

2 Timothy 1:12-14 – God Keeps, You Keep

Vincent, Calvin, Handfuls, Gill, TSK, GreekLexicon, Geneva, Family, Robertson, PNT, Poole, INT, JFB, Foster, Gray, Henry Emily, you will have troubles...but Emily...God will keep you. And one more thing, Emily, because God keeps you, you have a responsibility to keep God's law. Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, if ever there was a message that your children need to learn it is this one that the Apostle Paul delivered to Timothy. Why? Timothy faced many of the same challenges you and your children face today – pressures to be ashamed of the Gospel...pressures to try to control the future...and pressures to depart from orthodox 正統的 Christian living. So give good attention to this sermon today.

Our headings are: **God keeps you, body and soul.** **You Keep God's law and claim his promises.**

Our goals are: That you understand **that God is going to keep through (not from) all the troubles** of this life and therefore **you should not live in fear.** And second, that **you learn that, while God is sovereign over all things, you still have a responsibility to keep his law and claim his promises** so you can live to please him.

God Keeps you, body and soul

12 For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

1. From the previous verse the Apostle Paul said that he was sent to proclaim truth to the non-Jews. But Paul faced persecution – harassment 骚扰 from the Jews, imprisonment from the Romans in Rome, and abandonment from all his friends when he was brought before Emperor Nero. **The Jews hated him for speaking of Jesus Christ** and of a salvation that did not come by obeying the ceremonial laws.

And for the Romans, this was the time when Nero would wrap Christians in animal skins and throw them to hungry lions in front of 65,000 on Sunday mornings.

Weak Christians ran from Paul as if he had the plague.

Others mocked him his strange belief...or his faith in Christ alone.

2. Even though this was a horrible humiliation (Who wants to be hated, persecuted, abandoned, and mocked?), Paul said that he was not ashamed to experience this humiliation.

3. Why was Paul not ashamed? Paul knew **God was able to keep him, body and soul.** In fact, he knew that God was able to keep all the souls he had committed to the Lord, not just his own soul. Paul was not speaking of storing up treasures (or good works) in heaven, as some interpret it. Paul was referring to the preservation of body and soul. He knew that God would vindicate 辯護/平反 him in the end.

4. And look at the confidence that Paul had in the preserving power of God. He said that God would keep him “till the Day of Judgment.” Government welfare might run for 2 years. Most people’s RRSP’s will run out before they die. Breathing machines might keep you alive for a time. But God’s power is able to keep man till judgment day when he’ll be vindicated by the righteousness of Jesus Christ. You see, as one writer said: Confidence in the future drives away present shame.

5. Let us now look at the basis of Paul’s confidence. He had to have great confidence to make such a statement for sure.

a. **He knew and believed in God.** One cannot have faith in an unknown object... Christ was the object of his faith. He had seen the glories of Christ’s person, and the fullness of Christ’s grace. This is the power of faith. And this is not simply referring to the bright light on the road to Damascus. Rather, this refers to the transforming work of Christ in the life of sinners. He knew that Christ is an able, willing, suitable, and complete Savior for the whole world.

b. He was persuaded that God is able to do it – to do what he promised. “Able” is often translated “mighty.” Our word “able” is weak for the context. This word speaks of the power of God...the strength of God to do what he promised – to keep all Christians through the trials of this life till the Day of Judgment. And since God promised a big thing – this word (able) pictures God’s ability to do something big. And any good child would know that if he has something and wants it kept safely, he would turn it over to his big strong father for safe keeping. Luther wrote: “Let him that died for my soul, see to the salvation of it.” (God must do what he has promised.)

6. It is easier not to be ashamed if you know that God can and will keep you in the end. This is why it is imperative that you impart this knowledge to your children from the time they are able to understand right from wrong. Who knows what kind of nation Canada will be in 50 years socially and morally...you can already see where it is going now. Are your children trained in having confidence in the Lord? This is the confidence little Emily and all our children must have for living in this world. If they don’t have this confidence they will live defeated lives.

You Keep God’s Law and Claim his Promises

13 Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

KEEP THE PATTERN OF SOUND WORDS

1. God will keep, body and soul for eternity, but man has a responsibility to keep also. He must “hold fast” - keep securely...the pattern of sound words that he received. This is the language of Paul often used in his letters and used also to Timothy.

1Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Holding fast...or keeping...is a command...not a suggestion. The word “hold fast” could be translated “live.” So you could say: Live by the pattern of sound words you have received.

2. Now what is this “pattern of sound words” that Timothy had received? “Sound words” means wholesome...healthy words. This means doctrine...Words form doctrine. Some doctrines don’t plainly appear in Scriptures...but you can learn the doctrine from studying sound words...like the Trinity for example. The Trinity is not explicitly taught, but it is implicitly taught.

According to John Gill, the expression “pattern of sound words” seems to be an allusion 暗示 to painters, who first make their outlines - patterns, and make a rough draft before they lay on their colors and beautiful strokes.

3. What a contrast to much of what is present in Christian circles today where churches swing from **antinomianism** 反律法主义 to **legalism** in doctrine.

Antinomianism: Some think that since we are under grace we are no longer under law. They don't realize that God's grace through Jesus Christ causes us to obey God's law. You are saved in order to obey. This kind of thinking also allows them the freedom to make up doctrines that are tasty to their palates 味觉 – but they are harmful to their souls. They usually abandon the Sabbath Day, male covenant headship, mess around with the elements for worship, etc.

Legalism: There are those who spend much of their time making up laws that advance their ideas for Christianity, following the legalism of the Pharisees. They make up minute laws about how to keep the Sabbath, what foods you may or may not eat, and are generally more concerned about the letter of the law rather than the spirit of the law. But the letter kills. The spirit of the law gives life.

4. Antinomianism and legalism are not sound, but neither are they new. Two thousand years ago Paul had to give the same warning...and the Apostle John.

Galatians 1:8-9 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

2John 1:10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him;

5. In sum, Timothy was told to keep believing and preaching words of truth steadfastly, regardless of the opposition from the Gnostics 相信神秘直觉说的教派 and the Judaizers. This is what Paul did when he was in Ephesus.

Acts 28:20 "how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,
This was done in faith (internally) and in love (externally).

KEEP DEPENDING UPON THE HOLY SPIRIT

14 That good thing which was committed **(my deposit)** to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

5. How is this verse related to what was said before? This was a call to Timothy to depend upon the Holy Spirit to help him keep that pattern of sound doctrine which Paul had taught him. In other words, Timothy had to keep his ministerial office from becoming corrupted. This word “keep” means to “guard.” But he had to do so with the Holy Spirit's help. He could not keep these right doctrines safe by himself. These doctrines were a “good deposit” and he was not to trust himself with keeping them. Paul's concern was that Timothy would stray after new ideas and abandon true doctrines which were bound to come up. By Timothy's own strength he would misuse or destroy the doctrines. So Paul urged him to depend upon the Holy Spirit for help.

6. Won't this be true also for you? Parents, you are to guard that good truth that you have...so it is not lost...so it can be passed on to your children...so they can recall it and better serve the Lord.

Teach your children to depend upon the Holy Spirit. Ask him to daily keep you faithful to God's truth...not the common changeable "truths" that are in the world today. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill your lives so there would be no room for corruption. Paul warned before:

1Timothy 6:20 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane *and* idle babblings 胡说 and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—

Conclusion:

There can be little doubt that Timothy was a little afraid when, as a young man, he endured the different personal attacks of the Judaizers (Jews), the Gnostics (Gentiles), and the Romans (threats of imprisonment and death). But Paul assured Timothy that by following and trusting the Lord through his troubles, that the Lord, by his Holy Spirit, would keep him safe...and his soul would be secured to the end of the world. So Timothy had no reason to be ashamed and compromise his true faith. He would triumph.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: This is very practical to the church today and to the baby before us. Emily will face pressures to be ashamed of the Gospel...pressures to try to control the future...and pressures to depart from orthodox Christian living. But when she understands that God is going to keep her through (not from) all the troubles of this life, she will not live in fear. And when she is taught and realizes that she still has responsibilities to keep his law and claim his promises she will walk to please the Lord. And when she realizes that in order to walk in truth she needs the Holy Spirit, she will call on him and he will help her. And most of all, when she realizes she is a sinner and claims God's promises to her in Christ in her baptism, he will have no fear, but full confidence that Christ will keep her forever. And you too.

Finally, if you want that kind of assurance, may you ask God to make you his child, give you a heavenly hope, mark you by baptism, and give you life eternal, then ask him to count Christ's obedience and suffering as you own.