

Hold Fast The Truth

Let us turn to our Bibles to 2 Timothy 1.13 and verse 14. Verses 13 and 14 of chapter 1 of 2 Timothy. Let us listen attentively to the Word of God.

2 Timothy 1.13 and following. Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Let us pray. In this exhortation given to the young pastor, God, may we learn the importance of the ministry, that is the relative importance as you have bestowed upon him and God, and for our own sake to follow these examples, the example of Timothy and the other apostles, Lord, that we too are called to hold fast, to cling to, to keep the pattern of sound words that is true doctrine and teaching of the Word of God and to eschew or to flee and reject all other teachings that are indeed false and lies that would undermine the truth of your Word. And although we are not pastors with this public office, God Almighty, but we are certainly Christians who are called in accordance to the first table to cling to your truth and to believe in it and to pass it on according to our station and calling in life.

And may we do thus and be encouraged by this sermon, I pray. Amen. So in these two short sentences, we have encapsulated a key part of the job of ministers, to hold fast the truth of God's Word.

The preaching and teaching of the truth depends upon its retention, of course. If ministers get sloppy or forgetful or wander away from the truth, then the preaching becomes worthless and is a violation of this call of the Holy Spirit through the pen of Paul. So Paul starts at the beginning here, urging or rather encouraging the young minister Timothy to hang on to the truth.

He tells him elsewhere, as we know, and first Timothy to preach and here he takes a step back. You can't preach if you don't have it retained in your heart and your mind. The younger generation of ministers are called to hold tightly to this truth and boldly proclaim it to all.

And perhaps he was tempted, as we'll see in verse 15, that this you know that all those in Asia have turned away from me and among them are Philegides and Hermogenes. So apparently there are those who would not cling and hang on to the truth. So Paul is urging Timothy not to follow such a bad example and indeed that's for us today as well.

Let's dive a little further into this text to see more clearly what it entails for us and the importance therein in the Christian and in the ministry in particular.

Pastors: Hold Fast the Truth

The first point is, of course, pastors are called to hold fast the truth. That's the immediate object of these verses.

The old pastor Paul, who's also an apostle, I like to call them super pastors, super ministers, has given a specific directive to this young man carrying on the new generation of ministers. For Paul and the apostles will pass away from the scene, as we know. And he tells them to keep the truth.

Don't let it go. Hang on to it. Pastor here, as a young man, is called to retain it.

Not in a light fashion, just kind of holding it lightly here in his hands, as it were metaphorically, but firmly to hang on and never let it go. That's clearly the intent or the idea here. It's not something to be taken lightly.

The word of God, the gospel in particular, the good news of Jesus Christ. Rather, he is, as indeed all ministers are, to keep it and keep it carefully. He uses that word, he changes up the word here, that good thing, verse 14, which was committed to you.

Keep by the spirit of God. Protect it. Preserve it.

It's the pastor's duty to hang on to the truth, no matter what. As we see, verse 15, he may have been tempted, and certainly they are a bad example. It's a lot of people.

All those in Asia have turned away from me. That's a lot. I'm sure it wasn't just one or two.

He only lists two in particular, among them who were these two prominent leaders, presumably perhaps some pastors and leaders in the church. And there are lots of various troublemakers and false teachers Paul talks about in 1 Timothy and here in 2 Timothy, around the young pastor as well, who are bad examples. And Paul wishes to fortify him and equip him to stand firm.

But to hold on to what? To keep and retain what? It's an interesting phrase, the way he put the words here together. Hold fast the pattern of sound words, which you have heard from me. The pattern of sound words.

That description there, pattern or form, it can be taken strictly, like English, you have a strict use of a word, sometimes a more expansive or metaphorical use of a word. You have that here as well. Strictly, it means an outline or a sketch, but it can also mean a pattern or a form that which should be followed.

Either way, of course, it's clearly about retaining what? The truth, the pattern of sound words. It's just another way of saying the word of God, these things that you have been given and committed to you as a pastor, the Bible. It's one of the few descriptions here that's unique.

Often it's just the word of God or truth or gospel or Jesus Christ, that which is committed to you is another way of describing this. And here he uses this interesting phrase of perhaps an outline. Maybe it was, maybe Paul gave him a crash course in theology.

It sounded kind of like a catechism, which is an outline of theology, isn't it, of the Bible. It has a lot of meat, to be sure, but it could have more to be said. So perhaps that's the case why Paul is writing these letters, because he has more to say.

Whatever the case, it's clearly, he's talking about the truth of the Bible, specifically of the gospel. But of course, all of the New Testament is included in this. These are the sound or accurate words.

The word sound there is very much like what we have in English, of sound mind and body, we say. That means healthy. Same with this.

It's specifically of a physical or mental soundness. It's what this word means. And clearly, he's using it here metaphorically, because the Bible, he's not concerned about the Bible as a physical thing, right, but the moral truth therein.

It is a beautiful thing. It is a sound thing. It is healthy truth for our frail bodies.

The gospel, in other words, are words of life. All of the teachings, all of the teachings of the apostles and of Christ are words of life, because they are from the Holy Spirit. And all, in fact, moral truths in the entirety of the Bible is here.

The pattern of sound words, although immediately here is what was given to him, which would be the gospel and things related to the gospel, probably the Lord's Supper, as you see in 1 Corinthians, for example, in carrying on these New Testament institutions or ordinances as well, but certainly does not exclude the entirety of the word of God. For Paul, as we know often, as does Peter and the other writers of the New Testament, quote the Old Testament. Reference the Old Testament, because they believe the moral truth is part of their calling as ministers to preach and talk and defend and present and instruct.

And that would include, therefore, the entirety of the word of God is sound words. The Bible is sound words, has sound words. In other words, pastors all together now are to keep the truth of God and not lose it.

They were told to hold fast to it, not follow theological fads that come to and fro. In the life of the church, there's a commitment. It's a commitment that requires prayer and faith for our ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ and a boldness to face the growing pressure upon them.

We see that especially over and over again in the book of Acts. When I preached to that, I just noticed more and more how strong, how bold and how faithful the ministers of the gospel were, that is the apostles. It doesn't matter who was there before them, they would speak the truth.

And of course, sometimes they saw things were getting pretty bad, so Paul left in a hurry. He wasn't a fool. Nevertheless, these are the kind of men that we want.

This is the kind of prayer we want for our pastors, to be like them, to be bold, to be those who are not seeking after new and exciting teachings and approaches to the word of God,

but the simple truth of the sound words given to them, the pattern of sound words, the substance of the word of God, and that faithfully and continually. It is boring to people, to be sure. Yes, it can be.

Are offensive to others? Yes, it doesn't matter. Young Timothy and all pastors such as myself are called nevertheless here to retain it, to keep it. Of course, not keep it to themselves, but to present it to the rest of the world, to preach it.

No matter how unpopular or how offensive it may be. Ministers, of course, have varying degrees of talents and ability. Some may be more eloquent while others are more robust.

Yet every minister has the same duty. To hold fast the pattern of sound words. This is what we are especially looking for in a minister.

They ought to have as best we can. Of course, presbytery often, unfortunately, don't know the men that are coming in before them. We are spread out.

Our presbytery is especially bad. We're large, we're multiple states. And so it's hard for a number of ruling elders and pastors, the gathering of a presbytery right at a regional church, to sit down and examine the man.

All they have is what they see before them and letters sent from a church. They haven't lived with the guy. They don't live in this neighborhood.

They don't know if, is he cowardly? You don't want that. The implication here, of course, is it takes courage to hold this truth. When others, as we see in verse 15, all those have turned away from Paul.

They turn away from the gospel. They follow the lies of Philegius and Hermogenes. Because even within the best of churches, we still have what? That pull of the gravity of sin, even within the best of us.

Or like a magnet, we're attracted towards the sins of others, as it were. And we want to collect and make excuses for ourselves. And so Timothy fills this and Paul saw the effects of that in verse 15.

And thus behind all that is to say, it does take courage. It takes the power of the spirit to have this boldness to be committed and to hold fast this truth. So pray, brothers and sisters, for pastors, but also for presbyteries.

They would have insight and wisdom and proper trust for one another to examine the ministers, to see as best they can, of course. That's why we have a trial of ministers. They are at a church.

They preach. We see them work there for several months at a time. The local session in particular is examining the man to see, is he bold? Does he know? Will he keep? Will he be faithful to the pattern of sound words? That's their duty and that's their calling.

That's why they have a gathering of young men before they become full pastors and the like and they are trained accordingly. As a man under care, we call them. Now, Paul continues here in verse 14.

Excuse me, verse 13 was kind of interesting. Hold fast a pattern of sound words. This is true for all pastors, especially.

What you have heard from me, from Paul, by word of mouth. They must have met in person. Paul was Timothy's mentor.

Don't forget that. Like a father-son relationship, except within the church context. And he called him son.

He said, Timothy, my son. Young men need older men. Not unlike young men in a family need a father for mentoring, for jobs.

That's been the way for thousands of years and all kinds of vocations and callings in life. Women do a similar thing in their own way. You need someone older with experience and the like.

And that's true in the ministry. And that's why we have these things. That's why we have summer internships, for example.

So the young men would get experience under the tutelage of a man who's been around a long time as a minister, preferably. And could teach them the ropes, the ins and outs, the things in life that aren't covered in the details of the Bible. And that's a lot of things, frankly.

And they need a man they can respect and look up to and follow thereby. The best examples, of course. Seminary, of course, has its place.

We've developed seminary over generations of the church because it filled a need at the time. We talked a little bit about this in Sunday school class that the law of God includes means, causes, and occasions. And seminary is a means or even an occasion in which you can better instruct men so they are equipped to what? Hold fast and have people teach them the pattern of sound words.

Men who themselves have proven themselves worthy by God's grace and providence. That is teachers and professors. And that's why we have seminaries.

But seminaries cannot, I think, make up for mentorship. You need to have the young men, the ministers, training the young men to be godly men. Now, it also implies here what's kind of interesting.

A continuity of the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ as well as the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The ministry, of course, is the formal public office charged with preaching the truth and applying it. The whole truth and nothing but the truth.

And that message of salvation and all that's accompanied with it there, especially in the New Testament. But the ministry and the message, although they go hand in hand often, don't always. And I mean by this, that the message is more important than the messenger or the ministry as such.

Because ministers come and go, churches fade and go, but the word of God will survive forevermore. For the message that is the good news of Jesus Christ, the word of God created the ministry by Jesus Christ. That is, he called it into existence with the truth therein and the gospel also created the church.

This is in contrast to the traditions that emphasize pastoral continuity. I am the bishop who was laid on hands by this bishop who his former bishop back to 2000 years ago. So we're the true church.

Yeah, but where's the message? There is no message. You have lies. You have not held fast the pattern of sound words is what's wrong with those churches, so-called churches.

That's why I bring this point up. Clearly, there is some kind of continuity here. He teaches him, he learns, and by implication, Timothy, as we'll read later in 2 Timothy, is called to bring other men into his orbit and instruct them into the truth of God's word and raise up a new generation.

That's, of course, ideal, but things break it up in God's providence, of course, wars and decay and the like and sin, but in all this, it's the message that's especially important. The ministers are only here for the message. They're called to uphold these things, not only with their lips, but with their whole heart.

And that brings us then to the latter part of verse 13, which you have heard from me, that is the truth, these things I have instructed you in, in faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus. In faith and love, not just upon their lips, but upon their hearts and upon their actions, holding the truth, the word of God, the gospel in particular, in faith. A dead ministry, perhaps heard that phrase before, a dead ministry means often that pastors are unconverted.

We have a dead ministry people are complaining about, and what they often mean, I think, is that we have an unconverted ministry, and that has been a problem historically, but that's a problem all the time, not just in the ministry. You have people who are not saved, who are members of the church. We understand this.

This is the fact in which we live in this fallen world. But of course, we don't want that in the ministry. And so here, Paul highlights the fact that it's not just another job, in the sense of, hey, people are like, well, you know, I got nothing better to do in life.

I'm kind of good at speaking and the like, so I might as well become a pastor. They've done that historically. It used to be a position of status, so you would want to be a pastor.

You see that in the 1700s, 1800s, in the books of the 1800s. They've made a lot of movies out of them, and they're kind of making fun of the ministers there in England, because apparently to them, it was just a job. It wasn't like something serious and godly and holy.

It was just another job like anybody else. And so apparently many of them weren't really even believers, and that's a concern, and that ought not to be the case, of course. We ought to keep an eye out for that and to pray to that end that the ministry would not be filled up with men who are not believers, who are just looking for perhaps worldly fame and worldly attention, but rather those who, what? As Paul says here, who are in faith and in love, which are in Christ Jesus, that they have the faith of our Lord and Savior, and they have the love of the saints.

This is why, for example, presbytery exams also include a profession of faith. We want to hear their story. Were they grew up? Were they believers? Were they in the covenant home or not? And how'd they come to know the Lord? This is part of the reason why.

Holding the truth in love as well, not just in faith and trust in our Lord and Savior. Faith and love, of course, go hand in hand for all believers, for they are the fruit of the Spirit, but doubly so for pastors, for they are leaders in the church. They ought to show love and be clear to the world, that is to the church in particular, that they love Christ and love the saints and love the gospel of our Lord and Savior.

And these things, first and foremost, are of the heart. Of course, it's supposed to be of the hands as well, but especially of the heart. And this is why you can only examine so far, you can only examine the actions and the words of the ministry.

It's easy sometimes to go straight to the heart of the matter, excuse the pun, and say, I don't really know what's going on and I don't think you're really saved. No, I mean, he hasn't done any gross public sins and he's preaching the truth, so be happy, rejoice in the Lord, but certainly pray, because it's possible that some ministers aren't converted, although otherwise they seem pretty good and upstanding and say a lot of good things. Committed to Timothy, verse 14, that good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

So he repeats himself, as it were, before he says, hold fast the pattern of sound words. And here he says, keep that which was committed to you by the power of the Holy Spirit. Almost saying the same thing in two different ways to be emphatic, to say, this is important stuff.

Don't forget the gospel. Don't forget the truth that was given to you as a minister. It's committed to him, this good thing that is the pattern of sound words is the good thing, especially the gospel of our Lord and Savior, the good news of our Redeemer.

There in the first four books of the New Testament, all the letters, as we know, of the rest of the apostles. Now, what's interesting here, it says that good thing, that is the pattern of sound words, the gospel doctrine, true doctrine, which was committed to you, committed or deposited. You might remember that word before.

I referenced it earlier in 1 Timothy 6, 20. And you're gonna hear it again in chapter two, verse one. And it's here in chapter two, verse, excuse me, chapter one, verse 13.

And it is here in verse 12 as well. For this reason, I also suffer these things, the prior verse. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know who I'm believing, and I'm persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed, deposited to him.

It's a sacred trust, in other words. The continuity of the truth, from generation to generation, here in particular, in verse 14, that which was committed to you, the sacred trust given to you by the Spirit, through the apostle Paul, the trust of what? Hanging on to, retaining, and therefore teaching and feeding the people of God with the truth of God. That's what he's talking about.

And that's a very important job to be sure. It's a high calling to have this deposit of truth in the church, in the Bible in particular. It applies, therefore, the serious dangers of false ministers.

If church leaders drop the ball, stop keeping the truth, and start chasing lies, the church will suffer. There is no more deposit there. That which is committed has now been lost in the next generation through unfaithful ministers.

And that's a blow to the church of Jesus Christ. Now, of course, not a fatal blow, for Christ will always hold the church, but to that particular church, to that particular denomination. And that's a struggle and a serious concern, I think, almost every generation of every church.

Do we have faithful ministers who will stand firm and teach the people of God these whole truths of God, the pattern of sound words as a solemn obligation, as a sacred trust given to them by God Almighty. Many churches can suffer, but will all of them? No, by God's grace, he will always have his elect, even though some may not hang on to the truth, like Timothy hung on to the truth. But as we see, others in Asia did not.

Verse 14 continues here to describe this keeping and this calling to keep. The good thing which was committed to you, this holy deposit, keep, retain, hold, guard. Do not lose it.

He's emphasizing this point again to preserve it in his heart, to preserve it in his teaching, that the light of the truth will never be snuffed out while Timothy still lives. And it was not as, of course, as easy as it is today. It's a lot harder back then to stand for the truth, to have the truth before them.

We have it written down. We have it printed out. We have it on our computers.

So in that sense, you can say it's always here. But of course, when he says retain and hold fast, he means that in the sense of understanding what you're reading. Kids can have the Bible.

Five-year-olds don't know what they're reading, but I'm glad they have it. Obviously, he's saying they have to understand what they keep and keep what they understand. And Timothy is called by the Spirit of God to persevere, and he can.

Keep by the Spirit who dwells in us. Paul moves from you to us, as he often does in a number of his writings, perhaps to encourage him, saying, I'm in the same boat with you. I, too, need this help.

I, too, need this encouragement. And here, in particular, the encouragement is you can keep it because you have the Spirit of God within you. He can keep the truth of the gospel in his ministry because the Spirit dwells in him.

The almighty Spirit of God, creator of heaven and earth, the one who preserves them in their perseverance. It's like I preached last week. That's what you see here.

The Spirit of God here preserves him in his perseverance, where he's called to keep, as a minister, the truth, and never lose sight of that truth, and never stop preaching and teaching that truth. And, of course, this is true for all of us. Virtually all of these verses here, and all the descriptions here, in varying degrees, are still applicable to all of you.

Short of, you don't have a public office. So that extra responsibility is no longer with you. It's never been with you, for that matter.

Parishioner: Hold Fast the Truth

But, nevertheless, as we'll see here in the second part, parishioners are called, therefore, to hold fast the truth, to retain it, to guard it, to never lose it. We all have a responsibility, right? The moral truth is still the same for all of us. We should not lose what knowledge of the gospel that we have before us.

Hold fast the truth here, parishioners, as well. Keep it through daily prayer and reading. So the simple truth is there.

I don't think I need to defend that fact that, yeah, sure, Timothy's gotta hold fast, but all of us have to hold fast. Yes, Timothy's called to keep it. He can, by the power of the Holy Spirit within him, because it abides in him.

But you, too, are called to keep it. That is, keep the truth and not lose it, obviously, as only you can in your own private life. And you can do this through daily prayer and reading.

This is how we pass it on to our children, because we know it, we learn it, we read it. We keep reading the Bible. If we know so little, we can only pass on so little.

To pray in accordance to its truth, to use catechisms, perhaps, as a sketch or a pattern of sound words for ourselves, for our kids, that we may learn all the more what is true. And what is good, and what is right for us to hang on to. Keep it through meditation.

So it's not enough to simply read, say, well, okay, I read some of it. Meditation means to mull it over, to think, to ruminate upon what you have read there with your own eyes. What exactly is Paul saying here? And what does it mean for me? And what does it mean for

others in my life? And how can I use it to be helpful in God's kingdom? These are the ways in which we have meditation.

It is not some weird Eastern mystic thing. I remember running across this word as a teenager in the 80s. I'm like, meditation, is this new age, right? New age stuff came out in the 80s.

Remember that? Oh, new age stuff. This is kind of scary. No, it doesn't mean anything like that at all.

It just means think about it in your head. And of course, in a fruitful way, not just thoughtlessly, as it were, running through your head like a squirrel. But with a little consideration of the matter.

How can you apply it? What does it mean for me? And you can keep it and retain it through Sunday worship. Of course, time of fellowship here where we are with one another and we show love to the saints and we can encourage one another and admonish one another. And we are here to even speak the truth to one another that we as God's people may learn to practice the truth.

It's not enough to simply, of course, hold it in our heads. Paul does not ever mean here, hold it in your heads. He just means don't lose it.

Whatever it is in your life, in your will, your emotions, your mind and your hands and your feet and your actions, right, your doctrine and your practice. It means all of that. Time of prayer and sacraments in particular.

Wherein God is first and foremost in our lives and he's presented to us in a visible fashion as we saw this morning, but also audible fashion through the preaching of the word. We therefore draw unto Christ our Lord by these truths preached to us and also given to us in the symbolism of baptism and the Lord's Supper. And of course, times of preaching.

For as Timothy heard it from Paul, so we hear it from the pastors. The truth, the pattern of sound words that we are called to retain and to believe and to keep by God's grace upon us. And this is where discernment is most important because all kinds of men, of course, preach and teach, but nevertheless, they must be held to the word of God and to the text of his word.

Not with an evil eye looking for any blemish, but you are called to listen and listen carefully to the word and to see does it come from the Bible or is it just come from his head? You may, of course, have some disagreements and some particulars that are a little different here, a little different there, that's true. But nevertheless, we are called not to be empty vessels to the pastor as such, but alert vessels to receive the truth when it's there and not when there is a mishap, perhaps. But certainly if it's a false outright lie, we should be very alert to that and reject it most clearly.

False teachers and bad practices are very dangerous and we ought to be alert for them. It's not simply my calling, in other words, as a pastor to hold the truth, but it's also your calling

to recognize the truth, to read the Bible and say, yes, the pastor says here is true. You too have a responsibility as a listener, in other words.

Listen to learn, to understand the passage, listen to apply how it may impact you and those around you and the responsibilities you have for others or perhaps the responsibility you don't have because sometimes people put too much responsibility upon themselves when they shouldn't. However, the case is you have an entire week to reminisce and ruminate and meditate upon the word of God as preached on Sunday. But hearing and reading the word of God also needs a heart that hears God himself and that is we are also called to hold fast in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

That too is our calling. Faith in Christ, we cannot learn the word of right without trust in Jesus Christ. You can certainly have a surface reading, unbelievers can read the Bible and perhaps quote it better than you can.

But they're unbelievers and it means nothing to them this is an interesting historical fact, but to us it is the words of life. That's what I mean having a heart of faith, faith and trust and clinging to our Lord and Savior in the word of God. In love of Christ, our faith must grow with love of course.

Love is a commitment and devotion to our Savior and to our Lord and our Redeemer. Such that, such love that whenever we hear false teaching from preachers on the radio, on the internet, in a book, that it becomes needles scraping on a record in our mind or nails on a chalkboard, I don't want to hear that. I don't want to hear false, unsound words from ministers.

For all of us, not just me, I'm not talking about myself, I'm saying we. That's the kind of love we ought to have it seems to me and I'm sure Paul certainly had it because he was what? Provoked there on Acts 17 when he saw the idols around him, these false gods claiming to be the true God. He said, I can't handle this anymore.

I got to speak up. Now you, of course, are not a public teacher or a public speaker, so I don't expect you to do that in that kind of situation, but in your own way, in your own life, you're like, I don't want to hear that on the radio. I'm turning it off.

That's terrible teaching. It just drives me nuts. That's the kind of love we need to cultivate is what I'm saying.

And of course, a love for one another. He's not specific here. He just says in faith, the whole fast, in faith and love, which are in Christ Jesus.

It's rooted in Christ Jesus, of course, but it doesn't stay in Christ Jesus. It's for all the saints. The minister, of course, is supposed to show love to the saints.

That's his calling. That should be his privilege as one who speaks the truth to them. And so loving one another, I think, is part of this call of ministers and indeed all Christians.

We are called also to speak the truth and love to one another. It's almost a direct quote. Although not public teacher, we still have responsibilities to speak that truth as a situation warrants it to one another in a proper way with consideration.

Nevertheless, it's still there. In this way, we help the church keep the truth. So in other words, you too have a responsibility, not just me, but all of us together collectively.

That leads us here to my last sub-point, we can call it, committed to the church. That is, that good thing which was committed to you, that is Timothy, but it's not to Timothy as a private citizen. It's to Timothy as a public officer in the context of a public institution.

And therefore, it's also the institution's commitment. That is, this deposit wasn't just given to Timothy. Oh no, only Timothy has it.

Sorry, no other pastor. Titus never got it. No, just Timothy.

It's the public office is what he's saying here. So wherever these ministers are, whatever church they are in, if it's a faithful church, they too have been given this, but not just them. It's the church as such, as a public institution has this deposit.

I mean, what happens when you're missing a pastor? You lost the deposit. No, you still have the Bible, right? You still have it. You have it as individuals who are not church officers.

What I'm saying is you also have a responsibility to retain it and to protect it as you can in the church and pray that God would bring and work as best you can to find a faithful pastor so that he can uphold the truth in a public way, this deposit. So the deposit is given to the church in that sense. And you all are able to assist that way.

And so I have here particularly kept by elders, kept by elders, ruling elders, of course, play an important role therein. As they are governors of the church, that is in discipline, they correct bad practices. And that would include bad pastors preaching bad things.

That would mean not just discipline, but doctrine, protecting against lies. So they have to know what the deposit is. It's been committed to them in that sense of preserving and protecting alongside with the pastor here, young Timothy or all of the pastors for that matter.

And of course, all of us has already pointed out at the beginning there, the deposit of truth is the gospel. And that gospel is your gospel. It's our gospel.

It's the salvation that we have. And it's what we can read here in the word of God. And it's not just for private reasons.

It's for public reasons. It's for anybody who would hear the truth and believe in the truth. And so the way in which we can retain the truth for our children, our grandchildren to preserve that which is committed to the body of Christ in general, but not to any one of us per se as a public officer, unless we are a public officer, is by rejecting lies and hanging onto the truth.

You may lose a church. You could have a civilization wipe out by a nuclear war, but you have the Bible. You can give it to your kids and pass it on to them.

And in that sense, you are fulfilling this obligation more broadly speaking, that you do your job to hold the truth up as best you can in your life, in the life of your family. Keep it when others will not keep it. It's hard to stand for the truth, of course, when even family members mock you.

But nevertheless, we are called as Timothy is called. When others fall around him, as we see in verse 15, he must stand firm. And we too must follow that example as well in our lives.

And we can, because we are empowered by the spirit. It's not just Timothy is powered by the spirit. It's all of us.

We all have the spirit of God dwelling in us. And therefore we can persevere and that we can sustain in times of difficulty, the truth and hang on to the truth when all else will fall around and fall down around us. And we pray that God will continue to preserve the truth in the church and in the ministry.

And I pray, brothers and sisters, that all of us will continue to lift up the churches of God across the world, especially in America and in our backyard, that they would stand firm and faithful and bold and holding fast the power of sound words. Let us pray. Indeed, God almighty, we lift them up and we pray for my ministry.

We pray for the ministries around me here in Denver and our presbytery, God, that you would continue to be with the men and the officers, that they would be sustained by your spirit, the spirit who indwells indeed all of us. And to this purpose and that they would keep the good thing that was deposited and given to the church of God and to ministers in particular, God almighty, that you would therefore, through their faithful ministries, although we know they certainly sin, and draw all men unto you, we pray. Amen.

Let us.