

## Sermon Notes

# WORSHIP SERVICE - 7.30.2023

## PART 21 - OUR DUTY TO THE GOSPEL

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### 2 Timothy 1:8-14

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, **9** who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, **10** and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, **11** for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, **12** which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me. **13** Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. **14** By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

- The move in the opening of Paul's letter shifts to Timothy's duty in relation to the gospel.
- There are three main charges to Timothy and to all of us.
- These are the duties we have to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### II. WE HAVE A DUTY TO COURAGEOUSLY STAND FOR THE GOSPEL

- "Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord..."
- Timothy, like every Christian, must testify of Christ.
- He must not be afraid and he must not be ashamed of the gospel.
- Jesus said the same thing to his disciples.
- Mark 8:38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."
- Why do we have exhortations like this? Because we are prone to misplaced shame.
- How are we tempted to be ashamed of the testimony of Christ?

One of the ways we are tempted is to be ashamed of Christ and his words.

- We probably all have been in a setting where the opportunity to testify of Christ has come and we have remained silent for fear of man.

- We are tempted to be ashamed of Christ because speaking of who Christ is and what he has done can sound crazy.
- We can be ashamed proclaiming that Christ died a substitutionary death on the cross.
- The cross was an object of scandal and scorn in the first century world.
- Could you imagine the ridicule early Christians faced proclaiming the cross?
- To the Jews, the crucified person was seen as cursed by God (Deut. 21:23).
- To the Gentiles, the crucified person was viewed with the utmost contempt.
- And Christians are proclaiming a crucified King.
- "But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles" (1 Cor 1:23)
- Christ crucified - that was the centerpiece of Paul's powerful preaching of Christ.
- That was offensive to both Jew and Gentile alike.
- We must not be ashamed to proclaim Christ crucified.
- 1 Cor 1:18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- Even if the world were to ridicule, mock, shame, or persecute us, attempt to make us look fools, we must be fools for Christ's sake (1 Cor. 4:10).
- To be on the receiving end of that hatred from the world is no cause to be ashamed, it in fact brings honor and glory to God!

We can also be tempted to be ashamed of Christ's words

- The world hates when the true teachings of Christ are heralded.
- Christ's message and teachings offended many. His message caused him to lose disciples.
- On account of his message and claims, he was hung on a cross.
- Many Christians today try to soften the words of Jesus in order to not offend. They are ashamed of Christ's words.
- But you and I must not be ashamed of Christ or his words.

Some are tempted to be ashamed of Christ's people.

- Paul also says, "don't be ashamed of me his prisoner..."
- There were some who were saying that Paul's suffering and imprisonment was a sign that he was not a genuine apostle, that the Holy Spirit was not with Paul.
- Many were ashamed of Paul's suffering and imprisonment and they deserted him.
- But Timothy was not to be ashamed of Paul's predicament.
- The temptation to be ashamed of the testimony of Christ, his words, or his people is strong.
- But the way we overcome and take a courageous stand for Christ and his gospel is by the power of God.
- It is by the Holy Spirit.
- Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
- Paul writes in v11 that it was on account of the gospel that he was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher.
- No apostles exist today. The apostolic teaching has been transmitted to the church. There is no other gospel but what the apostles taught.

- And every believer is to be a faithful witness and testify to Jesus Christ, trusting in God's power to do what he said he will do—bring salvation to sinners!

### III. WE HAVE A DUTY TO SHARE IN SUFFERING FOR THE GOSPEL

- Not only is Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel and of Paul's suffering, but he must take his share of suffering for the gospel.
- Paul was suffering for Christ and on account of the gospel, but he wasn't having a pity party.
- He is the Lord's prisoner. He wasn't ashamed of his chains. He wasn't ashamed of his suffering.
- Paul had a sound theology of suffering.
- Suffering is part of the gospel. It is not removed from the gospel.
- Suffering goes hand in hand with the Christian life.
- John 15:18-20 "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.
- Philippians 1:29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake.
- When Paul was called by Christ during the Damascus Road experience, the prophet Ananias was sent by the Lord to Paul, saying to him, "*For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name*" (Acts 9:15,16).
- What is it about the gospel that stirs up such hatred and opposition that those who oppose it would harm the messengers of that gospel?
- It is simply this, the gospel proclaims that God saves sinners of his own purpose and grace and not on any human merit or good works.
- The gospel and the preaching of the cross is a stumbling block.
- If you take an unashamed stance for Christ and his gospel, persecution and suffering is inevitable.
- You cannot proclaim a faithful gospel message and escape opposition.
- How can we endure suffering for the sake of the gospel?
- We can endure every suffering and persecution by the power of God.
- By the Spirit, we have strength through weakness.
- 2 Cor. 12:9-10 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- If you suffer for Christ and the gospel you will receive all of the power of Christ to endure.

#### IT'S BECAUSE OF THE GOSPEL

- Vv9-10 we see Paul now amplifying the glorious gospel of which Timothy is not to be ashamed of and share in suffering for it.
- The grounds of our confidence and courage and duty to the gospel is the glorious gospel itself.

- The purpose of Paul's exulting in the gospel is for Timothy to know that he has no reason to be ashamed of the gospel or to suffer for the sake of the gospel—because of what the Lord has done through the gospel.
- Like in all of Paul's letters, he provides the gospel support for the commands that he is giving.
- We have a duty to the gospel because of what God has done for us in and through the gospel of Christ.
- When you embrace this, you'll have no cause to be ashamed and you will joyfully share in suffering for the gospel.

## IV. WE HAVE DUTY TO FAITHFULLY KEEP THE GOSPEL

- 13 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14 By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.
- The command to faithfully keep the gospel is expressed as two concepts.
- The gospel is both a pattern of sound words and it is a good deposit.

### To faithfully keep the gospel... THE GOSPEL MUST BE FOLLOWED

- The sound or healthy words were conveyed by Paul to Timothy.
- They are to be a pattern for Timothy that he must diligently follow.
- The apostolic pattern must be kept by every succeeding generation of the church.
- The gospel message has not changed as it has been transmitted from Christ, to his apostles, and then to the Church.
- We must follow it closely and not deviate from it. It is our standard, our pattern for Christian faith and practice.
- Note Paul's concern for the manner in which the sound words must be followed, "in the faith and love what are in Christ Jesus."
- It's not just what Timothy is to DO but HOW he is to do it. He is to follow the pattern in a way that is characterized by faith and love.
- Timothy was to be unashamed, bold and courageous in gospel ministry, but he was also to be faithful to keep the gospel by following the gospel in love and faith.

### To faithfully keep the gospel... THE GOSPEL MUST BE GUARDED

- The gospel is also a good deposit that must be guarded.
- Note, this is the same charge Paul gave Timothy at the close of his last letter (1 Tim 6:20).
- Only here, he adds the adjective "good". It is a "good deposit."
- "Good" means 'beautiful or precious.'
- The verb, 'guard' means to 'not lose or damage.'
- The gospel is a priceless treasure that must be guarded.
- It is an exceedingly precious treasure that has been deposited for safekeeping with the church.
- It had been entrusted to the apostles who then entrusted it to the church.
- Timothy must be on guard continually because of false teachers who were attempting to rob the church of the priceless treasure which had been entrusted to the church.
- We must protect the gospel from wolves and heretics who would want to rob the church of her precious treasure.

- What enormous pressure on Timothy to faithfully keep the gospel. How was he to do it?
  - Paul gives him all the assurance he needs.
  - He will do this the same way he is to do everything else, by the power of God—by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us!
  - That is how the whole of the Christian life is lived—by the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us.
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- It seems like a paradox, that this is our duty to the gospel yet it is by God's power alone that we can even succeed in fulfilling our duty to the gospel
  - We are not alone in this mission—God is with us, in us, and for us. How can we fail?
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- Here's what Paul discloses. We are entrusted with the gospel yet it is God who actually does the keeping.
  - He will take care of the good deposit himself. He is the ultimate guarantor of the gospel
  - Paul has been entrusted with the good deposit but look what he says in v12, "I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me."
  - We have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us (2 Cor. 4:7).
  - God gets the credit by using frail men and women that he has entrusted this message to, because he will ensure that everything he has purposed in the gospel will come about by his power alone!
  - He will ensure that the truth that has been entrusted to his church, will be preserved.

## CONCLUSION

- Our threefold duty to the gospel is only possible by the power of God.
  - The charge to Timothy, our duty to the gospel, is done with the help of the Holy Spirit.
  - We cannot serve Christ and his gospel faithfully in our strength.
  - We must depend on the Holy Spirit.
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- Have you been ashamed of Christ and his words or his people, look to the gospel and avail yourself of the power of God through the Holy Spirit.
  - Have you sought to avoid suffering for the gospel, look to Christ's suffering and avail yourself of the power of God to endure every hardship for the sake of the gospel.
  - Do you feel overwhelmed with the thought of what has been entrusted to you in the gospel and how to faithfully keep it, look to Christ who sent the Holy Spirit to indwell every single person he redeemed by his blood and who gives us the power to faithfully keep it.
  - Be encouraged, our weakness in fulfilling our duty to the gospel is the occasion for God to display his power in us and through us the Holy Spirit.
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- Paul wrote, "But I am not ashamed for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me."
  - Do you know whom you have believed?
  - If so, we can exclaim, as Paul did, "Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen (Eph. 3:20-21).

## **APPLICATION AND REFLECTION**

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?