

Guard the Faith

Text: 1 Timothy 6:20-21 (NLT)

Guard the gospel, and it will guard your life.

Being on Guard:

Paul instructed Timothy to do the following.

1. Guard what was entrusted to him (1 Tim. 6:20).
2. Reject false teachings (1 Tim. 6:20).
3. Remain faithful until the end (1 Tim. 6:21).

We must guard and protect our *faith* as a gatekeeper guards a city gate.

- A Gatekeeper is someone who guards or monitors passage through a gate, *controlling access*.
 - We are the gatekeepers of our lives, so wrong influences and the devil can only enter through us. Don't give them access (Eph. 4:27).
 - Anything contrary to the gospel should be denied access to our lives (1 Tim. 1:3-7).

The gospel and our faith are entrusted to us; we should guard them as our most precious possessions (1 Tim. 1:11; Prov. 8:10-11).

- Paul emphasizes that straying from faith stems from foolishness.
 - What you give heed to will influence your faith and affect the outcome of your life.
 - Solomon offers us the remedy for foolishness (Prov. 9:6).

Staying in the Faith:

Here are three things that we can do to guard our faith.

1. Reject beliefs that oppose Christ's gospel (Col. 2:8).
 - Beliefs such as worldly and religious philosophies, legalism, and carnality.

- The Apostle Paul was concerned about the faith of the churches of Galatia because the Judaizers were perverting the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-10, 3:1-3, 5:7-9).
- The Apostle Paul warns us of the dangers of not guarding our faith:
 - Our *faith* can be shipwrecked (1 Tim. 1:18-19).
 - We can depart from the Faith (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
 - Our faith can be undermined by false teachers (2 Tim. 2:16-18).
- Being firmly rooted and grounded in Christ is the only safeguard against false teaching (Col. 2:6-7). – *No roots, no establishment, no maturity.*

2. Contend for the faith (Jude 3-4).

- In Greek, contend (epagonizomai) means to struggle or fight over a matter, as in war when we face opposition. Adding “earnestly” emphasizes the importance.
 - The idea is to preserve the original faith of the gospel, which false teachers were destroying.
- Be loyal to the gospel of Christ and accept no alteration (2 John 8).
- It’s possible to lose the things you’ve worked hard for and some of your reward, so guard your faith (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

3. Continue in The Faith (Col. 1:23).

- The walk of faith is a steadfast commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is a lifestyle, not just a Sunday thing (Rom. 1:17).
- It is a commitment to live by the Word of God and to follow the Holy Spirit's leading.
- It is a decision to hold fast to your faith in God, no matter what obstacles you face in life.
- It brings joy to the father’s heart when we walk in truth (3 John 3-4).