

Abounding Grace Christian Church

A Study of Paul's Second Letter to Timothy – Part 3

I. Exposition of Chapter One (Continued).

A. Verse 8 – “Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,”

1. The word **“therefore”** connects this verse with the preceding thought of God having given him the **“spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind”**. As Timothy stirred this up, he would not be **“...ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.”** The word **“testimony”** means; **“witness, providing direct knowledge about a person or event; ...the content of what a witness tells”**¹ Paul is telling Timothy not to be **“ashamed”** of telling others about Jesus Christ. The word **“ashamed”** means; **“to experience or feel shame or disgrace because of some particular event or activity”**² Paul also told Timothy not to be ashamed of him, who was **“His prisoner.”** Though Paul was a prisoner of Rome, he also considered himself a prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was bound to Him and, from his perspective, he was confined by Him to fulfill the ministry given by Him. A. Duane Litfin writes:

“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 (cf. 1 Cor. 1:6), or ashamed of Paul His prisoner. Though Paul was held in a Roman prison (cf. 2 Tim. 1:16; 2:9), yet he called himself Christ’s prisoner—that is, a prisoner for Christ’s sake and purpose (cf. Eph. 3:1; Phil. 1:12–14; Phile. 1, 9). 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 (cf. 2 Tim. 2:3), for it is just in such circumstances that the power of God is made manifest (cf. 2 Cor. 12:9–10).”³

2. **“...but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God”** – The words **“share with me”** mean; **“to undergo the same type of suffering as others do—to join in suffering, to assume one’s share of suffering”**⁴ It’s important for all believers to know that there is a suffering that goes along with being a Christian. It’s not just any kind of suffering, it’s the suffering that comes due to persecution. However, notice the phrase, **“...according to the power of God.”** Remember previously, Paul had told Timothy that he had received the **“...spirit... of power”**, so there is a Divine help that comes alongside this persecution. The word **“power”** here is the same Greek word found in **verse 7** and means; **“inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth”**⁵ This word is often translated as **“mighty works”** or **“miracles.”** (Cf. I Peter 4:12-16).

B. Verse 9 – **“Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began”**

1. **“Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling...”** – The word **“saved”** means; **“to rescue from danger and to restore to a former state of safety and well being—to deliver, to rescue, to make safe, deliverance.”**⁶ The word **“called”** means; **“summon, tell a person to come and gather”; “to offer an invitation to someone”**⁷ Regarding the phrase, **“holy calling”**, Dr. Robert Utley writes:

“This could refer to God as holy, but probably in context it refers to God’s will for a holy covenant people. God’s will has always been for a people “made in His image” (cf. Gen. 1:26–27) to reflect His image! The work of the Messiah has restored the image of God lost in the rebellion of Adam and Eve in Gen. 3. The goal of Christianity is Christlikeness (cf. Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4).”⁸

2. **“...not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in**

¹ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 309.

³ A. Duane Litfin, “2 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 750–751.

⁴ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 285.

⁵ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 159.

⁶ Louw and Nida, 240.

⁷ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁸ Robert James Utley, *Paul’s Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 139.

Christ Jesus before time began.” – The Scriptures make it clear that we are not saved or called by our own works. (cf. Romans 4:1-6; Ephesians 2:8-10).

- a. **“...was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.”** – The idea that time had a beginning denotes the beginning of the universe. Everything that begins to exist has to have had a cause. With all the detail and design of the universe, rational thinking dictates that the cause must have been intelligent, thus, we have an intelligent God. Dr. Wayne Grudem writes:

“Before God made the universe, there was no matter, but then he created all things (Gen. 1:1; John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2). The study of physics tells us that matter and time and space must all occur together: if there is no matter, there can be no space or time either. Thus, before God created the universe, there was no ‘time,’ at least not in the sense of a succession of moments one after another. Therefore, when God created the universe, he also created time. When God began to create the universe, time began, and there began to be a succession of moments and events one after another.”⁹

- C. Verse 10 – **“...but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,”** - This **“appearing”** is referring to His first coming. It’s at His first coming that God’s purpose and grace has been revealed though He planned it before time began.

1. **“...but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ...”**

- a. The word **“revealed”** means; **“to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way;”**¹⁰ So, at Jesus’ first appearing, the purpose and grace of God was made manifest or visible. The following Scriptures have the same Greek word translated **“revealed”**:

“He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” – Hebrews 9:26

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you”

I Peter 1:18-20

2. **“...who has abolished death...”** – The word **“abolished”** means; **“to render idle, unemployed, inactive, inoperative”**¹¹ Even though a believer may die physically, Jesus has conquered over death by resurrecting from the dead. We may die physically, but we won’t stay dead physically!!
(Cf. I Corinthians 15:19-26; 51-57; I Thessalonians 4:13-18)
3. **“...and brought life...”** – The word **“life”** is a reference to the God-kind of life, or eternal life. It’s defined as: **“the absolute fulness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God”**¹²
4. **“brought...immortality to light through the gospel”** – The word **“immortality”** means; **“the state of not being subject to decay, leading to death”**¹³ Louw and Nida add the following: **“However, in 2 Tm 1:10 ‘life and immortality’ may be best understood as a phrase in which ‘immortality’ is a qualification of ‘life,’ and therefore one may translate ‘revealing immortal life through the gospel’ or ‘revealing by means of the good news the life that does not end.’”**¹⁴

“Death is that great, black darkness that terrifies humanity and works like a venom through the whole of our souls, showing itself in despair and a limitless variety of fears. This death came upon humanity in the disobedience of Adam (Gen 3; Rom 5:12-21). Jesus’ resurrection cut a permanent shaft of light right through the heart of that blackness and brought a living hope (1 Pet 1:3). But more than this, it destroyed death’s power, cancelled its authority. It can no longer menace us (Heb 2:14), and its final, total abolition is certain (1 Cor 15:26, 53-54). There is absolutely nothing left of which to be terrified—a truth relevant to Timothy (1:8), to Paul (4:6-8, 18), and to us.”¹⁵

⁹ Wayne A. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004), 169.

¹⁰ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 648.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 336.

¹² *Ibid.*, 273.

¹³ Louw and Nida, 267.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 267.

¹⁵ Linda Belleville, *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Volume 17: 1 Timothy*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2009)