

The Charge to Timothy – Part 8

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. the **completion** of the charge to Timothy (**read vv. 18-20**)
 - a. note the word “charge” here assumes that the definition of the word *has already been given*
2. the **substance** of the charge
 - a. the **nature** of the charge = challenge the **heterodoxy** that has invaded the church
 1. **principle: the church of Jesus Christ is defined by the boundaries of its doctrinal truth**
 2. 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 ...
 - b. the **aim** of the charge = as a way of showing true love
 - c. the **origin** of the charge = from a pure heart, a clean conscience, a *sincere* faith (**see below**)
 - d. the **target** of the charge = to those using law to control the church with a false power
 - e. the **personal nature** of the charge = because it is central to salvation and a life of faith
 - f. the **profundity** of the charge = within a profound view of the very nature of God himself
3. **Paul will now lay the charge at Timothy's feet, appealing to the calling that Timothy has received, with an example to help convince Timothy of the importance of this charge**

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

Content

b. the personal nature of the charge to Timothy (vv. 18-19a)

1. the *extremely personal* charge to Timothy (**i.e.** as “my child”)
 - a. not to be confused with “a child” – Paul does not consider Timothy to be *immature*
 1. the essence of this entire chapter implies that Paul thought Timothy fully able to do what was needed as a mature man, both spiritually and emotionally
 - b. rather “*my child*” – Paul considers Timothy to be his spiritual descendent (father-to-son)
 1. someone *converted* under his preaching at Lystra (**i.e.** a *literal* child of his)
 2. someone *trained* under his tutelage throughout Asia Minor (**i.e.** a *developed* child of his)
 3. someone *close to him* emotionally and spiritually in difficulties (**i.e.** an *adopted* child of his)
2. the *ordained calling* in the charge to Timothy (**i.e.** “in accordance with the prophecies ...”)
 - a. “*prophecies*” = because of the establishment of a “good word” over you in your calling
 1. probably not a *foretelling* of his place in the future (*i.e.* a *prediction*)
 2. rather, a sense of his own calling in the process of **ordination**
 - a. ordination = the setting aside of a man to a church office through the “transfer” of a calling via the laying on of hands; the extension of an office to a man through the “good word” given over him by other men **validating his calling in and by Christ**
 1. this parallels the words of Paul re: Timothy later in this letter (**1 Tim. 4:13-14**)
“Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.”
 2. this parallels the words of Paul re: Timothy in the next letter (**2 Tim. 1:5-6**)
“I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”
 - b. ordination is both 1) an *examination* and *affirmation* of a true gospel call upon an individual and 2) an *extension of the authority* of the church over him to *exercise* that calling

- b. “by them” = under the authority and responsibilities of your ordination
1. Paul believes that this charge is simply a part of (“in accordance with”) the calling that has been placed upon Timothy in his ordination to the gospel ministry
 - a. **IOW:** the authority to confront the heterodoxy in the church (and those advancing it) is *necessarily* a part of what it means to be a gospel minister
 1. **note:** “gift” in **1 Tim. 4:13f** is not (just) *ability* – it is an *authority* and *responsibility*
 2. **principle: the authority to preach the Word is not derived from the “permission” of the congregation, but is an extension of the authority of Christ himself**
 - a. **question:** how many ministers today preach *only* what their congregations will *allow* – how many ministers have been “run out” of their church because they *dared* challenged the “orthodoxy” of the congregation?
 - b. the *responsibilities* of ordination surely includes preaching and teaching, but it *also* includes addressing areas of church life that are unpleasant or difficult or **entrenched**
 - c. “wage the good warfare” = confront the heterodoxy with all of your strength and giftedness
 1. **fact:** those who will use falsehoods, traditions, legalisms, structures, etc. to glean power for themselves in the church will not just *stop* doing so just because they are “called out”
 - a. it is the natural tendency of people in positions of power to hold on to that power, regardless
 - b. Satan’s goal is always to *divide* the church along lines of power, and the steps that may be necessary to *heal* such divisions *will* result in some casualties along the way (**see below**)
 2. Paul recognizes that what Timothy is charged to do will be *exceedingly difficult*, but he must do it because it is the essence of his gospel calling
 - d. “holding faith and a good conscience” = maintaining your trust in Christ in doing the right thing
 1. this phrase parallels **v. 5** – the “aim” of this charge is “love” from:
 - a. “faith” or “sincere faith” – address the issue with a complete trust in the Lord of the church
 - b. “a good conscience” – address the issue knowing that you are doing the right thing
 1. **i.e.** that you have the best interests of the church at heart *and* that you are being obedient
3. **Paul entrusts this charge to Timothy because Timothy has been established to it – it is *his* responsibility to address, and he must do so with great *vigor*, as he trusts the Lord knowing it is the *right* thing to do**
- c. **the example within the charge to Timothy (vv. 19b-20)**
1. **note:** these verses are (IMO) an **example** that comes to Paul’s mind:
 - a. of men who are of the type that Timothy will need to address, and
 - b. of the action that may be needed by Timothy in addressing the underlying problem
 - c. **IOW:** Paul uses these two men as an example to Timothy of what *he himself* had to do in Ephesus
 2. **question #1:** who were these two men and what had they done?
 - a. “Alexander” = an unknown false teacher at Ephesus
 1. probably not the Alexander put forth at the theater mob (**Acts 19**) by the Jews to disassociate them from what Paul and his companions were teaching
 2. maybe the same Alexander mentioned by Paul in **2 Tim. 4:14**, a coppersmith that had done him great harm (although the mention of Troas immediately before may suggest another)
 - b. “Hymenaeus” (*HIGH meh NEE us*) = a known false teacher at Ephesus
 1. most likely the same man mentioned again in **2 Tim. 2:16ff**, and associated with Philetus
 2. there, Paul outlines the *specific teaching* that was troubling the church:

“Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some.”

 - a. a similar error corrected in **1 Cor. 15** – that the concept of a “resurrection” was to be taken only in the “spiritual” sense (based on Greek and Gnostic tendencies)
 - b. or, because flesh was inherently evil, the idea of resurrection was to be understood to have already taken place only in coming to the *special knowledge* of Christ
 - c. this destroys the literal resurrection of Jesus (and of us!), it implies that “faith” is only in knowing some truths, and says there is no connection between faith and holiness of life
 - d. **note:** these Gnostic tendencies are **rampant in the modern church**
 - c. “made shipwreck of their faith” = failed to navigate properly thus running aground; their own failure to steer their understandings properly, thus destroying their vessel (**i.e.** not due to storm)
 3. **question #2:** how had Paul responded to these two men and why did he take this action?
 - a. these words parallel the instructions of Paul in **1 Cor. 5:4**

“When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this incestuous man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

 1. **excommunication** = the *expulsion* of a member of the church due to unrepentant sin, in the hope that his removal from the church will cause him such pain that he will turn and be restored

- a. this particular step was first introduced by Jesus himself in **Matthew 18:17**
"If he refuses to listen to [the witnesses], tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."
- b. it is a necessary part of the Third Mark of a True Church (**i.e.** discipline)
- c. it has three (3) specific goals in mind (not just to **eliminate**):
 1. to stop additional damage to the reputation of the gospel coming out of the church
 2. to cause (spiritual) pain for the individual such that he or she repents of such sin
 3. to restore the individual back into the fullness of the body *for continued maturity*
- d. **e.g.** the continuing refusal of a member to participate in corporate worship *must* lead to such
- b. Paul took this action because these men needed to *"learn not to blaspheme"*
 1. *"blaspheme"* = to revile or curse the name of God; to use the name of God inappropriately
 2. Paul's considers this teaching *blasphemous* because it denies the authority of Jesus himself (as Lord, *by name*) to dictate the parameters of truth in the church (**i.e.** *they* get to make it up?)
- 4. **question #3:** why is this example relevant to Timothy and to us?
 - a. **reality: it will be necessary, in the life of the church, at times, to excommunicate members who refuse to hold fast to the covenant, either in their leading of others or in their failure to be obedient under the leadership of the elders (Hebrews 13:17)**
 1. Timothy was going to need to use the authority of his ordination to expel the false teachers
 2. **therefore, as a congregation of members, our expectation should be that everyone in the church adheres to the covenant, and that the elders will take the steps needed to hold fast the integrity and reputation of the message of the church**