

Staying "On Purpose"

2 Timothy 1:8-12

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God,
 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 granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,
 10 but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,
 11 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.
 12 For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

LAST WEEK, ONE THING TO DO: *Kindle afresh the gift of God...* i.e. "Get the words of the Bible in your mind and your heart and pray for God's Spirit to empower you to keep the spiritual gift within you fanned into flame.

THIS WEEK, ONE THING TO DO: *Join with me in suffering for the gospel...*

& ONE THING NOT TO DO: *Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner...*

- These two go together, as opposites
- And they both are built upon last week's instruction to keep the gift on fire, right? (Vs. 8's "**therefore**"!)

We join the apostle in suffering for the gospel by boldly doing what God has gifted us to do to get the gospel out, *that is*, to get the good news of salvation in Christ communicated, regardless of the cost. The cost? Shame / pain / death = "**take up your cross and follow Me.**" THIS is the main point of "2 Timothy."

TWO QUESTIONS...

1. Why does God empower His people to suffer for the gospel?

- i) vs. 9 It always was His intention to save us
 - ii) vs. 9 It always was His intention to call us with a holy calling, which is
 - iii) vs. 9 NOT based on "our works"
 - iv) vs. 9 BUT based on "His own purpose and grace", which
 - v) vs.9 was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity
 - vi) vs. 10 now has been revealed by the appearing of Christ Jesus, by which He
 - vii) vs. 10 abolished death
 - viii) vs. 10 brought "life and immortality to light"
- through the gospel!

2. **Why was Paul so willing to suffer for the gospel?**

i) vs. 11 He was in on this work by appointment.

ii) vs. 12 He knew Christ was worthy of such a commitment

iii) vs. 12 He knew Christ was trustworthy regarding all the details of his own life

SUMMARY: Christ appearing in the world is the central event in human history, and our involvement in "the work of the gospel" is the central event in our own lives, and the life of our church.

So here comes this week:

Let's look for assignments and appointments and opportunities to do the work of the gospel:

let's speak of the good news this week. And maybe there will be some shame and some pain to experience.

We aren't likely to die for it, although our brothers and sisters around the world are doing so!

Some of these assignments and appointments and opportunities to do the work of the gospel will come in the course of normal church life for the people heading up and volunteering in the programs and projects and events of our kids and youth and adult and worship ministries.....

This Morning is Commissioning Sunday...