

STUDIES IN THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

“THE TWELVE STEPS TO A FANTASTIC FINISH”

STUDY #2: 2 Timothy 1:8-12

“Conviction: Here I Stand, God Help Me”

Key verse 2:15 — *“Make every effort to present yourself to God, approved, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, guiding the word of truth along a straight path.”*

TEXT:

Key verse 1:8

v. 8 Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony borne by our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God;

v. 9 The one who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

v. 10 But now has been made known through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who on the one hand broke the power of death and on the other brought to light, life and immortality through the gospel.

v. 11 For which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.

v. 12 For this reason, I am also suffering these things, But I am not ashamed, for I am knowing whom I have believed and I have been convinced that He is able to guard that which has been entrusted to Him until that day.

INTRODUCTION:**A THOUGHT FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

A Thought for Christmas
Do you know what would have happened
If it had been Three Wise Women
Instead of Three Wise Men?

They would have asked directions,
Arrived on time,
Helped deliver the baby,
Cleaned the stable,
Made a casserole,

Brought practical gifts and
There would be Peace on Earth.

(Received via e-mail from Nesom & Beth Burt, December 1, 2000)

(Over The Hill & On A Roll: Laugh Lines for the Better Half of Life
by Bob Phillips)

I started going bald very early. In fact, in high school I was voted
“Most Likely to Recede.”

p. 38

He washed his hair this morning and forgot where he put it.

He keeps his hat on with a suction cup.

My hair’s getting thin, but then again, who wants fat hair?

He’s so bald that his head keeps slipping off the pillow when he sleeps.

There are three ways that men can wear their hair: parted, unparted, and
departed.

Sure he’s getting bald. People were certainly right when they said he’d come
out on top.

p. 39

Great Faith

An elderly lady was well-known for her faith and for her boldness in talking about it. She would stand on her front porch and shout, “PRAISE THE LORD!”

Next door to her lived an atheist who would get so angry at her proclamations that he would shout, “There ain’t no Lord!”

Hard times set in on the elderly lady, and she prayed for God to send her some assistance. She stood on her porch and shouted, “PRAISE THE LORD! God, I need food. I am having a hard time. Please, Lord, send me some groceries.”

The next morning, the lady went out on her porch and noted a large bag of groceries and shouted, “PRAISE THE LORD!”

The neighbor jumped from behind a bush and said, “HA . . . HA. I told you there was no Lord! I bought those groceries, myself! God didn’t!”

The lady started jumping up and down and clapping her hands and saying, “PRAISE THE LORD! He not only sent me groceries, but He made the Devil pay for them! PRAISE THE LORD!”

(Received via e-mail from unknown, August 26, 2000)

**YOU KNOW YOU'RE GETTING 'MARVELOUSLY MATURE'
WHEN . . .**

- You and your teeth don't sleep together.
- It takes two tries to get up from the couch
- When your idea of a night out is sitting on the patio.
- When you step off a curb and look down one more time to make sure the street is still there.
- Your idea of weight lifting is standing up.
- It takes longer to rest than it did to get tired.
- Your memory is shorter and your complaining lasts longer.
- Getting "lucky" means you found your car in the parking lot.
- It takes twice as long—to look half as good.
- You give up all your bad habits and still don't feel good.
- You have more patience, but it is actually that you just don't care anymore.

(Received via e-mail from Nesom & Beth Burt, August 23, 2000)

Last Letter

Fred had been a faithful Christian and was in the hospital, near death. The family called their preacher to stand with them. As the preacher stood next to the bed, Fred's condition appeared to deteriorate, and he motioned frantically for something to write on. The pastor lovingly handed him a pen and a piece of paper, and Fred used his last bit of energy to scribble a note. Then he died. The preacher thought it best not to look at the note at that time, so he placed it in his jacket pocket.

At the funeral, as the priest was finishing the eulogy, he realized that he was wearing the same jacket that he was wearing when Fred died.

He said, "You know, Fred handed me a note just before he died. I haven't looked at it, but knowing Fred, I'm sure there's a word of inspiration there for us all."

He opened the note and read aloud, "Hey, you're standing on my oxygen tube!"

(Received via e-mail from Mark Skorheim, July 20, 2000)

(Dave Barry is Not Making This Up by Dave Barry)

"As always, we will be living our motto, 'You're only young once, but you can always be immature.'
p. 157

Well it just wouldn't seem right if we didn't have a little bit of cowboy poetry and philosophy to add to our time of study today.

(Cowboy Poetry by Larry McWhorter)

A Bad Start

The clock don't ring as early
And I'm not as quick to rise
Since I don't have horses waitin' to be fed.
Pangs of shame shoot through me
As the sunlight finally pries
My lazy, slumbering carcass from my bed.

The feller in the mirror
Aint' the man I used to know
And sometimes I can't look him in the eye
Since I let other people
Tell me which row I should hoe
So I could have the things cowboys can't buy.
p. 27

(Croutons on a Cow Pie: Volume II by Baxter Black)

EAT MORE BEEF!

I'm a fairly frequent victim of the EAT MORE BEEF! campaign.

I've read the ads and seen the spots intended to explain
That if I will eat real beef, I will be real people
And have more iron inside me than a rusty army Jeep'll!

It will make me thin and happy and put my life in order
And I agree in principle, I've been a staunch supporter.
But sometimes all this hoopelah just plain gives me the jitters.
See, I have a vested interest. I raise the blasted critters!

Which tends to make me cynical, to doubt or even scoff it!
'Cause from a cowman's point of view, it ain't all fun and profit.
They've crippled more than one good horse and countless good blue heelers,
An order buyer now and then, plus hordes of wheeler dealers!

And as for me, I've had my share of wounds and lacerations,
Of broken heads and swollen thumbs, unwelcome perforations.
They've knocked me down and knocked me out and overhauled my keister
And woke me up on Christmas day and kept me up 'til Easter!

They've embarrassed and ignored me, annoyed and misused me.
They've broke me flat as hammered pie, mistreated and abused me,
And yet I keep on comin' back like bees keep makin' honey.
Maybe I'm a masochist 'cause it dang sure ain't the money!

So when they tell me EAT MORE BEEF!, I'll try and be attentive.
But tellin' me's a waste of time, I've got my own incentive.
I've spent a lifetime workin' cows which keeps a man believin'.
You bet your life I EAT MORE BEEF! . . . I eat it to get even!

p. 82

REDNECK COMPUTER TERMS

BACKUP—What you do when you run across a skunk in the woods.

BAR CODE—Them's the fight'n rules down in the local tavern.

BUG—The reason you give for calling in sick.

BYTE—What your pit bull dun to cusin Jethro.

CACHE—Needed when you run out of food stamps.

CHIP—Pasture muffins that you try not to step in.

TERMINAL—Time to call the undertaker.

CRASH—When you go to Junior's party uninvited.

DIGITAL—The art of counting on your fingers.

DISKETTE—Female disco dancer.

FAX—What you lie about to the IRS.

HACKER—Uncle Leroy after 32 years of smoking.

HARDCOPY—Picture looked at when selected tattoos.

INTERNET—Where cafeteria workers put their hair.

KEYBOARD—Where you hang the keys to the John Deere.

MAC—Big Bubba's favorite fast food.

MEGAHERTZ—How your head feels after 17 beers.

MODEM—What ya did when the grass and weeds got too tall.

MOUSE PAD—Where Mickey and Minnie live.

NETWORK—Scoop'n up a big fish before it breaks the line.

ONLINE—Where to stay when taking the sobriety test.

ROM—Where the Pope lives.

SCREEN—Helps keep the Skeeters off the porch.

SERIAL PORT—A red wine you drink after breakfast.

SUPERCONDUCTOR—AMTRACK's Employee of the Year.

SCSI—What you call your week-old underwear.

(Received via e-mail from Nesom & Beth Burt, December 2, 2000)

(Don't Dig for Water Under the Outhouse and Other Cowboy Commandments
by Texas Bix Bender)

HOLD YOUR PIECE
UNTIL YOU'RE SURE YOU KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT.

p. 63

WHEN YOU'RE HEADING
DOWN A LONG ROAD
WITH A HEAVY LOAD,
DON'T LOOK BACK, AND
DON'T LOOK TOO FAR
AHEAD, JUST KEEP
TAKING IT A STEP AT
A TIME AND YOU'LL
GET THERE.

p. 80

(All Hat & No Cattle: A Guide for New Texans and All the West of Us
by Anne Dingus)

BAD, MEAN

He's one sick puppy, and we're downwind from the kennel.

He'd spoil if you kept him in the icebox.

He couldn't get along with the devil himself.

He and the devil drink through the same straw.

She'd rather climb a tree to tell a lie than to tell the truth on the ground.

I'm not saying he's a liar, but when it's time to feed his hogs, he has to get
someone else to call 'em.

If she ever gets to heaven, she won't have nothing to do.

pp. 49-63

(Never Ask A Man the Size of His Spread by Gladiola Montana)

A woman who intends
to lean on her husband
for support better be sure
he stands on solid ground.

p. 4

(Will Rogers: Wise and Witty Sayings Of a Great American Humorist
by Will Rogers, selected by Art Wortman)

[It was Will Rogers who said:]

Of course, we are all just hanging on here as long as we can. I don't know
why we hate to go, we know it's better there. Maybe it's because we haven't
done anything that will live after we are gone.

p. 43

In our study of the TWELVE STEPS TO A FANTASTIC FINISH we have considered together:

Step #1—Integrity: Getting It All Together.

Now we will be considering:

Step #2—Conviction: Here I Stand, God Help Me.

Rush Limbaugh said:

“In today’s culture, if you dare have an opinion and express it, you are called divisive.”

(source unknown)

Politicians

He believes, with all his heart and soul and strength, that there *is* such a thing as truth; he has the soul of a martyr with the intellect of an advocate.

Walter Bagehot (1826-1877), British economist and journalist.

Referring to William Gladstone.

Biographical Studies “Mr Gladstone” (1881).

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Faith

Here stand I. I can do no other. God help me. Amen.

Attributed to: **Martin Luther** (1483-1546), German religious reformer.

Speech at the Diet of Worms (April 18, 1521).

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Despair

Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.

W. B. Yeats (1865-1939), Irish poet and playwright, 1919.
Michael Robartes and the Dancer “The Second Coming” (1921).

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Comfort

Every man, wherever he goes, is encompassed by a cloud of comforting convictions, which move with him like flies on a summer day.

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), British philosopher and mathematician.
Sceptical Essays “Dreams and Facts” (1928).

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Martyrdom has always been a proof of the intensity, never of the correctness of a belief.
 —ARTHUR SCHNITZLER (1862-1931)

(From Quick Verse 6.0)

Fiddler on the Roof

Tevye, the Jewish dairy farmer in the musical *Fiddler on the Roof*, lives with his wife and five daughters in czarist Russia. Change is taking place all around him and the new patterns are nowhere more obvious to Tevye than in the relationship between the sexes. First, one of his daughters announces that she and a young tailor have pledged themselves to each other, even though Tevye had already promised her to the village butcher, a widower. Initially Tevye will not hear of his daughter's plans, but he finally has an argument with himself and decides to give in to the young lovers' wishes. A second daughter also chooses the man she wants to marry: an idealist revolutionary. Tevye is rather fond of him, and, after another argument with himself, he again concedes to the changing times.

A while later, Tevye's third daughter wishes to marry. She has fallen in love with a young Gentile. This violates Tevye's deepest religious convictions: it is unthinkable that one of his daughters would marry outside the faith. Once again, he has an argument with himself. He knows that his daughter is deeply in love, and he does not want her to be unhappy. Still, he cannot deny his convictions. "How can I turn my back on my faith, my people?" he asks himself. "If I try and bend that far, I'll break!" Tevye pauses and begins a response: "On the other hand . . ." He pauses again, and then he shouts: "No! There is no other hand!"

Uncommon Decency, Richard J. Mouw, pp. 123-124

Multiple, 10,000 Sermon Illustrations, (Dallas, Texas: Biblical Studies Press) 2000.

(Logos Library System)

BORIS AND BILL

"Yeltsin is a lot like your President Clinton. He has few convictions on which is he unwilling to compromise."

—Russian factory worker
(quoted in *World*, Sep 11, 1993)

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

NO BACKBONE

“The problem with most leaders today is that they don’t stand for anything. Leadership implies movement toward something, and convictions provide that direction. If you don’t stand for something, you’ll fall for anything.”

—Don Shula in
Everyone’s a Coach (Zondervan, 1995)

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

CONVICTIONS

“It’s easy to be tolerant of the principles of other people, if you have none of your own.”

—Herbert Samuel (1870-1963)
(quoted in Chalcedon Report, Sept 1995)

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

INDEPENDENT THINKER

He’s a man of firm convictions. This manifests itself as soon as he knows what everyone else thinks about a given subject.

Beware lest we mistake our prejudices for our convictions.

—Harry A. Ironside

There are ten church members by inheritance for one by conviction.

—Austin O’Malley

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

conviction

1. **firmly held belief:** a belief or opinion that is held firmly . . .
2. **firmness of belief:** firmness of belief or opinion . . .

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The Thesaurus says:

- Persuasion
- Belief
- Assurance
- Good hopes
- Certain hopes
- High hopes

I think it would be good for us to begin our study of these verses in 2 Timothy 1 by MEDITATING for just a moment on Paul's words in:

Romans 8:31

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Because of the pressure of our culture to be BROAD-MINDED, the clarion call is for:

CARELESS CONFORMITY rather than to

STAND FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE.

The majority say that it does not matter what a person believes. As a result, the culture is swept into a state of confusion, doubting everything and believing nothing.

J. Vernon McGee says:

I have labeled this chapter, "Afflictions of the gospel" because there is a feeling today that the Christian life is a life that ought to be very easy, nice and sweet, bright and breezy. A great many of us think that we have an indulgent heavenly Father who is just going to put us on a bed of roses, remove every stone out of our pathway, and not let anything serious happen to us. A retired lawyer sent me this statement which he found in a will. It read: "To my son I leave the pleasure of earning a living. For twenty-five years he thought the pleasure was mine. He was mistaken."
p. 461

He says further:

I am afraid that many Christians are thinking like a little boy in Sunday school whose teacher asked, "Johnny, which of the parables do you like best?" The little fellow answered, "The one where everybody loafs and fishes."
p. 462

Lea & Griffin say:

Paul began with an appeal for Timothy to join with him in suffering for the gospel (v. 8). He followed with two incentives to support his appeal. First, he mentioned the truths of the gospel which would promote a readiness to endure hardship for Jesus (vv. 9-10). Second, he referred to features of his own life that would provide an example for Timothy to imitate. In v. 11 he mentioned his divine appointment to ministry, recognizing that Timothy would also sense his own appointment to a similar task. Paul mentioned divine appointment in order to emphasize that his imprisonment had come as a result of God's will. In v. 12 Paul presented his own courageous confrontation with suffering to add steel to Timothy's willingness to endure hardship.

p. 190

MacArthur says:

A third means for guarding against being ashamed of Christ is accepting the consequences of being faithful. Consequently, Paul advised Timothy to prepare himself for misunderstanding, animosity, and rejection.

p. 20

Hughes titles this section:

**Stand Tall, Suffer, and
Keep the Faith**

p. 177

Hughes then says:

Again, consider what Oswald Chambers wrote, “All through history God has chosen and used nobodies, because their unusual dependence on him made possible the unique display of his power and grace. He chose and used somebodies only when they renounced dependence on their natural abilities and resources.”

If this is true (and it is!), then Timothy was the right man for the job. He was not endowed with a powerful body and iron constitution—he was frail. He was not bold but reticent. And he was not a natural leader. If the job was to get done, he would have to rely upon God. Everything would have to be the result of Timothy’s profound dependence upon God’s power and grace.

p. 177

Demarest, speaking about the first three verses of the passage, says:

These three verses form a priceless pearl in the midst of this very personal letter. Notice the four “therefores” in 1:6, 1:8, 2:1, and 2:3. They introduce four strong appeals from Paul to Timothy: 1:6—Therefore . . . rekindle “*the gift of God.*” 1:8—“*Therefore do not be ashamed.*” 2:1—“*Therefore . . . be strong in the grace.*” 2:3—“*Therefore endure hardship as a good soldier.*”

p. 243

Barclay says:

IT is inevitable that loyalty to the gospel will bring trouble. For Timothy, loyalty to the gospel and loyalty to Paul meant loyalty to a man who was regarded as a criminal, because as Paul wrote he was in prison in Rome. But here Paul sets out the gospel in all its glory, as a gospel worth suffering for. Here sometimes by implication and sometimes by direct statement Paul brings out element after element in the glory of the gospel. There are few passages in the New Testament which have in them and behind them such a sense of the sheer grandeur of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

p. 167

Lock paraphrases the passage by saying:

So then, as you have that spirit, do not be ashamed of the witness which we have to bear about Our Lord, do not be ashamed of me because the preaching of Him has led me to imprisonment; nay, be ready to share my sufferings in the cause of the Gospel: you have not to rely on your own strength, but on the strength of God Himself—of the very God who saved us and called us into His kingdom, by a holy call to holiness, and that not in virtue of our own efforts, but in virtue of a purpose entirely His own, of a gift freely given—given indeed to us as embodied in Christ Jesus before time began, though only shown in these latter days by the bright light which radiated from the appearance of our Saviour Christ Jesus on earth, when He destroyed, the power of the dread tyrant death and brought to clear view the full meaning of life, aye of immortal life, through the good tidings which I was appointed to proclaim, to carry with authority throughout the world and to teach its truths. It is because I have done this that I am a prisoner now, that I endure these fetters; but I am not ashamed of them, for I know Him whom I have trusted, and I feel confident that He has strength to guard safely all that I have entrusted to His keeping till that great day to which we Christians look forward.

pp. 84-85

Liefeld titles the section:

No Cause for Shame (1:8-12)

p. 233

He then says:

VERSES 8-12 FORM one long sentence in Greek. It is introduced by the word “so” (or “therefore”), indicating that Timothy’s ability to resist being ashamed lies in the gifts of power, love, and self-discipline (v. 7). The word translated “be ashamed” . . . is a compound verb with a more intense meaning than the simple form from which it is derived . . . In this context being ashamed stands in contrast to joining with Paul in suffering. Elsewhere in the New Testament this verb is also used in a construction of contrast, specifically with confessing Christ. That is consistent with this passage, “do not be ashamed to testify of about our Lord.”

p. 233

Wiersbe titles the section and then says:

Shameless suffering (2 Tim. 1:8-12)

“Not ashamed” is a key idea in this chapter: Paul was not ashamed (v. 12); he admonished Timothy not to be ashamed (v. 8); and he reported that Onesiphorus was not ashamed of Paul’s chain (v. 16).

p. 121

Parker raises the question:

What is Timothy to do? He is, in the first place, not to be “ashamed.” Appearances are against him and against Paul. Virtue is in gaol [prison], Nero is on the throne, Rome is alive with the devil: Paul says, this is a time, my son, when we must look up in confidence and love and hope.

pp. 153-4

v. 8 Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony borne by our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God;

Pursuing the TWELVE STEPS TO A FANTASTIC FINISH, this:

Step #2—Conviction: Here I Stand, God Help Me

has as a KEY VERSE, verse 8.

The word “THEREFORE” in verse 8 POINTS US BACK to verse 7:

“In view of the spirit’s provision of power, love and of sound mind, do not be ashamed.”

In light of what I have just said, Paul now commands him not to be “ASHAMED”:

1. “OF THE TESTIMONY BORNE BY OUR LORD” and
2. “OF ME HIS PRISONER.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

If Timothy’s ministry were marked by power, love, and self-discipline, he would be able to stand tall against his opponents, and would **not be ashamed to testify about our Lord . . . or ashamed of Paul His prisoner**. Though Paul was held in a Roman prison . . . , yet he called himself Christ’s prisoner—that is, a prisoner for Christ’s sake and purpose . . . With this reminder of his own condition, which was far graver than Timothy’s, Paul exhorted Timothy to **join** courageously with him **in suffering for the gospel . . .**, for it is just in such circumstances that **the power of God** is made manifest . . .

pp. 750-51

2 Corinthians 12:9, 10

And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul in this verse admonishes Timothy on the basis of what he has had to say in the previous verses. He asks him in verse 6:

“to be stirring up the flame of the gift of God.”

The REASON:

“For God did not give to us a spirit of fearfulness (cowardice) but of power and of love and of self-discipline (good judgment)” (verse 7).

Since this is true, then:

“DO NOT BE ASHAMED OF THE TESTIMONY BORNE BY OUR LORD, NOR OF ME HIS PRISONER.”

The fear of what might happen to him if he were outspoken on these issues and also the fear of what has happened to Paul could cause him:

to be **STILL** when he ought to **SPEAK**,

to be **CAREFUL** when he ought to be **COURAGEOUS** and speak forth his convictions.

The COMMAND “DO NOT BE ASHAMED” is TWO-FOLD:

1. “DO NOT BE ASHAMED OF THE TESTIMONY BORNE BY OUR LORD” and
2. “NOR OF ME HIS PRISONER.”

I am sure Timothy reflected upon the consequences of the witness of the Lord Jesus in the fact that it cost Him Calvary for His stand.

Now he is thinking in terms of Paul and his testimony in the fact that his life is also coming fast on a conclusion.

The word “ASHAMED” is a KEY WORD in this passage. We are going to see it TWO TIMES here in our passage:

1. verse 1 and again in
2. verse 12.

Matthew 10:32, 33

“Every one therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.

Mark 8:38

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

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

When I think of individuals who let their conduct be formed by their convictions, I think of:

MOSES,

DANIEL, and

SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO.

First of all, MOSES is spoken of in:

Hebrews 11:24-26

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

Secondly, DANIEL comes to mind:

Daniel 1:8

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

In Daniel 6, Daniel is confronted with an edict that does not allow him to talk to the Lord. We read in:

Daniel 6:10

Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Thirdly, thinking of SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO. The king required universal worship and as he confronted the three of them with this issue, their response can be found in:

Daniel 3:16-18

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

I guess we could add JOSEPH to this list as well. When he was confronted by Potiphar’s wife with a potential affair, his response to her is found in:

Genesis 39:9

No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?”

Hughes observes:

Stronger men than Timothy had wilted when faced with shame and suffering. The iron-willed, sword-wielding Apostle Peter had loudly declared, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death” (Luke 22:33) but soon was ashamed to admit he knew Jesus and denied him outright before the soldiers and a servant girl as Jesus watched (cf. vv. 56-62). In those storied and (thankfully) fleeting moments, Peter fled the shame and suffering of Christ.
p. 178

Hughes says further:

Paul’s unbowed, towering posture is detected here in his subtle use of words as he describes himself as “his prisoner”—that is, *the Lord’s* prisoner! He is in Caesar’s dungeon, but Nero is not his captor—Christ is. And the apostle is proud, not shamed. Thus Timothy also ought to stand tall. “Be the man you are meant to be, Timothy!”
p. 179

Hughes says finally:

In the same way, Jesus crowned the Beatitudes with suffering, in essence saying that when you have attained the seven blessed qualities of poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, spiritual hunger, mercy, purity of heart, and peacemaking, you will suffer! “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:10). Suffering is part of God’s gospel blessing.

When Jesus called Paul on the road to Damascus, he immediately sent Ananias to him, saying, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name” (Acts 9:15, 16). And as the years passed, Paul would describe his ministry like this:

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. (2 Corinthians 4:8-12).

pp. 179-80

MacArthur says:

Therefore refers to the divinely bestowed gift and resources Paul has just mentioned in the two previous verses. “In light of those immeasurable blessings,” the apostle was saying, “you have no reason to **be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of [Paul] His prisoner**. Do not be afraid to name the name of Christ or to be known as my friend and fellow minister.”
p. 20

He says further:

Paul called on Timothy to share his own greatest desire, his supreme purpose in life: to know [Christ], and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Phil. 3:10).
p. 21

Lea & Griffin say:

Paul wanted such shame never to begin, but he realized the possibility that it might.
p. 190

They then say:

The power of the Holy Spirit can produce a strength that bears suffering. Paul knew that divine help was available, and he wanted Timothy to use it richly.
pp. 190-91

Hendriksen says:

Now, the expression, “his prisoner” does not only mean that it was for the defence of “our Lord’s” gospel that Paul had been imprisoned, but also that whatever pertained to his incarceration was entirely safe in the hands of the Sovereign Disposer of destinies.
p. 232

A CONTINUAL PRAYER of mine during this past election controversy has been:

“Lord, help me to maintain a continual contentedness under Your sovereign hand.”

Paul is commanding Timothy, here, to be:

FOLLOWING IN THE STEPS OF THE SAVIOR.

Matthew 5:11, 12

“Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me. Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

1 Peter 2:21

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,

Both Peter and Paul speak a lot about the fact that:

SUFFERING is a part of our Christian experience.

1 Thessalonians 3:3, 4

so that no man may be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this. For indeed when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction; and so it came to pass, as you know.

Philippians 1:29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Peter speaks of it often in his first epistle.

1 Peter 1:6, 7

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 2:20

For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.

1 Peter 4:12-14

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

1 Peter 5:10

And after you have suffered for a little, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

Quinn & Wacker say:

With this verse begins the long (seventy-nine-word), densely written sentence that extends through verse 11, to form the generative dogmatic core of this prayer.

p. 592

They say further:

Here Paul's co-worker is summoned to endure sufferings himself along with Paul, for to share the apostolic ministry is to share not only the work of the apostle but the world's reaction to that work . . .

p. 596

They say finally:

Thus the witnessing to the Lord, the imprisoned apostle, and the gospel are parts of a single reality that is to be confessed, believed in (i.e. not be ashamed of), and suffered with.

p. 596

Calvin points out:

Paul says this because it is thought to be a disgraceful thing to confess the Gospel, so he tells Timothy not to let ambition or fear of being badly thought of hinder him in his confident preaching. Paul infers this from what he has just been saying. The person who is armed with God's power will not be upset by the clamor of the world but will count it a privilege that ungodly people cover him with shame.

pp. 121-2

Calvin then says further:

Then Paul adds the words, **by the power of God**, for we would collapse immediately if God did not sustain us. This phrase contains both an admonition and a consolation. The admonition is to turn our eyes away from our present weakness and, relying on God's help, strive for things beyond our own strength. The comfort here is that if we suffer, in any way, on account of the Gospel, God will come and deliver us, and we will be conquerors through his power.

p. 122

Fee observes:

With the two imperatives of this verse (**do not be ashamed, and join with me in suffering**) we come to the heart of this first appeal. These imperatives are closely tied to what has preceded by the **so** (better, "therefore"). That is, for the very reason that "the Spirit God has given us" leads not to cowardice but "fills us with power" (not to mention also because of the close personal ties between them, vv. 3-6), Paul exhorts Timothy to further loyalty, both to the gospel and to Paul himself.

pp. 227-8

Fee says further:

But again, aware of Timothy's character and of the difficulties ahead, Paul adds the dimension of divine help: **by the power of God** (the same word as in v. 7).

p. 229

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Colossians 1:11

strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience, joyously

Milne says:

Paul was not ashamed of the gospel (Rom. 1:16) because of what it was and where it came from. But the temptation to be ashamed of the Christian faith is always present due to personal weakness of circumstantial factors. Jesus was aware of this danger when he warned against its damaging and enduring results (Mark 8:38).

p. 133

Barnes says:

Timothy knew that he had been thrown into prison on account of his love for the gospel. To avoid that himself, there might be some danger that a timid young man might shrink from an open avowal of his belief in the same system of truth.

p. 214

Barnes says further:

According to the power of God. That is, according to the power which God gives to those who are afflicted on account of the gospel. The apostle evidently supposes that they who were subjected to trials on account of the gospel, might look for divine strength to uphold them, and asks him to endure those trials, relying on that strength, and not on his own.

p. 214

Knight says:

It is striking that Paul refers to himself not as Rome's prisoner but as "his" . . . i.e., "the Lord's" prisoner, with [his] referring back to [the Lord]. His imprisonment is for no other reason than that he serves the Lord. Paul always refers to himself as a [prisoner] in this way . . . That he does so here gives Timothy perspective on Paul's imprisonment and thereby gives him reason not to be ashamed of the apostle.

p. 373

Knight points out the NEGATIVE and the POSITIVE commands by saying:

. . . “Do not be ashamed . . . , *but* join with me . . .”
p. 373

He says finally:

Timothy can rely upon “God’s power” because God’s powerful Spirit is in him to give him that power (cf. Eph. 3:16, 20).
p. 373

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

Timothy might easily be tempted to be ashamed of one in prison, especially as not only worldly shame, but great risk, attended any recognition of Paul the prisoner.
p. 1375

Matthew Henry says:

He exhorts him to count upon afflictions, and get ready for them. Be not thou ashamed of the gospel.

We must not be ashamed of those who are suffering for the gospel of Christ. Timothy must not be ashamed of good old Paul, though he was now in bonds.
p. 1894

He says further:

“Expect afflictions for the gospel’s sake, be willing to take thy lot with the suffering saints in this world.”
p. 1894

Liefeld says of the word “ASHAMED”:

... plays a special role in the confessional language of primitive Christianity. It can designate the renunciation of Jesus Christ by a human being or the renunciation of a human being by the son of man.”

In this way Timothy can join Paul in “suffering for the gospel.” This very suffering is “by the power of God” . . .
p. 233

Lock, commenting on the word that is translated “JOIN WITH ME IN SUFFERING,” says:

... here only in N.T. and not found in earlier writers: probably coined by St. Paul, who frequently coins compounds of [soon or with] out of his deep sense of the close “with-ness” of Christians with each other and with Christ. The main thought here is “suffer *with me* on behalf of the Gospel” . . .
p. 86

Barclay says:

The gospel was, and is, power, power to conquer self, power to master circumstances, power to go on living when life is unlivable, power to be a Christian when being a Christian looks impossible.
p. 167

Kelly says:

The next two verses set out, in moving terms, the reasons why Timothy, and indeed any Christian in any age, can rely on God’s power to carry him through suffering and disaster triumphant. It comes from One whose saving purpose, based wholly on grace and not on men’s achievements, has been at work since before the foundation of the world and has done what they could never have accomplished for themselves, redeeming them and in the historical mission of Christ breaking the hold of death and bestowing immortal life.
p. 161

Stott says:

Before he defines the gospel, he begs Timothy not to be ashamed of it (8). Suffering rather than shame is to characterize Timothy's ministry. He may be young, frail, timid and weak. He may shrink from the tasks to which he is being called. But God has moulded and gifted him for his ministry. So he must not be ashamed or afraid to exercise it.

p. 32

He says further:

We are all more sensitive to public opinion than we like to admit, and tend to bow down too readily before its pressure, like reeds shaken by the wind.

p. 33

Griffiths says:

The key words of this chapter are 'not ashamed'. They occur in verses 8 (twice), 12 and 16. Timothy is not to be ashamed of testifying, of suffering or of Paul. Paul is 'not ashamed' (verse 12) and neither is Onesiphorus (verse 16).

p. 170

He says further:

The early Christians were not supermen: nobody likes suffering. It is only possible *by the power of God*. Paul reminds suffering saints that God's power is there on tap to make us bold. Are we tempted to be timid? The early church prayed for boldness (Acts 4:29) and their prayers were answered (Acts 4:31).

p. 170

Guthrie says:

Men might imprison his body, but they could never enslave his spirit. To Christ alone he acknowledged himself a captive.
p. 128

King says:

“Be not ashamed”, he says in verse 8; and because, as we saw last time, he always practises what he preaches, he says, “I am not ashamed”, in verse 12. After all, what is there to be ashamed about in being a Christian—except it be that one is such a poor Christian. In very truth, it is a matchless honour to be a Christian. In one of the Italian wars of many years ago, the recruiting band was marching through the villages gathering young volunteers as it went, who brought their weapon, a gun, a sword from their houses, and fell in at the tail end of the procession. At one place an old woman, stirred by the martial music, went hurriedly back into her house; she had no sword, no gun, but she had a broomstick—and with that at the “slope-arms”, she joined the march. How her fellow-villagers laughed! What could the silly old woman do for the war? She hurled at them her spirited reply—“I don’t care so long as you know whose side I’m on”. I hope that story is true, for the action was fine! Even if we have nothing but a broomstick to contribute to the Cause, let us bring that, and see that there is no question of our allegiance, that all may know that we are undoubtedly and unashamedly His.
p. 23

He says further:

“Ashamed of JESUS! that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No, when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere His Name.

And, oh, may this my glory be,
That CHRIST is not ashamed of me.”

p. 24

Robertson says:

Paul challenges Timothy by this verb which he apparently coins for the purpose to a joint (*sun*) suffering with the Lord Jesus and Paul “for the gospel” . . .

p. 613

Wilson says:

In view of this divine enduement [v 7], Timothy must never be ashamed to testify about our Lord, even though the witness to a crucified Messiah inevitably excited the enmity and scorn of the world.

p. 130

He says further:

. . . according to the power that God gives [v 7]. For the power given is always commensurate to the sufferings to be endured [2 Cor 12.9, 10].

p. 131

Gaebelein says:

It was Timothy’s blessed calling and privilege to be a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God. He was not to shrink from the reproach and difficulties which then set in, but to endure it all, enabled by His gracious power.

p. 183

Hawthorne & Martin say:

Similarly at 2 Timothy 2:7 the Spirit given to Timothy is to be the foundation for a divinely inspired boldness concerning both the gospel and his association with the imprisoned Paul (“therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner,” 2 Tim 1:8), as well as the source of divine power to “suffer together (with Paul or with Christ?) for the gospel” (2 Tim 1:8). These functions are reminiscent of the role of the Spirit in the proclamation of the gospel . . .
p. 406

They say further:

Paul needed God’s empowering to endure suffering. . . He saw suffering as integral to knowing Christ—he who suffered to death for his people . . . Because Paul experienced God’s inner strength, he was able to endure a level of suffering that went far beyond mere human ability to endure . . . Because he trusted in a God who could accomplish anything he purposed through his frail human servants . . . Paul could tell the Philippians that he could endure any set of circumstances because of the empowering divine presence (Phil 4:13).
p. 724

Hawthorne & Martin, commenting further on the business of Paul being a prisoner of Christ, say:

Does the genitive in the expression . . . (“prisoner of Christ Jesus”) indicate that Paul sees himself as one taken prisoner by Christ or as one who suffers imprisonment for the sake of Christ? Most commentators have understood it in the latter sense, appealing to Philippians 1:29-30. This seems to be the most likely meaning, with the implied nuance that it is Christ who is truly sovereign over Paul’s circumstances.
p. 753

Lenski says:

The answer to this aoristic injunction: “Be not ashamed!” is not: “I will quit it,” but: “I will never once be!”
p. 757

Lange says:

The Divine power which was already (according to ver. 7) in Timothy, would fit him for the offering of the heaviest sacrifice.
p. 86

God’s plan involved PRISON or Paul would not be there.

This is the KEY VERSE in our study and we need as well to contemplate the truth of this verse. How often do we find that we are afraid to speak up about our convictions and our faith and trust in Jesus Christ because we are afraid of what people might think, or we are ashamed of what we believe.

Martin Luther, the great Protestant reformer stood fearlessly before the Holy Roman Emperor and the Diet of Worms as an archbishop questioned him about his writings. Luther replied:

“The books are all mine and I have written more.”

“Do you defend them all, or do you reject a part?” asked the archbishop. Luther replied aloud: “This touches God and His word. This affects the salvation of souls. Of this Christ said He who denies me before men, him will I deny before my father.”

Luther was given a day to think it over and asked the next day to recant his statements. Luther replied: “Unless I am convicted by scripture and plain reason, I do not accept the authority of popes and councils, for they have contradicted each other. My conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me.”
(source unknown)

The enemies a person makes by taking a stand will have more respect for him than the friends he makes by being on the fence.

—PROVERB

(From Quick Verse 6.0)

The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809-1894)

(From Quick Verse 6.0)

ENOUGH EVIDENCE FOR CONVICTION?

A young policeman spoke at a stateside law officers' retreat held at Hume Lake, California. He said, "I've been doing a great deal of thinking about my own life and just how much I have really 'come out' for Christ in my daily and public conduct. I often wonder, though, if being a Christian were a crime, would there be enough evidence to convict me?"

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

Proverbs

A wise man makes his own decisions, an ignorant man follows the public opinion.

Anonymous.

Chinese proverb.

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Submit to pressure from peers and you move down to their level.
 Speak up for your own beliefs and you invite them up to your level.
 If you move with the crowd, you'll get no further than the crowd.
 When 40 million people believe in a dumb idea, it's still a dumb idea.
 Simply swimming with the tide leaves you nowhere.
 So if you believe in something that's good, honest and bright—stand up
 for it. Maybe your peers will get smart and drift your way.

(From *Parson's Technology*)

(Stewardship of Sorrow by Douglass Scarborough McDaniel)

Submission is the other way. It is the triumph which comes when we lay our sorrowing soul at the Father's feet and accept what he sends, knowing that it must be best for us since it is his way, sure that one day it will all be made plain, with no bitterness and no questioning, but with serenity, saying, "Even so, Father, for thus it seemeth good in thy sight." Billows of peace will sweep over the soul thus trusting.

p. 29

(Let Go by Fenelon)

You have great need of the power of the Holy Spirit, both to sustain you in this time of trouble, and also to restrain you in your natural desire to find a way out.

p. 32

Your Cross

A young man was at the end of his rope, seeing no way out, dropped to his knees in prayer. “Lord, I can’t go on,” he said. “I have too heavy of a cross to bear.” The Lord replied, “My son, if you can’t bear its weight, just place your cross inside this room. Then, open that other door and pick out any cross you wish.”

The man was filled with relief said, “Thank you, Lord,” and he did as he was told. Upon entering the other door, he saw many crosses, some so large the tops were not visible. Then, he spotted a tiny cross leaning against a far wall. “I’d like that one, Lord,” he whispered. And the Lord replied, “My son, that is the cross you just brought in.”

When life’s problems seem overwhelming, it helps to look around and see what other people are coping with. You may consider yourself far more fortunate than you imagined.

YOUR CROSS

Whatever your cross, whatever your pain,
There will always be sunshine after the rain.
Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall,
But God’s always there to help you through it all.

Funny how you can send a thousand “jokes” through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny isn’t it when you go to forward this message how many on your list are not receiving it because you’re not sure they believe in anything? Funny? . . . Sad . . . and thought-provoking. May God give you the strength and courage to send this along.

(Received via e-mail from J. Birtell, November 20, 2000)

(Values and Virtues by Howard Hendricks & Bob Phillips)

It is easier to write ten volumes of philosophy than to put
one principle into practice.

LEO TOLSTOY

It is easier to fight for one’s principles than to live up to them.

ALFRED ADLER

p. 232

(God's Little Devotional Book for Men by Honor Books, Inc.)

For months Eric Liddell trained with his heart set on winning the 100-meter race at the Olympics of 1924. Many sportswriters predicted he would win. At the games, however, Liddell learned that the 100-meter race was scheduled to be run on a Sunday. This posed a major problem for him, because Liddell did not believe he could honor God by running on the Lord's Day. He bowed out of the race and his fans were stunned. Some who had praised him in the past now called him a fool. He came under intense pressure to change his mind, but Liddell stood firm.

Then a runner dropped out of the 400-meter race, which was scheduled on a week day, and Liddell offered to fill the slot. This was not really "his race"—the distance was four times as long as the race for which he had trained diligently. Even so, Liddell crossed the tape as victor and set a record of 47.6 seconds in the process. He had earned an Olympic gold medal . . . *and* made an uncompromising stand for his faith.

Liddell went on to become a missionary in China, where he died in a war camp in 1945. He lives in history as a man known more for his inner mettle than for his gold medal.

p. 159

(Inspiring Quotations compiled by Albert M. Wells, Jr.)

Times are especially trying for those who aren't trying.

p. 10

Wesley got down from his horse and began to pray, asking God to show him if his lack of persecution was due to any unconfessed sin. While he was on his knees before God, an unsaved man passing by recognized him as the preacher he disliked. The man picked up a brick and tossed it at Wesley. It missed the evangelist, but John Wesley saw it as an answer to prayer. "Thank God," he exclaimed, "it's all right. I still have His presence."

If one has not been persecuted for his Christian faith, he has not walked with Christ long enough or close enough

p. 153

(Churchill on Courage: Wisdom for Perseverance by Frederick Talbott)

I could be well content that others should bear the burden, but while I have life and strength I feel it my duty not to desert the fighting line, and I come before you now to ask you to stand by me giving me the best backing you can.

Winston Churchill
Election Address, Loughton, February 18, 1950

(quote 143)

(Fénelon: Talking with God by François Fénelon)

God is good, tender, compassionate towards our misery, even when he seems to launch his thunders at us, even when we are open-mouthed in our complaints of his severity.

We exaggerate all our sufferings by our cowardice. They are great, it is true, but they are magnified by fear. The way to lessen them is to abandon ourselves courageously into the hands of God. We must suffer, but the aim of our pain is to purify our souls, and make us worthy of him.

p. 98

(Will God Heal Me? by Ron Dunn)

When the daughter of a fellow pastor died suddenly of a rare disease, someone asked him if he still believed in Romans 8:28. Did he still believe that all things worked together for good for God's people? "Yes, I still believe that," he said, "but don't ask me to preach on it just yet."

p. 20

(Sport Shorts Calendar by Jay Carty)

Sweat is the cologne of accomplishment.
Heywood Hale Broun, Sportswriter

(September 19)

(Reflections for Ragamuffins: Daily Devotions from the Writings of Brennan Manning by Brennan Manning)

As Don Quixote tells Aldonza in *The Man from La Mancha*: “Wins and losses don’t matter, all that matters is following the quest.”

p. 354

(Renewed Day by Day: Daily Devotional Readings: Volume I by A. W. Tozer, compiled by Gerald B. Smith)

Suppose we take the position of compromise that many want us to take: “Everyone come, and be saved if you want to. But if you do not want to be saved, maybe there is some other way that we can find for you. We want you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ if you will, but if you do not want to, there may be possibility that God will find some other way for you because there are those who say that there are many ways to God.”

To take that position would not be a spirit of tolerance on our part—it would be downright cowardice! We would be guilty with so many others of a spirit of compromise that so easily becomes an anti-God attitude. Tolerance easily becomes a matter of cowardice if spiritual principles are involved, if the teachings of God’s Word are ignored and forgotten!

(March 13)

(The Book of Texas Wisdom: Common Sense and Uncommon Genius from 101 Great Texans compiled and edited by Criswell Freeman)

The only things in the
middle of the road are
yellow stripes and
dead armadillos.

Jim Hightower

p. 75

(When God Has Put You On Hold by Bill Austin)

Robert Louis Stevenson said, “Anyone can carry his burden, however hard, until night fall. Anyone can do his work, however hard, for one day.”
p. 55

(A Bend in the Road: Experiencing God When Your World Caves In
by David Jeremiah)

*Thou hast granted me many blessings;
Now let me accept tribulation from Thy hand.
Thou wilt not lay on me more than I can bear.
Thou makest all things work together
for good for Thy children.*

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

p. 75

*We know not what the future holds
But take each day as it unfolds
The bitter with the sweet God blends.
We wisely take what’ ere He sends.
His dealings are in wisdom made,
The warming sun or chilling shade.
On mountain top in the dell
Our Father doeth all things well.*

—David B. Stewart

p. 111

(50 Good Reasons to be a Cowboy/50 Good Reasons Not to be a Cowboy
by Texas Bix Bender)

The cowboy makes it clear when he says:

The cowboy life makes you real good and worn out.

Glamour tends to dissolve in sweat.

If your home is the range, your ceiling leaks and your floor is covered with cowpies.

(Quotes for the Journey, Wisdom for the Way compiled by Gordon S. Jackson)

There's nothing written in the Bible . . . that says if you believe in me, you
ain't going to have no troubles. —RAY CHARLES
p. 167

In the mighty power of God, go on! —GEORGE FOX
p. 168

I am reminded of:

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the
renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is,
that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Will it be CONFORMITY or CONVICTION?

Will we be a THERMOSTAT or a THERMOMETER?

Will we be a CHAMELEON or a CROCODILE?

I remember back many years ago when for Christmas the kids wanted a set of CREEPY CRAWLERS. On Christmas day we poured the pliable plastic into the metal molds and put them in the heat for a little while. Low and behold, when we took them out of the molds, we had spiders, worms, and all kinds of ugly creepy crawlers.

The world is in the business of taking the pliable and moldable clay of our lives and forming into that which is ugly. Rather we would do better to place the clay of our lives into the hands of the Master Potter and let Him mold us into Christlikeness.

(Great Souls at Prayer: Fourteen Centuries of Prayer, Praise and Aspiration
by Mary W. Tileston)

Blessed are all Thy saints, my God and King, who have travelled over the tempestuous sea of mortality, and have at last made the desired port of peace and felicity. Oh, cast a gracious eye upon us who are still in our dangerous voyage. Remember and succour us in our distress, and think on them that lie exposed to the rough storms of troubles and temptations. Strengthen our weakness, that we may do valiantly in this spiritual war; help us against our own negligence and cowardice, and defend us from the treachery of our unfaithful hearts. We are exceeding frail, and indisposed to every virtuous and gallant undertaking. Grant, O Lord, that we may bring our vessel safe to shore, unto our desired haven—Amen.

St. Augustine (354-430).

p. 278

v. 9 The one who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

Here, Paul is continuing on the admonition by reminding Timothy of the one who he would be ashamed of if he should happen to take that course.

It is Jesus Christ who saved us, first of all, from our sins. It is Jesus Christ who called us with a holy calling into His service.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Having mentioned the gospel, Paul spelled out some of its most important details. God **saved us and called us to a holy life**. This is an accomplished fact, not something yet to come.
p. 751

Lenski says:

In a magnificent panorama that reaches back even to eternity Paul now enrolls all that God's power has done in saving and calling us and touches even the immortality that carries us into eternal blessedness.
p. 760

Wilson says:

Thus our temporal trials, however severe they may be, are put into their proper perspective by the certainty of God's electing grace in Christ Jesus [cf Eph 1.4].
p. 132

King says:

His finished Work for us must first be accepted “by faith”, and then our continual works for Him must follow, as the mark of our gratitude and the fruit of our love.

p. 25

Stott says:

Paul now enlarges on the gospel of which Timothy is not to be ashamed, and for which he must take his share of suffering. He begins by sketching its main features (9, 10) and then summarizes our responsibility in relation to it (11-18). This then is the double theme of the rest of the chapter: God’s gospel and our duty.

p. 33

He says further:

Indeed, ‘forgiveness’, ‘holiness’ and ‘immortality’ are all three aspects of God’s great ‘salvation’.

p. 35

He says finally:

‘Salvation’ is a majestic word, denoting that comprehensive purpose of God by which he justifies, sanctifies and glorifies his people: first, pardoning our offences and accepting us as righteous in his sight through Christ, then progressively transforming us by his Spirit into the image of his Son, until finally we become like Christ in heaven, with new bodies in a new world. We must not minimize the greatness of ‘such a great salvation’ (Heb. 2:3).

p. 35

Kelly says:

Paul's first point is that Timothy, in facing suffering, can rely on divine assistance because God **has** already **saved us**.
p. 162

Barclay says:

The gospel is not simply rescue from the consequences and the penalty of past sin. The gospel is a summons to walk the way of holiness.
p. 168

He then says:

THE gospel is the gospel of *grace*. It is not dependent on our achievements but on God's purpose. It is not something which we have achieved, but something which we accept. God did not call us because we are holy; God called us to make us holy. If we had to win, to achieve, to deserve the gospel and the love of God, our situation would be helpless and hopeless. The gospel, is the free gift of God. God does not love us because we deserve His love; God loves us out of the sheer generosity of His heart.
p. 169

Lock says:

. . . mainly "with a calling to be holy," . . . but with the further thought of God's holiness which we have to imitate . . .
p. 87

Hawthorne & Martin say:

That salvation has its origin in God is brought out by speaking of God's "call": God "saved us and called us with a holy calling" (2 Tim 1:9). The idea of call is an important one for Paul, and here it brings out the truth that salvation comes as a result of a prior divine initiative. Or it may be linked with grace to bring out the fact that salvation is for all (Tit 2:11). This means that salvation is available to all, not that every individual is saved . . .
pp. 858-9

Lange says:

"From the order of time he adduces argument that salvation is given to us freely, we being in no degree deserving of it. For if God chose us before the creation of the world, he could not have the ground . . . of works, which were null when we were not yet in existence.
p. 86

Knight says:

Thus salvation is not only on the basis of God's purpose but also on the basis of "his own" [grace], the gracious intention of God. Paul also links these two elements, God's purpose or will and his gracious intention, elsewhere as the basis for human salvation.
p. 374

Milne says:

Salvation owes nothing to human wisdom or goodness, it is due altogether to the wisdom and will of God. Paul makes the same point in Titus 3:5 in almost the same words. The total exclusion of any human achievement or input to the accomplishment of salvation is a fundamental principle that sets the Christian message apart from every other system. Every other theory of salvation is a form of self-help, a doctrine of human works and merit. The fallenness of human nature is such that people are blind to their own spiritual bankruptcy, and persist in believing in their own righteousness. Only the teaching of the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures can convince them that they will be saved, not because of anything that they have done, but because of God's own purpose and grace.
pp. 134-5

Fee observes:

Having noted that Timothy's taking his part in suffering can only be accomplished "by the power of God," Paul emphasizes that this is the same God who **saved us and called us**, and that this saving act resided in God's **own gracious purpose . . . before the beginning of time**, but was **revealed** historically as an expression of **grace . . . through the appearing of . . . Christ**, whose work in this instance is defined as **destroying death** and revealing **immortality**. Thus he braces Timothy's resolve by emphasizing God's sovereign grace and purpose to render death inoperative, and by insisting that this revelation resides in the very gospel for which Timothy is to "take his part in suffering"!
p. 229

Lea & Griffin say:

The purpose of salvation is that each believer might produce a life of obedience and holiness to God instead of self. The basis of this salvation is the purpose and grace of God, not human merit.
p. 191

Lea & Griffin say further:

The availability of God's sovereign grace through Christ would brace the wavering resolve of Timothy. It was also important for Timothy to recall that God's saving purpose had been at work before the world was founded.
p. 192

Wiersbe says:

We are part of a great eternal plan that God determined "before the world began." God knows the end from the beginning. He has purposes for His people to accomplish for His glory. Suffering is a part of His plan. Jesus Christ suffered in the will of God here on earth, and all those who trust in Him will also suffer.
p. 122

Demarest says:

I find it awesome to ponder the fact that God calls me by name! The great God of the universe, the Creator and Cosmic Ground of all being, calls me Gary. That He calls each of us by name is the mark of His care for us. The Gospel is grounded in the reality of a personal relationship with the living God. It is personal because God calls us by name.
p. 244

Towner says:

What is this message that demands so much from a Christian? In verses 9 and 10, which continue the sentence begun in verse 8, Paul inserts a piece of a hymn or early creed in explanation of *the gospel* and the God who made its promises (see on 1 Tim 3:16).
p. 163

Towner says further:

God took the active role because he wants us to be related to himself. Salvation, the fact of rescue, is to find practical expression among God's people (*us*) in the form of *a holy life* (see 2:21 commentary), a lifestyle that is visibly different. It is a life lived in close relationship with God.
p. 163

Spurgeon has this to say in a sermon that he preaches on this verse:

It is somewhat remarkable—at least it may seem so to persons who are not accustomed to think upon the subject—that the apostle, in order to excite Timothy to boldness, to keep him constant in the faith, reminds him of the great doctrine that the grace of God reigns in the salvation of men.
p. 830

He continues:

Be it known this morning that every man and woman here is either saved at this present moment or lost, and that salvation is not a blessing to be enjoyed upon the dying bed and to be sung of in a future state above, but a matter to be obtained, received, promised and enjoyed now. God hath saved his saints, mark, not partly saved them, but perfectly saved them.
p. 831

He goes on to say:

Those whom the Saviour saved upon the tree are in due time effectually called by the power of God the Holy Spirit unto holiness; they leave their sins, they endeavour to be like Christ, they choose holiness, not out of any compulsion, but from the stress of a new nature, which leads them to rejoice in holiness, just as naturally as aforetime they delighted in sin.
p. 832

Spurgeon continues:

If any man be saved, it is not because he purposed to be saved, but because God purposed to save him.
p. 832

He says finally:

Those last words seem to me for ever to lay prostrate all idea of anything of our own merits in saving ourselves, because it is here witnessed that God gave us grace “before the world began.” Where were you then? What hand had you in it “before the world began?” Why, fly back if you can in imagination to the ancient years when those venerable mountains, that elder birth of nature, were not yet formed; when world, and sun, and moon, and stars, were all in embryo in God’s great mind; when the unnavigated sea of space had never been disturbed by wing of seraph, and the awful silence of eternity had never been startled by the song of cherubim—when God dwelt alone. If you can conceive that time before all time, that vast eternity—it was then He gave us grace in Christ Jesus.
p. 833

I love one other statement that Spurgeon makes:

If you are to be saved, it must be an act of sovereign grace.
(source unknown)

Let us MEDITATE for a few moments on the first phrase of verse 9:

“THE ONE WHO SAVED US AND CALLED US WITH A HOLY CALLING.”

Romans 10:9-11

that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.”

He is “THE ONE WHO SAVED US” in response to our FAITH and “[He] CALLED US WITH A HOLY CALLING.”

1 Thessalonians 4:7

For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.

1 Peter 1:15, 16

but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

“NOT ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE.”

Paul, here uses a NEGATIVE and POSITIVE approach. He points out:

1. “NOT”—NEGATIVE—“ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS”
2. “BUT”—POSITIVE—“ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE.”

SALVATION IS NOT SOMETHING THAT WE CAN ATTAIN BY GOOD WORKS.

Romans 4:4, 5

Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness,

Ephesians 2:8, 9

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.

Titus 3:5

He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

The word “BUT” forms the CONTRAST between the NEGATIVE and the POSITIVE. From a positive perspective, it is:

“ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE.”

It is His “PURPOSE” to SAVE. It is accomplished by His “GRACE.”

Jesus said in:

John 15:16 (KJV)

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

The last phrase in verse 9 says:

“WHICH [referring to “HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE”] WAS GIVEN US IN CHRIST JESUS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF TIME.”

It has always been the Father’s “PURPOSE” to give us the gift of ETERNAL SALVATION by “GRACE” in the gift of His Son.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

“WHICH WAS GIVEN US IN CHRIST JESUS BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF TIME.”

Ephesians 1:4

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love

Titus 1:2

in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,

How is it possible that we could have anything to do with our eternal salvation when the whole plan was put together long before we got here?

(The Mystery of God's Will by Charles R. Swindoll)

A holy life isn't the automatic consequence of reading the right books, listening to the right tapes, or attending the right meetings. It's the result of a living, loving union with Jesus Christ and a life marked by godly discipline.

—WARREN WIERSBE, *On Being a Servant of God*

p. 54

Because God has done the greater thing of providing eternal salvation for the whole world, don't you think that He can sovereignly superintend the circumstances of our individual lives to glorify and honor Himself?

v. 10 But now has been made known through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who on the one hand broke the power of death and on the other brought to light, life and immortality through the gospel.

In verse 9 we get the PAST.

In verse 10 we get the PRESENT.

“BUT NOW HAS BEEN MADE KNOWN THROUGH THE APPEARING OF OUR SAVIOR, CHRIST JESUS.”

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Philippians 2:6-8

who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Hebrews 10:5-7

Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, “Sacrifice and offering Thou hast not desired, But a body Thou hast prepared for Me; In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast taken no pleasure. Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (In the roll of the book it is written of Me) To do Thy will, O God.’”

1 John 1:1, 2

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

God became man in the incarnation.

Jesus Christ came into the world and lived the perfect, sinless life. And as the Lamb of God, became sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Paul in the later part of this verse, describes for us the work of Christ when he points out:

1. **“WHO ON THE ONE HAND BROKE THE POWER OF DEATH” and**
2. **“ON THE OTHER BROUGHT TO LIGHT, LIFE AND IMMORTALITY THROUGH THE GOSPEL.”**

What a comfort this is to Paul in prison, facing the penalty of death, to know that death no longer has its power and strangle-hold upon mankind because of the death of Jesus Christ.

Paul says practically the same thing in his earlier ministry as he speaks to the Corinthian church:

1 Corinthians 15:51-55

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?"

Jesus said to Martha in:

John 11:25, 26

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection, and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

2 Corinthians 5:1

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:8

we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

Philippians 1:21-23

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;

Lea & Griffin say:

Christ is a destroyer in that he put death out of action. He is an illuminator in that his words and actions bring the nature of eternal life into clear view. The preaching of the gospel allows these benefits to become operative within the world. Paul's conclusion of this verse by reference to the "gospel" allowed him to explain in the following verse his role in proclaiming the gospel.

p. 193

Lock says:

Here the two thoughts of the divine intervention of a saviour in the hour of need and of the dawning of a new light, . . . are combined.

p. 87

Kelly, commenting on the word "IMMORTALITY," says:

The word is regularly employed by Paul of the resurrection body . . . it denotes for him something which God alone can bestow (Rom. ii. 7).

p. 164

Stott says:

What, then, did Christ do when he appeared and proceeded to manifest God's eternal purpose of grace? To this Paul gives in verse 10 a double answer. First, Jesus Christ 'abolished death'. Secondly, he 'brought life and immortality to light through the gospel'.

p. 37

Stott says further:

For Scripture speaks of death in three ways. There is physical death, the separation of the soul from the body. There is spiritual death, the separation of the soul from God. And there is eternal death, the separation of both soul and body from God for ever. All are due to sin; they are sin's terrible though just reward.

p. 37

He continues by saying:

It is surely significant that this same verb *katargeō* is used in the New Testament with reference to the devil and to our fallen nature as well as to death . . . Neither the devil, nor our fallen nature, nor death has been annihilated. But by the power of Christ the tyranny of each has been broken, so that if we are in Christ we can be set free.

p. 38

He continues:

In order to appreciate the full force of this Christian affirmation, we need to call to mind who it is who is making it. Who is this who writes so confidently about life and death, about the abolition of death and the revelation of life? It is one who is facing the prospect of imminent death himself. Any day now he expects to receive the death sentence. Already the final summons is ringing in his ears. Already he can see in his imagination the flash of the executioner's sword. And yet, in the very presence of death, he can shout aloud: 'Christ has abolished death'. This is Christian faith triumphant!

p. 39

He then says finally:

Is it not truly wonderful that, although Paul's body is confined within the narrow limits of an underground cell, his heart and mind can thus soar into eternity?

p. 40

Gaebelein says:

The full accomplishment and victory comes when He who abolished death by His death on the Cross, and triumphant resurrection, comes again.
p. 184

Guthrie says:

The thought moves from eternity to time. Though the idea of God's eternal purposes of grace may be beyond comprehension, at least the fact of the incarnation is capable of being understood.
p. 129

Hawthorne & Martin say:

Immortality in Paul's writings, therefore, must be understood to be an existence that is imperishable, incorruptible, never-dying, never-ending.
p. 431

They say further:

In the final analysis, however, immortality cannot be gained by human endeavor. Rather it is something that is "brought to light through the gospel" (2 Tim 1:10), that is to say, through the appearing of the Savior, . . . Christ Jesus, who by his life and death and resurrection abolished death, on the one hand, and provided all who believe with immortality, on the other . . .
p. 432

Fee summarizes by saying:

So his word to Timothy is plain: "Be steadfast; rekindle your gift; take your part in the suffering; for we are already among those who have overcome death through Christ."
p. 230

Milne says:

God's purpose of salvation leads to the destruction of death and a new gift of life and immortality. He achieves this stupendous result through Jesus Christ who died and rose again to bring it all about. Christ defeated death by dying as an innocent and free individual representing others (Heb. 2:14f). Consequently, death could make no claims upon him, but was forced to quit the field.

p. 136

Knight says:

Paul moves from God's eternal plan and the grace resident in Christ to the manifestation of that grace in the appearing of Christ as the Savior who accomplishes salvation by abolishing death and providing life and immortality.

p. 375

Patrick & Lowth say:

Hence then we see the necessity that this "life and immortality" should be "brought to light by the gospel;" and what continual thanks we owe to the blessed Jesus, who hath, by his death, not only removed the fear and sting, but even the being of death, and hath procured a blessed immortality, not only for the soul, but for the body also.

p. 858

Matthew Henry says:

By the gospel of Christ death is abolished. Death once an enemy has become a friend; it is the gate by which we pass out of a troublesome, sinful world, into a world of perfect peace and purity. Death does not triumph over those who believe the gospel, but they triumph over it.

p. 1894

Barnes, commenting on the phrase “who hath abolished death,” says:

That is, he has made it so certain that death *will* be abolished, that it may be spoken of as already done. It is remarkable how often, in this chapter, Paul speaks of what God *intends* to do as so certain, that it may be spoken of as a thing that is already done.

p. 215

Hughes says:

The glory of the gospel is that everything is of God. It is a gospel of sovereign grace, preexistence grace, visible grace that begins and ends in him.

p. 181

MacArthur says:

Bringing them to light means making them known. That is our area of expertise. We know the immeasurable reality of eternal, immortal existence. That also is our joy and hope in Christ.

p. 24

They say we are nearing the sunset,
 And life with its meaning is past,
 Ah, no, we are nearing the sunrise,
 And life in its fullness at last.
 The sun of life's day is fast sinking,
 And the shadows of twilight have come,
 But there is no darkness of night in our spirit,
 We have glimpsed the bright glory of home.
 Our steps may be faltering and feeble,
 Our eyes dim and faded may be.
 But we're walking triumphant with Jesus,
 And His beauty more clearly we see.
 Do not pity the weakness and frailty
 Of bodies once active and strong.
 Our spirits are quick and unconquered,
 And our hearts overflowing with song.
 (source unknown)

Paul's heart-cry to Timothy is:

“Oh Timothy, do not be ashamed in this present life of the testimony of our Lord who has actually taken away the power of death and in the process, brought to light life and immortality.”

(The Fullness of Joy by Charles Spurgeon)

Hosannah to the Prince of light,
Who clothed Himself in clay,
Entered the iron gates of death,
And tore the bars away!

Death is no more the king of dread
Since our Immanuel rose.
He took the tyrant's sting away,
And spoiled our hellish foes.

See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,
And to His Father flies,
With scars of honor in His flesh
And triumph in His eyes.

p. 65

v. 11 For which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.

Acts 9:15, 16

But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

Here in **THREE WORDS** you have a **SUMMARY** of Paul’s ministry. He was:

- a **HERALD**,
- an **“APOSTLE,”** and
- a **“TEACHER.”**

This good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ did not make Paul content to have life eternal. But, instead it motivated him to throw himself into service, wearing himself out in every way to share the message of this good news with every possible person.

Let us consider together these **THREE WORDS**:

1. **HERALD**—the herald was one who brought the announcement from the king, so likewise Paul was a herald in this sense, that he was bringing a message from the King of kings.
2. **“APOSTLE”**—in the sense that he was a sent one—sent on a mission.
3. **“TEACHER”**—in a sense, this is the most important role. Here he conveys the truth to others so that they likewise may pass it on to still others. It is the teacher’s responsibility to bring the truth to the light, to make it clear.

Just like we read in verse 10 that:

“Christ Jesus . . . brought to light, life and immortality through the gospel.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

[These are] three roles which merely reflect different facets of the stewardship entrusted to him . . . Carrying out his stewardship had brought Paul much **suffering**, including his present imprisonment.

p. 751

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown say:

He brings forward his own example in this verse and vs. 12, as a pattern for Timothy, as a *public* “preacher,” an “apostle,” or *missionary* from place to place, and a “teacher” *in private* instructing His flock with patient perseverance.

p. 1375

Knight says:

The three terms [preacher, apostle, and teacher] . . . designate different aspects of Paul’s one ministry.

p. 377

Stott says:

If the ‘life and immortality’ which Christ achieved are ‘brought . . . to light through the gospel’, then of course it is imperative that we should proclaim the gospel. So Paul continues: ‘For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher.’ The same combination of words occurs in 1 Timothy 2:7, and in both Paul uses the emphatic *egō*, no doubt to express his ‘sense of personal wonder’ that he should have been given this privilege.

p. 41

Kelly observes:

If fine distinctions are to be drawn between **herald**, **apostle**, and **teacher**, the first word stresses the boldness and publicity with which the evangelist must proclaim his message, the second brings out his special commission, while the third draws attention to his pastoral obligations.
pp. 164-5

Towner says:

Verse 11 uses the same three categories as 1 Timothy 2:7 to describe Paul's commission in relation to the gospel: *herald, apostle, teacher*. *Herald* and *teacher* probably distinguish between the activities of evangelistic proclaiming and instructing the church (4:2). *Apostle* focuses on authority; Paul was selected and sent by Christ himself . . . This appointment, verse 12 continues, is the reason for his imprisonment in Rome.
p. 165

Griffiths says:

The words suggest three succeeding roles: first, a royal herald proclaims the Good News of the Kingdom to people who have never heard it before—the evangelist's role; second, the apostle plants churches; third, the teacher trains new disciples to obey Christ. This was Paul's calling and these were the spiritual gifts which qualified him to be a missionary to the nations.
pp. 171-2

Hendriksen says:

As a *herald* Paul must announce and loudly proclaim that gospel. As an *apostle* he must say and do nothing except that which he has been commanded to say and to do. And as a *teacher* he must impart carefully instruction in the things pertaining to salvation and the glory of God, and he must admonish unto faith and obedience. For this threefold gospel-task Paul has been *divinely appointed* or *commissioned*.
p. 234

Barnes, in explaining “FOR WHICH I WAS APPOINTED,” says:

That is, I am appointed to make these truths known . . .
p. 216

MacArthur says:

Preacher emphasizes his function in ministry, **apostle** emphasizes his authority, and **teacher** emphasizes his interpreting the message he authoritatively proclaimed.
p. 25

Hughes says:

At this last mention of the gospel, Paul exults in his privilege. His soul dances at the thought of his call: “And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher” (v. 11). He was a [preacher] *kerux*, one who sounds forth the evangel, the greatest news ever told. He was an [apostle] *apostolos*, one sent with a specific commission from God. And he was a teacher, a *didaskolos* (his favorite word in the Pastorals), as he outlined the great doctrines of the faith, the apostolic deposit.
p. 182

Standing Up For Jesus

Christians need to take a public stand with God, no matter what the cost. We also need to take a stand for our faith and have the courage to say, “I’m a Christian.” If we are to have revival in this nation, that’s what Christians will have to do.

—Robert Vernon, assistant chief of police, Los Angeles
Police Department, in *Christianity Today*, 3/18/89

(From *Parson's Technology*)

(Churchill on Courage: Wisdom for Perseverance by Frederick Talbott)

We know where we are and what we are going to do, and we also know what we are not going to do.

Winston Churchill
Chingford, October 8, 1935

(quote 39)

Carry on, and dread nought.

Winston Churchill
House of Commons, December 6, 1939

(quote 47)

(Future Grace by John Piper)

Henry Martyn was right when he said, "If [God] has work for me to do, I cannot die."¹ In other words, I am immortal until my work is done. Therefore, ministry is more important than life.

THEY LOVED NOT THEIR LIVES ABOVE MINISTRY

O, how many examples could be multiplied from the glorious history of Gods' faithful saints! William Carey sailed to India from England in 1793. He lost his five-year-old son, his wife became mentally ill, he labored seven years for his first convert, and he lost years' worth of precious translation work in a fire. But still he pressed on—for forty years without a furlough. Because ministry is more important than life. Adoniram Judson, "America's first foreign missionary," went to Burma in 1814. He lost a six-month-old baby boy, spent a year and a half in a "death prison," lost his wife from fever, suffered a mental breakdown, and waited five years for his first convert. But he kept on, because ministry is more important than life. Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to go to China (in 1807), lost his young wife and worked seven years for his first convert. But he kept on, because ministry is more important than life.²

1. Henry Martyn, *Journal and Letters of Henry Martyn* (New York: Protestant Episcopal Society for the Promotion of Evangelical Knowledge, 1851), p. 460.

2. I took these little summary vignettes from Clay Sterrett, "Hanging Tough," *Faith and Renewal*, Vol. 16, No. 4, January/February, 1992, p. 19.

It was Spurgeon who said:

If saints are immortal until their work on earth is done, some saints are going to be around for quite some time.
(source unknown)

(The Journey of Desire: Searching for the Life We've Only Dreamed Of
by John Eldredge)

Sanctified resignation has become the new abiding place of contemporary Christians.
p. 64

(Passion for Jesus: Growing in Extravagant Love for God by Mike Bickle)

I have to remind myself that I am not called to be a spiritual politician. I am called to be a man filled with holy passion and extravagant affection for Jesus.
p. 49

(The Valley of Vision: A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions
 edited by Arthur Bennett)

REQUESTS

O GOD,

May I never be a blot or a blank in life,
 cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of,
 or make my liberty an occasion to the flesh.

May I by love serve others,
 and please my neighbour for his good to edification.

May I attend to what is ornamental as well as essential in religion,
 pursuing things that are lovely and good report.

May I render my profession of the gospel not only impressive,
 but amiable and inviting.

May I hold forth the way of Jesus
 with my temper as well as my tongue,
 with my life as well as my lips.

May I say to all I meet,
 I am journeying towards the Lord's given place,
 come with me for your good.

May I be prepared
 for all the allotments of this short, changing, uncertain life,
 with a useful residence in it,
 a comfortable journey through it,
 a safe passage out of it.

May I be in character and conduct
 like the dew of heaven, the salt of the earth,
 the light of the world, the fullness of the fountain.

May I never be ashamed of Jesus or his words,
 never be deterred from fulfilling a known duty through fear,
 never be discouraged from attempting it through weakness.

May I see all things in divine light so that they may
 inform my judgment and sanctify my heart.

And by all the disciples of thy providence,
 and all the ordinances of religion,
 may I be increasingly prepared for life's remaining duties,
 the solemnities of a dying hour,
 and the joy and services that lie b[e]yond the grave.

p. 151

(I'm Trying to Number My Days, But I Keep Losing Count!: Life Lessons on Living Your Days to the Fullest by Al Sanders)

Right up to the very end, Dwight L. Moody was involved in evangelism. When asked why he maintained such fervor, he affirmed, "I look at this world as a wrecked vessel. One day, God said to me, "Moody, you're a lifeboat. Go out and rescue as many as you can before the end comes!"

p. 28

(A Small Book About God by Roy Hicks, Jr.)

Jesus says, "Launch out into the deep. Get ready for the catch of your life!" Oh, how we need to hear Jesus say that in our own personal lives. How we need the miraculous! The miraculous power that causes nets to break and boats to sink. When you begin to partner with Jesus, miracles will take place.

If we look at what this story teaches about miracles, we could say that the miraculous always begins with something you can do. Jesus only asked Peter to "launch out." He didn't ask him to produce the catch! But often the miraculous also begins with something you don't want to do. It requires time, energy, or resources that you'd rather not expend. It's all about fishing where you've already fished—just because He asks you to.

pp. 125-6

(Living Beyond the Limits by Franklin Graham)

It has been said that opportunities multiply as they are seized; they die when neglected.

p. 65

(God's Little Devotional Book on Success by Honor Books)

A winner is someone who recognizes his God-given talents, works his tail off to develop them into skills, and uses these skills to accomplish his goals.

■ ■ ■

The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more."

Matthew 25:20

I have no voice for singing,
I cannot make a speech,
I have no gift for music,
I know I cannot teach.

I am no good at leading,
I cannot "organize,"
And anything I write
Would never win a prize.

But at roll call in meetings
I always answer, "Here."
When others are performing
I lend a listening ear.

After the program's over,
I praise its every part.
My words are not to flatter,
I mean them from my heart.

It seems my only talent
Is neither big nor rare,
Just to listen and encourage
And to fill a vacant chair.

But all the gifted people
could not so brightly shine,
Were it not for those who use
A talent such as mine!⁹⁶

— Alice Barbour Bennett

⁹⁶*Knight's Master Book of 4,000 Illustrations*, Walter B. Knight, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 175
pp. 200-201

v. 12 For this reason, I am also suffering these things, But I am not ashamed, for I am knowing whom I have believed and I have been convinced that He is able to guard that which has been entrusted to Him until that day.

The words “FOR THIS REASON” POINT US BACK to the fact Paul states in the previous verse:

“I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.”

It is:

“FOR THIS REASON, I AM ALSO SUFFERING THESE THINGS.”

“SUFFERING” and “ASHAMED” carry us back to our KEY VERSE, verse 8:

“Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony borne by our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.”

Paul can say that he is:

“NOT ASHAMED of the testimony” of the Lord. He is “SUFFERING for the gospel.” The victory in his suffering is coming through the promised power that God makes available for His suffering children to be victorious in the midst of difficulties.

It is interesting here at the end of our study on:

Conviction: Here I Stand, God Help Me

that the apostle would give a PERSONAL TESTIMONY. He would say:

“I AM NOT ASHAMED.”

He then very clearly gives us the REASON for not being “ASHAMED” of the fact that he is in prison and that he is “SUFFERING” and very near martyrdom:

“FOR I AM KNOWING WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED AND I HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT HE IS ABLE TO GUARD THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO HIM UNTIL THAT DAY.”

Paul then follows with TWO REASONS that are given:

1. He is “KNOWING WHOM [he] HAS BELIEVED.”

It is interesting here that he would use the word “WHOM,” referring of course to the Person of Jesus Christ, and not saying “I know WHAT I have believed.”

John 20:31

but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life [through] His name.

1 John 5:13 (TLB)

I have written this to you who believe in the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

The SECOND REASON Paul gives here is:

2. “I HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT HE IS ABLE TO GUARD [my deposit] WHICH HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO HIM UNTIL THAT DAY.”

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

He was trusting his own destiny to the same One who had **entrusted** him with the stewardship of the gospel. Thus, even though he was suffering abuse and humiliation, he was confident of God's complete vindication in the end . . . Throughout, of course, Paul was using his own example to bolster Timothy's perhaps flagging courage.

p. 751

Milne says:

The traditional understanding takes Paul to mean that he has entrusted himself, his whole life and future, to Christ for safekeeping to the Day of eternity.

p. 138

Fee says:

Very likely it refers either to Paul's life or to his commitment to Christ and his gospel. But in either case the emphasis parallels that of verses 9-10. Just as the gospel announces a salvation that God in grace initiated and effected, and through which he rendered death ineffective, so also the same God can be trusted to **guard . . . for** the End the life that **has** been **entrusted** to his care.

p. 232

Gaebelein says:

“The Apostle does not say ‘in *what* I have believed,’ but ‘*whom*,’ an important difference, which pleases us (as to our confidence) in connection with the Person of Christ Himself. The Apostle had spoken of the truth, but truth is allied to the Person of Christ. He is the truth; and in Him truth has life, has power, is linked with the love which applies it, which maintains it in the heart and the heart by it. ‘I know,’ says the Apostle, ‘*whom* I have believed.’ He had committed his happiness to Christ.

p. 184

Lock paraphrases it by saying:

. . . all my precious things which I have put under his care. He does not define or limit; it will include his teaching . . . his apostolic work, his converts . . . his life which has been already in God's keeping and which will remain safe there even through death . . .

p. 88

Lea & Griffin say:

Paul connected his present circumstances with his role as a messenger of the gospel. His efforts to fulfill his commission as a herald of the gospel had led to his imprisonment and suffering. The resources that strengthened Paul in this difficulty were also available to encourage and embolden Timothy. Paul stated firmly that he was unashamed of his plight in life and then provided reasons that would banish any shame Timothy might have had

. . .

p. 194

They say further:

Paul's word for the translation "have believed" utilizes a Greek perfect tense to emphasize that he had "permanently put his trust and confidence in Him . . . , has been trusting Him all along, and is trusting Him now in the face of impending death."²²

²²D.E. Hiebert, *Second Timothy*, EvBC (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 42.

p. 194

Lea & Griffin say finally:

This suggests more likely that Paul was referring to something he had placed with God for his guarding. The NIV translation clearly emphasizes this. The reference can be either to his life, his converts, or his work. The phrase “for that day” expresses the duration of the time in which God can guard this deposit. God will guard it until the return of Christ. Paul was affirming that God can keep a life or ministry committed to him in a position of perfect safety. God will keep the recipients of his promises safe to the end. Paul’s more hesitant but promising friend Timothy could find strength in such truth to propel him to bold witness for Jesus.

pp. 194-5

Spurgeon concludes his message on this verse with these words:

“’Tis done: the great transaction’s done;
I am my Lord’s and He is mine:
He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice divine.

High heaven, that heard the solemn vow,
That vow renewed shall daily hear:
Till in life’s latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear.”

p. 840

Demarest says:

I find the fear of rejection a powerful counterforce to freedom in sharing my deepest feelings and convictions about Jesus. In that sense, my ministry is often hindered by the fear of being ashamed.

The antidote? The experiential reality of Jesus Himself and the confidence that He will keep us in His care to the very end (v. 12b). Courage and freedom in the pursuit of our ministry is much more than practicing techniques that will not offend people. It is first and foremost a matter of our relationship with Jesus Himself.

p. 249

Wiersbe says:

Note his emphasis on the person of Christ: “I know *whom* I have believed.” Salvation is not the result of believing certain doctrines, though doctrines are important. A sinner is saved because he believes in a Person—Jesus Christ the Saviour. Paul had deposited his soul in the care and keeping of the Saviour, and Paul was sure that Jesus Christ would faithfully guard that deposit. What difference did it make to Paul what happened on any certain day? What really mattered is what will happen on “that day” when Jesus Christ rewards His servants . . .

pp. 124-5

King says:

Paul does not want Timothy to forget that all-out Christian service involves a big price. Indeed, could he ever forget it, if, as is not unlikely, he saw Paul’s mangled, tortured, and supposedly dead body on the roadside by the gates of Lystra, as is described in Acts [14] xiv. 19. Ah, but you see (d) *He had a goal in view*. Do you remember how he describes it in Romans [8] viii. 18, “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed”. There, you see, is his secret. It was the thought of the Perfect Day that enabled him to endure the hardships of the Passing Days. In the light of “that Day”, he was (i) eager to serve, and (ii) ready to suffer. His goal brightens even his goal [prison]. Keep your eye on that Day, Timothy . . .

p. 28

He says further:

It cannot always be said that the believer knows What, or knows When, or knows Where, or knows Which, or knows Whether, or knows Whither, or knows Why—but he knows Whom! That is the essential, and the supreme, knowledge.

p. 29

King says finally:

It reminds one of Enoch, who, amid all the difficulties of his family and public life, and in face of all the opposing factors at which Jude 15 hints, “walked with God”, until the day when, as a little child explained, “They went so far that God said, It’s getting rather late, you had better come home with Me’. To know Him is to want to commit ourselves entirely to Him, and to be thoroughly persuaded that He is quite well able to keep that deposit safe “against the Day”.

p. 30

Wilson says:

The phrase ‘also these things’ marks the climax in Paul’s long career of suffering, since he was now facing the prospect of being executed as a criminal. Yet he is not ashamed to be found in such straits, ‘for I know him whom I have believed’, i.e. the Saviour who triumphed over death and brought to light ‘life and immortality’ [v 10]. Hence Paul is convinced that Christ is able to guard that which he has deposited with Him until that day [4-8]. In other words, he is assured of Christ’s ability to save and keep him to the very end.

p. 133

Lenski says:

The great “case or cause” presented to us in the preceding verses is more than ample reason that Paul gladly suffers also these things that have now come upon him.

p. 766

A. T. Robertson says:

Literally, “my deposit,” as in a bank, the bank of heaven which no burglar can break (Matt. 6:19f.).

p. 614

Matthew 6:19-21

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Paul has been faithful in his service to the Lord and he knew that the deposit of his life and of his service into the hands of God would be safekeeping against that day.

Liefeld says:

As Paul nears the end of his sentence, he gathers up in verse 12 what he has said about testifying to the gospel and declares that it is for this reason that he is “also suffering these things” . . . probably meaning that suffering is also part of his commission, as it is Timothy’s . . .
p. 235

Baxter says:

We recall that Paul clearly defines the “deposit” in the first epistle, chapter [1] i. 11: “The glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.” The “deposit” is the Christian faith, “the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.” The time of Paul’s own “departure” is now at hand. As he looks back over the years, he can say: “I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course; I have *held intact* the faith.” But what of the future? He must give this solemn, written “charge” to his dearest son in the faith. With a new sense of responsibility Timothy is now to “guard” this priceless, vital “deposit” of Christian truth: he is to preserve it, protect it, proclaim it.
p. 237

Hendriksen says:

. . . “I know that this God in whom I have placed my confidence is dependable, and will certainly keep in perfect safety that which I have entrusted to him for safe-keeping and protection.”

p. 235

Kelly says of verse 12:

The verb [“I AM NOT ASHAMED”] is the one he used in his appeal to Timothy in 8; its repetition contains a hint that, if Paul finds no occasion for shame in his sufferings, there can be no reason why others should in theirs.

p. 165

Kelly says further:

His point is that the Christian knows, on the basis of personal experience as well as the facts of the gospel, that God will never let him down. Characteristically, the faith he appeals to here is not faith in a creed but in a Person.

p. 165

Knight says:

Therefore, it is best to think of a new sentence beginning with the first words of v. 12.

p. 378

He then says:

[The] Present tense [“I AM SUFFERING”] is used here of that which Paul is “experiencing” in the sense of “enduring” or “undergoing” . . . “these things,” is a comprehensive term that includes all that is involved in Paul’s imprisonment . . .

p. 378

Knight then says:

“My” with the deposit here seems more naturally to refer to what Paul has committed to another than to what has been committed to Paul.

This second view also fits this part of the verse, which is oriented to God’s care of Paul. . . . “in whom I have put my trust,” has prepared the way for Paul to speak about the ability of the one in whom he trusts to guard “my deposit,” that which Paul has entrusted to God, which in effect he has already identified as himself in the statement “I have put my trust.” Furthermore, this perspective fits the letter as a whole and particularly this section, where Paul is encouraging Timothy to suffer for the gospel. Paul is concerned not only for Timothy’s fidelity but also that Timothy be assured that God will take care of his suffering servant.

p. 380

Hughes says:

But he stresses *whom* he has believed in and continues to believe in (perfect tense). There is no wavering, no doubt—only the profound confidence of perpetual faith and a constant relationship with God. Thus he stands imperially tall, unashamed.

p. 182

MacArthur says:

Oida (know) carries the idea of knowing with certainty. It is used frequently in the New Testament of God’s own knowing and of man’s knowing by direction revelation from God or by personal experience. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used that verb in assuring His hearers, “Your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him” (Matt. 6:8). John repeatedly uses it of Jesus’ knowledge. He records that “He Himself [Jesus] knew what He was intending to do” (John 6:6), and that “Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him” . . .

p. 27

“FOR THIS REASON, I AM ALSO SUFFERING THESE THINGS, BUT [in contrast] I AM NOT ASHAMED.”

You will remember that our passage began with the words:

“Therefore, do not be ashamed” in verse 8.

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

Philippians 1:20

according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

1 John 2:28

And now, little children, abide in Him, so that if He should appear, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

There are TWO REASONS that follow. “I AM NOT ASHAMED:”

1. “I AM KNOWING WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED” and
2. I HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT HE IS ABLE TO GUARD THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO HIM UNTIL THAT DAY.”

It is the PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP with the Lord that keeps him from being “ASHAMED.” He knows that the Lord is sovereign and in control of all of these things so he is at perfect peace with whatever the Lord wants to accomplish.

Paul is saying:

“I am proud to be a servant of the Lord! It truly is an honor to serve Him!”

“AND I HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT HE IS ABLE.”

Jeremiah 32:27

“I am the Lord, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?”

Luke 1:37

“For nothing will be impossible with God.”

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

Paul is saying:

1. As I look to the PAST—“I AM KNOWING WHOM I HAVE BELIEVED [and I still do believe in Him in the PRESENT].
2. And I look to the FUTURE—“I HAVE BEEN CONVINCED THAT HE IS ABLE TO GUARD THAT WHICH HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO HIM UNTIL THAT DAY.”

(Quote Unquote compiled by Lloyd Cory)

Fight the temptation to be bashful about the Christian faith. Avoid a bashful brand of Christianity that tiptoes up to people and hesitatingly suggest: “I may be wrong, but I’m afraid that if you do not repent after a fashion and receive Christ, so to speak, you might be damned, as it were.”

p. 55

(Rachel’s Tears: The Spiritual Journey of Columbine Martyr Rachel Scott
by Beth Nimmo, Darrell Scott, and Steve Rabey)

Rachel had two dreams: she wanted to make an impact for God and she wanted to live in His presence all the time. It’s amazing to me that God has fulfilled both in her death. I love you, Rachel. I’ll see you in heaven someday.

p. 79

(In Light of Eternity: Perspectives on Heaven by Randy Alcorn)

Martin Luther said that on his calendar there were only two days: “today” and “that Day.” May we invest all that we are and have today in the light of that Day.

p. 135

(Payne Stewart by Tracey Stewart with Ken Abraham)

Lee Janzen called to congratulate Payne after he got home from Pinehurst. Without identifying himself, Lee said, “Hello, is this the current two-time U. S. Open champion?”

“Why, yes it is. Is this a *former* two-time U. S. Open Champion?”

Lee and Payne talked briefly and before saying good-bye, Lee said, “I don’t care what anybody says about you making that last putt. They can say it was destiny, or that you had putted well all week long, or that it was your skill, but it was none of that. Your heart was too much to overcome.”

p. 275

(The Game and the Glory: An Autobiography by Michelle Akers with
Gregg Lewis)

We stood at attention at midfield as the national anthem played and a squadron of jets roared overhead. During the introductions, Mia reached over and slapped my shinguards—our longtime tradition. I remember a distinct feeling of calm filling me with a heightened sense of awareness. *This is it! The very last World Cup game of my career!* I wanted to soak it all in: the crowd, the anthem, the look on the Chinese faces, Mia and Julie Foudy standing on either side of me, our bench cheering us on, everything.

I remember telling myself, *You've got ninety minutes left. It's time to blow it out. Gotta score early and then hold the lead.*

Play. Score. Win. Go home. That was my personal game strategy.
pp. 30-31

(The Perfect Christian: How Sinners Like Us Can Be More Like Jesus
by Tony Evans)

When trials come, instead of getting mad, get glad because you know that God is up to something good in your life.

p. 8

(Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World: The Extraordinary True Story of
Shackleton and the Endurance by Jennifer Armstrong)

As the weeks lengthened into months of captivity, the men could not help feeling twinges of despair. But every morning the ever-optimistic Wild rolled up his sleeping bag and said to the men, “Get your things ready, boys. The Boss may come today.”

p. 122

(Game Plan: Winning Strategies for the Second Half of Your Life
by Bob Buford)

Sixth, *you know how to play through pain*. Things that might have laid you low in the first half will not be as devastating to you. You're tougher, mentally and spiritually. There's a statistic kept in the National Football League known as YAC—yards after contact. It records the number of yards a running back covers after he's been hit. I believe one thing we know in our fifties that we didn't know in our twenties is that we can take a hit and keep going. That's a tremendous comfort as you head out into the unknown.

p. 151

(The Velvet Covered Brick by H. Butt)

Oswald Chambers put it: "Nothing touches our lives but it is God Himself speaking. Do we discern His hand or only mere occurrence? Get into the habit of saying, "Speak, Lord," and life will become a romance. Every time circumstances press, say 'Speak Lord'; make time to listen."⁴⁵ Doors open, doors close; God is speaking to you. Lights turn green to say "Go," lights turn red to say "Stop," lights turn yellow to say "Caution": through what happens in the developments around you God is speaking, telling you what to do.

⁴⁵Chambers, op cit, p. 30

p. 128

(Let Go by Fenelon)

I am saying this because I have noticed a tendency in you to talk about problems rather than abandoning yourself to God and leaving them with Him. And you will be better off both physically and spiritually when you quietly place everything in God's hands.

p. 36

Insurance

INSURANCE, n. An ingenious modern game of chance in which the player is permitted to enjoy the comfortable conviction that he is beating the man who keeps the table.

Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?), U.S. writer and journalist.
The Devil's Dictionary (1911).

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Battle Is Your Calling

When principles that run against your deepest convictions begin to win the day, then battle is your calling, and peace has become sin; you must, at the price of dearest peace, lay your convictions bare before friend and enemy, with all the fire of your faith.

—Abraham Kuyper
Source Unknown

Multiple, 10,000 Sermon Illustrations, (Dallas, Texas: Biblical Studies Press) 2000.

(Logos Library System)

Never, for sake of peace and quiet, deny your own experience or convictions.
—DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD (1905-1961)

(From Quick Verse 6.0)

THE BOLD ONES

When Bishop Hugh Latimer was asked to give a message in the court of Henry VIII of England, he spoke the truth, and his sermon greatly displeased the monarch. The king ordered Latimer to preach again the following Sunday and to apologize because the ruler had been offended by his words. The next Lord's Day the bishop began as if he were addressing himself: "Hugh Latimer, do you know before whom you are speaking this day? To the mighty monarch, King Henry VIII, who can take away your life. Consider well whose Word you are sent to deliver—that of the great and mighty God who is everywhere present! He beholds all your ways and is able to cast your soul into Hell! Therefore, take care that you deliver your message faithfully." Latimer then repeated the SAME SERMON, but with even more zeal and energy! The royal court waited in fearful expectation, wondering what would happen to this dauntless preacher. The king, with stern face, asked Latimer how he dared to be so outspoken. The bishop said humbly that his first duty was to God and that he must be obedient to his conscience and the Scriptures. Arising from his seat, the king took him by the hand, embraced him, and said, "I bless God that I have such an honest servant!"

(From InfoSearch 3.51)

CONCLUSION:

What lessons did you learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Do you consider yourself to be a person of strong convictions?

LESSON #2: When the culture questions your convictions, can you with Martin Luther say: “Here I stand, God help me”?

LESSON #3: Are you able to boldly proclaim Christ when the opportunity presents itself for witness?

LESSON #4: When is the last time you shared your faith with someone?

LESSON #5: Suffering is a part of the divine curriculum to make us more Christlike.

LESSON #6: When we are suffering, we can trust his sovereignty and His strength to be made perfect in our weakness.

LESSON #7: Lord, help me to maintain a continual contentedness under Your sovereign hand.

LESSON #8: Are you making progress in a life of holiness?

LESSON #9: “If you are to be saved, it must be an act of sovereign grace” (Spurgeon).

LESSON #10: Can you face death with confidence?

LESSON #11: Can you say “I know whom I have believed” (verse 12)?

LESSON #12: Are you investing faithfully in light of the judgment seat of Christ?

(The Perfect Christian: How Sinners Like Us Can Be More Like Jesus
by Tony Evans)

One day an old man asked a young man, “What are your plans for life?”

The young man replied, “Well, I’m going to go to college and get a good education so I can get a good job and make a lot of money.”

“What then?” the old man asked.

“I’m going to get married and raise my children and then send them to the best possible college so they can get a good education and get good jobs.”

“And what then?”

“Well, after the kids are gone, my wife and I will travel around the world. Then we’ll retire and live off the investments we have made.”

“That’s fine,” the old man continued. “But what then?”

“Well, when it’s all over, I guess I’ll die.”

The old man looked at him and said, “And what then?”

That’s the question a lot of people can’t answer.

p. 203

(Lord Foulgrin’s Letters by Randy Alcorn)

At all costs, when it comes to the Carpenter, make sure Fletcher gets it wrong. For if he gets it wrong about Him, in the end it won’t matter what else he gets right.

p. 90

(Payne Stewart by Tracey Stewart with Ken Abraham)

Payne was very much a “Christian in process,” not someone who felt he had arrived spiritually. He never pretended to have the answers and probably didn’t know what some of the questions were. But his faith was genuine, and as he understood the Bible, the issue wasn’t about how much faith he had but whether his faith in Christ was real. And everyone close to Payne knew that his faith was real.

p. 261

(Rachel's Tears: The Spiritual Journey of Columbine Martyr Rachel Scott
by Beth Nimmo, Darrell Scott, and Steve Rabey)

A year before her death, Rachel wrote a letter to a friend named Brittney. In that letter, Rachel said, "Eternity is not just looking to the future and our place with God in Heaven, but it is looking at our Eternity as if it were only moments away." A few lines later, Rachel added, "People are not aware that tomorrow is not a promise, but a chance."
p. 171

(Through the Year with Warren W. Wiersbe: 366 Daily Devotionals edited
by James R. Adair)

Usually once the walls in the mind have been torn down, the door to the heart can be opened.
p. 252

(Great Souls at Prayer: Fourteen Centuries of Prayer, Praise and Aspiration
by Mary W. Tileston)

Be Thou present with me, O Lord, in every time and place. Let this be my consolation, to be cheerfully willing to do without all human comfort. And, if Thy consolation be wanting, let Thy will and just trial of me be unto me as the greatest comfort—Amen.

Thomas à Kempis.

p. 41

(The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart: And 1,501 Other Stories
by Charles R. Swindoll)

There is a line by us unseen
That crosses every path,
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and his wrath.

O where is that mysterious bourne
By which our path is crossed,
Beyond which God himself has sworn
That he who goes is lost?

How far can one go on in sin?
How long will mercy spare?
Where does grace end and where begin
The confines of despair?

An answer from the sky is sent:
Ye who from God depart,
While it is called today repent,
And harden not your heart.

Anonymous, quoted in William Hendriksen,
Exposition of the Gospel according to Luke

p. 482

(Grace for the Moment: Inspired Thoughts for Each Day of the Year
by Max Lucado)

The Gift Is God-Given

*Every good action and every perfect gift
is from God. These good gifts come down from
the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars,
who does not change like their shifting shadows.*

JAMES 1:17

The conclusion is unavoidable: self-salvation simply does not work. Man has no way to save himself.

But Paul announces that God has a way. Where man fails God excels. Salvation comes from heaven downward, not earth upward. “Every good action and every perfect gift is from God” (James 1:17).

Please note: Salvation is God-given, God-driven, God-empowered, and God-originated. The gift is not from man to God. It is from God to man.

In the Grip of Grace

p. 385

Perhaps you are a believer and you want to be characterized as a person who is making a strong finish. You are looking carefully at these TWELVE STEPS TO A FANTASTIC FINISH here in 2 Timothy.

In Step #2 we have talked about the importance of:

CONVICTION: Here I Stand, God Help Me.

As I was thinking about my own inconsistency over the years to be faithful, to stand with conviction in the crowd, I was reminded of the fact that the night the Lord washed Peter’s feet it was only a few hours later that those same feet walked away in denial.

What a comfort to know that with the Lord there is FORGIVENESS. With the Lord there is STRENGTH to accomplish His will and His purpose in our lives and to make us fruitful. Our prayer needs to be:

**“LORD, KEEP US CONSISTENT IN OUR CONDUCT IN
ACCORDANCE WITH OUR CONVICTIONS.”**