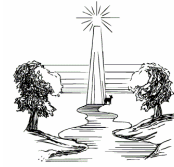


It's Worth It!

2 Timothy 1:8-18



Ashamed?

❑ Read 2 Timothy 1:8-14.

1. Paul tells Timothy, “do not be ashamed” (1:8), and he adds, “I am not ashamed” (1:12). Why might some people think that Timothy and/or Paul should be ashamed?¹ Why might some people *today* think that Christians should be ashamed?

📖 “God’s way seems foolish to Jews because they want a sign from heaven to prove it is true. And it is foolish to the Greeks because they believe only what agrees with their own wisdom. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended, and the Gentiles say it’s all nonsense.” (1 Corinthians 1:22-23, NLT)²

❑ Paul is not ashamed, and he tells Timothy not to be ashamed. In particular, Timothy should not be ashamed to testify about Jesus Christ, and he should not be ashamed of Paul being in prison (1:8a). On the contrary, he should join with Paul “in suffering for the gospel” (1:8b).³

📖 Paul wrote elsewhere, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes ...” (Romans 1:16a, NIV)

Why Suffer?

❑ Why is Paul not ashamed? Why is Paul willing to suffer? Because he is a servant of the gospel (1:12)! So is Timothy. So is every true Christian, though our roles may be different.

2. What do verses 9-10 tell us about “the gospel?”⁴ What has God done? What has God accomplished through Jesus Christ?⁵

S _____ us.

C _____ us to a holy life.

A _____ death.⁶

R _____ the way of everlasting life.⁷



¹ “ashamed” – feeling shame (loss of honor or respect) because something bad, wrong, or foolish was done. Paul was not only a Christian (which lacked the respect of many); he was imprisoned by the government.

² Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 for context. Paul adds, but “the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom.”

³ Suffering for the gospel is “by the power of God.” God gives his children the strength to endure suffering (1:7).

⁴ The “gospel” refers to the “good news” of Jesus Christ, which is centered on his saving work.

⁵ God has saved “us” (that is, those who have received Christ as Lord and Savior). He has called us to a holy life. Through Christ, he has abolished (destroyed) death and revealed (brought to light) life and immortality (1:10).

⁶ Death is a condition of the fallen world. It is the result of sin (Rom. 6:23), and *all* have sinned (3:23). Death is punishment for sin, and alienation from God (i.e., broken relationship with God). It is Satan’s power (Heb. 2:14).

⁷ We all physically die, but there is existence beyond death. “Life” beyond death was made possible by Christ’s death and resurrection from the dead. (This “life” is not mere existence, but abundant, everlasting life with God. The other existence is everlasting death, without God, commonly called hell.) Christ has already defeated and abolished death, but the full realization of that victory is future. “The last enemy to be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:26).

- ❑ God did not save and call us because of anything we have done (1:9). We do not deserve it, and it's impossible to earn it. Instead, God saved and called us because of his own purpose and grace. Salvation is a gift of God, and it is received through faith. God's plan of salvation was made before time began, but has been revealed in the coming of Christ (1:10).⁸
- ❑ Paul is suffering because God appointed him to be a servant of the gospel. But it's worth it! Not only for Paul, but also for Timothy, and for all Christians.

3. According to verse 12, why is Paul not ashamed?

4. Paul has entrusted his life – everything he has – to God (1:12). How do you think this affects his attitude as he faces suffering and impending death? Why?

Worth Guarding

- ❑ Read 2 Timothy 1:13-14. The gospel was entrusted to Paul. Now it has been entrusted to Timothy.⁹ Paul tells Timothy to “guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit” (1:14).
- 5. In what ways must Timothy guard¹⁰ what was entrusted to him? In what ways must Christian leaders and teachers *today* guard what is entrusted to them?



Examples

- ❑ Read 2 Timothy 1:15-18. Paul offers bad examples and good examples. Many have deserted Paul (1:15). Perhaps they were ashamed of Paul and /or unwilling to suffer for the gospel. Maybe they were even ashamed to testify about Christ. They are bad examples.
- ❑ Onesiphorus is a good example. He was not ashamed of Paul (1:16). In fact, he made great efforts to find and minister to Paul (1:17). He demonstrated love, courage and faith.

Reflection/Application

- What do you think of “the gospel?” What do you think of Christians who believe it, live according to it, and share it with others? Do you think the gospel is foolishness, or the power of God for salvation? If you are seeking answers to these questions, continue to do so. Find out why intelligent, reasonable people believe the gospel. If you are being convinced of the gospel, do not delay in receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. It's worth it!
- As a Christian, are you ashamed to testify about Jesus Christ?¹¹ Are you willing to “suffer” for Christ and the gospel? Do you consider the gospel worth it? Prayerfully reflect on what Christ has done for you. Meditate on 2 Timothy 1:7-12, and identify specific ways that *you* can be used in the service of the gospel, beginning now.

⁸ Also see Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:8-9 and Romans 8:28-30.

⁹ The “good deposit” refers to the gospel, including the sound teaching received from Paul (see 1 Timothy 6:20-21). Later Paul tells Timothy to entrust “what Paul has said” to reliable men who are qualified to teach others (2:2).

¹⁰ To “guard” is to “watch over; protect; defend.” However, the gospel is not to be hidden, it is to be shared.

¹¹ Jesus said, “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38, NIV).