

**(1:13)** - True faith is founded upon sound doctrinal teaching from God's Word (*2 Tim. 3:15-17*), the truth as it is in Christ Jesus revealed in the power of the Holy Spirit (*Rom. 6:17-18*). Some see doctrinal preaching as cold and dead intellectualism, but we cannot preach Christ without preaching the doctrine of Christ. The doctrine of Christ is truth that identifies and distinguishes Him and the power of His finished work from all counterfeits (*cf., 2 Cor. 11:3-4*). **"Sound words"** are words of truth from God which are healthy for our souls. They are healing words that not only expose our sinfulness but also show us the glory of Christ and God's grace to save us and keep us in Him. Once the Holy Spirit has given us spiritual life and implanted or engrafted the Word into our hearts, it will remain there forever by the grace and power of God. It will never leave us, and we cannot leave it. Paul tells Timothy here to **"hold fast the form of sound words."** **"Hold fast"** means to keep in one's possession or charge. **"Form"** refers to the standard or pattern of the Word as God reveals it. **"Sound words"** are not our opinions and thoughts but the revelation of God with which His true ministers are charged and which they are to keep in their possession due to its value as it is *"the Word of life"* (*Php. 2:16; 1 John 1:1; cf., John 6:68*).

**"Which thou hast heard of me"** - Timothy knew personally what Paul believed and preached (*2 Tim. 2:2; Php. 4:9*). He had been taught the Gospel first from his grandmother and mother, but it was Paul who had taught him more of the particulars and implications of Gospel truth whereby Timothy was equipped for the ministry.

**"In faith and love which is in Christ Jesus"** - Paul rejoiced that Timothy had received these **"sound words"** from him *"not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe"* (*1 Thess. 2:13*). Both **"faith and love"** are gifts from God given by the Holy Spirit in the new birth through the Gospel of His grace in Christ. Holding **"fast the form of sound words ... in faith and love"** distinguishes true salvation from a mere profession of doctrine. This is true faith in Christ and love for Him and His people. Christ is the source of true faith and godly love (*Eph. 2:8-9; 1 John 4:10*).

**(1:14)** - **"That good thing"** is the precious treasure of the Gospel and all truth that identifies, distinguishes, and leads us to Christ crucified and risen for our whole salvation. It is the good news of how God is just to justify, save, give spiritual life to, and preserve unto glory the sinners based on the very righteousness that Christ worked out as the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of God's chosen people. It is the revelation of the righteousness of God, the merit of Christ's obedience unto death which God has imputed to His people. This is God's sovereign grace, mercy, and love to His children. This great message **"was committed"** or entrusted to Timothy, as well as to all true ministers, to **"keep"** or guard with great care. We who have this great treasure must guard it with our lives. As we study, preach, hear, and follow it, we must treat it with reverence, care, honesty, love, and with a mind and heart to submit to it. This is why we must be very diligent and careful to be like the noble Bereans who, when they heard the Word, *"sought the Scriptures daily"* to make certain of what they heard (*Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1-3*).

**“By the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us”** - We have no power within ourselves to keep and guard the Word of God. It is only by the indwelling presence and power of God the Holy Spirit that we receive, keep, and guard the Word. We would easily and readily leave and forsake Christ and His Word if it were not for His grace, power, and indwelling presence. Paul expressed this in *2 Corinthians 4:7* - *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* All of salvation is of the Lord and by His grace and power, not our own.

**(1:15)** - Paul now reminds Timothy of some who had abandoned him. **“Asia”** probably refers to the Roman province known as Asia Minor, not the whole continent of Asia. **“All they which are in Asia”** refers to all within a certain circle of people, not all without exception. Timothy obviously had not abandoned Paul, and also Onesiphorus whom Paul mentions in the following verses had not abandoned him. They had **“turned away”** from Paul, meaning they had broken their former association with him. The implication is that not only had they abandoned Paul but also had abandoned the Gospel. If this is the case, these did not keep and guard the truth by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. They at one time had a profession of truth and love for Christ and His people but not a true heart confession. They had never truly believed and received the salvation that is of the Lord (*1 John 2:18-19*). Paul exposes two of them specifically. They may have been influential men of the church at one time.

**(1:16-17)** - Now Paul names a faithful brother in Christ who had stood with him in spite of the persecution and bondage. **“Onesiphorus”** was an encouragement to Paul. Paul prayed that the Lord would **“give,”** or grant, **“mercy,”** unearned compassion and kindness to him and his **“house,”** his family. The word **“give”** indicates a granting based on a decision of the will of the Giver and not on any merit of the recipient, especially in regard to what is being granted here - mercy. Not only did Onesiphorus stand with Paul in the truth and love of Christ, he **“sought me [Paul] out very diligently.”** He actively, eagerly, and sincerely looked for Paul and for ways to help and encourage the apostle in the ministry of the Gospel. Someone wrote, *“When Onesiphorus arrived in Rome, he had at least three choices. First, he could have avoided any contact with the Christians. Secondly, he could have met with the believers secretly. Finally, he could boldly expose himself to danger by visiting Paul in prison.”* By the grace of God, he chose the last and boldly stood with Paul.

**(1:18)** - Paul repeats his prayer to the Lord and extends his request for God’s **“mercy”** on Onesiphorus to the Final Judgment - **“in that day.”** Paul also mentions how Onesiphorus had helped him in **“many things,”** or many ways, while he was in Ephesus where Timothy was at present. Timothy himself knew this well and was a witness of the love and loyalty of Onesiphorus. Here is a great example of what Paul referred to in *Galatians 5:6*, *“faith which worketh by love,”* and what John described as loving *“in deed and in truth”* (*1 John 3:18*).