

2 Timothy 1:3-14**Lord's Supper Meditation****Eighteenth Sunday Morning After Pentecost, October 3, 2004****World Communion Sunday**

If something is important to you, you are going to guard it, aren't you? Bill Moudy was a member at Springfield Baptist Church. His faith is now sight. He was a delightful gentleman who always had a good word for anybody and everybody. He especially had a good word for his pastor every Sunday morning after the sermon – even if I knew it wasn't what it should have been. Bill always found something good in the sermon. He always found something good in everybody's life and he made it his life's task to guard against being too critical of anyone. He opened his life to the Father in order to bless others.

I have to tell you that Bill was also concerned about his pension. Now he wasn't a tightwad. He was very generous with the church and other worthy causes. He would spend hours at times just watching the television to see what the New York Stock Exchange was doing. His remote was in his hand. During commercials, he would change channels to get more "pension" information. That is how Bill died. His son found him sitting in his recliner, television on, remote in his hand, and stock information rolling across the screen at the bottom. His son later told me, "I laughed and cried at the same time!" Bill, by the way, left a fairly good piece of change to the church!

Bill was a wonderful person who guarded things that were dear to him. He was the real thing because more than his pension, he valued relationships and guarded them. I think about my family. I like to think that I would guard my family to my death. I want to believe that I would die for Jackie, Emily, and Nicholas. I pray that I would do that. But I've never been put in that kind of situation. I really don't know what I would do. I think about relationships here in this room. I like to believe that I would die for any of you. I don't know that I would, but I pray that if a moment like that ever occurs I would lay down my life. I hope you would be willing to die for me as well. Maybe I ought not push it! I do hope you see relationships as important and worth guarding. They are treasures that you and I are to guard.

Paul reminded Timothy to guard the good treasure in the power of the Holy Spirit. What is that treasure of which he spoke? Consider all that Timothy had experienced. Blessings from a mother and a grandmother. Blessings from people who were dear to him. Blessings from himself. Himself? Yes. Remember the Living God created him. All of these are treasures. But the treasure to which Paul referred is nothing less than the Gospel itself. "Guard the Gospel." That is what Paul said. The Gospel is a treasure. The best treasure is none other than the Gospel of Jesus Christ and it is news too good for you and me to keep.

Today you and I are invited to reflect upon the certainty that we are bound together with believers worldwide. What a treasure that is! This particular Sunday is set aside as a day when believers, globally, are encouraged to gather at tables such as these for communion. Some will gather where there are no tables as these.

Third World believers do not have the benefit of what we have when it comes to doing The Supper. We are invited to come together and recognize we are bound together by the common confession that says, "Jesus is Lord." Jesus died for us and Jesus was raised for us. So we renew ourselves, without shame, to Him and in doing so, we guard a treasure that is good. You see, the Good News demands that you and I recognize we never go it alone.

Timothy did not have to go it alone while he served the church in Ephesus. Timothy recognized the abiding presence and power of God in his life. He recognized that he had someone cheering him on and encouraging him. That someone was his mentor, Paul. He recognized there were other servants, like himself, that were seeking to honor Christ and give life what life deserved, which was a testimony to the Good Treasure. It was a treasure that needed guarding.

In just a few moments we are going to eat bread and drink juice. As we do there is something that should take place in our lives. It should be a profoundly deep spiritual experience that enables us to live out that experience with renewed lives every day as we guard that which is most important to us. It is the relationship we share in Jesus Christ. That, mind you, is the greatest treasure of all. This good treasure enables us to think appropriately and live appropriately.

What are you guarding today? My prayer is that you are guarding the Gospel. It is worth guarding because the moment we brought Christ into our lives, life forever changed. The good treasure can make a difference in our lives and in the lives of so many. Oh, how you and I are to let the Holy Spirit fill us and utilize us, rekindling within us an overwhelming desire, a burning passion to bind ourselves with those we do not know and to bind ourselves with those we do know. That is what the Supper concerns. It is about renewing ourselves to a God who loves us so much. It is also about renewing ourselves to each other whom we know and to people we do not know in Christ. Guard the Good Treasure. Guard the most important thing in your life and guard it passionately for the sake of Him who is passionate for you. So, what are you guarding today? Better still. What's your treasure today?

**Sermon by Dr. Jimmy Gentry, Pastor
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All scriptures, unless otherwise noted, are from The New Revised Standard Version, 1989.