

The Charge to Timothy – Part 7

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Paul's greeting and charge to Timothy: confront those who teach false doctrine in the church
2. aim – to cause us to understand the importance of sound doctrine as central to godliness
3. passage – 1 Timothy 1:1-20

b. outline

1. The Greeting into the Charge (1 Timothy 1:1-2)
2. The Substance of the Charge (1 Timothy 1:3-6)
3. The Target of the Charge (1 Timothy 1:7-11)
4. The Basis of the Charge (1 Timothy 1:12-20)

c. opening

1. **question: is there anything that causes you to break out in spontaneous praise to God?**
 - a. **IOW:** has there ever been a time when you became so profoundly aware of something about God that you couldn't help but break out in spontaneous praise to him?
2. the **core** of the letter
 - a. **principle: the church of Jesus Christ is defined by the boundaries of its doctrinal truth**
 1. the church ceases to be the church when it embraces as its central priority something "other" than apostolic truth – this letter is a charge to Timothy in this regard ...
 2. **principle: Paul considers the gospel so critical that he takes it very personal indeed when someone messes with its substance**
3. the **substance** of the charge
 - a. the nature of the charge = challenge the **heterodoxy** that has invaded the church (**i.e. what**)
 - b. the aim of the charge = to speak and fellowship in love (**i.e. why**)
 - c. the origin of the charge = a pure heart, a clean conscience, and a *sincere* faith (**i.e. from**)
 - d. the target of the charge = those using law to control others with false power (**i.e. against who**)
 - e. the personal nature of the charge (**i.e. on what basis**)
 1. it's personal because it is the substance of his calling, the rescue of his sinfulness in Christ, the mercy of God, the message of being saved by God from God, the patience of God in dealing with sinners: not with wrath, but with *eternal life*
 2. not about the "instant results" of law-keeping or traditions or programs or methodologies, but about the patience of a holy God towards the church, holding fast the gospel of Christ
 - f. (**now**) the profundity of the charge (**i.e. to what importance: what is so profound here?**)
 1. **IOW:** the message of the gospel (to be protected) is so profound that to even consider these things as he has causes Paul to break out in praise

IV. The Basis of the Charge (1 Timothy 1:12-20)

Content

a. the personal nature of the gospel to Paul (vv. 12-17)

6. Paul's rejoicing in the praising of God for this gospel (**v. 17**)
 - a. the appearance of this verse in the flow of the *personal words* of Paul
 1. (**as seen above**) the *flow* of this pericope is from greater truth to greater truth
 - a. his calling → his origins (**i.e.** his condition prior to being saved) → his saving (**i.e.** the mercy of God) → the purpose of Christ (**i.e.** the whole reason for the entry of Jesus into the world) → the patience of God towards sinners (**i.e.** the whole reason for the decree of God in the face of a world hostile and rebellious towards him)
 2. the nature of these truths (in his heart and mind) is such that they are "rising" in significance
 - a. his salvation and calling → the coming of Christ → the purpose of God's entire decree
 - b. **principle: the gospel of Jesus Christ is the message at the heart of the decree of God held in trust by the church; a message that, when preached as given, expresses the patience of God in the face of sin, and the grace of God to grant mercy to sinners**
 - c. for Paul, the final words he writes (**v. 16**), of this reality for him (specifically), but also for all of the elect (generally), are so profound that he must pause and lift up praise to God

- b. the definition of *doxology*
1. **doxology** = an ascription; a brief formula for expressing praise to God; a hymn or liturgical formula expressive of praise to God
 - a. “glory” (*doxa*) and words (*logia*) – words of glory; to speak of glory; to ascribe glory
 1. **part #1**: a direct ascription of praise to God (using “to” with “whom” or “him” or a title)
 2. **part #2**: an expression of God’s nature (in some sense relevant to the context)
 - a. **i.e.** the ascription of *doxa* to God; to acknowledge who God is or what he has done
 3. **part #3: (for Paul)** “forever and ever” to ascribe this glory without end (**see below**)
 4. **part #4**: a seal of agreement or profundity or completion (using “amen”)
 2. common doxologies include:
 - a. the *Greater Doxology* (**i.e. Gloria in Excelsis Deo; Luke 2:14**)
 - b. the *Lesser Doxology* (**i.e. Gloria Patri**; “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, [as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,] world without end, Amen”; emendation c. 4th C. in response to Arian controversy re: Jesus as fully God)
 - c. the *Hymnal Doxology* (**i.e.** “Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”)
 3. biblical doxologies are found in many contexts:
 - a. as conclusions to songs (**Exo. 15:18**), psalms (**Ps. 146:10**), or prayers (**Matt. 6:13**)
 - b. as conclusions to the divisions of the Psalter (**Ps. 41; 72; 89; 106; all of 150**)
 - c. as group responses to solo singing or recitations (**e.g.** “for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen”; an addendum to the Lord’s Prayer of **Matt. 6:13**)
 - d. as statements of blessing by individuals in the OT
 - a. Abraham’s servant (**Gen. 24:27**); Moses (**Deut. 32:3**); David (**1 Chron. 16**); etc.
 - e. as conclusions to NT writings (or sections of writings)
 - a. **x7** in Paul’s epistles; **x1** in Hebrews; **x3** in 1 & 2 Peter; **x1** in Jude; **~x4** in Revelation
 - c. the use of *doxology* by Paul in his letters – his ascription of praise to God because of ...
 1. **Romans 11:36** – the nature of God’s wisdom found in the message of justification by faith
 2. **Romans 16:25-27** – the revelation of the mystery of Jesus Christ to the whole world
 3. **Galatians 1:5** – the deliverance we have from this present evil age by the will of God
 4. **Ephesians 3:20f** – the great cosmic drama God is playing out in time and space
 5. **Philippians 4:20** – the supply of God towards the needs of the church in their benevolence
 6. **2 Timothy 4:18** – the rescue of the Lord from every evil deed bringing him safely home
 7. **1 Timothy 1:17** – the patience of God towards sinners as the central theme of the gospel
 - d. the substance of this *doxology*
 1. **part #1**: “to the King of the ages” – the one to whom the *doxology* is ascribed
 - a. “king” = the absolute ruler; the potentate; the sovereign One
 - b. “ages” = an eon; time immemorial; the universe of time; the period of eternity, without end
 1. **IOW**: the One who rules over time itself, being its *creator* and *sustainer*
 2. the word “ages” here is actually the same as the singular one at the end of the statement
 3. for Paul, the *doxology* is to the One who *transcends* time itself such that he *rules over it*
 - a. God exists *outside of time* – no past or future, only eternal “present”
 4. for Paul, this statement links to the phrase “Jesus Christ came into the world” (**v. 15**)
 - a. God enters *into time* (**i.e.** as both *immanent* [close] and *incarnate* [a part of it])
 2. **part #2**: “immortal, invisible, the only God” – the expression of God’s nature
 - a. “immortal” = lasting forever; imperishable; incorruptible by death or decay
 1. obviously, if God is the one who rules over time itself, he must be immortal
 - b. “invisible” = unseen; beyond the senses
 1. **i.e.** as an eternal Spirit, God exists on a “plane” so much higher than the world of time and space that he is (necessarily) “invisible” to us on this “plane”
 2. **note**: a key tenet of Christian thought is: because God is so profound, he is “invisible” to us, thus he must *reveal* himself to us to be “seen” (**i.e.** by the eyes and by the heart)
 - c. “the only God” = *mono-theos*; the existence of only one divine being
 1. **by definition**: there can be only one Creator of time and space; all other “gods” are simply fictions created in the minds of men from *within* time and space
 - d. Paul’s *doxology* is to the divine king who created time, is distinct from it, yet rules over every aspect of it – who’s nature is beyond the limits of time itself
 3. **part #3**: “be honor and glory forever and ever” – the ascription of honor forever
 - a. better translated: “to the ages of ages” – (**again**) the singular word *eon*
 1. **i.e.** forward to time immemorial; beyond the limits of time itself; even after time is ended
 4. **part #4**: “Amen” – the seal of agreement

- a. the connection to “*patience*” (in v. 16) – **how long was God patient with Paul?**
 - 1. note how everything in this doxology is *time-related* ...
- b. **the praise of Paul is to a God who’s patience endures not just in the short time prior to his conversion, but to a God who’s patience reaches back to eternity past, and one that will continue forever and ever**
 - 1. the nature of God is such that his patience is ***timeless***, and it is *for this reason* that Paul is *compelled* to break out in praise
- e. the application of *doxology* to us
 - 1. **question: what causes you to break out in spontaneous praise to God?**