**The Purpose of the Commandment**

*1 Timothy 1*

**Introduction**

1. It seems that some (both preachers and otherwise) have lost the proper perspective on the purpose of God’s word.
2. A study of Paul’s inspired explanation to Timothy proves beneficial.
3. What is the aim of preaching, listening to preaching, and studying God’s word?
4. A Charge to Teach Nothing but Sound Doctrine **(vv. 3-11)**
5. Timothy’s Work in Ephesus **(vv. 3-4)**
   1. Charge others – **(v. 3)** – Teach no other doctrine:
      1. Sound doctrine – **(v. 10)**
      2. Glorious gospel – **(v. 11)**
   2. Nor give heed – **(v. 4)** – fables and endless genealogies.
      1. **Fables** – fictional stories.
         1. **Mythos** – a tale, i.e. fiction (Strong)
         2. **Blended with gospel** – appealed to some suggested parallels with these stories to win some to the gospel.
            1. **Then their faith is in the wisdom of men**.
            2. **Cf. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5** – not human wisdom, but power of God.
      2. **Endless genealogies** – arguments about Jewish lineage – stories fabricated around names that have no info.
         1. **Greek as well** – tracing lineage back to someone of high repute.
      3. Cause – disputes (senseless and fruitless arguments)
         1. No infallible standard to stand upon, but anecdotes, tales, etc.
         2. ONLY UNITY POSSIBLE IN THE GOSPEL.
      4. Rather than – godly edification:
         1. ***“rather than furthering the administration of God” (NASB)*** – i.e. His will, or doctrine – dispensation – dispensing His will.
            1. ***“edification”*** – *Oikonomia* – *oikos*, “a house,” *nomos*, “a law” (VINE)

**Cf. 1 Timothy 3:15** – house of God, church of God, pillar/ground of truth.

(3) program of instruction, training (BDAG)

* + - 1. ***“in faith”*** – or ***“BY FAITH”*** (NASB) – i.e. God’s administration is accomplished by faith.
         1. **Romans 1:17** – faith to faith.
         2. **Romans 10:17** – faith comes by hearing God’s word.
      2. Such fables and endless genealogies prevent God’s work, not further it 🡪

1. The Purpose of the Commandment **(vv. 5-7)**
   1. The commandment’s purpose (of God, doctrine, sound doctrine, glorious gospel) – **(v. 5):**
      1. ***“Commandment”*** – parallel with ***“doctrine” (v. 3),*** ***“sound doctrine” (v. 10)***, ***“glorious gospel” (v. 11).***
         1. Contrasted with ***“fables and endless genealogies” (v. 4).***
         2. **I.e. “the administration of God” is not furthered by “fables and endless genealogies,” but by the commandment with this “purpose.”**
      2. **Love** – ultimately to keep God’s commandments (God and neighbor – **Matthew 22:37-40**) **(cf. John 14:15)**
         1. **Pure heart** – heart not tainted by impurities, but fully devoted to God.
            1. **Is the “love” you claim to have include matters outside of God’s will? – it is not pure.**
         2. **Good conscience** – make the conscience clean from sin.
            1. **Your conscience is cleansed from dead works, and by the commandment of God is directed in the way of righteousness which promotes a good conscience**.

**Hebrews 9:14** – necessary to serve God acceptably.

* + - * 1. **When one does what the commandment says they ensure a good conscience**.
      1. **Sincere faith** – faith that is unhypocritical, from God’s word (**Romans 10:17**).
         1. **Not partial obedience, but perfect (complete) faith accompanied with the works God ordained**.
         2. **Not pretend faith, but true devotion to God**.
    1. **Administration of God** – by His word to produce love that obeys His commands, such love is of a heart free from the impurities of sin and error, such purity cultivates a good conscience, such a purity and good conscience inheres in unhypocritical faith from God’s word.
    2. THIS IS WHAT IS ACCOMPLISHED BY GOSPEL PREACHING.
  1. Some have strayed from the purpose – **(v. 6):**
     1. Instead involved in ***“idle talk”*** – that of **(v. 4)**
     2. **(v. 7)** – they want to be teachers, but don’t even know the purpose of the commandment they propose to teach.
     3. They use the law unlawfully – compare **vv. 3-4, 8-11**

1. The Proper Use of the Law **(vv. 8-11)**
   1. There is a proper and improper use of the law – **(v. 8)**
   2. The law is used to correct what is wrong by directing back to sound doctrine **(vv. 9-11).**
      1. **(v. 9)** – not (merely)…but (especially)
      2. It exposes wrong so that men may do right.
      3. To direct love, to purify, to make the conscience clear of sin, and to produce faith in God.
2. Paul as an Example **(vv. 12-17)**
3. Placed into the Ministry Although a Former Enemy **(vv. 12-13)**
   1. Paul considers himself blessed to be involved in such a work.
   2. A work that he once was set out to destroy.
   3. And so, in light of the context of the gospel in which he now ministers, he considers his own salvation.
      1. That in connection with the very purpose of the commandment, and the administration of God by faith.
      2. **If anyone is positioned to make a charge to wage the warfare (v. 18) and to teach no other doctrine (v. 3) it is Paul – the one who is not only entrusted with the gospel, but WHO CONSIDERS HIMSELF TO BE THE GREATEST BENEFICIARY OF IT.**
      3. ***“committed to my trust”*** – and he is going to defend it as such.
4. The Salvation of Paul **(vv. 14-17)**
   1. Grace of God accompanied with faith and love **(v. 14):**
      1. Grace – **Titus 2:14-15** – teaching.
         1. Ananias sent with the ***“doctrine” (v. 3),*** ***“commandment” (v. 4)***, ***“glorious gospel” (v. 11)*** – **Acts 9:6** – what you must do; **Acts 22:10, 16** – appointed for you to do, baptized, wash away sins.
      2. What accompanied that grace? – ***“with faith and love”***
         1. ***“the administration of God which is by faith” (v. 4,*** NASB).
            1. Communication of God’s instruction/commandment/doctrine was from ***“faith to faith” – “by” or “in faith.”***
            2. I.e. the grace that was “exceedingly abundant” toward Paul WAS BY THE TEACHING OF THE GOSPEL IN PRODUCTION OF FAITH (**cf. Romans 10:17)**.
         2. Purpose of the commandment – **(v. 5)** – love.
            1. Such a visitation of God’s grace in the gospel accomplished its purpose.
   2. Christ came to save **(v. 15)** – this is why He came, and this is why His gospel is to be preached.
   3. Paul as a pattern for salvation for those going to believe **(v. 16):**
      1. Pattern – i.e. this is how any and all can be saved.
      2. What was Paul? – **(v. 13)**
         1. **Blasphemer** – law for “ungodly…unholy and profane” (v. 9)
         2. **Persecutor** – law for “insubordinate” (v. 9) – “It is hard for you to kick against the goads” (Acts 9:5).
         3. **Insolent (violent) man** – law for “murderers…manslayers…kidnappers” (vv. 9-10)
         4. I.e. the “doctrine” “commandment” “law” “sound doctrine” “glorious gospel” was given to Paul, and turned him from his sins to faith and love in Christ to the salvation of his soul.
   4. Praise to God (**v. 17)**
5. A Charge to Wage the Good Warfare – Fight for Sound Doctrine **(vv. 18-20)**
6. Paul’s Charge in Accordance with the Inspired Word **(v. 18)**
   1. ***“according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare” (ASV).***
      1. Prophecy – inspired teaching
      2. Led the way – i.e. established before you, and led you to Christ and salvation.
   2. By these wage the good warfare – i.e. fight against sin, error, and the misuse of the law BY USING SOUND DOCTRINE.
7. The State in Which this Charge is Carried Out **(v. 19a)**
   1. **Faith** – that which is by His word (**Romans 10:17).**
      1. **Claim to religion or faith w/out God’s word is not Biblical faith**.
   2. **Good conscience** – clean from sin so as to remain true to God’s word in teaching it.
      1. If teaching God’s word is approached in a bad conscience then God’s word is in danger of compromise and distortion to ease said conscience.
   3. How? **(v. 5)** – by taking heed according to the commandment. (**4:16** – take heed to yourself and to the doctrine)
8. The Failure of Others to Do So **(vv. 19b-20)**
   1. Some rejected:
      1. **Faith** – did not trust solely in God’s word (not faithful to His word).
         1. Did not seek to have their actions dictated by God’s word.
      2. **Good conscience** – conscience guilty of sin as they sought to teach. (Especially in fundamental sense of refusing to simply teach the truth – can’t say in good conscience they have.)
   2. Suffered shipwreck concerning ***“the faith”*** (Gospel) –THEIR TEACHING AND ACTIONS ARE IN CONTRADICTION TO GOD’S WORD AS THEY CLAIM TO TEACH GOD’S WORD – USE LAW UNLAWFULLY **(V. 8)** – MAKE SHIPWRECK OF THE FAITH. (Hinder the gospel – cause disputes, **v. 4)**
   3. Identified – **(v. 20)** – Hymenaeus and Alexander:
      1. Paul disciplined (withdrew from) them – likely alongside the church in Ephesus. (**cf. 1 Corinthians 5:5)**
      2. Their doctrine was “blasphemous” – they needed to learn such:
         1. When God’s word is misused in this way “blasphemy” is committed.
         2. **Blasphemy** – “to speak slanderously, impiously, profanely” (blapto, “to injure,” and pheme, “a saying”) (Vine)
         3. Injurious to who? God. How? – **v. 4** – cause disputes rather than further His administration in faith.
9. Applications for Preaching, Teaching, and Hearing
10. Understand the Purpose of the Commandment (of teaching) **(v. 5)**
    1. Administration of God in faith **– v. 4**
       1. Not merely educational.
       2. Not entertainment.
       3. Not a hobby. Etc.
    2. Love – from pure heart, good conscience, sincere faith.
11. Teach and Demand Only Sound Doctrine (**vv. 3, 10**)
    1. Sound – healthy.
    2. Only sound doctrine is spiritually healthy.
    3. Nothing contrary to it, and nothing like fables, etc.
       1. Such does not accomplish the “purpose of the commandment.”
       2. Where would Paul have been if he was presented with doctrine foreign to the pure gospel, or a fable, etc.?
12. The Gospel is Doctrine (**vv. 10-11**)
    1. Idea of “core gospel” to suggest “unity in diversity” – extending fellowship.
    2. We only have to agree on the “core gospel?”
    3. Gospel and doctrine refer to the same message in scripture. (Includes teaching against sin and error.)
13. There is War to Wage (**v. 18**)
    1. “Sound doctrine” is specified because of the reality of UNSOUND doctrine.
    2. There are ***“deceiving spirits” (4:1***) – this is serious and real, we are at war, and all are called to battle!
14. Have Faith and a Good Conscience (**v. 19**)
    1. **Preachers** – trust only in God’s word and keep self from sin or “the faith” will be compromised and suffer shipwreck.
       1. **Stand by faith** – which is in the gospel.
    2. **Listeners** (all Christians) – same, or else we will reject “the faith” and seek things to ease our defiled conscience instead of repair it.

**Conclusion**

1. In a world which abuses God’s word, His people must understand its purpose.
2. We need to have constant remembrance of the place God’s word has, and never go against God’s intended purpose.