

~2 Timothy~

Lesson 4 – Hold Fast the Word of Truth

In our study of 2nd Timothy so far in chapter 1, we have seen Paul's encouragement to his son in the faith Timothy.

- There was a massive amount of persecution coming against Timothy and the church of Ephesus. They were experiencing hostility from Rome, the hostility from unbelieving Jews, and the infiltration of the Gnostics
- Thus far Paul has exhorted and encouraged Timothy in several ways:
 - Reminding him of the genuine faith he has without hypocrisy, 1:5
 - Reminding him to stir up and ignite the flame of the charisma gift inside him, 1:6
 - Reminding him of the resources he has as a Christian, of power, love, and a sound mind, 1:7
 - Telling him to not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, 1:8
 - And to share with him in the sufferings for the gospel, 1:8
 - In verses 9-10 Paul reminds Timothy of the saving power of God; God is powerful enough to save us, he is powerful enough to keep us
- And as we learned last week, we are told to expect sufferings as we proclaim the Truth.
 - But these sufferings ought not deter us, but rather we press through the persecution because we are confident in His promise of eternal life, knowing we are held safe in the Father's hands even unto death.
- Now in our text today, 1:13-18, we see Paul continue to guide Timothy.
 - V.13- he says to hold fast the pattern of sound words, 1:13
 - V.14- Paul reminds him to keep that good thing which was entrusted to him, 1:14
- Paul's encouragement and direction to Timothy in the midst of persecution, sufferings, and false teachings is to stay focused on the pure gospel message and be committed to the Word of Truth
 - Remember last week, we learned that the only way that life and immortality can be brought to light and made evident is through the gospel, 2 Tim 1:10
 - This is why it is so important to be committed to the Word of Truth and sound doctrine, because if we stop proclaiming the gospel, life and immortality will not be revealed.
 - This is the concept behind our text today- the importance of sound doctrine

2 Timothy 1:13-18

¹³ **Hold fast** the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ That good thing which was committed to you, **keep** by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. ¹⁵ This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; ¹⁷ but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. ¹⁸ The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.

- In this text, Paul gives Timothy two commands- "**hold fast**" *the pattern of sound words* and "**keep**" *that good thing which was committed to him*
- First off, what was it that Paul committed to Timothy that he is instructed to keep?
 - To know this, we need to travel back to the book of Acts and 1st Timothy because we'll discover that what he is commanded to "hold fast", namely the pure Word of God, is also that good thing that was "committed to him" when he became the Bishop of Ephesus.
 - And that good thing committed to Timothy is actually that thing that was committed to Paul when he was transformed on the road to Damascus.- so that' where I want to start this morning.

- In 36AD, the gospel was entrusted to Paul, that he would be the witness of Jesus Christ to proclaim the Truth

Acts 22:14–15- (Ananias says to Paul while in Damascus ...) ¹⁴ ... ‘The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.

Acts 26:15–18-¹⁵ ... ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. ¹⁷ I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, ¹⁸ to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’

Acts 9:20- Paul immediately preached the Christ in the synagogues that He is the Son of God

Galatians 1:11–20-¹¹ But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ. ... ¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, ... I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter...

- This was when Paul was given the revelation of Jesus Christ and began proclaiming the gospel
- Then through the course of 18 years as Paul fulfills his ministry, Paul is called to go to Ephesus on his 2nd missionary journey with Timothy in 54AD.
 - This is the first time he ministers to the Ephesians and Scripture tells us he reasoned with the Jews there, Acts 18:19.
 - The Jews there were very interested in the gospel, they asked Paul to stay longer, but he could only stay a short time on account of making it back to Jerusalem for the coming feast, Acts 18:19-21
 - But Paul leaves Aquilla and Priscilla in Ephesus to help minister to them
- Then Paul returns to Ephesus about one year later in 55AD and this time stays nearly 3 years, Acts 20:31

Acts 19:8–10-⁸ And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

- Many people in Asia believed the gospel, but there were still unbelieving Jews who were hostile to the Christians, speaking evil of “the Way”
 - In addition, there was immense hostility from the pagans in Ephesus as well

Acts 19:23–28-²³ And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. ²⁴ For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. ²⁵ He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: “Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. ²⁶ Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and

turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. ...²⁸ Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath...

- Paul then leaves Ephesus and continues to Macedonia.
- At the end of his 3rd missionary journey, on his way back to Jerusalem, Paul meets with the elders of Ephesus in Miletus not wanting to go inland for times sake, Acts 20:15-17
 - It is here that Paul warns the elders of the threat of false teaching

*Acts 20:29–31-²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure **savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.** ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, **to draw away the disciples after themselves.** ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.*

- After this, Paul is arrested in Jerusalem and then transported to Rome. It is during his imprisonment in Rome that Paul writes the letter to the Ephesians, but he doesn't physically see them again for 5 years until 63AD after his release from Rome.
- It is at this time in 63AD when Paul travels back to Ephesus that he ordains Timothy as Bishop of Ephesus and leaves him in charge of the church
 - During these 5 years that Paul was away, the sound doctrine that Paul gave them was being attacked by the Judaizers, Gnostics, and the hostility from the pagans.
 - The church had fallen into a corrupted state being led by false teachers
 - This was the purpose of the 1st letter to Timothy, to get this church back on its feet
 - When Paul left Timothy in charge in Ephesus, he gave him strict orders how to shape the church and preserve sound doctrine because the Word of Truth was being attacked.

*1 Timothy 1:3–19-³ As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—**remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,** ⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. ⁵ Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, ⁶ from which some, **having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk,** ⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.*

The leaders in Ephesus were being swayed by the Judaizers. So, this was Timothy's first order of business, to clean up the false teachings being spread and establish sound doctrine.

The revelation of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of Christianity, was given to Paul and it was committed to his trust to preserve it and teach it. So Paul continues to tell Timothy of the importance of sound, pure doctrine, and how to preserve it, portray it and teach the gospel of Truth...

*¹⁰... and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹ according to **the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.***

The sound doctrine of the Words of Jesus Christ is what was committed to Paul. Now listen to what Paul does next... he says...

*¹⁸ **This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you,***

“The Words of Jesus Christ, that were committed to me, I now commit to you my son”. When Paul ordained Timothy as the Bishop of Ephesus, he entrusted Timothy with the

preservation of the Word, just as God had entrusted Paul with the responsibility to proclaim the Words of Christ

¹⁸...*that by them you may wage the good warfare*, (Paul knows they are fighting a spiritual battle, and the preservation of the Word of Truth will result in getting the church back under sound doctrine, but will also result in persecution and sufferings)

¹⁹ *having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck*, (This is the reason for Timothy being stationed in Ephesus. There were already people rejecting and abandoning the faith because of false teachings) Paul spends the majority of the letter giving Timothy the structure to get the church of Ephesus back on track)

⁴⁻¹ *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and **doctrines of demons**, ² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, ...*

⁶ *If you instruct the brethren in these things* (the doctrine of Christianity and the pure Word of Truth), *you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the **good doctrine** which you have carefully followed.* ⁷ *But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. ...*

¹⁰ *For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach*, (Paul says, I know persecutions and sufferings will come from this) *because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.* ¹¹ *These things command and teach.*

¹² *Let no one despise your youth, but **be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*** ¹³ *Till I come, **give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*** ¹⁴ ***Do not neglect the gift that is in you***, (the charisma, χάρισμα, gift) *which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.* ¹⁵ *Meditate on these things; **give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.*** ¹⁶ *Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. **Continue in them**, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*

¹ Timothy 6- ² ...**Teach and exhort these things.** ³ *If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, ⁴ he is proud, knowing nothing, ... destitute of the truth, ...From such withdraw yourself. ...* ¹¹ *But you, O man of God, flee these things and **pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*** ¹² ***Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*** ¹³ *I urge you in the sight of God ...¹⁴ that you **keep this commandment without spot**, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, ...* ²⁰ *O Timothy! **Guard what was committed to your trust***, (the sound doctrine of the Words of Jesus Christ) *avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge* (the Gnostics trying to infiltrate the church) —²¹ *by professing it **some have strayed concerning the faith.** Grace be with you. Amen.*

- Timothy now has the responsibility of preserving the sound doctrine of the Words of Jesus Christ
- 2 years go by and in 65AD, Paul is arrested and thrown in a dungeon awaiting his execution
 - It is here in this dungeon that Paul writes this 2nd epistle to Timothy, which would be the final letter of his life.

- Paul commits this charge to Timothy to carry on the work of the gospel.
 - The Ephesian church had been swayed by false teachings and didn't have any root or firm foundation, so now that tribulation and persecution has risen for the Word's sake, Mark 4:17, many believers are abandoning the faith.
 - Timothy is losing heart and needs encouragement to persevere in the midst of these persecutions
- Paul's response to Timothy remains consistent- Hold fast to the Word of God,
 - In 1 Timothy 4:13 Paul said, "... **give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.** 1 Timothy 6:2-... **Teach and exhort these things.** Now in 2 Tim 4:1-2- *I charge you...Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching*
 - This is how we fight the enemy; *that you may wage the good warfare,*" 1 Tim 1:18, *Fighting the good fight of faith,* 1 Tim 6:12
 - He didn't do this by fighting flesh and blood, but rather by holding the Word of God pure and proclaiming the Word of Truth.
 - Paul committed in Timothy the responsibility to preserve the Words of Christ.
 - To keep them pure and sound and uncorrupted, that they might shine the light of life and immortality; to *lay hold on eternal life,* 1 Tim 6:12.
 - Paul is telling Timothy to hold these Words dear and precious, and believe in them even unto death. Having confidence of the promised hope of eternal life.
 - It is when we are confident in the Word is when God moves in us to be bold in speech 2 Cor 3:12.
- Now we are ready to understand Paul's two commands - to "**hold fast**" and to "**keep**" the pure Word
 - Paul is encouraging Timothy to stand strong in that which was committed to him, even unto persecutions and suffering evil afflictions, to be committed to the purity and the teaching of the Word of Truth.

2 Timothy 1:13 †Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

† *Hold fast the pattern of sound words, which you have heard from me ...*

- **Hold fast**- echo, ἔχω, to have, to possess
- **Pattern**- hupotyposis, ὑποτύπωσις, the underlying form, a type, a model
- **Sound words**- hugaino logos, ὑγιαίνω λόγος, pure, uncorrupted, healthy, wholesome, life-giving words
 - This is having and possessing the underlying form of the pure Word of Life, 1 Jn 1:1
- By staying committed to the gospel, he was establishing and solidifying the doctrine of Christianity.
 - The Word of Truth is meant to be spoken, the very meaning of the verb form of this word, lego, λεγω, means "to speak" Paul proclaimed the λόγος of Christ and Jesus Himself is the λόγος that became flesh and dwelt among us, Jn 1:14
 - By speaking out the λόγος, we are living out that Truth as a **pattern** to show others how to live the Christian life, 1 Tim 1:16.
 - This is getting involved with people and teaching and showing them the love of God through living out the Word in deed and in Truth, 1 Jn 3:18.
- **Which you have heard from me**- apart from Luke, Timothy was probably the one person who had heard the most from Paul
 - Timothy had been with Paul the longest out of all the men that followed him. Timothy heard the Word of Truth and he had it inside him
 - And it is very possible that Timothy had access or copies to Paul's letters

† ...*in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.*

- Hold fast the pattern of the pure Word of God by faith toward God, and love toward man
 - By faith, not doubting, and in love, not abusing
 - This is a perfect balance- faith and boldness with love and selflessness
- This is how to hold fast the pattern of sound words...
 - Be a living example, a living pattern of the Truth in love and faith
- And remember everything is done **in Christ**

2 Timothy 1:14 †That good thing **which was committed to you**, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

† ... *That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.*

- It was the sound doctrine of the Words of Jesus Christ that was first committed to Paul, 1 Timothy 1:11, and then Paul committed it to Timothy, 1 Timothy 1:18
 - This word committed is- *parakatatheke, παρακαταθήκη*
 - that which was given to you for safe keeping, deposited or entrusted deeply to you
- In 1 Timothy 6:20, Paul commands Timothy to “*Guard what was committed to your trust*”
 - Now in verse 14 Paul says the exact same thing, “*Guard that good thing that was committed to you*”
 - But Paul is not telling Timothy to do this by his own power
 - But to guard the Word through the Holy Spirit that strengthens and empowers us to be bold and proclaim and teach the gospel, 2 Tim 1:7- *God has not given us the spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*
- In these next 4 verses, Paul gives us two examples, both from the Asian churches of whom Timothy would have personally known being the Bishop of Ephesus.
 - Timothy’s willingness and commitment to press on and persevere through persecution for the gospel’s sake was dying down
 - This is why Paul gives Timothy these two examples. They are examples close to home and would hopefully stir him up.
 - In the first example, we have those who abandoned the faith and ran away from the Truth and were not committed to the Gospel.
 - And the other who endured and pressed toward the Truth by risking everything, not being ashamed of the gospel.

2 Timothy 1:15-18 ¹⁵ This you know, that †all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.
¹⁶ The Lord grant mercy to the household of †Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; ¹⁷ but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. ¹⁸ The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus.

- In verse 8, Paul told Timothy, “*do not be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel.*”
 - It is this that Paul is referring to when he gives Timothy these two examples following verses 13 and 14, in which he says, “*hold fast the pattern of sound words and to keep that which was committed to you*”

† ... *all those in Asia have turned away from me among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.*

- All those in Asia- this word “all” is a strong word. He doesn’t say “some”, but “all”. Does this mean “all who were wavering in sound doctrine”? Scripture doesn’t make this distinction, but it had to be a lot of people. This might explain why Timothy is so distraught.

- Many were abandoning the church because of this massive persecution. They learned of Paul’s arrest and now they are running away from the Truth.
- This abandonment is so heartbreaking. Paul spent 3 years with these people. He had a great burden for all the churches, and then when times get tough, they abandon him.
- This word “turned away from”- apostrepho, ἀποστρέφω
 - We see Paul use this same word later in this epistle, 2 Tim 4:4, and it gives us some insight

2 Timothy 4:3–4³ *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;* ⁴ *and they will turn their ears away* apostrepho, ἀποστρέφω *from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

† ... Onesiphorus...

- This was a faithful man. In contrast to those who “turned away from Paul”, Onesiphorus zealously sought Paul out.
 - Onesiphorus was from Ephesus and a dear friend of Paul and Timothy
 - The fact that he earnestly sought Paul out means it was probably hard to find Paul in Rome
 - A Christian in Rome was not a safe place, however he was not ashamed of Paul’s chains
 - Furthermore, Onesiphorus refreshed Paul in prison- probably both spiritually and physically
 - Prisons were not like now. This was a dungeon and the only way Paul would have gotten food and water was to have someone bring it to him.
 - Luke was with him, but no one else, except also Onesiphorus.
 - How great a reward Onesiphorus will have on that great Day, to risk his life to see Paul and show compassion on him in his chains, Heb 10:34
- By showing these two examples, Paul is telling Timothy, “Don’t be one that gives up and abandons the Word of Truth like Phygellus and Hermogenes, but be like our friend Onesiphorus, who was not ashamed of the gospel, and bold in the Truth to show himself as a Christian even in the midst of persecution.”

Just like Paul told Timothy, and he is also telling us, “Hold fast and guard the purity of the Word of God”

We as Christians, even now, have the responsibility and a commitment to preserve the precious Word of God by proclaiming and teaching the Truth.

Do not be ashamed of the Truth.
Be a Defender of the Faith;
Guard the Truth;
Hold Fast the Word of Truth;
and maintain the Integrity of the Truth