

1 Timothy 6.20-21 Custodianship of Apostolic Doctrine

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Preacher: Dan Morley

[0:00] I know that when it's hot it can be hard to pay attention so I'll try to be extra loud to help you stay engaged. In our examination of the book of 1st Timothy, when we started off we saw that the Apostle Paul began this letter with the charge to confront false teachers.

And that's a theme that's carried throughout the letters, false teachers, false teaching. And now as we come to the close of this letter, the Apostle Paul brings the letter to a close with a concise summary.

So we'll take a look. Our text today will be verses 20 and 21, but we will start reading in verse 3 of chapter 6.

If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

From such, withdraw yourself. Now godliness with contentment is great gain. Though we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, and having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

[1:34] But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, from which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

But you, O man of God, flee these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith.

Lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called, and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you, O man of God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ appearing, which he will manifest in his own time.

He who is the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

[2:55] Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

O Timothy, guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

By professing it, some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen. Our great God, we thank you for your word, and that we have supernatural revelation, divine testimony, that we may know how we ought to conduct ourselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God.

And I pray, Lord, that as we seek to hear from you through your word, that you would indeed illuminate your word to us, and you would grow us in a right knowledge of your word, understanding of it, and that we may be renewing our minds according to your word.

[4:08] Pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, today we're coming to the end of 1 Timothy. And in these last two verses that we'll be examining today, what's going on here is that the church, by God's grace, is to guard what has been entrusted to it, being warned by the peril of those who do not.

So I'll say it again. The church, by God's grace, is to guard what has been entrusted to it, being warned by the peril of those who do not. So we will take a look at the charge of custodianship, the danger of catastrophe, and the source of strength.

So first of all, the charge of custodianship. Well, notice that it starts off with the charge that's given. It's a charge that's given. It's a task.

A task has been given. So what is the verb that we see starting off? It's to guard. So the charge or the task is to guard.

To guard something. To guard what we see as the good or to keep. We could say to guard or to keep what is true. Some of your translations might say committed to your trust.

[5:30] So what's to be guarded? Something that's to be guarded. This something is something that has been committed to the trust of the church. And committed to your trust holds the solemn obligation of having been entrusted with something that belongs to another.

Something that someone else has entrusted to the church to guard on the behalf of the person who owns whatever this object is that has been entrusted to the church.

Entrusted with another person's possession with the responsibility to keep it safe and return it to the owner in the same condition in which it was received.

Not to twist it. Not to distort it. Not to change it. Not to take away from it. But to guard it. To keep it. So the task is to guard or the task we could say is to keep.

So what is the church to guard? Well we say we see that it's the good deposit. So the next question is if the deposit is the object.

[6:33] The task is to guard. To guard something. To guard an object. And the object is this deposit. What is the deposit? What is the deposit that the church is entrusted to guard or to keep?

Well it is the truth. It is the unchanging word of God. It is the gospel. It is the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Which means that the church is to guard and to keep the truth.

It is not to change the truth. Change the truth would make it untruth. The church is to guard and to keep the unchanging word of God. Obviously not to change it.

The church is to guard and to keep the gospel. Not to add to the gospel. Not to make it into something else. The church is to guard and to keep the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

Key there is that once for all delivered to the saints. Keep your finger here actually and turn over to Jude 3. We will be coming back to 1 Timothy so don't lose that spot.

[7:35] But Jude 3 it says, Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

It's not that a part of it was delivered and there will be more to come down the road or that it's only an insufficient amount, but it will be filled in later. But the faith once for all has been delivered to the saints.

And I want to read a couple more verses after this to kind of highlight the context of it and demonstrate how it is applicable even today. But notice it continues on in verse 4. For certain men have crept in unnoticed who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now if there was just some random teaching out there and you were to go and look at it and it says, By the way, this teaching turns the grace of our Lord into lewdness, you would be like, okay, I know what that is, I don't want it.

But notice what it says. It says, In order to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, it is against some who have crept in. So what's the location of these false teachers?

[8:54] It's within. The location is within the church. It's internal. And obviously they're not advising everybody of the reality of what they're teaching, but it's deceptive.

They are ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God in our Lord Jesus Christ. So that is an end, a result that we don't want to end up in ourselves.

So what is necessary to keep that from happening? Well, as it says in verse 3, Contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Looking down a little bit further here, look at verse 8.

Likewise, also, these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Or it's they rely on their dreams.

So if what these false teachers who have crept in are teaching, where do they come up with these ideas? Well, it's their dreams. It's what they have dreamt up. And some would even assert that today, if somebody has a dream, that's divine revelation, and that's of equal authority with Scripture. [10:02] But as our confession says, the faith was once for all delivered to the saints. And what is a person's thoughts is not divine testimony.

It's not the authority of Scripture. So they're relying on their dreams in order for this false teaching, which has crept in. And look a little bit further in verse 12 here. It says, And then jump down to 16. These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts, and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.

That's interesting, isn't it? Flattering people to gain advantage. They have crept in inside. They're inside the church. They're teaching false teaching. Their end is destructive.

The source of what they're saying is their own dreams. But within the words that they use, they use big eloquent words that attract people.

[11:27] Because why else would anybody listen to it? And we're going to look at that more tonight, too. But why would anybody listen to false teachers? Well, first of all, they don't know. Probably don't know that what they're saying is to their own destruction.

And second of all, the way in which they're presenting their false teaching is intermixed with truth. So you hear truth. That's good. But then they bring in either a different interpretation or a different definition to a word.

Or they insert their false teaching with it in a way that's flattering to the hearers. People like to have their ears tickled. People like to hear things that entertain them or things in which they like to applause.

And false teachers will present things in a way that's acquire the applause of the people. And that's what they're after. So to do that, it has to be something that the people really like to hear.

And it really, well, tickles their ear. So to execute judgment on all, to convince all who are ungodly among them. Sorry, down to 16.

[12:29] These are grumblers. 17. But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. So directing back to the teaching of the apostles.

It's the teaching of the apostles which the church is to guard. The custodianship of the apostolic teaching. How they told you that there would be mockers in the last time.

Who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons who cause divisions, not having the spirit. And this is just as much a reality today as it was then.

So the charge, the task that is given is to guard. The deposit, what the church is to guard, is the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

And the church must keep it safe. The church is entrusted to keep it safe so that it is returned. Now for it to be returned, it is throughout the centuries, which means throughout generations, guarding it as it is passed on, the pure teaching of the apostles from the word of God.

[13:39] So that it's returned without change or loss, without skimming anything off of it, without including a little bit to it, not including any tradition of man as though being inspired.

And even to guard the deposit with our very lives. The church is charged to guard and to keep the good deposit even with their very lives.

And there's many examples throughout history that we see this. One example is Polycarp, if you're familiar with him, who he is, his martyrdom was AD 150.

And he was a faithful Christian in a time when Christians were being executed for the sake of professing Christ. And he was a bishop. He was a pastor in the early church.

He was taught by the apostle John. He was a faithful man and held to the faith once for all delivered to the saints. And the Romans were executing Christians because they would not reproach Christ and give full allegiance to Caesar.

[14:49] And they also called them atheists. So Christians were known as atheists in the early church because they would not worship the Roman gods. They exclusively worshipped the one true living God.

So they were called atheists. So they were executing Christians. And as they were executing Christians in public arena, the people were chanting for Polycarp to be executed.

So they came and arrested him and took him. And they gave him an opportunity to reproach Christ, which he would not. And they threatened to toss him to wild beasts, to be torn apart by wild beasts. And he would not recant. Sorry, he would not reproach Christ. And they threatened to burn him. And he would not reproach Christ, saying that he had to affirm of the taking away of the atheists, which was their term for Christians, which he would not do.

And I think the crowd called for him to be fed to a lion. And he would not reproach Christ. So they took him into the marketplace and they tied him up.

[16 : 03] They were going to nail him to a post to burn him. But he said not to nail him, that he would remain there. And they lit the fire to burn him. And according to John Fox, the fire didn't touch him.

The fire didn't burn him. So the Romans pierced him. And so much blood came out of him that, according to John Fox, it put out the fire and he bled to death. So the church, contrary to the prosperity gospel of our best life now, the church is called to guard the good deposit, even with our very lives.

As custodians of the doctrines of the faith, we must be careful in the preservation of the apostolic teaching. Acts 20, 27 says, For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

The careful preservation isn't just taking the Bible and putting it in a vault to preserve it. It's declaring the whole counsel of God as it's passed down throughout the generations.

Now, 2 Timothy 1, 13 to 14 says, Hold fast. To hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, from the apostle Paul, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

[17 : 28] That good thing which was committed to you, similar wording, committed to your trust, committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

So in this charge of custodianship, we have the charge, the task given, we have the deposit, that object that is entrusted to the church to guard. And then we see the effect, the effect of this faithfulness in guarding the good deposit.

There is the consequence of faithfulness and that effect. Notice how it says there's the task, the verb that's given says guard. And the word guard is, in the Greek it's an aorist.

An aorist means that it's a completed action. So a completed action is the beginning and the end and everything in between. It's the whole thing. It's a completed action. And then it talks about avoiding.

Avoiding what is false. But avoiding is in present. And in Greek, present tense means it's something that's continuing. You don't see the end. It's something that started and is continuing. So to guard is, the task is a completed action.

[18 : 37] And in the church, for the church to guard, to be faithful in its task, to guard the good deposit, the consequent effects, it entails avoiding what is false.

To avoid is to turn away from something. So if being faithful as a church means to avoid something, it means turning away from it.

And that's not always the way we think in the moment. But avoiding it is turning away instead of turning to something. Because those we see by the warning given is that those who have turned to it instead of turning away from it is what is false.

So that to turn from it is turning away from what is true. And the turning away from what is true is to stray. To stray from what is true. So to turn away from God is to turn toward evil.

As an illustration, think about Adam and the garden. What was Adam to do with the garden? He was to guard it. He was to keep it. The garden was a temple sanctuary with the dwelling presence of God with his people and the glory of God.

[19 : 55] And Adam was to guard the garden. He was to keep the garden. From anything unclean. But Adam failed at his task to guard the garden.

To keep it from anything unclean. The serpent in the garden was spewing out lies. Using what God had said but twisting God's words.

And Adam failed to keep. He failed to guard from anything unclean. And he followed Eve who was seduced by the serpent who was twisting God's word to cause doubt in God's word.

Has God indeed said? And then he twisted what God had said. And that is still used today. And this evening, in this evening's sermon, we'll look at some more modern versions of has God indeed said but packaged with a little bit different words.

So Adam failed to guard. He failed to keep the garden. The church is called, the church is charged to keep, to guard the deposit.

[21:11] In other words, to guard it from the twisting of God's word. To guard it in from ancient and from modern ways of twisting God's word.

To keep that which is committed to its trust. It doesn't belong to the church to do what it wants with it. But it has been entrusted with what belongs to another.

And this applies especially to pastors and ministers as it has been charged to Timothy. Some other examples would be in 2 Timothy 1.14.

That good thing which was committed to you keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in you. And in Hebrews 13 verse 7 it says, Remember those who rule over you who have spoken the word of God to you.

The responsibility of pastors to speak the word of God and not to invent something new or to speak something that is straying from the truth. And pastors will give an account for that.

[22:11] Later in chapter 13, 17 it says, For they watch out for your souls as those who will give an account. Who will give account. So, others, we see the charge to the church, we see that others not firmly established and fixed in the faith have strayed toward evil.

So, our second point is the danger of catastrophe. So, with the danger of catastrophe we see the hazard, the peril, and the warning sign that's given in our text.

So, the hazard we see by professing it. So, those who have strayed it says by professing it. Well, professing what?

It's what goes before that that they were professing. Which is profane in idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

These things are not what is the pure apostolic teaching. It's not what is the faith once for all delivered to the saints. That is not a description that we can apply to scripture.

[23:18] So, others, by professing this, have strayed. Now, something that's important to keep in mind here is that the unity of the church is founded on faith.

Unity is a big word and it has been redefined post-enlightenment era and then with the ecumenical movement influencing this enlightenment era thinking.

Unity has really been redefined in a different way and faith too. When you think of the word faith, if unity is founded on faith, faith, then those who've been influenced by the enlightenment period and the ecumenical movement, they might think faith is a subjective feeling or maybe a wishful thinking that rests on an object and that object is God.

So, if you have this wishful thinking which rests on God, then you have faith and it's this kind of wishy-washy, spiritual, wishful thinking.

But that's not what faith is. And unity of the church is founded on faith. So, what's unity? Because likewise, those churches would probably say, well, doctrine divides and division is not good for unity, so we'll just do away with doctrine or if there's any divisions or disagreements, we'll just sweep that under the rug because that has a adverse effects on our unity and that's our view of unity.

[24:50] But unity, unity is agreement. The more that you agree on something, the more unity there is. So, the more doctrine that you agree on, the more unity you have.

So, if you want unity, doctrine is important and the more doctrine that is taught, the better the unity will be. So, if unity is founded on faith, what is faith? Faith is not just a wishy-washy, wishful thinking that finds its rest on God.

Faith is knowledge, assent, and trust. So, knowledge in what? Well, knowledge in the Word of God, knowledge in sound doctrine, knowledge in the Apostles' teaching, knowledge in the things of the Gospel.

So, doctrine then is necessary to have knowledge and knowledge is necessary to have faith, which is necessary for unity. So, faith is knowledge and then it's assent. What does assent mean?

Scent is agreement. Having a knowledge and then agreeing with it that that is true. Now, one can agree that something is true. One can agree that God exists.

[25:56] One can agree that Jesus is the Son of God, but they have not apprehended the mercy of God personally. So, faith is knowledge, assent, and trust. Trust is confidence in the trustworthiness in the Word of God as it applies to oneself and to embrace it for oneself that the promises that all those who receive Christ for salvation is true and personally, that having received Christ, I will have

a full pardon of all of my sins and I will be robed in the righteousness of Christ as pure garment and I will be made right with God on the day of judgment, be acquitted on the day of judgment.

So, that's what faith is and unity of the church is founded on faith, which means that unity is founded on knowledge, assent, and trust. So, the argument to compromise on doctrine for the sake of, well, their redefinition of unity is an evil argument that is unfaithful to guarding the good deposit and that argument is more interested in darkness than it is in light.

It wants to take doctrine, which is light, and put it under the rug and have there be darkness to cloak, to just throw a cloak over doctrine because doctrine divides. Doctrine does divide.

Doctrine divides truth from error. Doctrine divides sheep from wolves. So, to say, we don't want that, that divides and bring in the wolves with the sheep and bring in the error and the heresy because we're more about embracing, you know, everybody and everything.

That's not unity and that's not founded on faith. And some, we see here in our text that some have strayed. Now, the Greek word used here for strayed is aorist.

[27 : 43] So, if you remember from before, aorist means a completed action. They have strayed. Beginning and end and everything in between, it has happened. They have strayed. And then, what having strayed entails is described in the present, the present being that which is ongoing.

So, it's not that they're on their way to straying. They have strayed, beginning and end, completed action. And that entails the fact that they are professing what is false.

Professing what is false, what comes out of your mouth is what is inside. What's bouncing around in your head and is already inside of you is coming out of your mouth.

So, they are professing what is faith because they have strayed. So, the peril. The peril is that they have strayed from the faith.

Their straying, what their straying is, is doctrinal error. That is, evils that defile the faith. Sometimes we might think of it as being immorality that is straying from the faith.

[28 : 53] But the evils of straying from the faith is doctrinal error. And these have wandered from the true doctrines of faith.

That is, they are not in the faith. They have wandered from the faith. They are not in the faith.

They've heard the truth, but they were dissatisfied with the truth to stay in it, to remain in it.

Having heard it and dissatisfied with it, they strayed from it. They are tossed about by every wind of doctrine. So, what happens with a ship when a ship is tossed about by every wind on the sea?

What happens to a ship when it's tossed about by every wind of doctrine and, consequently, strays off course? What's going to happen to it? 1 Timothy 1.19, which some, having rejected concerning the faith, have suffered shipwreck.

The peril, the danger of catastrophe, having looked at the hazard, the peril is shipwreck. To shipwreck the faith, having strayed from the faith. And so, we have a warning sign that's given to us in this text.

[30 : 07] The warning sign, the wording that's used, we see here, is profane in idle babblings and contradictions to what is falsely called knowledge. Now, as I said, these are not an explanation that you'll see for Scripture.

This is something other than Scripture. So, if the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints is faithfully preached, then you will not hear what is profane in idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

In order to hear that, it's something new. It's something new that has been brought in other than the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints, which is the deposit entrusted to the church to guard and to keep.

So, there's novelty. So, the warning sign is to avoid, avoid profane novelty of words.

As I said before, why would, why would people listen to what is false? If the church is to guard the good deposit and that good deposit is the faith once for all delivered to the saints, the apostolic teaching as contained in the word of God, why would anybody listen to anything different?

[31 : 15] As I said, it's because of the way in which they present it. Maybe they've got, you know, this entertainment. They take the ways in which the world entertains itself and brings that in to entertain people.

Or maybe they, you know, present a bit of truth and then subtly slide in a little bit of heresy with it. or maybe, whatever reasons, maybe they've got all the different programs for the families so that they're there for the programs and then they end up hearing this teaching.

Why do people even listen to them? Because these false teachers, they're teaching out of a love for applause. And so, they gear their message in a way to elicit the applause of the hearers.

So, then it has to be tailored to the entertainment of the hearers as opposed to on what is true which may be offensive. It will be offensive to hearers.

So, out of a love of applause, they tailor their message to tickle the ears and elicit the applause of men rather than the approval of God and people like it.

[32:23] They, they present error in a way that people like it. So, a big red flag that we can have, if we see this today, let a big red flag just pop up in your head.

A red flag that's here is that something is novel. Something is novel. If something's new, you know, this new message, come hear this, this new message or this, this new doctrine or this new insight on the word of God or this, this new perspective, that's a big red flag because if it is new then it's contrary to what was once for all committed, once for all, once for all entrusted, the good deposit committed to the church, to the saints.

So then, in this warning sign we see the effect of the charge. Thanks. The charge is to guard the good deposit and then we see the danger of catastrophe and within the danger of catastrophe we see the effects of the charge avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

That is the effect. if the church is to take the task seriously and guard the good deposit then in guarding the good deposit the effect of that will be the avoiding of the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge.

The church that faithfully guards the good deposit it will entail the effect of avoiding novelties and new teaching new doctrines.

[34:05] So the church having been charged and warned finds its strength in the grace of God. This is a big task that the church is charged to.

It will be there will be hostility there will be persecution there will be opposition even from within and it will require strength to do it. So where's the church to find where's Timothy to find the strength for the task for the charge given?

We see here that the church is to find its strength in the grace of God. So our third point is the source of strength.

That last line grace be with you amen. So where the strength comes from for the church to do its task is grace and grace is unmerited favor.

It's not our own strength it's not what we have to offer it's not what we have merited but we must rely on Christ and we must not rely on our own strength or on our own merit.

[35:16] Just as with salvation that it is only by the grace of God we don't merit the unmerited favor of God God doesn't save us because we deserve it because he owes it to us but it is exclusively by the free grace of God.

It is not by our works that we have earned that the wages of our life is God's favor it's grace it's unmerited favor and this is one of the pillars of the reformation is that justification is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone and just as much as our salvation is by the grace of God so also the church's operation God supplies the strength to do it.

1 Corinthians 15:10 says but by the grace of God I am what I am and his grace toward me was not in vain but I labored more abundantly than they all yet not I but the grace of God which was in me. so of course even the very operation of the church to require the strength from God from the grace of God the church being the people of God the people of God individually being recipients of the grace of God all of it comes from the grace of God so if in any way if the church thinks that it is going to function based on its own strength apart from grace from the strength provided by Christ by the Holy Spirit in us then it's misguided so also if a single particular person whether in the church or out of the church thinks that they are going to be saved or acquire the favor of God because of their own merits their own works thinking that God will be so delighted with me because of how I have lived my life and have done more good than bad that's not the case and that God will by no means clear the guilty and every sin according to scriptures deserving of the condemnation and wrath of God and the only way to be able to stand before a holy and just God is perfect obedience spotless without blemish righteousness which none of us can offer and that can only be by the righteousness of Christ which is imputed to those who are united to

Christ by faith having received Christ and rested on Christ alone for salvation so the source is grace and then we see the recipients it's interesting it starts in verse 20 by saying oh Timothy addressing

Timothy it's pretty clear who he's talking about it's Timothy but when we get to the last line when it says grace be with you in English the the single singular and the plural for you is the same word so just by merely looking at the word we can't it doesn't tell us if it's single or plural but with Greek there's a different word what do you think is used in the Greek there it's plural so in other words if if there was a pastor in the United States was preaching he might say grace be with y'all and he would be getting to the point because it's a plural that's used there you all so he starts by saying oh [38:43] Timothy but then he all because this letter isn't exclusively just for Timothy and then he used to throw it away and it's never to be looked at again but it is for the church and as it is for Timothy who is a pastor of the church so also throughout the ages as the church contends for the faith once for all delivered to the saints this applies to the whole church this charge and this task and this warning and in light of that grace be with you all to the church and if you recall from last week Timothy's charge right before this text Timothy's charge was to flee to fight and faithfulness and to flee from sin to flee from evil to fight the good fight of faith and to be faithfulness in the face of hostility necessitates the grace of God as does the church in that day and as does the church today in our age so what are some concluding uses that we can take out of this text first one is how is

Timothy but likewise because of Timothy subsequently the church so how is the church to practically guard the good deposit we see that the charge is to guard the good deposit but practically speaking what does that look like what can the church do to guard the good deposit well the same way that Timothy was to do it in 2nd Timothy 4:2 it says preach the word be ready in season and out of season convince rebuke exhort there it is preach the word convince rebuke exhort with all long suffering and teaching for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but according to their own desires because they have itching ears they will heap up for themselves teachers and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to this happening the church is to preach the word and in preaching of the word the whole counsel of God to convince while preaching the word to preach to rebuke and to preach to exhort also in Matthew 28:19 the great commission says go therefore and make disciples so the church is to make disciples of all nations this commission was given to the apostles but the apostles didn't carry it through the ends of the earth that's through the church holding faithful to the teaching of the apostles go therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all things teaching them to observe all things not just teaching them to observe that which they would like to hear but all things that I have commanded you and lo I am with you always even to the end of the ages spiritual presence of Christ and the commission that's extended to the church even to the end of the age which includes today so to keep what was committed to keep what was entrusted to keep what was once for all delivered to the saints means no novelty and no innovation of doctrine and the word of God from what has been once for all delivered to the saints which also means no new utterances of tongues and no new prophecies and of course what is at stake and my hope is that when I ask this question as I give the answer that you've heard it so many times that in your head you're kind of checking them off or rhyming them off in your head with me but what is at stake if we do stray for the faith once for all delivered to the saints and I'm going to use this illustration tonight so maybe might be helpful to also use it again this morning but if you picture the faith once for all delivered to the saints from the apostles Christ to the apostles and the Holy Spirit brought to remembrance and move them along and it being written and the church holding to what was written the word of God and what is orthodox what is straight upright what is correct so if you go straight upright and correct that's what's orthodox the foundation is laid you build up now what if the foundation starts to go this way the foundation is going to collapse or what if it's a tree however you want to picture it and a branch starts to go off from what is upright and correct then that is something that is not what was once for all delivered to the saints and we're going to look at examples tonight of what has straight from it and what that necessitates is breaking off from that and not starting something new but returning to what is once for all delivered to the saints what is orthodox what is upright what is straight what is correct so what is at stake if we branch off a little bit even if it's branching just a little bit well branching off a little bit first of all it's not what's straight and correct and upright but also what's the trajectory of that going to lead you to so what is at stake if you stray a little bit you go off course a little bit if the ship steers a little bit if we try to steer the ship just a little bit off course what is at stake what's the big deal anyways well check them off in your head but what is at stake the glory

of

God the salvation of man the edification of the saints and living blessedly in this life and that which is to come for your word and that which is contained in your word is divine testimony with the author of the Holy Spirit and we thank you Lord that your word is sufficient it is clear it is perfect it is authoritative and that from your word the church knows how we ought to conduct ourselves as the church of the living God the pillar and ground of truth and that knowledge from your word is it contains everything that we need to know for salvation for faith and obedience I pray that you would help us to love your word and to love your word and to have no desire or itching ears for that which is new or novel or contrary to it and that we might be faithful as a church in guarding the good deposit which has been entrusted to us and that we might be a light to a dark world and the misery of sin through the proclamation of your word according to the teaching within it pray these things in [45:49] Jesus name amen