

Ashamed of the Gospel

2 Timothy 1:8-12

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God,⁹ who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,¹⁰ but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.¹¹ And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.¹² That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.

The letter to Timothy is written by Paul to Timothy. Paul calls Timothy his spiritual son. Paul had known Timothy's mother and grandmother and thought a lot of them. The men at the churches in Lystra and Iconium thought a lot of Timothy. So Paul took Timothy along on his 2nd missionary journey. This letter is much later and Paul is in a Roman prison awaiting death. This is a goodbye letter to Timothy.

So with this background let's get started. The first seven verses are just an introduction and hello, but in verse 8 Paul gets to why he is writing *So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner*. Do not be ashamed to testify about Jesus. Paul realizes that it is going to be hard for a young Timothy who is seeing his mentor about to be executed.

Timothy has to be asking himself is this my same fate. Paul has given him this warning, so when it gets hard he will remember not to be afraid to testify about our savior. In verse 12 Paul says defiantly from his prison cell I am not ashamed because I know in whom I have believed.

So with this first exhortation of Paul are you willing to say I am not ashamed to testify about Jesus. Last year at this very campground one of the saints of our church was going around and inviting people to come worship with us and he had a man become irate with him. It's getting where people will get offended if we tell them about Jesus. They feel that religious freedom means they have a right to **not** hear about religion and we do not have a right to testify. So are you ashamed to testify about Jesus?

The gospel we proclaim is offensive. If you are a Christian it's a glorious thing. God loved you so much that He chose to save you even though you have done nothing but rebel against Him. But if you are not its offensive. I'm supposed to tell someone that no matter how good they think they are, they are not good enough to please God. And I don't care how much someone claims to not believe in God. They do. If atheist didn't believe in God they wouldn't get so fighting mad when we mention it. So I'm telling them God is real! He is watching you! You are not good enough and you are going to Hell which is also real! That's offensive to someone who feels that they are a good person and they do not need to rely on anyone for anything.

Then I'm going to tell them that they have to rely on Jesus dying on a cross for their sin and then rising from the tomb as was prophesied in advance.

Ashamed of the Gospel

I want to try and illustrate this if you were out by the lake and you see a man start to drown. It's obvious he has swam too far and is too tired to make it back. You are inches away from him in a boat and you are trying to hand him a life preserver. But this man is proud and does not want to admit he can't make it, so he will not take your life preserver. You continue trying to tell him he is not going to make it to shore but he continues to swim until he goes under once. He comes up and you miss him with the preserver. He goes under and comes up again and you manage to get the life preserver around him and you drag him to the shore where he proceeds to cuss you out because he would have made it. Some of you may have been in a situation like this. You had to help someone that did not want to be helped. You may have suffered for it, but you did it anyways.

We are talking about someone's eternal life. Whether they spend it in heaven with Jesus or hell in torment. Is it not worth being uncomfortable? Is it not worth a little persecution? I am not ashamed of the gospel.

Verse 9 says God has saved us and called us to a holy life. A holy life means one dedicated to God. Some legalist will try to say that a dedicated life means a perfect life with no drinking, or smoking, or sinning in any way, but we are at war with our flesh and can't succeed in a perfect life. Now that is not to say we should not try to avoid sin, but we should not feel that we blew it and God doesn't care anymore. A life dedicated to God means putting God's will before your wants or comfort. What is God's will? That all would be saved and come to knowledge of the truth ([1 Timothy 2:4](#))! And that is done by sharing the gospel. [Romans 10:14](#) tells us that belief comes through proclamation.

A holy life, a life dedicated to serving God is one that goes out and tells others about Jesus Christ. Let's look back at Paul's suffering. What is Paul suffering for? The Gospel. How is he doing that? Paul ends the letter to the Philippian church saying that the believer's in Caesar's house greet you. He also references that he has preached Christ to the palace guard. Paul also preached Christ to King Agrippa, Festus and Bernice. All this while in prison.

You say Paul was called to be a herald, apostle and teacher, but no we all were called to be a nation of priests. We are all called to be the feet that carry the gospel to a lost and dying world.

I am not ashamed of the gospel the power of God to save. Why would you be ashamed of such good news. Another illustration and I'll be done. How many have had cancer or know someone who has? What did they do when they finished their treatments? They celebrated and told everyone they had defeated the disease. When they see someone else fighting that dreadful disease what do they do? They encourage them! They tell them about their fight with the disease and how they overcame.

We have defeated the disease of death through the power of God and our savior Jesus Christ, let's tell everyone about our struggle with the disease of sin and death and how we are made well in Christ. If you are still fighting that disease this morning, there are many here that will be happy to help you find the cure. Just come up and talk to us as we finish this last hymn this morning.