

2 Timothy 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Analysis

That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. Paul refers to "that good thing" (τὸν καλὸν παραθήκην)—literally "the good deposit." This echoes verse 12's deposit metaphor but reverses perspective. In v. 12, Paul deposited himself to Christ's keeping; here, God has deposited gospel truth to Timothy's keeping. This deposit is "good" (καλὸν, καλήν)—beautiful, noble, excellent—infinitely valuable treasure entrusted to finite, fallible men.

Timothy must "keep" (phylaxon, φύλαξον)—guard, protect, preserve intact. The verb suggests vigilant protection against theft or corruption. False teachers constantly threatened to corrupt gospel truth with legalism, speculation, or compromise. Timothy's solemn responsibility is preserving pure doctrine and transmitting it faithfully to the next generation (2:2). This guarding isn't passive preservation but active defense against error and positive proclamation of truth.

Critically, this keeping occurs "by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος ἐν ἡμῖν). Human effort cannot preserve divine truth—only the indwelling Holy Spirit enables faithful guardianship. The same Spirit who inspired Scripture (3:16) empowers its preservation and proclamation. The participle "dwelling" (enoiountos, ἐνοικοῦντος) indicates permanent residence—the Spirit doesn't visit occasionally but continuously indwells believers, providing ongoing enablement for faithful ministry.

Historical Context

The metaphor of sacred deposit was particularly meaningful in ancient culture. Pagan temples often served as banks where valuable items were deposited for safekeeping, trusting priests to guard them faithfully. Roman law severely punished those who violated sacred trusts. Paul applies this concept to gospel stewardship—God has entrusted the church with infinitely valuable truth that must be preserved intact. Timothy's generation faced the crucial transition from eyewitness apostles to second-generation leaders. Would the faith be preserved pure or corrupted? Paul's emphasis on faithful transmission (2:2) and guarding the deposit through the Spirit's power addressed this critical concern.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What specific aspects of "the good deposit"—gospel truth, sound doctrine, biblical teachings—are you actively guarding against contemporary corruption or compromise?
2. How are you relying on the indwelling Holy Spirit's power rather than mere human effort to preserve and proclaim truth faithfully?
3. In what ways are you faithfully transmitting the gospel deposit you've received to trustworthy people who will teach others (2:2)?

Interlinear Text

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|-----------|-----------------|-------------------------------|---------|-------|
| τοῦ | καλὴν | παρακαταθήκην | φύλαξον | διὰ |
| which | That good thing | which was committed unto thee | keep | by |
| G3588 | G2570 | G3872 | G5442 | G1223 |
| πνεύματος | ἀγίου | τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος | ἐν | ἡμῖν |
| Ghost | the Holy | which dwelleth | in | us |
| G4151 | G40 | G3588 | G1774 | G2254 |

Additional Cross-References

John 14:17 (Spirit): Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Romans 8:13 (Spirit): For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

1 Timothy 6:20 (Parallel theme): O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

2 Timothy 1:12 (Parallel theme): For the which cause 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 that which I have committed unto him against that day.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (Spirit): Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

Romans 8:9 (Spirit): But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

1 Peter 1:22 (Spirit): Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

1 Thessalonians 5:19 (Spirit): Quench not the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 (Spirit): And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Ephesians 2:22 (Spirit): In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

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