

## Thursday, April 20, 2023 ▫ Read 2Timothy 1:13–14

*Questions from the Scripture text: With what command does v13 begin? Of what does this prototype consist? What sort of words? From whom had Timothy gotten them? By what mechanism had he gotten them? What two principles must characterize the way that he holds to this pattern? Who is at the center of a life that is sustained by this faith and driven by this love? What is this pattern called in v14? To whom had the precious deposit been entrusted? What was Timothy to do with it? To Whom was he to entrust his own keeping of the precious deposit? Where does this Holy Spirit dwell—in whom (n.b. how many)?*

**What is the purpose of the official ministry of the church?** 2Timothy 1:13–14 looks forward to the second reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **a great part of the official ministry of the church is to guard patterns of words.**

Pattern of sound words, v13a. We live in an age when ministry in the church is often about worship or activities that induce certain feelings in people. The church has forgotten that it lives first before the face of God, and that even before the face of the world, the great thing that it has to offer is God Himself. So the question is not how we can get people to feel a certain way about us, our church, or even our God. Rather, the great question of ministry in the church is just what it is that God has given us to do, what is it by which God communicates Himself.

So as the apostle is urging his protégé to conduct his ministry faithfully as Paul comes to an end of his own course, he urges Timothy about particular words. He doesn’t urge him to a Word-centered ministry. He cares much about the particular words themselves. He has given Timothy a pattern of words, a model and example of what particular words to use, and he expects Timothy to follow it.

What fuels this particularity about words: faith and love in Christ Jesus, v13b. Why can’t we all just respect that each has his own faith? Why get so particular with doctrine, when it’s all just about love? Such phrases sound sweet at first, but it is the saccharin, nutritionless sweetness of manmade, synthetic ideas.

True faith in Christ Jesus cares very much to get the identity of Christ Jesus correct. Faith is not holding on to trust; this is faith in faith, not faith in Christ Jesus. Faith is holding onto Christ. And it matters very much whether we are holding onto an actual Being Who is the Creator of all things and the Redeemer of those who trust in Him, or whether we are holding onto a figment of our imagination, an artifact of our emotions, or simply the lies of mere men.

And true love for Christ Jesus cares very much about Him Himself. True love for Christ cares very much to be truthful about Him. True love for Christ cares very much to know what actually pleases Christ. It does not foist upon the Lord whatever makes us feel good and expect that He must therefore approve of it. Do we have true faith and true love?

Then we will care to be particular and Scriptural, even about the words of our theology and the patterns in which we arrange those words. This is the principle behind catechizing, and why times of reformation and revival have often produced excellent catechisms or recovered their use.

Who maintains these patterns of sound words, v14. Are such patterns of words kept by the church or by the Holy Spirit? Yes. Ministers of the gospel, like Timothy, are charged with keeping “that good deposit,”—“that good thing which was committed to you.” But believers can do nothing in their own strength.

Apart from Christ we can do nothing (cf. Jn 15:5), so the apostle reminds Timothy that he has the very same Spirit dwelling in him as has dwelt in Paul—the Spirit of Christ Himself, by Whom we abide in Christ Himself. It is this Spirit Who has given the Scriptures (cf. 3:14–17; 2Pet 1:20–21), by Whom the Lord Jesus Himself has given pastor-teachers as His method of stabilizing His people in those Scriptures (cf. Ac 20:28; Eph 4:11–14). For this purpose, the Spirit dwells with believers and in believers, so that He will be to us the Spirit *of truth* by Whom the Lord Jesus is always with us to keep us loving Him (cf. Jn 14:15–18). The pattern and the power of ministry is not up to the minister. It has been determined by Christ: keeping sound words as those who are kept by the Spirit.

**What has the study of sound words played in your walk with Christ? Whom is He using to facilitate this, and how have you availed yourself of their ministry? Whom do you trust to make this effective?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for keeping Paul by Your Spirit, and keeping Timothy by Your Spirit, and that now You have come to us by the Spirit Who dwells in us. Forgive us for trying to do things our own way—either by minimizing doctrine or being loose with it. And forgive us for trying to do things in our own strength—rather than by Your Holy Spirit Who dwells in us. By Your Spirit, grant that we would keep the good deposit that has been entrusted to Your church, for we ask it through Christ, AMEN!*

**ARP23B “The Lord’s My Shepherd” or TPH406 “Jesus, With Thy Church Abide”**

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Second Timothy chapter 1 verses 13 and 14. These are god's words. 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?

So far the reading of god's inspired and And Aaron tort So, the first thing, the apostle tells Timothy here. Is to hold fast. The pattern of sound words. That he had heard. From the apostle. The lord cares. Uh, not just about ideas generally but even words. Specifically. He teaches us and encourages us here.

To. Arrange his words. In patterns. But they are to be his words. Her to be sound words. And that which makes the theological word sound. Is their consistency with their origin from? The scriptures. Whether by, Uh, explicit plainly being set down in the scriptures. Or those things that are necessarily implied by the scriptures.

By good and necessary consequence. So those are sound words. Uh, but the lord teaches us here that Uh, he has given us not just A. Body of truth. In all of the books of the bible. The different genres and types of literature. In which the lord has inspired every word that we Need for faith.

And Practice, not just a body of truth, but a system of truth. Is popular. And In some circles to. Uh, despise theology. As something that is divisive. And you'll hear doctrine divides, because there have been disagreements over at theology. Well, they're disagreements over at theology a Because we are ignorant and b because we are sinful.

Um, But doctrine does divide. It divides truth from error. And many of those who, Uh, Despise theology. Will despise especially what they call systematic theology. They say it, as if Uh, you know, you got acid in your mouth. When you say systematic. Uh you may even hear them. Say well, i believe and biblical theology.

Which by which, they mean, the theological reasonings of particular books of the bible, Rather than the theology of the bible as a whole, Now, biblical theology is fine. It real recognizes that there is a literary context and a grammatical context. In which the lord has given us scriptures. And that there's a historical context that he gave the scriptures through particular people that particular times two particular audiences, but the great context of the bible is the context of the bible as a whole.

Uh, the triune context in which the father has spoken to us by the sun. As. Uh, he carries people along. By his spirit. And so, the great interpreter of scripture is not just the particular book of the bible that you're in, but the scriptures as a whole And paul now tells Timothy reminds Timothy.

That as christ's apostle. Remember he had introduced himself that way in the letter, even though he was well known to Timothy, but he lets Timothy know, he's writing his christ's apostle And when he introduces the letter, that way, it's Clue. Timothy, i'm writing under inspiration of the holy spirit, i'm writing as an apostle.

This is to be added to the holy scriptures, what we call the canon. Um, And as christ's apostle, he writes and he says hold fast to the pattern. Of sound words. Which you had heard from me. And so he says, you know, the reason That i have systematized, the truth of the bible for you.

Is because that's jesus's will for the church. And i did that as an apostle and you are to continue doing that. As an elder. Do you know what some systems of sound doctrine? Or Patterns of sound words are called. Fashions. Orgasms. Praise god. We still have, don't we? A pattern of sound words.

And we are encouraged then by scripture to use confessions and catechisms to systematize to summarize and show the relationships of the truths of the bible. In. Uh, in Patterns, which will, and facilitate understanding And facilitate recall. It's easier to remember something when it's in a pattern and to facilitate transmission.

From one generation to the next even as we see being done here. So patterns of sand words are part of The lord jesus's plan for our Uh, being instructed in the bible. I were having our thought patterns shaped by his word patterns. Uh, that we Can understand from scripture.

Now, the thing that Motivates, this is not. Merely so that we can achieve theological superiority to everyone else. There is a. Joy in seeing how truth fits together. We are made in god's image and that way. But our sin perverts. True joyce. And we can actually, Fall into not the knowledge that humbles us before god, but the knowledge that as the scripture says puffs up, And so we're not just to use patterns of sound words and hold fast to patterns of sound words, he gives us also the right motivation.

For holding fasts to these patterns, which is faith in christ jesus and love for christ. Jesus. Jesus is the one who we're trusting. So, it is important to understand from the bible. Everything that it says about him. And have patterns of sound words so that we may know whom it is that we trust.

And so that we may understand what it is that he tells us Because we don't just trust him personally. We also trust him in in Belief understanding. Uh, receiving whatever he teaches us and believing it. And in obedience, receiving, whatever, he commands us and following it, we are taught to keep all the es commanded us.

This is what his disciple do. As we hear in the great commission. So the faith that is in christ jesus, this should motivate us. To hold to the pattern of sound words. This prevents us from saying well, i don't really care about theology. I just trust in jesus or i just they don't even say i just love jesus.

Which is the second part, isn't it? Says well, no. Trusting in jesus and loving jesus makes you care about theology. So that statement is a self-contradicting statement. Isn't it to say? I don't care about theology. I just trust in jesus or i just love. Which jesus do you trust?

Oh, now we're doing theology. Oh, What does it look like to love, jesus? Now, we're doing theology. But if we do trust in him and we do love him, we want to answer those questions, don't we Who is he? What is he like what has he done? What does he want me to do?

How can i show him? Uh, my love. So that was that fuels this particularity about words. The faith And the love that are in christ, jesus. Because we care very much to know who he is, and we care very much about him himself and to, please him And to love him.

Finally, we see in verse 14, That just as, Part of jesus's plan for Timothy to have sound words. Uh, was the ministry of the apostle. So jesus is planned for the Ephesians and the new ephesian elders who whom Timothy is supposed to be ordaining. Jesus's plan for them to have sound words.

Is timothy and jesus's plan for the ephesian believers to have sound words. Is the new Ephesian elders and jesus's plan for us to have sound words. Includes our elders, our ministers. And also in the home, of course, Uh, the father and husband as the head, but also the mother with her children.

Um, But the lord has appointed, then those whom his spirit is going to use. Because the spirit is the spirit of christ. And so when someone says, We all have the holy spirit. Why are you teaching me? Well, because the holy spirit taught us that he ordains teachers. Right?

If you have the holy spirit, then you should recognize and make use of those, whom the spirit has appointed for your good. Just as paul when he writes to the Corinthians and they've got charasmania going on in quarantine says, if anyone is spiritual or a prophet, let him recognize that i too have the spirit of god.

In other words, Those who actually have genuine spiritual gifts or eucharist Corinthians. The first thing they're going to tell you about this letter, is that it's holy scripture. That this wasn't just the letter of a man. This was a letter of god to our church. Uh, well, similar thing here.

Uh, yes, we all have the spirit he dwells in us. Praise god. Because if we didn't, we wouldn't understand the pattern of sound words, even if we had it. And if we had it and understood it, we would abuse it. We wouldn't use it out of trust in and love to the lord jesus, which humbles us.

And makes us pour ourselves out. We would take those patterns of sound words that we understood, and we would be proud of ourselves for understanding and despise others. And we would, because we were proud feel less need for jesus. And in our despising others, of course. Uh we would be hateful to christ to made them and if it's other believers, we would be hateful even to christ to whom they are united.

And so, praise god. Yes. The holy spirit. Dwells in us. This is his truth and he will apply it to us. And that is our hope. Uh, for keeping the truth. And employing it, applying it in the right way. That good thing versus 14 that good thing which was committed to you.

Keep. By. The holy spirit. Who dwells in us? Praise God. Let's ask him to help us. Our father in heaven. Our lord jesus christ. We thank you. That you have given us your spirit. Who proceeds from you? That not only would he Uh, lead us into all the truth.

Just as he carried, men along who wrote and spoke from you. That we might have the completed scripture. But we pray that he would continue to help us to understand. And put together to synthesize. Systematize, what you have taught us? Into patterns of sound words. We thank you for giving us.

Pastors elders. Pray. That you would help those whom you give a teaching responsibility. Whether in the congregation or in the households, And we pray lord that you would be helping me in our house. That you would be providing. For the girls even now. Those husbands. Uh, whom we asked that you would help in their house as when that day comes.

Lord help my sons. To love you. Make your spirits to dwell in them. That. They would grow in understanding your word and being able. Uh, to explain it to their families. When the time comes for them to have a household, We thank you, lord. That our hope is in you.

Who have given us the word and you your spirit through, as the one by whom we keep it and even who dwells in us as the spirit of the sun, And so we put all our hope in you. Stir up in us faith and christ jesus. Stir up in us.

Love for christ jesus. We ask these things in the name of christ, jesus. Amen.