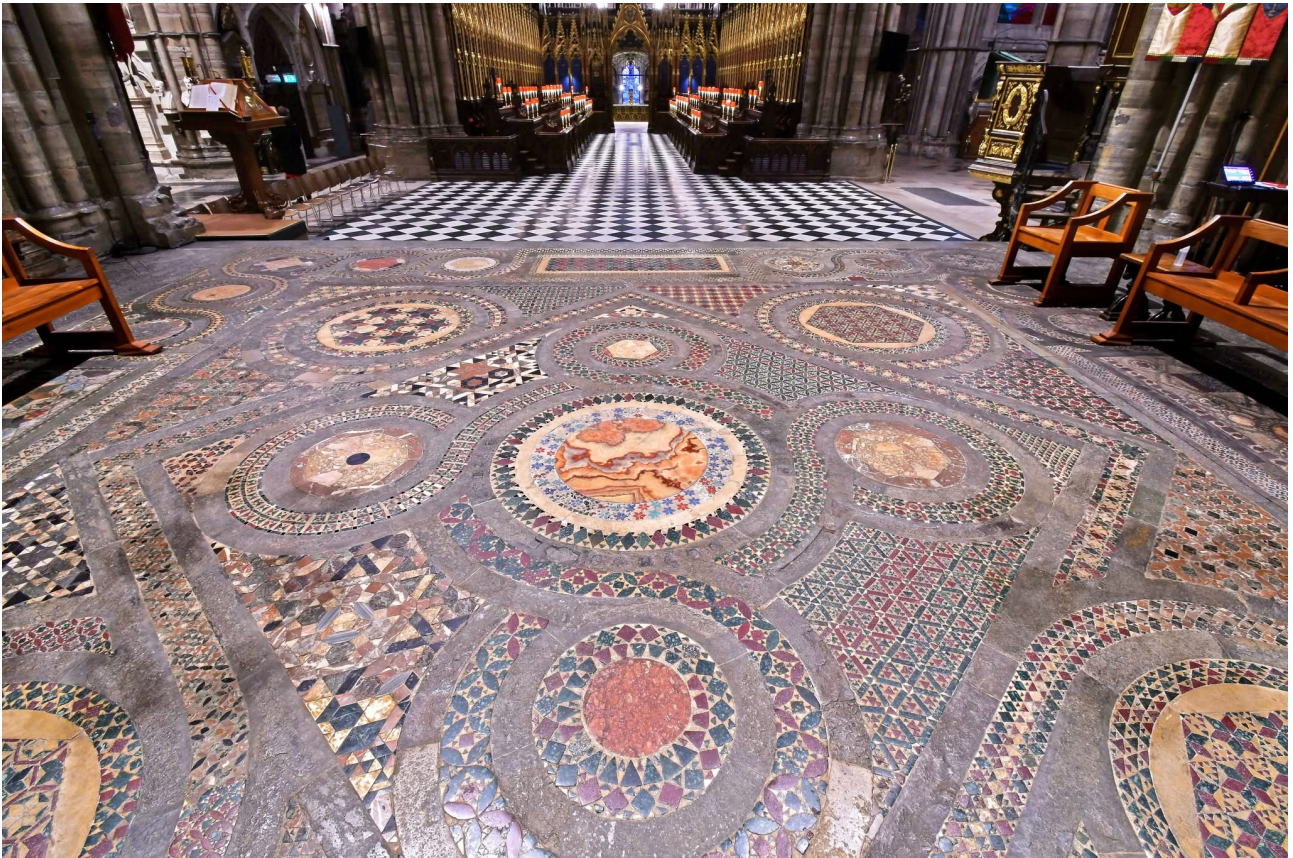


# Speaking to the soul



## Treasure on earth

**Timothy, guard what God has entrusted to you. Avoid godless, foolish discussions with those who oppose you with their so-called knowledge. 1 Timothy 6: 20**

The name Timothy is Greek and literally means 'he who honours God'. As Paul drew his letter to an end, he challenged Timothy to live up to his name by looking after what had been entrusted to him. It was as if he had been

called to look after a treasure chest, and he needed to ensure that it was passed on to others and wasn't spoilt. We all have exactly the same responsibility. Our Christian faith is so precious and important that we need to look after it so we can hand it on to others, especially to the next generation.

Looking after our Christian faith sounds simple enough, but Paul often reminded Timothy that his faith would continually be under attack. Timothy needed to keep away from time-wasting conversations. The Greeks loved nothing better than to engage in philosophical debate. There was one particular school of Greek philosophers called the Academics. Their view was that it was possible to find, by logical argument, the precise opposite of every opinion. They therefore argued that there was no such thing as absolute truth because there would always be two opposite and logically satisfying conclusions on every subject. The wise man was, therefore, the person who would never make up his mind about anything and would forever live in a state of suspended judgment. The effect of that was to paralyse all action and reduce everyone to complete uncertainty. This was precisely the sort of nonsense that Paul was arguing against. Timothy needed to make sure he didn't fritter away his life by becoming entangled in time-wasting debate.

As we head into today, let's remember that we are responsible for looking after the greatest treasure on earth. What an incredible privilege that we have been invited to receive it and care for it! The debates of our day may be very different from those in Paul and Timothy's day, but we need to be just as careful that we don't allow the treasure to be spoilt.

## **QUESTION**

In what way are you conscious of the need to guard what God has entrusted to you?

## **PRAYER**

Loving God, thank you for the precious gift of faith. Help me to be strong and determined as I guard it. Amen

*Photo - Mosaic of the Last Supper Westminster Abbey*

This intricate mosaic of the Last Supper is from the Abbey's High Altar screen. It was designed by J.R. Clayton and made by Italian artist Antonio Salviati.

The inscription along the top reads 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ' - a quotation from the book of Revelation.

