

Fact Sheet for **“Never Be Ashamed to Tell Others about Our Lord”**
2 Timothy 2:1-14

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ESV 1:1 ¶ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus, 2 ¶ To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

You can see in these words Paul’s relationship with Timothy who was ministering at Ephesus. What you don’t readily see is what was transpiring in Paul’s life when he wrote this. He was in a prison in Rome. This imprisonment was later than the one we read about towards the end of the book of Acts. And, according to tradition, Paul would be beheaded soon afterward. Paul knew that his death was imminent (4:6).

3 ¶ I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4 As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

We have already seen some words in Paul’s second letter to Timothy (*underlined*) that are very similar to some words in his first letter (1 Timothy 1:5).

Paul attributed Timothy’s faith to the influence of his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois (see Acts 16:1; 2 Timothy 3:14-15). What legacy are you working to leave? The best legacy I can think of is the spiritual influence you try to impart to your children and grandchildren. This is more important than any financial legacy.

6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands,

This is probably referring to Timothy’s ordination (1 Timothy 4:14). The ministry can be tough at times. Paul knew this first-hand, and he knew Timothy needed encouragement as he ministered there in Ephesus. Here I am reminded of something that Paul wrote to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 15:32). Paul was referring to people, not wild animals.

7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Then Paul, in one of his famously long sentences, wrote one of those great statements of theology that people have debated and have been encouraged by ever since.

8 ¶ 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, 9 who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10 and which now has been manifested through 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 apostle and teacher, 12 which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed,

for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

About ten years earlier Paul had written to the church in Rome about not being ashamed of the gospel (Romans 1:16). Think for a moment about the culture in which we live. It can be quite antagonistic to the gospel. In many ways our culture has gone beyond merely passing the gospel message by... to actively opposing anyone who is a Christian. Paul's message to Timothy, "never be ashamed to tell others about our Lord," rings so true for us today.

Look again at verse 9. How exactly did God apply this to me? How exactly did He apply this to you? I don't know exactly, but He did! Why did Paul write these words? Was it to remind Timothy of the theology of election and answer all his questions about that theology? No. It was to encourage Timothy to not be ashamed of the gospel. For in the gospel is the only real message of life and immortality!

Next Paul mentioned something that had not experienced like Paul himself did... Paul's Damascus road experience. Paul received an appointment from God, like none of us ever have, and he often referred back to that experience and drew strength from it. This is one reason why Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. In this letter he encouraged Timothy never to be ashamed of the gospel as he himself had never been ashamed of the gospel. And by extension he encourages us in the same vein. Never be ashamed to tell others about Christ!

My favorite verse in this portion of Scripture is verse 12. Take time to read it in the King James version. If you are of the younger crowd this may not explode with meaning as it does for us who have been Christians for several decades. When I was in high school our church built an entirely new building. In our old building there were two curtains behind pastor Ed Miller. This is where the baptistry was located. After each person was baptized the curtains would close to allow the person being baptized to step out of the baptistry and the next person to step in. Then the curtains would open again. But while they were closed we would sing the chorus of the hymn, "I Know Whom I Have Believed." The apostle Paul, as he was facing his own death, was not ashamed of the gospel. He was convinced of its truth. And he was encouraging Timothy to fan into flame his own commitment to the gospel.

¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

As in 1 Timothy "sound words" has the same sense as "sound doctrine." It is what is true, lived out by character. This combined with a sincere faith and an agape love for people is an effective means to sharing the gospel with others. And again, Paul encourages Timothy in his ministry.

We may live in a culture that at times can be actively opposed to the gospel and to Christians. But take Paul's words to Timothy into your own context. Fan into flame your commitment to Christ. If necessary be willing to suffer for the sake of Christ. And never, never be ashamed of the gospel.

For we know whom we have believed,
And are persuaded that He is able
To keep that which we've committed
Unto Him against that day!