

“Under Command” (1 Tim. 1:1-11)

1. God’s Command (1)

- a. Paul’s apostolic authority was accredited directly by God as marked by his unique conversion. As the voice of God thundered and spoke to him (Saul at the time), he was thrown off his horse, blinded, converted, and sent to be baptized and commissioned to spread the Gospel.
- b. Paul means little or small and it was the LORD who renamed him such. Saul (his former name) meant ‘desired’ or ‘petitioned.’ I find it pertinent that one whose name was to be desired and of whom was dedicated and determined to ascend in righteousness was transformed by Messiah to be an apostle (sent one) to promote that which he formerly tried to destroy.
- c. His position was to be desired and he was asked – if not volunteered – to wipe out the Christians = Saul. Yet God had made Him “Paul” (small) so as to command him.

2. Paul’s Command (2-3)

- a. Having the designation apostle (one who is sent) of Messiah meant carrying Christ’s authority and thus authority in the chain of command.
- b. Paul’s command to Timothy is, in essence, the same as was his own. As preachers of the Gospel, they were to equip the Church in doctrine – which produces “grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (2).

3. Timothy’s Command (3-4)

- a. It’s not an easy job. In fact, it cannot be done unless the one in the position of command is called and equipped. One must first be made small so to speak. We are all soldiers under command, but the offices called to equip the church must be filled by those called of Christ to do so.
- b. Without the resolve to stand up for the true faith (Jude 3), one will easily put up with error, immorality, distractions, etc. Timothy was relatively young and (like today) had many challenges to his authority, not the least of which were those “desiring to be teachers” (7).
- c. Therefore, Timothy was to “command” or “charge” such to cease from distractions and perversions of false teaching.
- d. Timothy means ‘one who honors God’ and the best way to do so is to uphold truth! Such is not popular, easy, nor periodic. It is a constant resolve to promote love via the Gospel and denounce the plethora of distortions, deceptions, and distractions which occur w/in the churches.
- e. Like today, teachers can easily get distracted by the sensational and desired topics. There were some who had unhealthy focus on genealogies to the point of distraction – if not distortion of the Gospel (2 Cor. 5:16-17). Those of the highest Jewish order boasted of their lineage as being Abraham’s seed, yet Jesus called them sons of Satan and not from God cf. Jn. 8:39-47 e.g. vv. 44 & 47.
- f. There are such “fables” and “genealogies” today which both draw on the sensational and heretically focus on the flesh. Respectively, they distract from and distort the integrity of the Gospel. We must avoid speculation and cling to the mere revelation. We must avoid sensation and glory in the call of the rugged Cross instead!
- g. Therefore; we, like Timothy, are not to suggest but command the prohibition of such.

4. Love’s Command (5-7)

- a. The command (and Commandments) are from love. Their impetus is goodness, truth, and life.
 - i. A redeemed heart is a good benevolent heart.
 - ii. A good conscience is one awakened by the Spirit – not excusing sin.
 - iii. A sincere faith is one as quickened by God and results in salvation.
- b. Love’s purpose is seek the benefit of others. Therefore it is patient / longsuffering and able to bear the load – exposing itself to shelter the beloved. Like a roof which is exposed and takes the brunt of weather so as to shelter those inside.

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- c. Therefore, the roof – love – does not rejoice in or tolerate compromise which allows the elements of weather i.e. corrupting forces to get in and corrode (infiltrate) due to a lack of integrity (e.g. holes in roof).¹
 - d. The command of love is beautiful, good, and true! And pure love is often misunderstood because its expression is found in the Law – of which the world detests. The Decalogue is ignored, ridiculed, misrepresented, and perverted in word and by the lifestyles of the world. But it is only the Law of God which leads us to ultimate liberation.
 - e. Conversely, for the false teacher, prominence is the motive (7). Their actions are motivated by their selfish desires. They are not willing to expose themselves for the sheep or even to sacrifice for them. Rather they elevate themselves as wise and intellectual and favored (genealogy).
 - f. However, they neither understand love nor the Law (7) →
5. Law’s Command (8-11)
- a. Even false teachers know that they must acknowledge the Word and its Law but they misapply it. They misunderstand it (7) thus misuse it (8). Just because one says he preaches the Word does not mean that he preaches the intent of it!
 - b. They think themselves righteous, not knowing theirs is like filthy rags. As if the Law confirms them and only condemns the dirt bags, deplorables, and irredeemables.
 - c. Jesus explained that the Law also condemns the deceitful and desperately wicked heart. Thus the Law’s commands drive the unrighteous to the Cross of Christ. Acts 17:30-31 = revelation of Christ unto repentance and salvation.
 - d. Those who think themselves righteous have a misunderstanding of the Law (7) and of the Gospel. They have a high view of themselves because of their low view of the Law. This is why Jesus articulated that adultery, murder, envy, and such are not just found in the acts of violation but proceed from coveting, lust, pride, and insecurities in the heart.
 - e. Therefore the Law excused no evil and commands punishment for the violators. Its purpose is to expose our sin and reveal God’s purity (righteousness).
 - f. Those who are driven to Christ have a high view of the Law and of God’s righteousness thus a low view of theirs. E.g. the gospel of social justice values redistribution and reparations – not repentance. It esteems groups of different people according to the flesh (e.g. ethnicity) and social status (the oppressed and oppressors). Only certain groups need to repent and repay while the others must rise and ascend to power.

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We are all under command. All men are commanded to repent (Acts 17:30). And of those who have heeded the command, we are under another command, namely, to preach the Gospel of Christ. Many claim to have this as their preeminent purpose and they are indeed very evangelistic. However, fervor and consistency are only as “pure,” “good,” and “sincere” as correctly lined up with God’s, the Apostles’, Love’s, and the Law’s motives. One can easily and cleverly pervert the meanings of such commanding realities while appearing benevolent. But the truth and impetus of these righteous authorities is often rejected or perverted as they are initially offensive. Everything in the flesh wars against truth, righteousness, and God’s authority. But we must take our marching orders with solemn sobriety and receive courage from Christ to stand for truth and against all perversions of it without apology or retreat.

¹ For points b. and c. cf. 1 Cor. 13:4-7.