

## INTRODUCTION

We have trouble dealing with men who are in power.

If they seem to be doing us good, we are tempted to put our trust in them, and to give them undue honor rather than to trusting in God and giving Him the highest honor.

If they seem to be doing us evil, we are tempted to be afraid of them rather than fearing God only. If we often succumb to such temptations, and live like that, we will be blown back and forth by the winds of political and economic fortunes. We repeatedly will be disappointed by false hopes, and we constantly will be dismayed by vague fears.

That is not the kind of life that our Lord Jesus Christ will have His servants to live, neither Timothy in Ephesus 2,000 years ago, nor us here today.

So, our Lord's apostle Paul, as the Holy Ghost carried him along, wrote for Timothy and for us a doxology, a word of praise, about God, for us to ponder. In pondering the excellencies of God, we will find clarity of mind and strength of will to resist such temptations, and to walk in the truth.

This doxology is spoken in praise to God, to the divine being, to Jehovah. But, as I said to you last week, to the person of God the Father in particular. Hear this world of praise to God.

## TEXT

1 Timothy 6:15-16 which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, (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.

## BODY

- I. We Are Tempted By Men's Apparent Blessedness or Happiness
  - A. We see people in this world living as greatly blessed
    1. healthy, even into old age
    2. good looking
    3. wealthy
    4. talented
    5. popular - they have a million subscribers to their channel
  - B. But God is infinitely blessed, perfectly happy
  - C. All lesser blessedness of men on earth is from Him, as He gives blessing according to His will and by His power

## II. We Are Tempted By Men's Power to Rule Over Us

- A. Men get power for themselves, and use that power to rule over us
  - 1. they incur huge debts, which they have the power to make us and our children pay the payments on
  - 2. they pass laws or court rulings that impose radical changes to society, and they have the power both to enforce those new rules and to keep them from being repealed
- B. They rule over us with false promises of good intentions
  - 1. this will save the environment
  - 2. this will right the wrongs of racism
  - 3. this will prevent the spread of disease
  - 4. this will lift people out of poverty
- C. They rule not by doing what is right, but by mere force
  - 1. if they ruled over us by insisting on what is right, the vast majority would consent, and there would be need for enforcement only in extreme cases
  - 2. but they rule over us arbitrarily, according to whatever their will is at the moment, and so their rule must be enforced with violence and the threat of it; they use the sword not to punish and terrify evil-doers, but to punish and terrify those who do good, because they make many good things to be against their arbitrary rules
- D. This power that men have to rule over us tempts us
  - 1. to be afraid of what the wicked powerful rules might do to us
  - 2. to pin our hopes to seemingly-good men who promise to oppose them
- E. But against that temptation, consider that God is the only Potentate
  - 1. Here we see the old-fashioned word "potentate"
    - a) essential meaning is "power"
    - b) derived meaning is "ruler" or "sovereign"
  - 2. That captures the Greek word *dunastes*
    - a) essential meaning is "power"
    - b) derived meaning is "ruler" or "sovereign"
  - 3. all power is in God;
    - a) He exercises it all;
    - b) He gives power to men for a time; but their power is derived from Him, and serves His pleasure;
    - c) all exercise of power by men accomplishes what God has decreed
    - d) a man might be potent; but God is omnipotent --- a man might be powerful, but God is all-powerful

### III. We Are Tempted By Men's Powerful Positions

- A. Men in this world attain to powerful positions
  - 1. in government: king, lord, president, governor, judge, senator, chairman, mayor, sheriff
  - 2. in business: owner, CEO, president, manager, foreman
  - 3. in education: president, professor, provost, dean, superintendent, principal
- B. From those positions, they wield power, which effects us, and to some extent controls us
- C. When men's powerful positions tempt you to trust in them, or to be afraid of them, consider how God's position is infinitely more powerful than any of theirs
  - 1. He is King of kings and Lord of lords
  - 2. every man holding a position of power holds it only because God has given it to him
  - 3. every high position has power only because of God's providence
  - 4. the King of kings and Lord of lords sets men up in positions of power and brings them down whenever He pleases
- D. Hear in these glorious titles the truth that Jesus Christ our Lord is God, in that He also is called by these titles - Revelation 19:16
  - 1. in today verses, God, whom no one can see, is called King of kings and Lord of lords
  - 2. in Revelation, our Lord Jesus Christ is called by those same titles
    - a) identified
      - (1) 19:13 His name is called The Word of God
      - (2) pictured as having body and parts
      - (3) pictured wearing a robe
    - b) named - 19:16
  - 3. we know, then, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is man as we are, also is God as God the Father is

#### IV. We Are Tempted By Men's Power Over Our Lives

- A. In this world, powerful men seem to have great power over our lives
  1. Powerful men can take people lives
    - a) can sentence people to death and have them executed
    - b) can wage war, killing many people
  2. Powerful men can ruin people's lives
- B. Powerful men often stay in power for their whole lives
- C. When that power that men seem to have over our lives tempts you to trust in them, or to be afraid of them, lift your eyes to heaven and think of how God alone has immortality
  1. immortality
    - a) Gr for being subject to death is *thnetos*
    - b) Gr word here is *a-thanasia*
    - c) our word for being subject to death is "mortal" from the Latin
    - d) our word here is "im-mortality"
  2. God is the only being who has life in and of Himself
  3. all other living beings have life from God
  4. all other beings who have immortality have it as a gift from God
  5. powerful wicked men might have the power to kill the body; but God has granted that Jesus Christ will raise from the dead all who believe in Him; He will raise us up at the last day

## V. We Are Tempted By Men's Inaccessibility

- A. In the case of the many powerful men, one of the imposing things about them is that we cannot get an appointment to see them
  1. they keep themselves behind imposing walls and fences on grand estates
  2. they transport themselves in luxurious limousines, helicopters, and jet planes
  3. they surround themselves with assistants and bodyguards
  4. only a select few ever get access to them personally
- B. This inaccessibility tempts us to put too much trust in them if we perceive them to be good, and to be afraid of them if we perceive them to be wicked
- C. But shift your gaze from inaccessible men to the infinitely inaccessible God
  1. it is not merely hard to get in to see him
  2. instead, the Bible says that no man has seen Him or can see Him
  3. He shows Himself in heaven, which we cannot see; it is as if He lives behind the sun and the stars and the clouds
  4. when He would have us think of Him as visiting us here, He shows a vision of a glorious chariot, with the cherubim as living wheels
  5. He is surrounded by a retinue of glorious heavenly creatures, some of them flying around Him, covering their eyes against His brightness
  6. and we see Him only as He chooses to reveal Himself to our created eyes
  7. He shows Himself to us in such bright manifestations as a burning bush, a pillar of fire, shining white appearance
  8. He describes Himself as being clothed with light and as dwelling in light so bright we cannot approach Him in it
- D. Despite the fact that by nature the creature cannot see or approach the Creator, and despite the fact that we sinful men are separated from God by our sins, God has made Himself accessible to us by the way He has provided, which is through our Lord Jesus Christ.
  1. in His taking on our humanity
  2. in His dying for our sins on the cross
  3. He has opened the way for us to approach God
  4. believing in Jesus Christ our Savior, we have access to God through faith
  5. we come before God and are accepted by God because He considers those who believe in Christ to be in Christ through faith

## CONCLUSION

Do not be dazzled by the apparent blessedness or happiness of certain men in this world. God is the one infinitely blessed or happy.

Do not be overawed by the power some men have to rule over us in this world. God is the only Potentate who truly has that power.

Do not be overly impressed with the positions from which some men exercise power in this world. God's position is infinitely higher than any of theirs. God is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Do not tremble at some men's power over our lives here in this world. God is the only One over whom no one has power, and who has power of life and death over every creature.

Do not be to impressed by the inaccessibility of the rich and famous. No man has seen God, or can see Him, as He dwells in unapproachable light.

Then, let highest honor be given not to men, but to God.

Recognizing that men have power in this world only during their short lives, let us praise God as the one who has everlasting power, eternal dominion.

~~Jeremiah~~ - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 145:1-3

Roel - Scripture Reading - Deuteronomy 10:12-21

Thad - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Psalm 29:10-11

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 81 "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 2 "God, My King, Thy Might Confessing" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 362 "Let Thy Blood, In Mercy Poured"

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...invisible...

1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Deuteronomy 4:15-16 Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: (16) Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,

...who only hath immortality...

John 5:26

Genesis 2:7

Psalm 104:29-30

...dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto...

Psalm 104:1-2 Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. (2) Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

Trapp: ...chief among all things sensible, as coming nearest to the unapproachable glory of God

Poole: wherewith therefore he may well be said to be covered or hid from the eyes of mortal men.

Henry: Of all visible beings light comes nearest to the nature of a spirit, and therefore with that God is pleased to cover himself, that is, to reveal himself under that similitude, as men are seen in the clothes with which they cover themselves; and so only, for his face cannot be seen.

Barnes (as Poole): Referring to the first work of creation, Genesis 1:3

This is the exact language from the NT, from the KJV.