past.

C. Paul cannot stop his definition of the eternal God there. He adds two phrases that add color to the picture of our eternal God. He is ***“King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”*** This is absolute supremacy. Name a king. Take Caesar, the supreme emperor of the Roman Empire, who rules over the known world for example. Our God is King and Lord over him. This is significant because the Emperors thought themselves divine.

D. Although human words cannot fully contain the person of God no more than Solomon’s Temple enclose His presence. Still Paul tried. **(1 Timothy 6:16)**

“Who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.”

1. Our God is also He ***“who alone has immortality.”*** The word literally means, ***“cannot not die.”*** God gives to us eternal life. We do not have eternal life in ourselves. The Emperors who claimed to be god, all died. The one true eternal God cannot die!

2. Our God dwells in ***“unapproachable light.”*** This brings to mind the theophanies of God in the desert wanderings. Do you remember after Moses spent time with God on the mount, people could not stand to look on his face because it shown with the glory of God. God lives in unapproachable holiness and glory.

3. ***“Whom no man can see.”*** This is to remind us of Moses and his experience in **Exodus 33**. Moses asked to see God’s glory. Moses wanted to see God as He really is. Instead, God told Moses no man could see God and live. While we can see God in Jesus Christ, we will never fully see Him until the Lord returns. **(1 John 3:2)**

“Now are we the sons of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be. For we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.”

4. Finally, Paul ascribes to God ***“honor and eternal dominion.”*** Our God is supreme in rank and value. He is also the one who rules time and eternity.

E. Some wonder why Paul puts such an amazing doxology a second time in his letter to his son in the faith. Perhaps, Timothy, who may have been timid, and required some spiritually building up, needed to remember how great our God is. We may need the same thing.