

Series: Striving Together To Finish Our Course

BE NOT ASHAMED

2 TIMOTHY 1:6-12

Text: 2 Timothy 1:8, 12

2 Timothy 1:8

⁸ **Be not thou therefore ashamed** of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

2 Timothy 1:12

¹² 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.

Introduction:

Twice in this section Paul speaks of being ashamed.

He encourages Timothy, "Be not ... ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (verse 8), stating emphatically of himself, "I am not ashamed" (verse 12).

He was reminding Timothy that there was no disgrace in serving the Lord Jesus Christ. The ministry was not an inferior occupation. He need feel no embarrassment

to be associated with Christ or to proclaim His gospel. Paul was in prison, facing certain death, but he didn't feel in any way inferior or disgraced. He counted it an honor to serve the Lord and to share in His sufferings.

Today, Christians and the Christian faith are often ridiculed in the public media. Our belief in creationism, an inspired, inerrant Bible, and traditional family values is said to make us intellectual half-wits. Our faith has supposedly blinded us to the facts of science. We are accused of hindering the progress of society with our moral bias. In such an environment, many Christians feel intimidated. They find it embarrassing to talk about their faith, as though being a Christian somehow made them inferior to the rest of society.

Apparently, this is what was happening during the persecution initiated by Nero. Some Christians acted as though they were ashamed of Christ. Lest Timothy, too, be intimidated, Paul encourages Him to stick by his faith and proclaim it with dignity.

1. DON'T BE ASHAMED OF YOUR SERVICE. VERSES 6-7

2 Timothy 1:6-7

⁶ Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. ⁷ For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

A. He had been called by God. Verse 6

The phrase "stir up" means to revive, or fan to life, as you would the embers of a dying flame.

Ephesians 4:11 speaks of gifted men given to the church for the work of winning others to Christ and building them up in the faith.

There is the evangelist, who is specially gifted for winning souls.

There is the prophet, who is specially gifted to discern truth from error.

There is the pastor/teacher who is specially gifted to lead others to maturity.

Timothy had received such a gift, but was apparently neglecting to exercise it to his full potential.

Paul himself had laid hands upon Timothy, confirming that God had called Timothy and gifted him for Christian ministry.

This put Timothy in the company of such men as Moses, Elijah, and John the Baptist.

It was an honor to serve God - nothing of which to be ashamed.

B. He had been equipped by God. Verse 7

It is the Holy Spirit who would supply all that Timothy would need to fulfill his call to service.

The word translated fear is always used in a bad sense. It means cowardice, to be "chicken-hearted", or mastered by fear.

Because the Spirit of God indwells us, we need never to be overcome by fear, even in the face of adversity or persecution.

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but the mastery of fear"

In dependence upon the Holy Spirit, Timothy could exercise his gift:

With power - courageously, dynamically, without reserve.

With love - not harshly, or selfishly, but sacrificially.

With a sound mind - calmly, confidently, not given to fear or worry.

2. DON'T BE ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL. VERSES 8-11

A. It was the reason for Paul's sufferings. Verse 8

2 Timothy 1:8

⁸ Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

The "testimony of the Lord" is the same as "the gospel" for which Paul suffered.

In its simplest terms, the Gospel is nothing more than bragging on that which God has done to save us.

The gospel is a message the world needs, however cultured or educated it may become, even if it mocks or persecutes those who preach it.

It was in connection with preaching the gospel that Paul had become the prisoner of the Lord.

He did not consider himself the prisoner of Nero, or the victim of unfortunate circumstances.

He was in prison because it fit the purposes of God. Thus there was no shame connected with his imprisonment.

B. It is the means of God's salvation. Verse 9-11

2 Timothy 1:9-11

⁹ Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, ¹⁰ But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: ¹¹ Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

The central truth of the gospel is grace. Verse 9a

God saves us by grace.

Salvation cannot be earned. It must be received as a gift.

Grace tells us that God has done it ALL. Our efforts CANNOT enter into it at all.

God calls by His grace.

His call to salvation is offered to "whosoever" will believe the gospel, totally apart from good works of any kind.

All who respond in faith are made "holy", set apart for God's glory and preserved for God's heaven.

The central figure of the gospel is Christ. Verse 9b -10a

Before the world began, in the timelessness of eternity, it was determined that salvation would be provided in Jesus Christ. Vs 9b

The "appearing" of Jesus Christ - his birth, life, death, and resurrection - has revealed God's plan of salvation. The central purpose of the gospel is to give us life. Verse 10b

Jesus abolished death; he conquered it. To the believer:

Spiritual death is overcome by the life of Christ the moment we receive Him as Savior.

Physical death is no longer an enemy to be feared because to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

Through the gospel, man is offered life and immortality.

Eternal life, a never-ending relationship with God, begins when we believe the Gospel and accept Christ as Savior. SEE 1 JOHN 5:11-12

Immortality, exchanging this corruptible body for an incorruptible body like that of Jesus, begins when Christ returns. SEE 1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-54

NOTE: Unbelievers will also be resurrected to immortality, endless torment in the lake of fire. Paul had faithfully preached the Gospel, and suffered for his faithfulness. He had been beaten, stoned, falsely accused, and unjustly imprisoned. Yet he claims, "I am not ashamed". If he were given the chance, he would suffer "these things" for the privilege of preaching the gospel. Why? Because he had confidence in the God he served.

3. DON'T BE ASHAMED OF YOUR FAITH. VERSE 12

2 Timothy 1:12

¹² *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.*

A. Because of the OBJECT of our faith. "I know WHOM ..."

Our faith is not in a philosophy, or a religious practice, but the person of Jesus Christ.

It is the character and ability of Christ that assures us that our faith is not in vain.

Paul was confident that all "these things" which God allowed were governed by His grace, love, goodness and wisdom.

If God allowed suffering, it was necessary and profitable for the advancement of the Gospel. SEE PHILIPPIANS 1:12

B. Because of the OUTCOME of our faith. "That day"

The word "committed" has the idea of putting something on deposit with another person for safekeeping. When a person committed something, he expected it to be returned intact.

Paul had committed both his eternal soul and daily life to the Lord.

He was confident that his salvation was secure, that his soul was "on deposit" with God.

As a child of God, nothing that happened to him in this life could alter his eternal destiny.

He was safe in the hands of God. John 10:28-29

He also knew that he had not given up his life for the Lord, but had invested it for eternal dividends.

SEE MARK 8:35

Mark 8:35

³⁵ *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.*

Paul also knew that whatever happened to him would not close the book on his life.

He knew a day was coming when God would reward the saints for their faithfulness and punish the unrighteous for their wickedness and unbelief.

What happened to him today was not near as important as what would happen on "that day".

There is nothing in the realm of Christian truth or activity of which the believer needs to be ashamed. Our faith does not make us in any way inferior in our society.

We can boldly proclaim the Gospel without apology or embarrassment because it is true, and because it is the only hope that God offers to the world. We need not be ashamed to serve the Lord, share his gospel, or suffer for our faith.