

30 Days of Prayer

Day 23

2 Timothy 1.8-13

8 Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, ⁹who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, ¹⁰but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

¹¹For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, ¹²and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him.

God of the good news,

I fear speaking your Word to those who do not believe. I am afraid of offending my neighbor. I am afraid of looking foolish. I am afraid that pursuing your call means risking relationships, confidence, career, and control. Give me strength and courage to boldly proclaim your Word to anyone who will listen. Give me confidence to pursue your calling, placing all those things I could lose in your hands, knowing that you will never take from me what I need.

Lord, in those times when suffering seems pointless, take away my pain, and give meaning to my distress. Help me see the good you can create out of evil. Bring me out of the pit and guide me in your path. Fill my darkness with light and give breath to my stifled lungs. Give voice to my silence, and quiet to the noise in my head. Thank you for your faithfulness to me, and for holding me in difficult times. In the name of Christ,

Amen.

Paul writes from prison, addressing the shame he has experienced as a result of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. But he tells his friends not to be ashamed, and not to fear suffering for the sake of the gospel.

In America we don't know the kind of suffering Paul and the early Christians endured for their faith. We don't know the kind of suffering still going on today in other parts of the world. But we may know shame, embarrassment, and discomfort over sharing the gospel with others. For many it has broken relationships. For many it has disrupted career paths and friendships.

But Paul is confident in the gospel, and asks us not to be afraid of shame or suffering on account of Jesus Christ. Ultimately, in Jesus Christ there is victory and triumph!