

2 Timothy 1:13-2:2

Protect and Preserve the Gospel

¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

¹⁵ You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains, ¹⁷ but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me— ¹⁸ may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day!—and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

2 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

Literary Context

Paul has given a summary of the gospel, spoken of its great benefits, of his own commitment to it, even to the point of suffering.

Describe, summarize the gospel

Historical Context**Biblical Context****Melodic Line****Sermon Thesis****Textual Structure**

Follow the pattern of the sound words
 Guard the good deposit
 Many had forsaken Paul
 Onesiphorus had stood with Paul
 Timothy is to entrust the gospel to faithful men

Key Words

Follow
 Pattern

Sound words
 From me
 Guard
 Good deposit
 Entrusted
 Turned away
 Refreshed
 Not ashamed
 Faithful men
 Able to teach

Peaching Text: 2 Tim. 1:13-2:2

Sermon Title – Protect and Preserve the Gospel

Key Verse

Verse 14: By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

Sermon Outline

- I. **Follow the Sound Words**
- II. **Guard the Good Deposit**
- III. **Be strengthened in the Grace in Christ Jesus**
- IV. **Entrust the Apostle’s Teaching to Faithful Men**

Application

- I. **The Gospel – Follow It**
- II. **The Gospel – Guard it**
- III. **The Grace in Christ Jesus – Be Strengthened in It**
- III. **The Gospel – Entrust It to Faithful Disciples**

Intro:

Let’s jump back into the book of 2 Timothy from where we left off last Sunday when Wayne preached.

Remember, this book is the last NT letter that Paul wrote. He wrote it from a Roman prison where he was awaiting execution. He was even bound with chains when he wrote it. He knew his time was short. But he did not quit. He continues laboring in love for Jesus and his people. As he says in chapter 2, verse 9:

“I am bound with chains as a criminal. But (C)the word of God is not bound!”

He had given, gladly given, his whole life for the gospel, for Jesus Christ his Lord. He had suffered greatly over the years with beatings, shipwreck, persecution, betrayal, fastings, lack of sleep, with dangers and hardships on every hand. He had labored hard and tirelessly in preaching and teaching and writing; often he worked as a tentmaker to

support his own ministry. How could Paul do all these things? He tells us the secret: “It was the grace of God working powerfully in my life.” God could do the same with you and me. Yet he chose to make this man, this former Pharisee and persecutor of the church, into a chosen instrument to spread the gospel throughout the countries along the northeastern and northern border of the Mediterranean Sea. Maybe our own expectations of how God could use us are too low: maybe we need to look to God to make us more like Paul, to have a ministry more like his. What does the scripture say, “We have not, because we ask not.”

I want to pray for us today. If you would join me in the heart of this prayer, I invite you to join me in the “Amen” at the end of it:

“God, would you use us in mighty ways, beyond our thoughts and expectations, not because we are anything, but because you are great and your gospel is great and our Lord Jesus Christ is great. **Amen!**”

Yet in all of Paul’s labors there was no begrudging on his part because of his hard, self-sacrificing life. On the other hand, the crowning marks of his life were joy and gratitude and unflagging zeal for Jesus and his kingdom.

Oh, that Jesus would work in our hearts and minds the same faith and love and zeal of the apostle Paul. “Lord, work within all of us, to make us more like your beloved apostle, our father in the faith.”

Brothers and sisters, Timothy was not the only one who Paul could call his child in the faith. In fact, you and I who have studied Paul’s NT writings, and in whom the Spirit of God has worked the truths of his Word into our minds and hearts, we too, are spiritual siblings of Timothy, and the apostle Paul is also our beloved father in the faith.

He labored for us as well as for Timothy and for the church of his day. We see this truth in such passages as v. 10 of chapter 2 of this letter:

“Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the **elect**, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

So this letter, written to a young pastor of the church in Ephesus, has tremendous relevance for us today. It is the very Word of the living God. Through it the Holy Spirit teaches us and instructs us today. As I have been studying this book I feel as if I have grabbed a mighty lion by the tail – it is so powerful and life-changing.

Let us bow in our minds and hearts to the authority of God’s Word. It is the very truth of God, given for all times for the edification of his people, for our growth in grace and holiness, for our equipping for spiritual warfare, so that we might be authentic worshippers and servants of the living God.

So let's look at this passage today with holy reference for the Word of God. May he speak to us today and instruct us through his Word.

Paul tells Timothy:

13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me,

Q. 1 - What is "the pattern of sound words" that Paul is taking about?

We have seen in previous verses in this letter something of what Paul means: In verse 1 he talks about the "promise of the life that is Christ Jesus."

This is part of the "pattern of sound words." Death is all around us. It's integral to our human condition. Just this past week 157 people died in the Ethiopian Airlines crash, and 49 people were killed by a white supremacist at two Muslim mosques in New Zealand. Our own friends and family members have been taken from us by our great enemy – death. And our own time is coming.

But Jesus came to conquer death. He defeated it when he rose from the dead after 3 days. Death has no dominion over him and we who are united to him by faith will be raised from the dead when he returns.

And the promise of the life is not only deliverance from the jaws of death but it means that eternal, never-ending life is now given to all who trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. He sends his Spirit into our hearts to unite us irrevocably and unbrokenly with him. And that same Spirit works mightily in our lives to conform us more and more into the character and mind-set of Jesus. These realities are an essential part of the "pattern of sound words" that comprise an essential part of the Gospel message.

And then we saw last week in those great verses, 9-10, some of the clearest summaries of the essential work of Christ Jesus for his people:

What did Jesus do?

He saved us – this is a once-for-all time transaction that cannot be revoked.

He called us to a holy life – a life set apart from the world and a life dedicated to God and his purposes.

And he did all this not because we had worked our way into his favor but because he favored us in spite of our sin and rebellion and ignoring him. It was his purpose to save us. And he saved us because of his grace - his unmerited favor to undeserving sinners:

-We deserved condemnation but we received justification.

-We deserved the wrath of God but we were given the mercy of God.

-We deserved punishment for our sins, but instead we received forgiveness.

-We deserved to be rejected by God, but instead we have been embraced by the love of God.

-We deserved eternal hell for our sins, but instead God has given us eternal life because of the work of his Son.

Jesus, the Savior of the world, appeared in human history to rescue a people for himself. Through his death and resurrection he triumphed over death and robbed it of its power – he broke its power by rising from the dead. How Satan and his demons must have trembled with fear and despair when they beheld the Son of God come forth in triumph from the tomb. What they greatly feared had come to pass by the sovereign power of God. Their defeat was sealed by Christ's resurrection.

Our own mortality, that is, the necessity of our own death because of Adam's sin and our own sin – was suddenly altered by Jesus' resurrection.

Instead of mortality – certain death – we were given immortality, the assurance of eternal life. Though we all will die from illness or accident or tragedy – that will not be the final word. Death has become only a temporary state for the Christian. When Jesus returns each of us will be raised from the grave and clothed with resurrection bodies like unto Jesus' glorious resurrection body.

As the young shepherd boy named David in the name of Yahweh defeated the giant Goliath and brought victory to the whole nation, so Jesus conquered death and brought victory over it to all his people.

It was Christ “who abolished death and ^(AC)brought life and ^(AD)immortality to light through the gospel.” (v. 10),

(v. 12) This great work of Christ for his people gave the apostle Paul great confidence. He had confidence in Christ; he had confidence in the security of his own salvation. Yet he never was trusting in his own works, or his own dedication, but in Christ, and in his work, and in his dedication.

So this great work of Christ, his life and death and ascension back to heaven were at the heart of the “pattern of sound words” that Paul is telling Timothy he must follow.

So in verse 13 when Paul tells Timothy to “Follow the pattern of sound words that you have heard from me” he is talking about all these great essential truths of the gospel message.

They are sound words, they are solid words.

IL – If you go to cardiologist, a heart doctor, and you’re an older adult and you want to start jogging again but you want to be sure your heart is strong enough for that, the doctor will listen to you heart, look at scans of your heart, maybe give you a stress test, and if all looks good he’ll tell you, “Your heart is sound. You can resume jogging.”

So these words of the gospel message, this pattern of sound words, are sound. They are not unsound or unstable or unreliable. These words, this gospel of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection are sound enough to place your eternal salvation in his hands.

Paul tells Timothy to “follow these words.” This is not an option for Timothy. Paul says you ‘have heard these words from me...’ For one thing, Paul was not just your average preacher, but he was a chosen apostle of the Lord Jesus, appointed by Jesus to teach the church the true doctrines of the faith which the risen Jesus himself had taught him.

Timothy knew this. He knew that the gospel that Paul preached was about Christ Jesus, who was the fulfillment of the OT prophecies of the Messiah. This was the same gospel preached by Peter and John and all the apostles who had known Jesus Christ personally and preached about his life and death and resurrection and all that this meant for humanity.

Paul is charging Timothy to follow this pattern of sound words. Paul is commanding him. Being inspired by the Holy Spirit, this charge, this command is being issued to Timothy as if from the very mouth of God himself. It is just as authoritative as if God himself had descended as the angel of Yahweh and spoken to Timothy, or as if God himself had spoken from heaven to Timothy.

There is no option for Timothy. He has been charged, he has been commanded by the chosen apostle of Christ Jesus to do this very thing: to follow the pattern of sound words.

Timothy may have thought or said to Paul, “But, Paul, my beloved father in the Faith. Aren’t you being a little too demanding on me?”

“Since we have such a close relationship, it’d be okay to fudge a little bit, wouldn’t it? I mean, some of these sound words don’t agree with the esteemed Greek philosophers,

and the worldly Romans with their own pantheon of gods see our faith as too exclusive, not allowing for other religious loyalties.

“And this commitment, this loyalty, this dedication, this sacrifice in order to keep these sound words, to be honest, is hard for my flesh to submit to.

“Paul, look where your commitment to this pattern of sound words has gotten you. You’re seen as an enemy of the Roman state. You’re seen as a leader of a fringe movement of Judaism. Your preaching of the resurrection is seen as totally unbelievable and impossible by nearly everyone in Ephesian society and Roman society.

“You’re an apostle, Paul, I’m just a regular guy, yes, I’ve been trained by you and I know the scriptures, but I’m not sure I can really follow the pattern of sound words that you’re commanding me to do. I’m just a man with feet of clay. Beloved Father in the gospel, can’t you cut me a little slack here!”

What do you think Paul would have answered to his beloved Son in the faith? He’s already said to Timothy, “Follow the pattern of sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (v. 13).”

Paul gave this solemn charge, this command, with no exceptions or excuses allowed.

Paul may have said something like this:

“Follow this pattern of sound words, follow this gospel, Timothy. Stay close to it. Don’t swerve to the right or left. Don’t get distracted by the jeers of the world, don’t let the popular intelligentsia intimidate you, don’t get distracted by the allurements of the world and the flesh, don’t let anything get between you and following the sound words.

IL – in the old days, before we had cell phones, and we were following someone in our car to a mutual destination, we would be careful to keep up with them and not let other cars get in between us so that we’d lose the car leading us.

So, it is with us, like Timothy, we’ve got to stick close to the pattern of sound words in the gospel. We mustn’t let things get between us and the gospel message. – whether its false doctrine or what’s politically correct in our culture, or false living on our part or hardship or persecution or whatever – we’ve got to follow the sound words of the Word of God, of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ, of the one born of a virgin, who lived a sinless live, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, who was raised on the third day, and who is coming back to judge the living and the dead.

Paul would say to Timothy, “Timothy, my son, I charge you before the living God: follow without reservation this Gospel that I preach, this Savior that I preach, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

This charge of Paul to Timothy in verse 13 is not really a new charge. Similar commands were given to Timothy in other places in the pastoral letters:

2 Tim. 3:14 - ¹⁴ But as for you, ^(A)continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom^[a] you learned it .”

Tit. 1:9 - Regarding man appointed to be an elder in the church “-⁹ He must ^(A)hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in ^(B)sound^[a] doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Other places in the NT issue similar commands to its readers:

Rev. 3:3 - ³ ^(A)Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent.

Rom. 6:17 - ¹⁷ But ^(A)thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the ^(B)standard of teaching to which you were committed,

Paul goes on in verse 13: **Follow the pattern of sound words that you have heard from me in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.**

Truth #1 – The gospel is more than just a message, a statement of true religious teaching. It is not just a cold declaration of facts, though its foundation is historical facts.

It is a message, when rightly received, that comes with life-changing and life-transforming power.

Paul wrote in Rom.1:16 - ¹⁶ For ^(A)I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is ^(B)the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew ^(C)first and also to ^(D)the Greek.

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul describes what happened to him when the grace of Jesus Christ came to him and engulfed his life:

1 Tim. 1:14 - ¹⁴ and ^(A)the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the ^(B)faith and love that are in Christ Jesus - the same phrase used here in v. 13.

If a person says he is a believer in Jesus Christ, but he doesn't have living faith, personal faith, loving faith, grateful faith, daily faith – then he or she isn't a real believer in Jesus Christ.

And likewise, if a person says that they are a believer in Jesus Christ but they don't have love in their life – if they don't love God, if they don't love their brothers and sisters in Christ – if they don't care about suffering people, about people who are outside the gospel, who are lost in their sin and unbelief – if a person's life is not marked by a deep love for God, for his people, the church, and for a lost world – then there is something wrong. They don't have the believing, saving faith that Paul is talking about.

The gospel is more than just a message, a statement of true religious teaching, it is also a message with spiritual power that brings along with it deep, personal, living faith in God, and sincere and devoted love to God and for other people.

There is form of so-called Christianity that is outward only, it does have the inner faith and love that the Spirit of God brings into a human heart when he awakens that person from spiritual death and brings them into spiritual life.

True Christianity consists of true and right religious teaching that comes from an accurate presentation of the Gospel message, but is also accompanied by life-changing inner power and reality because of the life-changing presence of the Holy Spirit that enters the human heart.

But Paul does not stop here. As if that were not enough – the message of truth accompanied by “the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus “ - Paul writes what is no doubt some welcome input to Timothy who is probably doubting his own ability to fulfill the demands of the ministry that God has put before him.

How can Timothy possibly keep the demands of the charge, the command given to him by Paul, to follow closely and diligently the pattern of sound words that Paul preached. Can Timothy really rise to this challenge?

Paul, in essence, says, “Timothy, you're not alone in this great responsibility that's been laid to your charge.” He says in verse 14:

¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

Let's consider, first of all, what Paul means by the “**good deposit**” that was entrusted to Timothy.

Here Paul uses a different phrase to refer to basically the same thing as the “pattern of sound words” refers to, that is, it refers to the gospel. Here he calls it the “good deposit.”

What is a deposit? It is something that is valuable and that is guarded until it is needed. We only deposit valuable things, like money. We deposit money in a bank for safekeeping and leave it there until we need it. Some people rent a safety deposit box at a bank and in it they deposit jewelry, or valuable documents like wills, or stock or bond certificates.

Paul deposited something extremely valuable with Timothy for safe-keeping. It was, in fact, the most valuable thing in the world – the very gospel itself – the only hope of humanity for forgiveness and eternal life. Timothy was to guard this gospel message and allow no one, no false teacher, to in any way lessen its truth and power. He must protect it from corruption and preserve it from being diluted or damaged.

Paul would soon be leaving the scene of human existence. It would now be the responsibility of the next generation of Christians, men like Timothy, to continue to guard the Gospel, to protect it and preserve it. *You know, you and I are in the same position today as Timothy was.*

But how could Timon do this? He was beset with fears and timidity and even had a health problem – something was wrong in his stomach. How could Timothy carry on this ministry with all his personal weaknesses? Paul has an answer to this problem. He says¹⁴ **By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you**

Paul is saying to him, “Timothy, the Holy Spirit lives in all of us believers.”

In other of his letters, Paul wrote about the indwelling Spirit. For example he wrote in **Rom. 8:9** - ⁹You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact ^(A)the Spirit of God dwells in you. ^(B)Anyone who does not have ^(C)the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

So Paul is telling Timothy that by the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit he must and he can guard the good deposit entrusted to him.

“It’s not just left up to you, Timothy, and your human strength. But it is the Holy Spirit within you who gives you the strength and power to guard the good deposit.

IL – After all, why do we have guards at banks and grocery stores and public gatherings? Because there are dangers and these guards are put in place to negate, to neutralize thieves and criminals.

Paul knows there were dangers in the world that would seek to dilute, corrupt and destroy the pure doctrine of the Gospel. Back then, as now, there were false teachers and false doctrines floating around seeking to influence people, captivate their minds and allegiance, and lead them astray. We live in a world in which there is a fierce spiritual battle waging to gain control of people's minds and hearts. Satan is at work, wicked spiritual powers are at work, false teachers are at work, false religions are being propagated – and all these evil forces are having tremendous success. Billions of people have been sucked into their deception and delusions. The only religious doctrine that is true is that of Christianity – all other religious beliefs are either made up from men's imaginations or inspired by the devil or a combination of both.

Wm. Hendriksen says of Timothy's responsibility to guard the gospel: "He must defend it against every attack and never allow it to be changed or modified in the slightest degree." P. 237

Mr. Poole: "We can neither keep our minds sound in the faith, as to the doctrine of it, nor our souls steady in the exercises of faith or love, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit." -quoted by G. Wilson p. 134

In other words, we can't keep ourselves in steady understanding and commitment to the Gospel without the aid of the Holy Spirit.

IL - Like an alert military policeman who is charged to guard the money that will be used to fund the whole military operation, Timothy is charged to guard the good deposit of the gospel that was entrusted to him.

There were some, in fact, who had not guarded the good deposit of the gospel. Paul says in verse 15:

¹⁵ You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

So some were ashamed of the Gospel and ashamed of Paul and they deserted him, they abandoned him. But not every supporter of Paul had fallen away. Paul now mentions a positive example:

¹⁶ May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains,⁷ but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me – ⁸ may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day!

You know, back in those days it was very much like it is in many parts of the world. If you're in prison, you don't get fed unless your family or friends bring you something to eat. So Onesiphorus, probably refreshed Paul with food, but he probably also refreshed Paul by his presence and fellowship. Paul wrote about this refreshment through fellowship in the letter to Philemon:

Philemon 7 - ⁷ For I have derived much joy and ^(A)comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints ^(B)have been refreshed through you.

Philemon 20 - ²⁰ Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. ^(A)Refresh my heart in Christ.

Paul says that **Onesiphorus, ...**

and was not ashamed of my chains,

⁷ but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me –

Onesiphorus was doing what Jesus said true believers would do:

Matt. 25:36 - ^DI was in prison and you came to me.

⁸ may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day!

Why did Paul say this? It seems that perhaps Onesiphorus was not a Christian but a good and compassionate man who was helping Paul and Paul was praying for his salvation.

What is "that day" that Paul mentions here? He had used the same phrase in v.12 - *I am convinced that he is able to guard until ^(D)that day ^(E)what has been entrusted to me.*^[a]

It is, I believe, that final day in human history, the day of the Lord's return, the promised Day of the Lord that is spoken of in many places in both the OT and NT.

—and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

So we see here that Onesiphorus was not only serving Paul but he had done a lot of service to the church at Ephesus where Timothy was the pastor.

I was going to cover the next two verses of chapter two for they continue the theme of this sermon which is to protect and preserve the gospel but our time is out so let me give you a few summary thoughts and charges from the Word of God.

In this passage, 2 tim. 1:13-18, we see that Paul issues two charges, two commands to Timothy:

I. Follow the Pattern of Sound Words

II. Guard the Good Deposit

Since all ¹⁶ (A) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 2 Tim. 3:16, then how does this passage related to us? I think we can see that it has tremendous relevance to us today.

Like there were to Timothy, there are two basic charges or commands to us also:

Applications

I. The Gospel, the pattern of sound words – Follow It

Make your doctrine and life follow closely the Word of God. Don't waiver in our belief in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. Live your life so that you adorn the gospel in every aspect of your life. All these things are not optional, they are commands from the eternal God to his people.

Commit yourself to the Gospel message – to proclaim it and defend it, no matter what others are saying in our society. And live it out to the fullest, immerse your life in the Word of God so that all your thoughts and attitudes and actions conform more and more to that Word.

Leave no stone unturned, but let the light of the gospel permeate every area of your life so that you will be unashamed before Jesus when he returns. Be a productive and God-honoring servant of Christ, and an ardent (burning with passion) defender of the Biblical Gospel.

II. The Gospel, the good deposit– Guard it

There are many in our culture and world who would seek to emasculate the gospel – rob it of its truth and power. But not you!

Guard the precious treasure of the Gospel that has been handed down to you. Keep it safe in your own thoughts and beliefs and life-style and proclamation. Be willing to be ridiculed, even persecuted, as you stand for the truth of the gospel in a world that is hostile to the gospel and would prefer to silence it.

With all that is in you: protect the gospel message and the gospel way of life and preserve it from every corrupting influence.

I close in the words of Ephesians 3:20-21:

²⁰ (A) Now to (B) him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, (C) according to the power at work within us, ²¹ (D) to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.