

1Timothy 6:20–21

Guarded by Christ by Guarding What Is Christ's

Thursday, March 16, 2023 ▫ Read 1 Timothy 6:20–21

Questions from the Scripture text: Concerning whom does the apostle now address Timothy (v20)? What is he to do? To what? How did he obtain this deposit? What two things must he avoid? What pseudonym do others give these babblings of empty talk and these contradictions (end of v20)? What have some done with this "knowledge" (v21)? And what has this profession led them to stray from? In opposition to this danger, with what blessing does the apostle conclude the letter?

What endangers our doctrine, and what does this endanger us of doing? 1Timothy 6:20–21 looks forward to the second reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **it is critically important for us to maintain biblical truth and reject the temptation to think that we have come into some secret knowledge of our own.**

This letter began urging Timothy that he was left in Ephesus to not permit any other doctrine (1:3). Halfway through, the apostle summarizes that he's writing, even though he plans to come shortly, so that the church may maintain its role as the pillar and ground of truth (3:14–16). Now, the conclusion of the letter is an urgent plea to guard the deposit entrusted to him (v20).

A deposit that must be kept. We learn from the language of v20 that the truth is a deposit; it isn't ours. It belongs to God as His possession, to the church as its charge, and to the world of sinners as their only hope. It is a deposit entrusted from God, kept by the church, for the sake of the world. As any who are well-instructed know, when something precious belongs to someone else, you should take even greater care with it than you would if it was your own. And if it is God's, and if it is the world's only hope, how then should we take care of it?

All addition must be avoided. In the second half of v20, we learn the great threat to the truth: not lies but things that go by the pseudonym of truth. Sadly, much of what gets presented as knowledge in the churches is actually "babblings of empty talk." How can we know that it's empty? It doesn't come from the Scripture. Truth is what was entrusted to the church as a deposit, not something that the church may add to. Scripture is the only authoritative interpreter of Scripture, and it never contradicts itself. Anything we attempt to add will instead be "contradictions"—falsehoods that cannot entirely synthesize with the truth of Scripture.

All must take heed not to fall. The apostle warns Timothy about what happened to others who have not guarded against the temptation to think that they had special knowledge apart from the Bible. They strayed from the faith. In the author's short time on the earth, many have attempted to add—whether feminism, evolutionism, tolerance of homosexuality, or some other "new truth"—and ended up rejecting the entire faith altogether. The apostle did not want Timothy to think that he was immune from getting caught up in some new, extrabiblical "knowledge" to the destruction of his profession and theology.

This keeping and avoiding and taking heed was not something that the apostle expected Timothy to do in his own strength. Rather, the closing greeting is also a prayer that God's grace would be with him. God Himself, by grace, is Timothy's hope for fulfilling his ministry. And it is our hope, too, for learning and holding to the truth of Scripture and not straying from the faith.

God has given us the Bible to be the substance of private worship, family worship, and corporate worship. He has given us the Lord's Day and how to keep it. In addition to apostles, prophets, and evangelists, He has given us pastor-teachers. He has given us congregations that hold together to a pattern of sound words. He has given us husbands and fathers. And most of all, He has given us His Spirit, that we might humbly be kept, rather than self-assuredly end up straying. May His grace be with you, dear reader!

What are you doing, in your life, to learn the Scriptures and what they teach? What are you doing to avoid getting into extrabiblical teaching that appears wise but isn't? What does it look like for you to depend upon the Lord in order not to fall for human knowledge?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for keeping Your truth for us in Your Word, throughout the centuries. Forgive us for when we have given in to the seductive desire to think that we had special knowledge apart from it and apart from Your own stated way of preserving it. Truly, our pride has endangered us of straying from the truth. Forgive us, and preserve us by Your grace, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

ARP1 "How Blessed the Man" or TPH273 "Break, Thou the Bread of Life"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First, Timothy 6:20 and 21. These are God's words. Oh, Timothy guard. What was committed to your trust? Avoid the profane and idle babblings. And contradictions. Of what is falsely called, knowledge. By professing it some have strayed, concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen. So far the reading. Of the word of God.

Timothy has been left behind on this particular trip. By Paul in the city of Ephesus with the church. In Ephesus, and there has been some decline in the church of Ephesus. Not only have they ordained men that should not have been ordained. So there's instruction here for Ordaining, the right kind of man and the right kind of way both for the office of elder and also for the office of deacon and restoring order to the church.

Having the role of The full-time. Praying widows properly established, the ones over 60 who meet those qualifications. And also having men being the ones who lead in prayer in the home and in the gathering in every place and women. Conducting themselves with modesty not taking authority and not teaching either their husband in the home or in the church where there are also men.

So he's left instructions for reordering, the church and he's left some instructions for Reforming, the behavior of the church that they would walk in godliness. And he's made the point that one of the results of not having the right men ordained in the right way has been that the doctrine of the church.

Has been messed up and that the doctor of the church being messed up is the reason why the godliness Has declined in the church. And ungodliness has arisen

in the churches doctrine, that accords with godliness. And so, that is the main thing that Timothy is doing here aiming at keeping the church as that pillar and buttress of the truth.

As he says, at the end of the middle chapter, right there in the middle of the Of the letter. In verse 15 of chapter 3. So getting the letter he says, as I urged you when I went into Macedonia remain an emphasis that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

And then in the middle of the letter, he says these things are right to you though. I hope to come shortly. But if I'm delayed, I write so that you may know how you want to conduct yourself in the house of God which is the church of the living, god the pillar and ground of truth and then he goes on to say, great is a mystery of godliness and gives there's wonderful lines about the glory of the divinity.

And the redemption accomplished by Christ. And then now at the end of the letter he says, oh Timothy Guard. What was committed to your trust, or the deposit? Guard. The entrusted thing. Guard the deposit. Avoiding. Profane idle babblings. You notice that? The word and is not in there. Originally, they are babblings of empty talk, literally, avoiding two things.

One Babblings of empty talk and contradictions. So, those who want to be teachers or think themselves,

So those who think themselves teachers are want themselves to be experts? Take for themselves that which actually belongs in the church, only to those for whom God has given it. They Teach in two different ways, one. Hey, is The Babel empty talk. Even though the the babbling the empty talk that they babble, Goes by the pseudonym, literally in the in verse 20 of knowledge.

And then they also like to contradict that which is taught that is true. Well, I don't believe that's exactly. So blah blah blah blah. Well, and so that's how they puff themselves up Timothy on the other hand is not to have. Some new thing is not to try to elevate himself by producing some new ideas or correcting, the ideas of those who have gone before him.

No the truth and the church is something that is entrusted to it. It receives it from God as a deposit and it preserves it for the next generation, the church is not a place for innovation. Theological innovation is not creativity to be admired but heresy to be condemned And so that's the first thing we see here is that the truth is a deposit that must be kept.

The churches a non-secret society that has been given this treasure that it must protect and preserve for the generations. That are still coming. Therefore, all addition must be avoided. That, which is added. Hey, is referred to here as The idle empty talk or the sorry the babblings. Of empty talk.

If it doesn't come from the Bible, then it shouldn't be taught or preached in the church. In fact, not only must nothing be added, but one of the reasons nothing must be added is because if we add, then we will contradict that which the Lord has already given us.

One of the great evidences of scripture being the word of god is how something that was given in 66 books through dozens of men, over thousands of years. Could be entirely and completely internally consistent. A man doesn't even agree with himself from week to week. But here is something that conveys not the mind of a man but the not the mind of God.

And so that internal consistency of the Bible, which is amazingly. So even those who think that they've discovered, they might end discovered a contradiction here or they might have discovered a contradiction there. Well, they're wrong, they haven't but suppose there were just one or two. It still would be something that was impossible for man.

And so they're only two options. The first option is, It's actually divine nor there aren't two options. There's only one option. The only option is that it's actually divine and therefore, the things that you thought were contradictions were not. Because it can't be human. Because supposing those were actual contradictions than what's it going to be something that's impossible for man to produce who produced it then And so, The word of god does not contradict itself, you know what does contradict itself?

Or do you know, it does contradict the word of god, anything we try to add to it from ourselves. There is no way. To add a new idea to the doctrine of scripture. With the same consistency that scripture has within itself. Coming up with new ideas, rather than rightly, understanding and explaining what's there in, the Bible will always introduce contradictions.

And so if we don't want to mess up, our doctrine, on the whole than either, we won't add anything or if we do, and God forgive us. If we do. But may also then God spare us from being consistent. Because if you add something from outside the bible, or if you misunderstand something that's in the Bible and then you consistently follow through, Whatever it is that you're adding or misunderstanding, you will undo All of the doctrine of the Bible, you will not know the triune God.

You will not know Christ as the great revelation of the triune God. You will not know God as your Savior and christ and his atonement as the way in which God has accomplished that salvation. And God, the spirit as the way in which the salvation, which Christ is accomplished is applied to those whom, the father has sent the son and the spirit to save And so, it's very, very important that we keep the main doctrines, the main doctrines, But also that we seek to understand rightly and keep the charge that is entrusted to us and not add anything.

Because if we do then we will end up not just in Babblings of empty talk. But we will also end up with contradictions. And the contradictions will threaten to undo the faith. That's what he says, isn't it in verse 21 by professing it some have strayed. Concerning the faith.

That should be very alarming to us. And a strong warning against the desire to come up with new ways. Of understanding the Bible. Lest we lose. God himself. Lest we lose the gospel? Last we lose Christ. Last we find ourselves. Never to have actually believed from the heart. But merely held to a set of ideas.

Which got undone by the new ideas that we tried to add. So, one indicator of someone who genuinely believes is, he doesn't try to add new ideas. He is glad humbly to receive what the Lord has given him in the Bible and humbly to receive it. In the way that the Lord gives it, which means From the apostle and then the ones to whom the apostle, entrusted the deposit And then others to whom it was further entrusted.

That the Lord actually uses apostle's prophets evangelists and pastor teachers. And somebody who says, solar scriptura not to mean, The Bible alone as the rule of faith and practice because it belongs to Christ. But to mean, Me alone with my Bible. That person is not trusting in Christ, he's not trusting the Bible because

it's Christ's because Christ has also given us the pastor teachers And Christ has told us in the Bible.

That he uses elders. Faithful elders from one generation to the next to guard the deposit. That has been preserved in the church. What's going to be very careful because There's great difference between saying solar script or a meaning, the Bible is Christ's own words and therefore is the highest authority.

And using the idea of solar scriptura to mean, Just me and my Bible. Because just me and my Bible is not even with the Bible teaches. And you're not trusting Christ at that point. You're falling into. That which Paul is warning Timothy about. And it should also sober, I said, we should find it.

A great warning here. That Timothy has to be warned about this himself. These are singular. Verbs in this command. Or this is a singular verb in this command. And his warning Timothy that. That the same. Faith is not quite the right word. The same result that came. To others who did not guard the truth in the way that the apostles commanding him here.

That they strayed concerning the faith. And then just stray on the other things that they add it. Are the little contradictions that they made. They strayed concerning the faith. And if Timothy is in danger of that, Then certainly, we are all in danger of it and May God the Holy spirit.

Help us. To heed the warning. With which this letter concludes. And that's course exactly how it happens. Doesn't say Timothy guard. What was committed to your trust? And, As a result, Grace will be with you. No Grace will be with him to keep him. From losing from straying from the faith.

From ending up being in error and in heresy. Ultimately, It is not our resolve not. To go off in false doctrine that will keep us from going off in false doctrine. It is got himself. Christ himself. By his spirit. Who will keep us and preserve us. And so, as we read this hear it, we think.

Yes, Lord, please Help me to guard. Help me to believe that what you have inscribed in your word and preserved through your church and handed down from generations of faithful elders until it reached me. But we say, God is the one who's helping me in one of the ways he's helping me.

Is I'm reading that which the Holy spirit carried Paul to write, I'm reading and hearing. That which has been taught by means of the scripture. From Timothy to other elders to other elders, to other elders. Until? The Lord in his providence, brought it to me and he himself is still using it.

In my life. And Lord willing and my children's, their children's in a generation. Yet to come. My father in heaven, we thank you that it is by your grace by your almighty spirit doing that. For which you have sent him forth for which he is. Proceeded from the sun.

And we pray that. You would help us to understand believe. What we read and hear in the Bible. And that you would keep us from The pride and covetousness. That once makes us want to be inventors of new things. How that sound like knowledge but I really just battling of empty talk.

Save us from doing that. Lord save us. Have from contradicting, anything. In your word. Last, we Be so infatuated with and pleased with our own ideas. That we end up spraying from the faith. Save us, Lord. Don't let us do that. We ask. In Jesus name, amen.