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*Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God... (2 Timothy 1:8)*

**I. Not Ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (vv. 8-13 )**

- a. Paul is a prisoner in Rome and most of his ministry associates were gone and only Luke and Onesiphorus was at his side. It was a dark hour, but the Lord will send the help we need in our hour of need. (1 Sam 30:6) When we encourage others we encourage ourselves. (2 Cor 1:4-5)
- b. God gives power to accomplish every task He has sent us to do. We do not enjoy suffering.
  1. Jesus prayed, *Father, if it be Your will, remove this cup from Me.*" (Luke 22:42)
  2. Paul prayed three times for God to remove *the thorn* from his flesh. (2 Cor 12:7-8)
- c. Paul knew that he was still on assignment as he suffered in chains. He used the term, "his prisoner", which was Paul's personal acknowledgment that his commitment to follow the righteousness of Christ led him to be in chains. Paul did not blame God for the suffering.
- d. As we fight for a cause, fear will usually arise when a loved one, who is fighting for the same cause, is under threat. Paul did not want Timothy to be discouraged.
- e. Even in ministry we follow a "fight or flight" pattern in response to fear or when under trial.
- f. Paul declares, I am here because of my appointment (preacher, apostle, and teacher) and my assignment includes suffering. (v.11-12)
- g. The apostle Paul set a *pattern* of faith in Christ's purpose for his life and love. (v.13)
  1. Discipleship is about following a pattern. Ephesus church → Timothy → Paul → Christ
  2. Paul became a personal example of Christ for Timothy in praxis.
- h. We have to get the "idea" or "theory" of Discipleship off the page and put into practice (praxis).

**II. I Know, I Believed, I am Convinced (v.12)**

- a. Are you convinced of your salvation and calling in the Lord?
- b. Paul was not ashamed because he knew that Christ would keep him. *I know whom I have believed.* We are saved because we believed in the person of Christ not just a doctrine.
- c. *I have believed* presents the active and continuous faith in an ongoing reality of following Christ.
- d. *I am convinced.* Paul is convinced of the gospel of Jesus Christ based on his salvation (how it happened), his calling (why it happened) and the fruit produced from it (what has happened).

**III. Thoughts and Considerations for Action**

- a. Discipleship is not an easy assignment. Those who are being discipled must continuously be encouraged. The disciple-maker must also be encouraged.
- b. Christ has called us by His grace, meaning He has purposes for His people to accomplish His glory.
- c. Are you setting a "pattern" of faith and love for someone to follow? We need an example of faithfulness when things get dark and depressing around us. We need an example of truthful living, when the world is filled with counterfeits. We need an example of love and forgiveness, when others tell us we should hate our enemies.
- d. We may not be put in prison, but in these difficult days, it is important that we stand true to Christ and be willing to suffer for Him in love. Be the "unashamed pattern" for people to follow wherever you are!