

1 Timothy 6:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

Analysis

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust (Ὁ Τιμόθεε, τὴν παρακαταθήκην φύλαξον, Ō Timothee, tēn parakatathēkēn phylaxon)—'O Timothy, guard the deposit.' Parakatathēkē means a deposit, something entrusted for safekeeping—the gospel and sound doctrine Paul has entrusted to Timothy. Phylaxō means to guard, protect, keep safe. **Avoiding profane and vain babblings** (ἐκτρεπόμενος τὰς βεβήλους κενοφωνίας, ekrepomenos tas bebēlous kenophōnias)—'avoiding godless chatter.' Ekrepomai means to turn away from, avoid. Kenophōnia means empty talk, meaningless discussion—from kenos (empty) and phōnē (sound).

And oppositions of science falsely so called (καὶ ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, kai antitheseis tēs pseudōnymou gnōseōs)—'and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.' Antithesis means opposition, contradiction. Pseudōnymos means falsely named, misnamed. Gnōsis means knowledge—possibly early Gnosticism, which claimed secret knowledge.

Timothy must guard the gospel deposit against corruption. Avoid empty speculation and false 'knowledge' (proto-Gnostic teaching). Focus on truth entrusted to you, not novel ideas. Ministry requires both positive (guard truth) and negative (avoid error) vigilance.

Historical Context

Paul uses *parakatathēkē*, a banking term for valuable deposits entrusted to another's care. Timothy holds the gospel in trust—he must protect it from corruption and faithfully transmit it to the next generation (2 Timothy 2:2). The false teachers offered impressive-sounding 'knowledge' (*gnōsis*) that contradicted apostolic teaching. Timothy must avoid their empty chatter and guard sound doctrine.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'deposit' has been entrusted to pastors and teachers—why is 'guarding' it essential?
2. What contemporary 'falsely called knowledge' threatens to corrupt biblical truth?
3. How do we balance avoiding error with engaging culture and answering honest questions?

Interlinear Text

Ὡ	Τιμόθεε	τὴν	παρακαταθήκην	φύλαξον
O	Timothy		that which is committed to thy trust	keep
G5599	G5095	G3588	G3872	G5442
ἐκτρεπόμενος	τὰς	βεβήλους	κενοφωνίας	καὶ ἀντιθέσεις
avoiding		profane	and vain babblings	and oppositions
G1624	G3588	G952	G2757	G2532 G477
τῆς	ψευδωνύμου	γνώσεως		
G3588	falsely so called	of science		
	G5581	G1108		

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 2:8 (Parallel theme): Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

2 Timothy 2:16 (Parallel theme): But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

Colossians 2:18 (Parallel theme): Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Romans 3:2 (Parallel theme): Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

1 Timothy 6:14 (Parallel theme): That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

2 Thessalonians 2:15 (Parallel theme): Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

Titus 3:9 (Parallel theme): But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

Acts 17:18 (Parallel theme): Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babblers say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

Acts 17:21 (Parallel theme): (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)

1 Corinthians 3:19 (Parallel theme): For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org