

## Guard It 2 Timothy 1:13-14

**(Show slide 1 as soon as Bible Reading ends)**

What motivates us to protect the items we own?

There are **two** main reasons.

- The item needs to be precious
- The item needs to be in danger

In my garden there are lots of twigs. I don't lock them in the garage when we go out. However, I do make sure I don't leave the front door wide open.

At the **heart** of the two verses that we are focusing on today is the major theme of **protecting** what is **spiritually precious**.

Look at verse 13. **Read verses 13 and 14.**

To help us get our heads around these truths I'm going to answer two questions.

- What is so precious?
- How should it be protected?

**First, what is so precious?**

**Change to slide 2**

In **verse 13**, we are presented with sound teaching. In **verse 14**, we are presented with the good deposit.

Let's ponder these in turn.

The apostle Paul is **exhorting** Timothy the pastor to keep what he has told him as the pattern or standard of sound teaching for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**What is precious are the words that have been communicated.**

Not money or precious stones or modern technology. But words!

**The words of Paul are the words of God.**

How precious that the God who made us is not the silent type but the one who has spoken to those he loves.

**Change to slide 3** When a new monarch is crowned in this country they are presented with a Bible. When this happens the king or queen is told unmistakably why this is being done.

This was what was said to **King Charles III in 2023**: “We present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; This is the royal Law; These are the lively Oracles of God.”

**The original wording first said in 1689 at the coronation of King William III was even more profound**: “We present You with this Book, the most valuable thing that this World affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the Royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God. Blessed is He that readeth and they, that hear the Words of this Book, that keep, and do the things contained in it. For these are the Words of Eternal life; able to make You wise and happy in this World, nay wise unto Salvation and so happy for evermore, through Faith which is in Christ Jesus, to whom be Glory for ever. Amen.

**Change to slide 4** In **2 Timothy** the word used to describe the teaching is **sound**.

The original Greek word was often used as a medical term and it would be translated as **healthy or well**.

We see it used this way in the Gospels of people Jesus healed.

**Matthew 15:31**. “The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing.”

The cropped made well is the word translated sound in **2 Timothy chapter 1**. We could say he was made sound!

This is a wonderful way to view the words of God. They are for our health and wellbeing.

**We are a generation obsessed with healthy living**. So many have an in-depth knowledge of what counts as nutritious food and so many spend hours and hours a week at local gyms.

**Why are we not as obsessed with the Bible?** Whether that's our personal reading or small group commitment or our attention attitude when we gather on a Sunday morning? Have we forgotten that God's word is sound? That is, it is for our health and wellbeing.

**Change to slide 5** In **verse 14**, God's word is also called the **good deposit**.

The original word translated as **good** can also be translated as **beautiful**. It's the word **kalos**. This is closely related to English word calligraphy, which means beautiful writing.

The Bible will present us with **beautiful truths** and it will transform us to be **beautiful** in **character**.

- God's word is authoritative
- God's word is reliable
- God's word is understandable
- God's word is powerful.

## Let's also believe that God's word is good.

This will help us **listen** and **do** what it says.

Even when it's hard and even when a thousand people say it's nonsense and will do us **harm**, by faith we believe the opposite.

God's words are precious.

## Second, how should they be protected?

**Change to slide 6** In **verse 13**, Timothy is told to keep as the pattern of sound teaching what he has heard from Paul. He is to do this with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

Then, in **verse 14**, he is told to guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit.

How are God's precious words protected from harm so that countless generations can enjoy them?

## First, they are to be faithfully preached by faithful pastors

**Change to slide 7** It's not a free for us. Those who teach must only teach within the boundary and on the foundation of the Bible.

They are not to be fascinated by what isn't said. No, they are to faithfully hold out what is there. When they do, the people of God will hear the authoritative voice of God.

**My time in Bracknell.** I took Nick's Bible and did two things. I gave it to him and reminded him that this was the basis of his authority to pastor the people. I then placed it on his head as a sign that he himself is always under its authority.

They are to do this with **faith** and **love** in Christ Jesus.

Personal faith in the truth they say to others.

**They are to trust that despite appearances it is the right thing to do.**

Of course it's vital to reflect and analyse what we are doing. But we are never to move away from the faithful words of God.

Also they are to keep hold of it in **love**.

They are to be **kind** and **compassionate** to all God's precious ones regardless of what they currently believe on every theological issue and how they respond to the truth as it is preached.

**Without love, the church will be a harsh place.**

One of my responsibilities as a **pastor** in this church is to ensure that God's word is faithfully proclaimed across the life of the fellowship.

Many people handle the Bible but we want to support you as best we can do that you too can hold onto the Scriptures with faith and love.

One of my responsibilities as a **bishop** is to ensure that only those committed to the Bible are ordained as future pastors. It's not a free for all. So for the good of the church, we need to ensure that only those who are godly and gifted are set apart for future leadership.

**How are God's words protected?** First, they are to be faithfully preached by faithful pastors.

**Secondly, they are to be faithfully defended by faithful pastors**

**Change to slide 8** This implies that the true word of God will be attacked.

People will come along who want to **change** it, **corrupt** it and **cancel** what God has said.

Two of the most common ways are what I call:

- The gospel plus
- The gospel minus

**The gospel plus.** Grace isn't enough. Do work things. Warm your way.

**The gospel minus.** Jesus isn't Lord or he isn't Lord of everything.

Faithful pastors must defend the gospel against these attacks.

**How?** There are **two** main ways.

**First**, we need to stop people who believe these things from teaching others.

**Second**, we need to speak openly about the errors so that the previous ones of Christ don't get sucked into the dangerous spiritual quick sand.

This is a difficult task and fraught with difficulties and mistakes.

It's like having a stroll in a mine field.

I love that Paul says, **do this with the help of the Holy Spirit** who lives in us.

Do pray for us as we seek to protect you from the danger of false teaching.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not asking that you only listen to me or Pastor James. But realise that not everything preached in the pulpits of Scarborough or the channels on YouTube will do our souls any good at all.

## In Conclusion

**Change to slide 9** God's precious words are what we need.

They are **healthy** and **beautiful**.

With God's help, let's remain committed to it until we see Jesus face to face.

**Let's pray.**