

Preserving The Truth

January 4, 2026

- Thankful for prayers
- Thankful for believing
- Thankful for family

The responsibility placed upon each of us who knows the principles of God's Word and understands how it fits together is a tremendous blessing. God did not reveal these truths to us by accident. He opened our eyes for a reason. He taught us how to rightly divide His Word so that we could faithfully carry it forward and entrust it to others who believe and are committed to it. This is the principle for preserving the truth of God's Word to the next generation, and those that follow.

II Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

This is a dynamic verse of Scripture, and it deserves careful attention. Paul reminds Timothy that the Word of God that he received came directly from Paul's instruction and example and was confirmed "among many witnesses." In other words, the truth Timothy received was public, tested, and consistent — not novel, secretive, or speculative.

Paul then gives Timothy a clear responsibility: the truth is not merely to be held, but to be **committed**. The word implies entrusting something valuable to another for safekeeping. Timothy was to pass this doctrine on deliberately, not to everyone indiscriminately, but to **faithful men** — those proven to be trustworthy, teachable, and loyal to the Word of God.

Finally, Paul shows that "truth preservation" is **multi-generational**. Faithful men are to teach others also. This establishes an unbroken chain: from Paul, to Timothy, to faithful teachers, to future believers. The preservation of truth, therefore, is not dependent on institutions, creeds, or traditions, but on faithful people accurately handling and transmitting God's Word. This verse reveals God's method for preserving truth across time: *sound doctrine taught openly, guarded carefully, and passed on faithfully from generation to generation.*

II Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

This is about *rightly dividing* and handling that truth of God's Word accurately. Accuracy is vital. We don't leave out words, we don't add words, we don't change words. If we do, then we don't have the Word. Just like Eve. Timothy had spent considerable time traveling with Paul, listening to him teach, watching him minister, and learning the Word in practical, real-life situations. We can trace the beginning of this relationship, starting in Acts 16:

Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Prior to Acts 16, an important doctrinal controversy had taken place in Acts 15. Certain men from Judea had traveled to Antioch [HQ] teaching that believers needed to be circumcised in order to be saved. Paul and Barnabas strongly opposed this teaching and went to Jerusalem to resolve the matter.

During their time in Jerusalem, the council of the apostles and elders conferred with them and agreed with Paul that circumcision was not required for salvation. To remove confusion and establish unity among the churches, James and the elders drafted a letter affirming this decision. That letter, recorded in Acts 15, was sent with Paul & Barnabas back to Antioch, and thereafter to all of the churches, confirming to the believers that salvation rested solely on God's grace—not on physical circumcision. Here is what the letter stated:

Acts 15:23–29

23 And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: 24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: 25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; 29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

The record in Acts 16 presents a very interesting action taken by Paul. Even though circumcision was not required for salvation, Paul circumcised Timothy because of the Judeans in those regions who knew that Timothy's father was a Greek. This was not done to keep the Law, nor was it a condition of righteousness, **but** to remove a stumbling block that would have hindered their ministry among Judeans. It may also be understood that God instructed Paul to take this action so that the Word would have free course. This stands in clear contrast to the situation with Titus, described in Galatians 2. In this record, Paul points out that Titus was also included in the journey to Jerusalem in Acts 15.

Galatians 2:1–4: 1 Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. 3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.

With the circumcision of Timothy in Acts 16, Paul was removing a cultural barrier so that the Judeans in those regions would listen. A simple analogy helps illustrate this truth: Imagine being invited to teach in a home where everyone removes their shoes before entering. However, **you** do not remove your shoes so as to gain God's favor or to fulfill a spiritual requirement. You remove them simply to avoid creating a distraction that would hinder people from receiving the message. That is what Paul did with Timothy. Circumcision did not make Timothy more righteous; it simply removed an obstacle so the Word could be received without offense.

With Titus, the situation was entirely different. Titus was a Gentile, and certain men were insisting that he must be circumcised in order to be saved. To circumcise Titus would have validated that false teaching and placed the churches under bondage to the Law. In this case, the truth of the gospel was at stake, and Paul refused to allow Titus to be circumcised. So, we see two very different circumstances:

- With **Timothy**: Circumcision removed a cultural stumbling block and opened doors for ministry among Judeans.
 - With **Titus**: Circumcision would have supported false doctrine and undermined the liberty believers have in Christ.
- Paul's actions were not inconsistent. They were directed by spiritual wisdom and revelation—always protecting the integrity of God's Word and ensuring that nothing hindered the Word from having free course.

These two records—Timothy in Acts 16 and Titus in Galatians 2—give us remarkable insight into how Paul protected the purity of the gospel. He refused to allow false doctrine to creep in. He removed unnecessary barriers when it helped the Word to move. And he stood immovable when the integrity of the Word of God was threatened. Why? Because the truth had to be rightly divided, **preserved**, guarded, and handed down **accurately**. This sets the stage perfectly for Paul's charge to Timothy:

II Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Paul had spent years teaching Timothy, modeling the ministry before him, and showing him—by revelation and by example—how to stand for the accuracy of God's Word. Timothy had seen Paul confront error, he watched him remove obstacles, defend the truth, and keep the Word moving forward in all circumstances. He was trained not only in doctrine but also in **decision-making, operation of the manifestations, and boldness**. Now Paul turns to Timothy and says: *"Timothy, do the same! You must pass on what I have taught you. You must entrust this same truth to faithful men—men who will guard it, study it, and teach it to others."*

This was God's design for preserving the truth across generations.

Paul → Timothy → Faithful Men → Others Also. It is a spiritual chain—each link connected to the next. If one link fails, the chain weakens. But when each generation takes this charge seriously, the truth remains strong, clear, and powerful. Just as Timothy stood on Paul's shoulders, others would one day stand on his. This is how the integrity of the Word is preserved—by faithful believers who refuse to compromise and who are committed to teaching the next generation. Preserving the truth is not passive. It requires conviction. It requires commitment. And it requires a willingness to study and teach others also.

This was not the only thing that Paul instructed Timothy to do. Both I & II Timothy give great instruction to lead him and show what needs to be done for the future.

II Timothy 1:13 Hold fast the form [pattern, or model] of sound words [healthy words], which thou hast heard of me, in faith [believing] and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14 That good thing [the gospel] which was committed unto thee keep [guard] by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

This instruction fits perfectly:

- Paul committed the truth to Timothy
- Timothy is to *hold it fast*
- Timothy is to *guard it*
- Timothy is then to *commit it to others* (2:2)

This "theme" of truth is something that has been very important to God throughout the ages. It is not a new concept. Protecting the integrity of the truth of God's Word was, and is vital. Let's look at Psalm 78:1.

Psalm 78:1: Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

And then continues in verse 4.

Psalm 78:4 We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. 5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: 6 That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: 7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

This is the Old Testament **parallel chain** to **II Timothy 2:2**:

- Fathers → children → children yet unborn → their children
- The emphasis is that the precious truth must *be preserved and passed down*
- It must be taught with intention and purpose

1 Timothy 4:15: Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

As Paul continued teaching and training Timothy, he emphasized not only the importance of *receiving* the truth and *passing* it to faithful men, but also the responsibility of **watching over his own life and doctrine**. Preserving the truth is not only about guarding the integrity of the Word; it is also about guarding the one who carries it. In this case, Timothy had to keep himself strong, disciplined, and rooted in sound doctrine so that what he taught would remain pure and effective. Paul reminded him that the impact of his ministry would depend on his personal faithfulness to the truth he had been given.

The truth is preserved by faithful men and women who take heed to themselves, to the doctrine, and to their stewardship of God's Word. As they do, the Word continues to have free course. It remains clear, powerful, and free from corruption. And the generations that follow can stand with the same confidence that Paul and Timothy stood upon.

This is our calling today. God has entrusted His Word to us—not merely to understand it, but to protect it, live it, and pass it forward with accuracy and love. We are to rightly divide the Word of truth. When we commit ourselves to these things, we strengthen the chain of believing and ensure that the truth continues to shine brightly for all who will come after us.

God bless you.
Jack Northart