

*8Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, 9who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 10but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. 12For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.*

*15You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains; 17but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me— 18the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus. 2 Tim 1:8-18*

Today we are going to look one last time at these important verses at the beginning of Paul's second letter to his fellow worker in the faith, Timothy. We have noted that this is most likely Paul's final letter coming at the end of his imprisonment at Rome and shortly before his death. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 4:6,7, *I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.* Keeping this in mind we will do an overview of this chapter and consider its implications for our Christian walks.

*8Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, 2 Tim 1:8*

Paul begins this section by affirming Timothy, *not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner.* This statement is similar to what he declared at the beginning of his letter to the Romans, *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. Rom 1:16* The testimony of our Lord is the same thing as the gospel, the good news that was being declared. But Paul adds, *or of me His prisoner.* Don't let my treatment at the hands of the Romans deter you from speaking the truth but *join with me in suffering for the gospel.* Paul realizes that some believers seeing Paul's treatment would be tempted to turn away. He will write later in this letter, *Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me. 2 Tim 4:10*

Instead to Timothy Paul writes, *join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.* This is similar to what Jesus told his disciples, *If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.* Paul saw Timothy doing this *according to the power of God.* This suffering for the gospel comes from God and in line with His Will. The term 'according to' this suffering of the believer comes down God and is part of God's Plan. (*kata in the Greek is properly, "down from, i.e. from a higher to a lower plane, with special reference to the terminus (end-point)" (J. Thayer).* Think of a person having some sentence from a judge, it comes down from the authority of the judge to the person being tried, he is to do what is required according to the judgement. God, who holds all power, allows suffering to be part of the life of believer. Hebrews says of Jesus, *He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. Hebrews 5:8* Should disciples be like the Master?

*but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, 9who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,*

Then Paul continued, God *saved us and called us with a holy calling*. He saved us or better *having saved us*. This is the aorist tense, in Greek past continuous, it starts in the pasts and continues on indefinitely. If we are in Christ we have been saved, past (when we accept Christ) and then forever. The same is true of God's call, from the past and then forever. We are *saved and called with a holy calling*

*a call, invitation: to a feast (3Macc. 5:14; Xenophon, symp. 1, 7); in the N. T. everywhere in a technical sense, the divine invitation to embrace salvation in the kingdom of God, which is made especially through the preaching of the gospel. Thayer's Greek Lexicon*

As believers, like Paul writes here to Timothy, we have *the divine invitation to embrace salvation in the kingdom of God* And Paul wants us all to remember this is *not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity*. Salvation is from first to last is *not according to our works*. Salvation is *according to the power of God*, it comes down from God and not because of our good work. It comes down from God in Christ *according to His (God's) own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity*, Paul here magnifies the greatness of the salvation God has provided in Christ *from all eternity*.

*from all eternity, 10but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 2 Tim 1:9-10*

The believer has come to more than Mount Sinai as the Jews had with Moses. We come to the heavenly city of God. *22But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. Heb 12:22-24* God's redemptive plan for man was *from all eternity* But Paul wrote with Christ's coming God's eternal plan was revealed to Man, it *has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*. What glorious words, *our Savior Christ Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel*. The curse of Law, the result of Adam's sin that brought in sin and death and alienation from God, was abolished. Paul wrote the Galatians, *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us Gal 3:13* Christ's death on the cross, *abolished death (the curse of sin) and brought life (newness of life) and immortality (eternal life in Christ) to light through the gospel, 2 Tim 1:10* Paul declares he was chosen to be a minister of this Gospel. In this is an encouragement for Timothy to follow him and suffer if need be for the gospel.

*for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. 12For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. 2 Tim 1:11,12*

*13For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; 14and I was*

*advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. 15But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased 16to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles. Gal 1:13-16*

Paul was appointed, given his position from God, called of God. He writes he was *set apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace*. So even though he at one point saw his mission to stamp out Christianity, God still had this mighty call on his life, to *preach Him among the Gentiles*. For this cause he was willing to *suffer these things*. He willingly suffered the loss of everything in his moral, fleshly existence, *I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ. Phil 3:8* For this gospel cause he affirms, *I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. 2 Tim 1:11,12* Because he knew Christ, *the surpassing value of knowing Christ*, he was convinced that trusting God with his future was best and that is what he wants for his son in the faith, Timothy. As the apostle John wrote, *The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. NAS or And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever. 1 John 2:17*

*I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.* As Jesus had stated, *store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal. Matt 6:20*

*15You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains; 17but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me— 18the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus. 2 Tim 1:15-18*

Here Paul states the hard fact many will turn away at the first sign of suffering for the gospel. Paul wrote, *all who are in Asia turned away from me*. This was severe test for this young bride of Christ, defectors from the faith. But then Paul tells of Onesiphorus, he refreshed Paul and was not ashamed of Paul's chain. He most likely did this at the risk of his own life. Timothy knew him from his faithfulness when he was in Ephesus, where Timothy had pastored, *you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus*. Paul prays for the Lord to keep him, *the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day*. I am sure Paul prayed thus for all those who knew the Lord. That they would remain faithful and *find mercy from the Lord on that day*.

May we receive Paul's instruction to Timothy and join Paul *in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God*. Knowing God is *able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day*. Let us store up our treasures in heaven, and allow God to stand guard over them.