

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## The Conviction to Suffer for The Gospel, Pt 2

2 Timothy 1:8b

**Keywords:** Paul, Timothy, discipleship, gospel, suffering, persecution

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** NONE

**SermonAudio Blurb:** Suffering is never fun or it would not be suffering. But it is a part of the human experience. Suffering for the gospel is something unique to Christians. It was, and is, a mark of shame. You are involved in something wrong, dishonorable and you need to suffer until you reject it. This is the reality that any true Christian faces and the ability to give honor and glory to God in the midst of this is due to having the right perspective.

## No Thursday Study This Week Dismiss

### I. Introduction.

A. Read vss 6-18.

#### *Propositional Statement*

From vss 6 - 18 there are ten ways a Christian is live a gospel-exalting life before God and man. Ten convictions that show you to be a faithful servant of Jesus.

Today we continue to examine the second conviction to not be ashamed of the Gospel (8).

- B. How do we approach the Christian faith? For it is a call for the Christian to embrace their calling by God.
1. We are working through 10 specific convictions that every Christian is to have as they live out their hope in Jesus.
  2. This is the third conviction. The conviction to suffer for the gospel.
  3. (Briefly point to the text in 2 Timothy to bring them up to speed.)
    - a. Understood whose prisoner he was.
    - b. Wants Timothy to not seen the chains as shameful.
    - c. Instead he urges Timothy to embrace the suffering that is part of the gospel.

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C. And that is what I am saying to each of us today.

## II. The conviction to suffer for the gospel (8).

A. So how do we do this? How do we learn this?

1. We must not shrink from the demands the gospel brings to our lives (ashamed of the chains).
  - a. The call to consider what God demands of you in the gospel
    - (1) Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:61-62)
  - b. The sure expectation to be persecuted .
    - (1) Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (2 Timothy 3:10-12)
  - c. The opinion of this world compared to the opinion of the Father.
  - d. The reminder that it is a long race, we cannot rest.
2. Only when we realize that in the end we shall not suffer true dishonor, but honor and glory and power shall we run well and faithfully. **This is the key point.**
  - a. Romans 8:16-17.
    - (1) What Paul is doing here is beginning to point our hearts and minds to the future, to the time where we enjoy our joint-inheritance. But there is a present aspect that also exists. Suffering.
      - (a) And what we will see today is that there is a real relationship between these two events.
      - (b) One is joyful, the inheritance. And one is painful, suffering.

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- (c) Both need to be kept in our mind. If you only think about the future inheritance then you can be greatly dismayed when suffering comes.
  - (d) If you only think that you shall inherit all things in Christ and forget that it is through suffering, then you will stumble.
  - (e) If you only see your suffering and you forget where that pathway leads then you will stumble as well.
  - (f) So, both must be kept in balance and both must be understood. How do they work together and how do they cooperate with one another to bring about the plan of God in our lives?
- (2) To be called a child of God is a good thing.
- (3) The term, “fellow-heir” or “Joint-heir” is important to this passage.
- (a) It speaks to the union we have with Christ. It is not merely that we are heirs of God in our own right.
  - (b) Rather, it is completely due to our intimate union with Christ that we possess this blessing.
  - (c) Without Christ there is not inheritance for any of us. But because we are “in Christ” there is that certain promise.
  - (d) It is important to understand that the glory of Christ that He desired was only found through the path of suffering.
    - i) As Jesus explained to some of His disciples in Luke 24:26 “Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?”
    - ii) This idea of entering His glory is closely connected to our passage where it says “. . . in order that we may also be glorified with Him.”
- b. Romans 8:18-27.

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- (1) Take them through this with necessary comments.
- (2) Make sure to note the forward looking aspect that is to be a part of the Christian's thought-life.
- (3) Part of what suffering does for the Christian is to make this age fade. Even in an average life the older you get the less impressed you are, you know that nothing lasts.

c. Romans 8:28-30.

- (1) Much like Jeremiah 29:11 for too many.
- (2) Too often used to encourage people who have suffered great loss in a wrong manner.
- (3) Often seen as a "Hey, it is OK, God is going to make it all up to you."
- (4) Better to see it this way: Both Christian and non-Christian have to face and endure much suffering and evil. But, for the Christian there is a key difference for God trains them up in their faith through these trials and sufferings, always pointing them to the ultimate end, where all things shall become new."
- (5) We must learn to not interpret "good" as always pleasant. We must also learn that it is good to be trained up in godliness and often that is through the school of suffering.
- (6) Finally, we must remember that in between being justified and glorified is the "being conformed into the image of Jesus". And according to the context we have just looked at, that includes suffering with Him.

d. Colossians 1:24.

- (1) Paul begins by giving thanks and rejoicing in the trials and hardships that he has suffered because they have been for the believers at Colossae.
- (2) Paul is expressing here the awareness that is lacking in many of us today. That is that as we suffer we are to be suffering on behalf of the Church of Christ, His Body.

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- (3) He says it this way in Philippians 3:8-10, “More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I **have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ**, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and **the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death.”
- (4) There, in Philippians, as well as here, in Colossians, is speaking of the intimate relationship that Christians have with their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The same with Romans 8, where we are to suffer “with Christ” because we are now joint-heirs with Him.
- (5) Paul was told by the Lord, in Acts 9:16 that he was being called by Christ to suffer for Christ’s name’s sake.
- (6) Here, in our passage he takes these ideas of suffering for the sake of Christ and having a sharing, or fellowship, in Christ’s sufferings, and enlarges it even more.
- (7) Now he is says that it is more than merely suffering, or sharing in suffering, but that he is also filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.
- (8) Now what is meant by this?
  - (a) It would be wrong to assert that Paul was filling up what was lacking in the atonement. In other words, that somehow Christ’s work of covering our sins with His blood was inadequate. For there is no mention here of the atonement, but rather, of the afflictions—the sufferings.
  - (b) The answer lies in the middle of this verse, where it is written, “. . . and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body (which is the church). . .”

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- (c) What we have here is that intimate union between Christ, the head of the Church and His body, the Church itself.
- (d) As I mentioned in the past, when Paul was not yet a Christian, he was persecuting the Church. But when he was struck down by the Lord, Jesus say to him, “why are you persecuting Me?” Even though Christ was in heaven.
- (e) There is a passage in Acts 13:47, where Barnabas and Paul are in Antioch and are preaching the gospel to Gentiles. Why were they doing this? Well it is written,
  - i) "For thus the Lord has commanded us, 'I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, That You should bring salvation to the end of the earth.'"
  - ii) Now this is interesting because that is a quote from Isaiah 49:6 which is referring to the Messiah being a light to the Gentiles.”
  - iii) But Christ did not personally go out to the Gentiles. How then is He doing so? Well Acts 13 tells us that Christ is going out to the nations, even to the uttermost parts of the earth, through His Church.
- (f) What Paul is saying here in this passage is this: Christ has reconciled us to God through His death on the Cross (20). And what Paul, and all believers are now called to do is take that message to the world and continue to call people to repentance that they might be saved.
- (g) But in doing so they shall suffer, like Paul has, for the sake of Christ.
- (h) In other words [listen carefully], though the work of atoning for our sin is a finished work by Christ, the

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suffering that is attached to that atoning work is not finished.

- i) It is no less finished than the task spoke of in John 10 when He said that He was going to gather all of His sheep to Himself.
- ii) There He was referring to the gathering of the elect Gentiles. But He ascended into heaven and has left that task to His Body to accomplish.
- iii) In the same way, He has perfectly atoned for sin. But there is an amount of suffering that is ordained by God for His Body—the Church—to endure.
- iv) But it is a suffering, in which Our Lord participates with us, just as our own head suffers when our bodies suffer.

3. The inheritance shall be glory, the glory of the only begotten, the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

a. Philippians 3:1-14.

- (1) Paul has a vision of Jesus Christ that surpasses anything that this world has to offer.
- (2) All things that this age counts as honor he rejects as being the PRIZE. Get that, not that these things can't be nice or pleasant, but they are NOT the prize.
- (3) 3:7-8 “Loss” unwanted material, he writes these things off as a loss. But it matters not!
- (4) Vs 8 “rubbish” = excrement, there is a shock value that he is pushing for. What you flush is how he views all that the world calls “treasure.”
- (5) How does one do this?

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- (a) It occurs when you repeal/switch/overturn those things which you value most. (7) It starts in the realm of thinking, a heart change.
  - (b) It occurs that you THEN embrace the suffering that comes with this switch. When you accept that because you become a fool for Christ, you reject the treasures of this world, that you will suffer. (Emph. It is not just suffering for suffering sake)
  - (c) You keep the eye on the prize of gaining Christ Jesus.
- (6) Note that in the eyes of Paul, by the word of the Spirit, this is what the “Christian life” is to look like.
- (a) 15—And if you are “mature” (play on words with vs 12), you will agree with Paul. And if you don’t, you are wrong.
  - (b) 17—follow my pattern, walk my path.

“The prisoner who had lost his faith in the future — his future — was doomed. With his loss of belief in the future, he also lost his spiritual hold; he let himself decline and became subject to mental and physical decay. Usually this happened quite suddenly, in the form of a crisis, the symptoms of which were familiar to the experienced camp inmate. . . . Usually it began with the prisoner refusing one morning to get dressed and wash or to go out on the parade grounds. No entreaties, no blows, no threats had any effect. He just lay there, hardly moving. If this crisis was brought about by an illness, he refused to be taken to the sick-bay or to do anything to help himself. He simply gave up.”

Viktor E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning* (New York, 1969), pages 117-118.

- b. **1 Corinthians 15:58** – Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.
- c. **Galatians 6:9** – And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.
- d. **Hebrews 2:1** – Therefore, we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard lest we drift away from it.



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- e. **Hebrews 3:12-14** – Take care, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called today, that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we share in Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end.
- f. **Hebrews 10:35-36** – Therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised.
- g. **Hebrews 12:1-2** – Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
- h. **Hebrews 12:13-14** – Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.
- i. **Romans 8:23-25** – Not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.
- j. **Acts 20:24** – But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.
- k. **James 4:7-8** – Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and the late rain. You also be patient.

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1. **1 Peter 5:10** – And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. To him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

## III. Conclusion.

- A. Think of ways you see the idea of honor and shame even in our culture. Think about how the gospel message is one that can create shame.
- B. Paul is asking Timothy to take on a new (really to renew his view) view of the Cross and Jesus (which includes Paul's imprisonment). It is a cruciform view that turns the cultures norms on what was shameful and what was honorably upside down.
  1. Things in our culture that create that sense of shame:
    - a. Sexual purity prior to marriage. Think Tebow and the press's reaction to his virginity.
    - b. View of creation.
    - c. Simple belief in God in any definitive way.
    - d. View of right and wrong in specific manner.
    - e. View of homosexuality.
    - f. View of marriage in many ways, need for marriage, sanctity of marriage, divorce and remarriage, homosexual marriage.
    - g. Post-modernism.
  2. These and the current state of morality all look at the gospel and the demands as a result of believing the gospel and they call it foolishness.
  3. Nothing has changed.
- C. Paul is telling Timothy, and he is telling you and I, that we must embrace the gospel and embrace the shame that comes with it. **But to not let it define us, rather the Cross and the promises of the Cross are to define us.**
- D. Where are you in this? That is the question you need to consider.

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1. Is the Cross and Jesus your hope and joy or only the way that you get to heaven?
2. Do you embrace the Cross? Do you accept the fact that people will seek to make your faith a point of shame and reject that pronouncement, seeing the honor and glory that comes from your Father in heaven?
3. Being ashamed of the gospel is to be ashamed of Jesus. And to be ashamed of Jesus is to be ashamed of the Father and it renders you useless to any sort of actual Christian service.
4. Think on this.

**IV. Third, the conviction to suffer for the gospel (8).**

**V. Fourth, the conviction to keep the gospel in the forefront of our minds (9-10).**

**VI. Fifth, the conviction to remember our God (12a).**

**VII. Sixth, the conviction to remember our end (12b).**

**VIII. Seventh, the conviction to retain sound doctrine (13).**

**IX. Eighth, the conviction to guard the gospel (14).**

**X. Ninth, the conviction to stay the course before God and brethren (15).**

**XI. Tenth, the conviction to bless and encourage those in the battle (16-18).**

**XII. Conclusion.**

A.

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## Small Group Questions

- How, in your life, does the gospel, bring about shame before this world? This is a harder question than it may first appear so think for a bit.
- Think through 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 and how Satan's false teachers present themselves to the church compared to Paul. Which of these two positions do you see yourself and the church at large gravitate toward? Why and how. **This is another nasty little question that I want you to be honest about. We all know the 'right' answer, but that is not necessarily the true answer. Think!**