

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

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HOW TO GUARD THE FAITH

1 Timothy Series # 23

1 Timothy 6:20-21

Do you have any heirlooms in your home, precious treasures passed down from your family ancestors? We have several. As most of you know that **Jewell loves old rusty things** and that is why she loves me so much, I'm old and rusty. We have several heirlooms that are very special to us, like: my mother's **Bye-lo doll baby**; her grandmother's **sewing table**; handmade **quilts** from her grandmother and her mother; she has her mother's **Bible** which was so precious as being a pastor's wife for so many years; and I have her grandfather's **old double barrel shotgun** that is from the late 1800 hundreds. These heirlooms remind us of our heritage, and it is important that we protect and pass down our heritage to our families after us. However, as I think about these family treasures, I realize I have another heirloom of unparalleled value. I am a recipient of God's grace. I have been adopted into His eternal family. I am an heir of God and joint heir with Christ.

As we come to the last two concluding verses, we return to that overarching theme. Our faith, our salvation is a precious heirloom entrusted to us by God. We must not hoard it for ourselves. We must not bury it in legalism, traditionalism or denominationalism.

In the final two verses of 1 Timothy we will examine the **duty of guarding the faith** and the **danger in guarding the faith**.

I. THE DUTY OF GUARDING THE FAITH (v.20a).

Paul is so intense in these final words that he invokes Timothy's name and personally commends him to the task, "**O Timothy! Keep/Guard what was committed to your trust.**" We like Timothy are to "**guard**" or defend the precious treasure of God's truth.

"**...what was committed to your trust**" is one word in the Greek text. It is actually a compound word meaning, "to place beside." The word was commonly used in the Greek language to refer to a deposit. As Timothy did, we live in an age that has **denied** the truth and that **defies** the truth! Guarding the faith is our ultimate responsibility. The faith delivered once to the saints is being attacked from all sides, from within and without.

How do we guard the faith? Let me offer you several suggestions:

- ♦ First, we must **BELIEVE God's Word**. 1 John 2:14
- ♦ Second, we must **HONOR God's Word**. Job 23:12
- ♦ Third, we must **LOVE God's Word**. Psalm 119:97
- ♦ Fourth, we must **OBEY God's Word**. John 8:31
- ♦ Fifth, we must **PROCLAIM God's Word**. 2 Timothy 4:2
- ♦ Sixth, we must **DEFEND God's Word**. Jude 3
- ♦ Seventh, we must **STUDY God's Word**. 2 Timothy 2:15

More than anything, we want our church to be known as a church that loves and teaches the Scripture, we are a
BIBLE PREACHING AND TEACHING CHURCH

II. THE DANGER IN GUARDING THE FAITH (vv.20b-21).

Not only do we have a duty to perform in guarding the faith, but we have a danger to avoid. Paul tells Timothy that he must be "**avoiding the profane and vain/idle babble and oppositions/contradictions of what is falsely called science/knowledge**" "**Avoiding**" comes from a word that means "to turn aside, twist away from." Picture a boxer in the ring twisting away from an opponent's punch.

What specifically are we to avoid? First, we must avoid "**profane and vain/idle babble.**" "**Profane**" basically means "godless" or "worldly." "**Idle babble**" is the compound word means "empty or fruitless discussions." Paul also tells Timothy to avoid "**oppositions (KJV)/ contradictions.**" This is from the meaning "opposite." This referred to false teachings that contradicted or were the opposite of orthodox or Bible truth.

Timothy was not to involve himself too deeply with such disputes because "**by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.**" Some have been deceived by such false teaching so much so that they turn away from biblical truth and distort the gospel. This is still going on today.

So, he ends with "**grace**" which is "God's attitude towards us, God's assistance to us, and God's attractiveness in us." Paul knew that Timothy would need the grace of God to grow him, guide him, and guard him.

Then Paul closes this letter out with a hearty "**Amen.**" What he has said is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! And God's people said "**AMEN!**"