

2nd Timothy Ch 1 Vs 8-18

“The Testimony of Our Lord”

When we began the book of 2nd Timothy I told you that this 1st Ch had woven with in it a theme by which the apostle Paul was exhorting Timothy to be encouraged, and unashamed of 3 things; the Lord, His message, and His messenger. and Here in vs 8 Paul begins to get into the meat of that encouragement. Paul has identified himself to Timothy as the instrumental author of this epistle, has given thanks for the godly heritage that Timothy has received through his mother and grandmother, has reminded Timothy of the fact that the overflow of the genuine and sincere faith that is in him is faithful service to the Lord and to His body. That the way we serve the body of Christ to which we’ve been called is to “stir up (by means of use) the gift of God which is in you.”

If you’ve given your heart to Christ, and received the Holy Spirit upon your life, God doesn’t need to add any more ingredients to your life in order to make you the man or woman of God that He’s called you to be, all you need to do is to “stir up” the ones that He’s already entrusted to you. But so often rather than “stir up” the gift of God which is in me, I neglect the gift, I allow it to lie dormant because of intimidation or as vs 7 says, “fear.” “How will so and so react if I actually do *that*?” Or “What will they think if I really say *this*?” Because of fear or timidity I neglect the gift of God which is in me, I take council of my fears rather than council of God’s Spirit and the unction, or the conviction that He’s placed upon my heart. So rather than step out in *faith*, I shrink back in *fear* and neglect the gift that God has given me. The bible says, “*The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.*” Prov 29:25 But any such *notion* or *emotion* that resolves in reservation and intimidation when it comes to utilizing and exercising the gift of God that is in you (with in the orderly confines of acceptability as found in the scriptures) is not inspired of the Lord.

In other words the reservation one would feel to restrain themselves to *not* speak in tongues during a bible study would be well founded, God is not the author of confusion. But to withhold a word of wisdom, or prophecy at a time that’s delegated to facilitate the gifts, or to refuse administer the gift of helps or giving or whatever when the time is appropriate and placed on your heart by the Spirit because you’re worried about what someone may think of you isn’t of the Lord either. Why, notice vs 7 (read).

We spent our time with those 2 vs last week exhausting what these things mean to you and me, and so having identified the resources that God has given us Paul says here in vs 8-12.

Vs 8-12

Notice the emphasis on being unashamed, twice in this short section Paul reiterates the fact that regarding Jesus Christ there's nothing to be ashamed of, be it His person, or His Word (Vs8) *"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord."* Again that word "Therefore" simply ties us back into vs 7, "Due to the overwhelming resources that God has enabled you with via His Holy Spirit, there's no need that you should be ashamed, or embarrassed of who He is in your life, and what it is that He has to offer to the lives of others." God has given you a Spirit, of power, or boldness, and of love, that is the Agape' self-denying, others oriented, serving type love, and self-control or discipline. These things working in you, and working in me should result, not in timidity and shame, or embarrassment and humility, but rather great boldness and confidence in who Christ is. and The fact that even as He has radically transformed your life, taken you out of darkness and placed you into the Light, has rescued you from the pit of hell, despair, and destruction, and seated you in the Heavenly places, so can He do for anyone who will place their trust and faith in Him.

Jesus Christ is the remedy for sin, He is the satisfaction of the human heart, and the emptiness and the void that lies therein, and it's a lie from the pit of hell that tells you, that tells me that I need to be ashamed or embarrassed of the Lord, because Satan wants to drag as many people to hell with him as possible. and Anytime we restrain ourselves from sharing the love and grace of Jesus Christ and the salvation that He offers by faith in Him because of embarrassment or shame we've completely given way (not only to our own flesh) but to the influence and the sway of the enemy. Aren't you glad that someone wasn't ashamed to tell you the truth concerning Jesus Christ who He is and what He's done? I sure am, now who am I to withhold that precious eternally impacting truth from the hearts and lives of others in need Jesus.

I'm not telling you to cast your pearls before swine, and that you should use no discernment in when to speak and when to be silent. But what I am saying is don't use those precepts and principals as excuses to justify your shame and embarrassment. Paul said in Rom 1:16 *"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes."* You see he knew the reality of who Jesus Christ is and what He had done for him and how that the only hope that there was for anyone regarding the things of eternity was found only in Jesus and that pushed him beyond his own reservations. He wasn't worried about what other people thought of him, he was worried about snatch people from the clutches of hell, and if that involves a little ridicule or temporal discomfort along the way than so be it, but we're playing with stakes that are much higher than that. and When we let the way we look or feel influence our position, we're no longer operating in Agape' love, because Agape' doesn't consider self, it considers the well being of others.

Jesus said, *“For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”* Mark 8:38

Let that roll around in your heart and in your mind for just a minute, do you want Jesus to look at you on that Day in all of His glory, at the right hand of the Father, the holy angels surrounding His throne in power and majesty, and hang His head in shame as you stand before Him? Man I don't, I want Jesus to say *“Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.”* Matt 25:21 So then what do I need to do? I need to allow God's Spirit proper priority in my life so that I'm faithful with what He's committed to my trust, and part of what's been committed to my trust, and what's been committed to *your* trust is the “testimony” or that could also be understood as “witness” of our Lord.

What it was that He testified of, what was His witness and the things that He bore witness to, what were His claims. Well there were many, here's just a few, first of all we read in Mark 14:61-62 where, *“The high priest asked Him, saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” Jesus said, “I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”* So He claimed to be the Christ, or the anointed One, the Messiah sent from Heaven to be the Savior of the world. He said in, John 6:35, *“I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”* So He claimed that only He could truly satisfy the deep hunger and thirst that's in the heart of man. He said, *“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”* John 8:12 (That is eternal life). In John 8:58 we read where Jesus said, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”* Speaking of the fact of His eternal nature and that He is in fact the same “I Am” that was speaking to Moses in the burning bush calling Himself “I Am that I Am” the eternally present One. (Turn to John Ch 10 vs 7-15)

So Jesus claimed to be the exclusive access to eternal life, He made it even clearer in John 14:6 when He said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*

This is the testimony of our Lord, the fact that even as Moses lifted up the bronze serpent in the wilderness, so must Jesus Christ be lifted up on the cross, shedding His blood for the remission of sin. If anyone will just look to Jesus by faith and place their trust in Him, they won't suffer the penalty of death having been bitten by the serpent of sin, but they'll be saved from death and abide in everlasting life through Him.

Now claims like this put Jesus in a category all His own, C.S. Lewis said that Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord, He's one of the 3 and there is no in between. His claims were either absolutely absurd, or absolutely true. If you told me that you were the light of the world and if I'd follow you I wouldn't walk in darkness, but have the light of life. I'd think you were both a liar, and a lunatic, definitely not just a good person with some neat ideals. Why then don't I feel this way about Jesus? Because of the sign of the prophet Jonah, and the more sure word of prophecy. The works the Jesus did testified of who He was, the fact that He fulfilled over 300 prophecies ratify the reality that He is who He said He was, and to top it all off, the fact that there was over 500 witnesses at one time to the resurrected Christ removes all doubt. Jesus proved the validity of His statements through the resurrection, you can find Buddha's tomb, Mohammed's tomb, the burial place of Confucius, but you'll never find the body of Jesus Christ in a tomb somewhere because it's not there, because He defeated death, death not being able to hold Him down and though He was crucified for our transgressions, He was raised for our justification and He proved everything He said via the resurrection. and I'm going to be ashamed of that?

Don't be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, Jesus testified in John 7:7 of the world, and the fact that it's works were evil, and in contrast to the world *He alone* offers salvation from the penalty of sin and the works of the world. There's not a soul on this earth that is not in need of Jesus Christ Don't be ashamed of Him and His claims, make it known that Jesus is the solution to the sin problems of the world.

Paul adds here, "Nor of me *His* prisoner" which is to say that Paul didn't consider himself a "victim" of circumstance, or the prisoner of "Rome" he trusted in the fact that God is in control. and He served the Lord Jesus, and either Jesus is Lord *of* all, or He's not Lord *at* all, so Paul figured the Lord must've wanted some prison guards to hear the gospel. and So Paul was the Lord's prisoner, not Rome's prisoner.

What we see in this vs is an "invitation to suffering", so the *exhortation*, "Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." Nor of those who are about His bidding, and the *invitation* in contrast, "But share with me in the sufferings" and notice not for acting weird, or for being obnoxious, or receiving a just penalty for something you've done wrong or for breaking the law. But, "For the gospel" for heralding the testimony of our Lord, now this is not a call to sadism, and by nature none of us like to suffer. Even Jesus in reference to the cross cried out in the garden, "*O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.*" Matt 26:39 Paul in reference to the "thorn" in his flesh pleaded with God 3x to take it from him, but he learned there that God's grace is sufficient for us, and that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. and Time forbids us today to learn all the lessons of suffering but let me just say that at times part of the cost of godliness is persecution, tribulation, and suffering. I know that there are those who want to paint you a primrose picture of Christianity and tell you that if you just come to Christ all your problems will be over. But quite frankly that's a lie; the pathway of least resistance is what Jesus referred to as the broad path that leads to destruction.

Listen to this, “*Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*” Matt 7:13-14

Why, because we rebel against suffering, and difficulties, why then go that way? Because we’re able to see beyond the here and now, and consider the eternal perspective, Paul said, “*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*” Rom 8:18 But you need to know that, “*All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*” 2 Tim 3:12 At some point, in some way it’s coming, why? Because you are the light of the world, reflecting the light of Jesus Christ into the darkness of the world, but men refuse to come to the light because they love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. But you expose them in their wickedness and they don’t like that, so what follows? Persecution, ridicule and suffering, but don’t be ashamed, Jesus bore the shame of the cross for you, count it a privilege that you’ve been counted worthy to suffer shame for His name’s sake. Part of knowing Christ isn’t just experiencing the power of the resurrection, but it’s entering into the fellowship of His sufferings being conformed to His death if by any means we might attain to the resurrection of the dead (Phil Ch 3).

But we don’t suffer according to our own power, (notice that) if that were the case we’d crack; no one can endure on their own. God’s callings are God’s equippings and so as we suffer it’s according to the power of God. As Paul said, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*” Phil 4:13 So even as we suffer, we do so through the means of the power of God.

Vs9-10

Did you notice how there in vs 9 he acknowledges that it’s God who has saved us, and in vs 10 he gives the title of “Our Savior” to Jesus Christ? I love stuff like that because just over and over again we see the triune nature of the Godhead and deity being ascribed to Jesus acknowledging His equality with the Father.

But 2 things to draw out of vs 9 and 2 corresponding comments regarding them and that is that God #1 Saved us and #2 called us. and The comments that correlate with those points is that “Revelation” that we spoke of when we outlined this ch, and that is to the lifestyle that God has called us to. He’s called us (notice) with a “holy” calling, and I love the contrast that’s immediately presented. Sometimes the best way to distinguish what something is, is to determine what it is not, and in this case a “holy calling” *is not* according to, or through the means, or by the measure of our works. So see this, your works, my works are immediately placed up against, or in contrast to the calling that God has placed upon your life, so then what I glean from that is that my works are unholy, and even as we’re not saved according to our works, then neither are we called to live according to our works. But rather as we’ve been saved by His purpose, by His grace, so we live according to His purpose and His grace.

What is God's purpose towards you? That you might know Him intimately, through His grace, and develop a love relationship that's personal with Him, that He might walk with you in the cool of the day and just spend time in fellowship with you. God doesn't want a legal relationship with you that's according to your works, but rather a loving relationship with you that's predicated upon His work upon the cross.

As Paul was writing to Timothy you recall that Timothy was pasturing in Ephesus, and a few years from now Jesus would write a letter to the church of Ephesus, and we have it in the book of Rev ch 2. and Even as Paul admonishes them here that God hasn't called us according to our works, but according to His purpose, and His grace, Jesus indicts them just the same. He acknowledges all these works that they have (their labor, their patience, their hatred of evil) but He says, *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."* Rev 2:4

He said that unless they repented He would remove His presence from their midst, why? Because it's not according to our works that He wants to fellowship with us, but according to His purpose and grace given to you, not upon your receiving Christ, but before time began. God knows the end from the beginning and He extended Himself to you in Christ before you ever were (isn't the love of God Amazing)? and Even in that His sovereignty is at work because there's no way it can be of man's works if His grace is towards me before I've done anything, and so the call goes out, and whoever will call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Because God called us according to His own purpose and grace in Christ before time began. (Vs 10 read)

God's love and grace have been toward you since before time began, but the fullness of His purpose and grace was made manifest in Christ. *"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."* John 1:17 and Jesus abolished death, that is made death of no-effect to the believer (we're speaking here of spiritual death, eternal separation from God) and brought eternal life and the fact of immortality to light, that is made it evident through the gospel. Or to understand it another way, eternal life, the resurrection, death not being able to have victory over the believer, these concepts were just shadows in the OT, they were a bit fuzzy and vague. But Jesus made it real clear, He said, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"* John 11:25-26

You see this is the testimony of our Lord, and I hope that today you can say from your heart that you believe this, that you're not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord. and Again Paul with the sentence of physical death upon him as he writes this, already for the 2nd time focuses on the life that there is in Christ that's been made manifest by the gospel, that is, the good news of Jesus Christ

Vs11

The 3-fold ministry of Paul's #1 *A preacher*, that is a proclaimer of the gospel to the unsaved, #2 *an apostle*, one commissioned personally of Jesus Christ with the authority to instruct the believer how to live their lives according to the Word of God and #3 *a teacher* of the gentiles, meaning anyone who's not a Jew. and As to where "preaching" is for the non-believer, once someone becomes a believer they need to be taught the Word of God, so "teaching" is for the believer.

Vs 12

You remember what we labeled vs 8-12 "Reproach" Paul was imprisoned because of his faithfulness to Jesus Christ but notice again he says, "Nevertheless I am not ashamed." Why, notice, (read last ½ of vs12).

Three words I want you to take note of here, #1 "Whom" #2 "He" and #3 "Him". and I Don't want to take away from the absolute importance of "*what*" we believe, it's essential to know sound doctrine and to have right theology. But you can know "what" you believe and never make it to Heaven, eternal life is found *not* in sound doctrine or deep theology, but in a person, the person of Jesus Christ Jesus said to the religious leaders, the Pharisees one day, "*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*" John 5:39-40 and There's a lot of people that can quote the bible, speak Greek and Hebrew and know all sorts of things intellectually concerning God's Word, but they've missed Jesus, they haven't committed their hearts and their lives to Him. Eternal life is found in knowing Jesus Christ personally, Jesus said in John 17:3 just prior to the cross when He was praying to the Father, "*And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*" Paul had committed his life, his well-being, his eternal security over to Jesus Christ This word "committed" speaks of a deposit, like a bank deposit, he deposited his life in Christ. and Trusted Jesus to keep it right where He wanted it until they were together face to face, Jesus said, "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.*" John 10:27-30

Again this is the testimony of our Lord, He will keep what you commit to Him, I pray you've committed your whole life to Him, your marriage to Him, your children to Him, your responsibilities to Him, because that which has been committed to Him He will keep.

Next (as we close the word in view is "Remain").

Vs 13-14

Again the exhortation to finish well, to hold fast the pattern of sound words, be consistent in faithfulness, to the truth of the Word of God, don't back down through intimidation when people want their ears itched, but speak the truth. Not harshly so as to beat the sheep but in faith and in Love, we're to speak the truth in love, the love that's in Christ Jesus. and That which He's committed to you we're to keep through the power of the Holy Spirit, now this is interesting. Paul says in vs 12 that Jesus will keep that which has been committed to *His* trust. and So the question is (in light of vs 14) will we keep that which He's committed to *our* trust? Now contextually we're talking about the solid truth of the word of God, the testimony of our Lord. But what has God committed to your trust? A spouse, children, a trade, a good job, maybe He's blessed you financially or otherwise, what are you going to do with those things, your time and talents? Be faithful to the Lord through them, use them for His glory by the Holy Spirit who dwells in you.

Vs15

Man how would you like to have your name recorded throughout eternity as one who was unfaithful and got going when the going got tough? Paul never had an issue naming names, we seem to think its taboo to point out error in such fashion, but the Holy Spirit has no problem identifying those whom you should stay away from. Because He loves you and wants you to draw near to Jesus, and learn from those who will point you to Him and His will and desire for your lives. These guys were ashamed of the testimony of our Lord and of Paul His prisoner, but in contrast.

Vs 16-18

The word in view here, "Refreshed" and as to where Phygellus, and Hermogenes were ashamed to be identified with Paul, Onesiphorus was renowned for his support of what God was doing in the apostle's life. This word "refreshed" literally speaks of being "cooled off" like a cool breeze on a hot summer day. and How we need those brothers or sisters who will come into our lives during those heated seasons like a cool breeze and refresh us and revitalize us, help us to refocus and not lose heart. To remind us of the word of Jesus who said, "*In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*" John 16:33 and God help us to be those who are unashamed of the testimony of our Lord, who can bring times of refreshing into the lives of those who are weary from the heat of the seasons of this life. That we might be renown for ministering to one another in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

If you're here today and you don't know Jesus Christ, you've heard me testify of His Words and His claims, what He's done for you in laying down His life that you might have life. and He's proved His testimony through His resurrection, Jesus said the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. If you're willing to come to Jesus He's willing to keep you till that Day, He's not the easy way, but He's the only way, and if you're willing to surrender your life to Him, He'll receive you just as you are and forgive you of your sin and breathe new life into you. Will you receive Him today?

