

January 6, 2019

“Be The Guardian”

“...guard what God has entrusted to you...”

1 Timothy 6:20a

“Be the Guardian of Your Faith”

Chapter 1

“Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.” 1 Timothy 1:19

A. Paul, the spiritual guardian to Timothy...

“I am writing to Timothy, my true son in the faith.” Vs 2a

1. Guardian: a defender, protector, or keeper
2. Paul was the spiritual father of Timothy. This mentor/mentee relationship began very early. Timothy was about 17. Timothy was from Lystra with a mother and grandmother who taught him the O.T. Scriptures. Paul visited their hometown and met Timothy and his family.
3. Timothy had an excellent reputation and Paul wanted to take him along on his journey. (Acts 16)
4. Paul began equipping Timothy and engaging him in ministry in Berea. (Acts 17)
5. Timothy worked with Paul and witnessed Paul's passion and practices of ministry. (Acts 18)
6. Timothy helped establish churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. (Acts 16-17)
7. Timothy carried money from the Philippian church to Paul for his needs in Corinth.
8. Paul was in prison for two years in Rome and Timothy stayed with him.
9. Timothy was with Paul for 13 years until about 30 years of age. When Paul was released, they visited churches and stopped at Ephesus.
10. Paul charged Timothy with the work at Ephesus and this is where he wrote his first letter in 64 A.D.
11. Six of Paul's letters include Timothy in his greetings. Paul's last dying wish was written to Timothy in his second letter in 67 A.D.

12. According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs, Timothy remained at Ephesus for 33 years. Timothy was violently beaten by a wild mob of partygoers who were angry from Timothy's rebuke for their immoral behavior. He died two days later.

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful.” 2 Timothy 4:7

B. Guard the priorities of your faith...

“These things only lead to meaningless speculations, which don't help people live a life of faith in God. The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith.” Vs 4-5

1. The highest priority is to live a life of faith in God.
2. The goal is that love would be seen in all we do.
3. Maintain a pure heart in all of our dealings.
4. Operate with a clear conscience.
5. Keep a genuine faith that is evidenced to all.

“But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of His great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in Him and receive eternal life.” Vs 16

C. God commissions each of us to be the guardian...

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength to do His work. He considered me trustworthy and appointed me to serve Him,” Vs 12

1. God calls each of us to serve in ministry.
2. God equips each of us with the strength to serve in ministry.
3. The ministry is His and not ours.
4. God's grace is greater than our past and He will use us as He sees fit.

“Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus.” Vs 14

D. Some have shipwrecked their faith...

1. Avoid endless discussion, debates, and pride in your spiritual heritage.

“Don't let them waste their time in endless discussion of myths and spiritual pedigrees. These things only lead to meaningless speculations, which don't help people live a life of faith in God.” Vs 4

2. Avoid getting lost in your own self-interest and insincere faith. *“The whole point of what we're urging is simply love—love uncontaminated by self-interest and counterfeit faith, a life open to God. Those who fail to keep to this point soon wander off into cul-de-sacs of gossip. They set themselves up as experts on religious issues, but haven't the remotest idea of what they're holding forth with such imposing eloquence.” Vs 5-7 The Message*

3. Avoid conversations that are destructive rather than building one another up.

“It's true that moral guidance and counsel need to be given, but the way you say it and to whom you say it are as important as what you say. It's obvious, isn't it, that the law code isn't primarily for people who live responsibly, but for the irresponsible, who defy all authority, riding roughshod over God, life, sex, truth, whatever! They are contemptuous of this great Message I've been put in charge of by this great God.” Vs 8-11 The Message

4. Avoid anything that would soil a clear conscience before God! *“Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked. Hymenaeus and Alexander are two examples.” Vs 19-20a*

E. Be the Guardian...

“...May they help you fight well in the Lord's battles. Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear.” Vs 18b-19a

1. Remember, it is the Lord's battle...not yours! He will help you fight well.
2. Cling to your faith. Your everyday belief, that God is greater than any obstacle, is the faith you must hold onto!
3. Keep your conscience clear. Don't allow sin, anger, bitterness, or distractions to keep you from experiencing the greatest joy you can find! Stay tuned to the Spirit and listen to His Voice!

“So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.” Galatians 5:16-17

“Because of this, I always try to maintain a clear conscience before God and all people.” Acts 24:16