

# Day 194, 2 Timothy 1

by David Servant

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*David Servant's sermon emphasizes the importance of faith and perseverance in the face of persecution, as exemplified in Paul's letter to Timothy.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 17:17, Matthew 13:21, Philippians 4:13, 2 Timothy 1:6-7, 2 Timothy 1:10, 2 Timothy 1:14, 2 Timothy 4:6

**Topics:** "Persevering Through Suffering", "Standing Firm In Faith"

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## Description

David Servant preaches on Paul's final letter to Timothy, written during Paul's last days before his martyrdom. Despite facing severe persecution and abandonment, Paul encourages Timothy to remain bold in the face of adversity, reminding him of the power, love, and discipline given by God. Paul emphasizes the importance of standing firm in the faith, guarding the treasure of eternal life through the Holy Spirit, and not being ashamed of suffering for the gospel, as he himself endured without shame, knowing his reward awaited in eternity.

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## Transcript

Paul's second letter to Timothy could be considered his last words, as he knew that "the time of [his] departure had come" (4:6). He wrote from Rome during his final imprisonment there, apparently during a second trial before Nero. Church tradition tells us that Paul was beheaded just outside Rome in AD 67, around the same time that Peter was executed by being crucified upside down. When Paul wrote this letter to his "beloved son" in the faith, Timothy had been his close and trusted companion for about 15 years. Paul longed to see Timothy before leaving this world and requested that he come to Rome (1:4; 4:9, 21).

Times were very hard for Christians when Paul wrote this letter. Because Nero was being blamed for the burning of Rome in AD 64, he fastened blame on the Christians, whom he consequently violently persecuted. Roman historian Tacitus reported:

Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

It would have been dangerous for anyone to associate with Paul, and concerning this, Paul writes near the end of this letter, "At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted

against them" (4:16). And although Paul also reports that "all who were in Asia" had turned away from him (1:15), thankfully, Luke had faithfully stood by him (4:11) as well as a disciple by the name of Onesiphorus, who was not ashamed of Paul's chains or afraid to visit him (1:16-18). Thank God for faithful friends who stick with you in your trials! Proverbs 17:17 says, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."

The current wave of persecution had apparently affected Timothy as well, which is why Paul reminded him that "God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline," and also admonished him, "Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join me in suffering for the gospel" (1:7-8). God has not given any of us a spirit of timidity, but like Timothy, we can yield to the temptation to be fearful of man. When we do, the remedy is to "kindle afresh the gift of God which is in us" (1:6), namely, the Holy Spirit who can make us bold. Paul's analogy is excellent. A fire is a supernatural thing that none of us can create, but that any of us can start with a spark. The spark that ignites boldness is faith. Step out of your comfort zone by faith and then stand amazed at the fire that burns! You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you! (Phil. 4:13).

Although Timothy knew well the fundamentals of the faith, Paul wisely reiterates them to him, knowing that there is nothing comparable that can motivate us to action than the simple knowledge of the gospel. God 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" (1:10). For this, we live, and for this, Paul "was appointed a preacher and an apostle and teacher" (1:11). For this, he also suffered without shame, knowing that in the end he would be vindicated and rewarded.

Anyone who truly follows Christ will be persecuted to some degree. At bare minimum, we will find ourselves mocked by those who are in darkness. So we would be wise to follow Paul's admonition to "guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted" to us (1:14). That treasure is eternal life and the new birth, and if those need to be guarded, then they can potentially be forfeited. Jesus warned that when persecution and affliction arise, some fall away (Matt. 13:21). Paul was not one of them. Make sure you are counted with him!

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