

**Title:** Sound Doctrine  
**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 1:13 and 14  
**Series:** The Pastoral Epistles

1. Introduction:

- a. In our portion today, Paul turns once more to the matter of Timothy's duty.
  - i. Timothy has a model of the Christian life, which he must follow. This model consists of the words, which he has heard from Paul. Timothy must hold on to these words, ever using them as his example, never departing from them. Because Paul's words were divinely inspired, they were sound words like the rest of Scripture. The sound words of Scripture compose the sound doctrine by which we must live by.
- b. According to our passage, **Doctrine matters:**
  - i. This last statement is of the utmost importance in our times. We see an increasing number of so-called religious leaders asking us to lay aside our doctrine to embrace love. However, when we sacrifice the fundamentals of the faith, we lose the truth that saves us. Love without truth is meaningless, hypocrisy. It is no love at all, for it leads all to eternal ruin.
    1. The Scripture calls the Christian to sound doctrine. Through sound doctrine, we can know who God is, know the singularity of Christ and what He has accomplished on behalf of God's elect, know the effectual

drawing of the Holy Spirit, know the gospel know obedience, and many other blessings.

- c. We see that doctrine mattered immensely to Paul. The pastoral epistles call the believer to sound doctrine as one of its central themes. Paul is calling both Timothy and Titus to be ministers that preach the truth, call the unrepentant to faith in Christ, and teach the believer how to walk orderly before His God. A quick survey of these epistles proves the point.
- i. Sound doctrine teaches us what is holy and what is profane. **1 Timothy 1:9-10** understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, (10) the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,
  - ii. Judgment is passed on those who teach unhealthy doctrines or will not agree with the sound doctrine presented in the holy scriptures. **1 Timothy 6:3-4** If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, (4) he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions,

- iii. People have a propensity to deviate from the sound doctrine of Scripture **2 Timothy 4:3** For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,
- iv. A minister's job is to teach sound doctrine and correct those that are living contrary to it. **Titus 1:9** He must hold firm to the trustworthy Word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.
- v. A minister's job is to ensure that all Christians live according to sound doctrine, even if that means using ecclesiastical discipline to accomplish the goal **Titus 1:13** This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,
- vi. Again calls the minister to teach sound doctrine to the believers **Titus 2:1** But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.
- vii. Calls Christians to speak in sound words. **Titus 2:8** and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.
  1. The slogan, so popular today, "It does not matter what you believe, as long as you are serious in whatever you believe," is flatly contradicted in the Pastoral Epistles and all of Scripture! It does matter what you believe. Salvation hangs in the balance.

a. Sound doctrine matters. We are to build our lives upon the sound doctrine of Christ's words.

i. **Matthew 7:24-27** “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (25) And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. (26) And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. (27) And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

2. We can only know God through the genuine Christ revealed in Scripture. We can only walk in obedience as God's very Word teaches us sound doctrine.

d. Nevertheless, we must remember that the Spirit in which one clings to the truth and passes it along to others does matter.

i. We have just said that love without doctrine is empty and meaningless. It is also true that doctrine without love is cold and judgmental.

1. **Ephesians 4:15** But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

2. Verse 13: Doctrine Matters: Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

a. To guard the gospel, Timothy must **follow the pattern of sound words he had heard from Paul**.

i. Paul has been calling Timothy to a willingness to sacrifice all for the sake of the gospel. However, before you put your life on the line for what you believe, you must first believe it. The gospel must have penetrated and taken root in the heart.

1. **Psalms 119:159-160** Consider how I love your precepts! Give me life according to your steadfast love. (160) The sum of your Word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

a. The Psalmist loves God's word.

b. He recognizes it as Sound Doctrine

ii. Many professing Christians and churches today have little concern for biblical truth and biblical standards of living. They don't know what they believe. In the name of love, understanding, and peace within the church and with society, almost any theology is accepted, or at least not challenged, no matter how much it may contradict Scripture and ruin lives eternally.

1. We cannot live this way. We are called to be students of Scripture. As RC Sproul once

wrote, Everyone is a Theologian. All Christians are called to have an appropriate systematic theology that is biblical. We are called to know, serve, and worship God correctly. We are called unto the way of holiness. We learn of this way in the holy scriptures—Beloved, doctrine matters.

iii. Paul calls Timothy to a **pattern**: to a drawing of a sketch or first draft as painters when they begin a picture, an exemplar by which to live. In God's Word, we find this exemplar. We find everything necessary for salvation and for living the Christian life.

1. **2 Timothy 3:15-17** and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (16) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (17) that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

a. We must, like Timothy, be **acquainted** with the sacred writings.

i. Sound doctrine **makes us wise for salvation** because **it points us to faith in Christ Jesus**.

b. We must view **Scripture** itself is the **breath** (*theopneustos*) of **God**

c. Sound doctrine

- i. **Teaches** us
      - ii. **Reproves** us
      - iii. **Corrects** us
      - iv. **Trains** us
    - d. Sound Doctrine makes us **complete** in the Christian life
    - e. Sound doctrine **equips** us to live the Christian life
  - b. Sound doctrine always points us to **the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.**
    - i. Paul is commanding Timothy to hold these truths with sincere faith in the Lord Jesus and with love that evidences our attachment to Him.
      - 1. **Faith** means not only trust but to be dependent as well.
      - 2. **Love** includes not only **love** to God but also **love** to our fellow believers and to the perishing world around us.
3. Verse 14: Sound Doctrine is a precious treasure to be guarded: By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.
- a. Timothy is to **guard**: (Greek: *phulássō*) Of persons or things kept in safety, to keep, preserve
    - i. This Word gives us the impression of a soldier guarding either a person or city from outside harm.
      - 1. Timothy is to guard sound doctrine. He is to be careful not to allow any deceitful outside influence from corrupting the truth set forth by God. If faith comes by hearing and

hearing by the Word of God, then Timothy must guard the only message that can save sinners.

- ii. This is not the first time that Paul has exhorted Timothy in this regard. He states in **1 Timothy 4:16** Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.
  1. Brothers and sisters, are you guarding the **good deposit** of **sound doctrine**?
    - a. Do you know the fundamentals of the faith?
  - b. The “**good deposit**” is, of course, the gospel. The gospel consists of “the **sound words**” which Timothy has heard from Paul.
    - i. The gospel is precious and excellent because it belongs to God and results in His glory through the salvation of those who accept it by sovereign grace.
      1. Today, the tragedy is that our churches are filled with people who do not guard or even believe the **good deposit** of the gospel.
        - a. An August 2020 article by The Gospel Coalition explains this is increasingly horrific detail:
          - i. A survey conducted by the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University finds that American adults today increasingly adopt a “salvation-can-be-earned” perspective. A

plurality of adults (48 percent) believes that if a person is generally good, or does enough good things during their life, they will “earn” a place in heaven. Only one-third of adults (35 percent) disagree.

ii. A majority of Americans who describe themselves as Christian (52 percent) also accept a “works-oriented” means to God’s acceptance—even those associated with churches whose official doctrine says eternal salvation comes only from embracing Jesus Christ as savior.

iii. The survey goes on to say: While about 65 percent of American adults describe themselves as Christians, only about half (54 percent) believe they will experience heaven after they die. Only one-third of adults (33 percent) believe they will go to heaven solely because of confessing their sins and embracing Jesus as their savior. Another one-in-five expecting to experience heaven are counting on earning their way in or because they embrace universalism (i.e.,

that God will let all people into heaven).

- ii. Timothy is urged to **guard** this **deposit**. He must defend it against every attack and never allow it to be changed or modified in the slightest degree.

1. Beloved, doctrine matters.

- c. However, since the enemy is strong and we are weak, Paul very wisely adds the thought that this guarding cannot be done except “**By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us**. Timothy, and all Christians, must continuously come to God the Holy Spirit for His preserving care. We dare not walk in the deception of human strength. We are called to guard the deposit, something we must do. However, our guarding causes us to be solely dependent on the Spirit’s provision.

- i. Timothy was admonished to stand true to the Word of God. He would not have to do this in his strength. The indwelling Holy Spirit would supply all that he needed for this task. The Bible promises this grace to all believers.

1. **John 16:7** Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

- ii. This portion of Scripture reminds us that we are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit as Christians. Don’t let this point escape your attention. Can there be a more incredible blessing for us than this? If we are the temple of the Holy Spirit, then God the Holy Spirit must live within us.

1. **John 14:15-17** “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (16) And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, (17) even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.
  2. **Romans 8:11** If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
- d. The gospel deposit is described as being **entrusted** to Timothy. With this closing thought, we come back full circle to the things previously discussed. We have all, by the Great Commission of God, been entrusted to guard and proclaim this great treasure of the gospel.
- i. As Paul states in **1 Corinthians 9:17** For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward, but if not of my own will, I am still entrusted with a stewardship.

#### 4. Benediction:

- a. **Psalms 119:10-11** With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! (11) I have stored up your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

### **Public Reading Romans 16:17-20**