

Remember the Calling

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes the importance of remembering our holy calling and being faithful vessels for the testimony of Jesus amidst challenging times.

Duration: 1:12:39

Scripture: Romans 8:28-29, Ephesians 1:18, Ephesians 4:1, Ephesians 4:4, 2 Timothy 1:7-11

Topics: "Calling Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of Christians having a form of godliness but denying its power. He emphasizes that it is not surprising to find such behavior in the world, but it is alarming when it is present among Christians. The speaker highlights the importance of being trustworthy and standing firm in the testimony of Jesus, even in difficult times. He emphasizes that Christians are called to be the body of Christ and should strive to walk worthy of this calling.

Transcript

2nd Timothy chapter 2 verse 2 And the things thou hast heard of me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, such as shall be competent to instruct others also. 1st chapter verse 3 I am thankful to God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, how unceasingly I have the remembrance of thee in my supplications night and day, earnestly desiring to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I may be filled with joy, calling to mind the unfamed faith which has been in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Louis and in thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also, for which cause I put thee in mind to rekindle the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of wise discretion.

Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but suffer evil along with the glad tidings, according to the power of God, who has saved us and has called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time, but has been made manifest now by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has annulled death and brought to light life and incorruptibility by the glad tidings, to which I have been appointed a Herod, an apostle and teacher of the nations. As I was waiting before the Lord for this time that we were together, somehow the second verse in the second chapter of 2nd Timothy impressed very deeply upon my heart. There you find the apostle Paul told Timothy, the things which thou hast heard, these entrust to faithful men.

Whatever Timothy had heard from Paul, he was to entrust to trustworthy people, and these trustworthy people are people who are qualified to instruct others also. And I think probably this is why we are here this time, that we may learn together to be trustworthy people, faithful people, that God may use us to instruct and to help others. So God willing, we will use 2nd Timothy as our book for these evenings, and we would like to point out from that book different things that we need to learn in order to be trustworthy and also to instruct others.

I believe, brothers and sisters, we all know that this second letter to Timothy was the last letter that Paul wrote. He wrote this letter shortly before he was martyred, and he wrote this letter to his beloved son, Timothy, his son in the truth. It was a most difficult time.

Paul was arrested. He was put in prison in Rome. And if there were two imprisonments of Paul in Rome, and I believe there were, this second imprisonment of Paul in Rome was very different from his first imprisonment.

Because we find at the end of the book of Acts, while he was in Rome, he was able to live in his own rent house. He was able to receive people who came to see him. He was able to teach and to preach the kingdom of God without any hindrance.

But in this second imprisonment, it was completely different. He was a prisoner, a real prisoner. He was not given liberty, and he was waiting to be tried, even by Caesar, by Nero himself.

He told us that all Asia let him. Why? Because the atmosphere at that time was so tense. The pressure was so great.

Anyone who professed the Lord, anyone who had any connection with Paul, would be under suspicion and would be probably arrested too. And because of the most difficult situation, all Asia, those brothers and sisters among whom he labored with tears, faithfully, year after year, all Asia let him. He was alone.

At his first trial, nobody stood with him. But the Lord delivered him out of the lion's mouth, and he was waiting for the next trial. In a sense, he sensed that that would be his end.

Therefore, he wrote to Timothy, one who was nearest and dearest to him. He urged Timothy to come before the winter, because in a sense, he felt probably he would not be there when winter came. But his main concern was not himself.

He was not concerned with himself, with what would happen to him. He was concerned more of the testimony of the Lord Jesus. During this difficult time, will the testimony of Jesus continue? He was concerned with the vessel of the testimony of Jesus.

In a sense, you find that by the grace of God, he was able to be faithful to the very end. He could say that I have fought the good fight. I have kept the faith.

I have run the course. But he was almost alone. Even Demas met him at that critical moment and went to Thessalonica.

One of those who worked with him. So maybe in the heart of Paul, he was concerned, deeply concerned. How could the testimony of the Lord Jesus be maintained? Who will be the vessel for that testimony? He was soon to depart from this earth.

Who will continue with the torch of the testimony of the Lord Jesus? He turned to Timothy. He hoped that Timothy would take over from him that torch of the testimony of the Lord Jesus. And not only Timothy alone, but others who are of kindred spirit.

He wanted to see that there will still be a vessel, a copper vessel, to continue on with the testimony of Jesus that Paul has so faithfully maintained throughout his life. And that was the main concern. And that was the reason for this letter.

Paul as a veteran in the testimony of the Lord Jesus. As one who had gone through a lot and was able to continue to the very end. Now he was going to hand over that torch of the testimony of Jesus to someone else.

And he wanted to make sure that this will happen. And I believe that this is behind the second letter to Timothy. Dear brothers and sisters, if the time that Paul lived was a perilous time, a difficult time, can we say that we are living today in an easier time? As we are living at the end of the last days, we are living in very difficult and perilous times.

You know if you turn to the third chapter of 2nd Timothy, Paul mentioned, he said but this know that in the last days difficult times shall be there. And then he described the difficult times. Now often times when we read what follows, probably we think that Paul was just describing the situation in the world.

As you look at the world, what was the world like? You find that in the world man will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, evil speakers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, profane, without natural affection, implacable, slanderous, of unsubdued passion, savage, having no love for what is good, traitors, headlong, of vain pretensions, lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God. Now we think that these are the symptoms of the world at large. But dear brothers and sisters, if this is what the world is, there is no surprise.

Why? Because this is what the world always is. Can you expect the world better than what is described here? It has always been that way. But I do believe that what Paul was describing was not the world as it is.

He is describing the religious world. Why? Because in the fifth verse he said, having a form of piety, but denying the power of it, and from these turn away. Now if these are the description of the religious world, if these are the description of Christianity, will that be a shock to you? You will not be surprised if these are the descriptions of the world.

The world can be no better than what are described here. But if these are describing the Christian world, are you shocked that among God's people you'll find people become lovers of self, lovers of money, lovers of pleasure. Now think of that.

Among people who have a form of godliness. Awkwardly there is a form of godliness. And yet, actually, you'll find that people are lovers of self.

Christians, professing Christians, are lovers of self, are lovers of money, are lovers of pleasure. They are not lovers of good. They are not lovers of God.

Now when these things are true, we are truly living in very difficult times. It is difficult for anyone to be faithful to the Lord. It is difficult for us to maintain our first love.

And no wonder the Lord said, the day shall come when people's love will go cold. No wonder the Lord said, when he shall return, will he find faith upon the earth. And he's speaking to Christians, to believers.

Can he find faith in believers? Can he find that our love towards him is not waxing cold? Can he find we are still keeping hope, that blessed hope towards him? Dear brothers and sisters, not only the whole world is falling apart, but the Christian world is falling away. We are living in a very difficult time. I believe that the time that we live in is not in any sense easier than the time that Paul lived.

Even though in certain parts of the world you do not have that persecution, physical persecution yet. And yet, when you find that God's people are loving self, loving money, loving pleasure, instead of loving good, they've been loving God. When this become the general conditions of the church, the general conditions of Christianity.

How difficult it is for anyone to press on unto the goal. How difficult it is to be alone as if you're standing all by yourself. It is difficult.

I think what is a real issue in our days is this matter of faith. Whether the testimony of Jesus can be maintained in such difficulty. Where can you find vessel for the testimony of Jesus? Will there be people who are faithful? Faithful to the testimony of Jesus.

Will there be people who are trustworthy? That God can commit Himself. He can commit His testimony to them. That they will not only stand, not just survive, but to stand.

Not only to stand themselves, but they will be able to instruct other people. So that the testimony of Jesus may continue on until He returns. I think this is the real issue of our days.

And I believe this is the reason why we are together. We are together this time, not just for the purpose of gaining some knowledge. Not just for the purpose of adding some spiritual statute.

We are gathered here this time because we feel that the testimony of Jesus is an issue with us. And we want to be by the grace of God those who are trustworthy. That He can commit Himself.

And also we can instruct other people that the testimony of Jesus will not be quenched. But will continue on brighter and even brighter until He returns. And I believe this is our main concern.

This evening we would like to touch upon one thing. How can we be maintained faithful when we see all around us are falling apart? What make us press on without compromising? And I believe in 2nd Timothy you can find a number of things that we need to learn together. And this evening we would like to mention the first one.

And the first one is found in 1st chapter, verse 9. Who has saved us and has called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time, but has now been made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has annulled death and brought to light life and incorruptibility by the glad tidings. The first thing that Paul reminded Timothy, now we know that Timothy was very different from Paul. Paul was a person who was a natural leader.

Paul was a person who had an iron will. Paul was a person who was very aggressive. We will say he was an extrovert.

He was a person who was naturally looking out, courageous. But Timothy was just the opposite. Timothy was not only younger, less experienced, but by nature, by temperament, Timothy was timid.

He was not a coward, but he was timid. He was an introvert. He tend to look within himself.

He didn't want to be a leader of any kind. He would like to follow a leader. He would like to hide himself under the shadow of another person.

And all his life, up to that point, he hid himself under the shadow of Paul. And he felt very comfortable about it. But here you'll find Paul was taken away from him.

Now we don't know whether when Paul was arrested, whether he was with Timothy at that time. And literally, Paul was torn away from Timothy. And there Timothy cried, wept bitterly when he saw Paul was taken away from him.

Now we don't know whether when Paul said, remembering your tears, whether that was the situation. It might be so. Here you'll find Paul was taken away from him by violence.

He was left alone there in Asia. And all Asia left Paul. And Timothy was there, trying to recover.

Trying to rescue the situation. Trying to help those brothers and sisters who at that moment were so frightened that they were not even recognized Paul. They were denied Paul.

They didn't know that person. They wanted to stay themselves. And yet Timothy was left behind, trying to rescue the whole situation.

Now probably with Timothy he was wondering, what could he do? He was wondering whether he should hide himself too, by nature. He would love to hide himself. But now he was exposed.

He was being thrust, as it were, to the front. And he was to be there alone in a sense. This was a situation he had never met before.

He was on his own. Of course we know, you are never on your own. But humanly speaking, that was it was.

And probably because of that, Timothy being an introvert, he must be pondering, he must be thinking about the whole situation. He looked at the situation and probably said, well it's hopeless. If this was the situation, Paul was taken and all Asia left Paul, what could I do? Let me hide myself.

If only I can be faithful to the end, that's all probably I could do. How could I rise up and try to restore the brothers and sisters into faith, into love, into faithfulness? I couldn't do that. Probably he would like to hide his gift too.

He wouldn't use his gift, bury it, so that he would not be so exposed. Brothers and sisters, that was the actual situation. And Paul, knowing Timothy so well, even while he was in prison and he was going to be martyred, he remembered Timothy.

He knew Timothy needed some encouragement. You know, Timothy was not a coward. He was just timid, that's all.

He needed some encouragement from Paul, that the gift that God has given him might be rekindled. That he might be able to pass on, not only for himself, but for the testimony of Jesus. He was to forgive himself and to fulfill his ministry.

But how could he do it? Brothers and sisters, put ourselves in the same situation. If we are in the same situation, now even though that physically it is different, but spiritually and morally, dear brothers and sisters, we are in a similar situation today already. And we need to be before the Lord and ask, how can we be trustworthy? How can we stand? And not only stand, but to instruct others, that the testimony of Jesus may be carried on.

What are the essential ingredients that we must have within us? If we do not have these ingredients within us, we will not be able to stand and continue. But if by the grace of God there are these ingredients within us, then we find that we can go on. So this is what we feel we need to consider very seriously before the Lord.

Number one, remember the calling. You know whenever a person is put into such a situation like Timothy, it is a time for that person to remember the calling. In other words, if we are clear of our calling, that will be like a rock upon which we can stand.

Now, dear brothers and sisters, we know that we are saved. But Paul said, who has saved us and has called us with a holy calling. It is not just a matter of being saved.

Now, thank God that he has saved us. If he has not saved us, where will we be? We can never cease thanking him for saving us. But the worst edge who has saved us and has called us with a holy calling.

Now, remember brothers and sisters, we are not just being saved. We are not saved by chance. Somehow God just pick us up and save us.

No. We are called with a holy calling. I think the first thing that we must remember is that we are being called.

I often say, we are not volunteers. We are drafted. If we are volunteers, well, where there is first love within us, we volunteer.

But when that first love begins to grow cold, then we volunteer to leave. It is all up to us. That is being a volunteer.

But dear brothers and sisters, you must remember that God needs no volunteers. He always drafts people. We are called.

And by being called means he has drafted us. He has called us with a holy calling. Now, if he has called us, then there is no escape.

Whether you like it or not, if you are called, you are called. It is not left to your choice. I think the calling is the most wonderful thing in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, everything in the gospel is wonderful. But I think this calling is the most wonderful thing in the gospel. Why? Because if you really know that you are called, it makes all the difference.

Why? Because calling is always related to purpose. God never calls anybody without any purpose. Now, we may not know the reason why God save us.

But certainly when God calls us, he has a purpose behind it. He just doesn't call anybody. He just doesn't call us without any purpose in view.

Our God is too practical for that. I believe that you are all familiar with Romans chapter 8 verse 28. You know, all things work together for good to those who love the Lord.

Whenever we go to a hospital or visit some brothers and sisters, you know, who have some problems or sickness, and we really do not know how to explain it, and we really do not know how to comfort them, well, there's a ready verse you can use. We always tell brothers and sisters, all things work together for good to those who love the Lord. You know, so long as you love the Lord, everything will turn out good.

But we do not quote the full verse. All things work together for good to those who love the Lord, who are called according to purpose. You love the Lord.

Why? Because you are called according to purpose. If you do not know, you are called. If you do not know why you are called, brothers and sisters, how can you love the Lord? Or even if you do love the Lord, probably it will be just five minutes.

We are called according to purpose. God has a noble, glorious purpose. And it is because He has the purpose in Him, therefore He calls us.

Now, if you read on to Romans chapter eight, you'll find He said, because whom He has foreknown, He has also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He should be the firstborn among many brethren. But whom He has predestinated, these also He has called. And whom He has called, these also He has justified.

And whom He has justified, these also He has glorified. We are called according to purpose. And that purpose was purpose before time.

In eternity past. You cannot measure it with years. Even before time begins, in eternity past, God has foreknown us.

Whom He has foreknown, He has predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. Now, brothers and sisters, that is our calling. Our calling is not just being saved.

Being saved is not our calling. Do not think that you are called to be saved. Because there is so much room in heaven, therefore you are called to fill the heavens.

No. This is not your calling. You are called to be conformed to the image of God's Son.

That is what you are called. Whom He has foreknown, He has predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. So that He should be the firstborn among many brethren.

God wants His only begotten Son to be the firstborn among many brethren. Now that is your calling. And because He has called us, He justifies us.

He not only justifies us, but He glorifies us. So you find everything is really related to this matter of calling. But dear brothers and sisters, do we really know our calling? What is our calling? Now of course in the Word of God you will find it is being described in many ways.

Why? Because our calling is so all-inclusive. But first of all, let me say this. Whenever we touch upon this matter of calling, our mind just drifts to that area of we are called to do this and to do that.

I am called to be a teacher. I am called to be a prophet. I am called to be a missionary.

I am called to be a housewife. I am called to be a doctor. I am called to be a nurse.

You find that whenever we think of this matter of calling, immediately we think of what we do. But brothers and sisters, calling is not primarily related to doing. Calling is primarily related to being.

We are called to be, not called to do. We are called to be first. And because we are what we are called to be, therefore we are able to do what we should do.

So never put doing before being. God is interested in us, in what we are or what we will be, rather than what we do or what we can do for Him. Now even in Romans chapter 8, you will find we are called according to purpose.

And what is that purpose? To be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Now that's being. That's not doing.

Number two. When we think of calling, immediately we think in terms of individuals. No matter who you are, where you are, what you are, we are all called with one calling.

Not many callings. We are called with one calling. We share the same calling.

Take Ephesians. The letter to the Ephesians, for example. Now if you turn to the letter to the Ephesians, you'll find that Ephesians, for instance in chapter 1 verse 18, being enlightened in the eyes of your heart, so that you should know what is the hope of His calling.

And then again in chapter 4 verse 1, I the prisoner in the Lord exhort you therefore to walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye have been called. Verse 4, there is one body and one spirit as ye have been also called in one hope of your calling. Here you'll find that there is one calling.

He calls us. It is our calling. And we need to know what is the hope of His calling.

And we need to walk worthily of the calling wherewith we have been called. Now according to Ephesians, what is that calling that He has called us? Chapter 1 verse 22 and 23. And has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all and in all.

And chapter 4 verse 4, we have already read it. There is one body and one spirit. And then in the same chapter, chapter 4, we find that verse 16, from which the whole body fitted together and connected by every joint of supply, according to the working in His measure of each one part, works for itself the increase of the body to itself building up in love.

And in chapter 5 verse 30, you'll find that for we are members of His body. We are of His flesh and of His bones. It is evident according to the letter to the Ephesians that we are called to be the one body of Christ.

Now that is what we are called to be. Brothers and sisters, you are not just called to do something for the Lord. You are called to be the body of Christ.

This is your calling. And this calling is something that we share together because no one person is the body of Christ. It takes all of us who are saved to be the body of Christ.

Now this is our, it is a glorious calling just to think of this. What is the body? A body contains the riches of the head. And a body expresses the glory of the head.

God has made Christ head over all things. To the church which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all and in all. Now brothers and sisters, we are told in Colossians that all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ.

All the fullness of the Godhead. Now who can fathom the fullness of the Godhead? God. All that God is dwells bodily in Christ.

Why? Because Christ is the fullness of the Godhead. And Christ is our head. And He fills us with Himself.

So we become His body. The fullness of Him who fills all and in all. Now put it in this way.

As Christ is the body of God, so we are the body of Christ. The Godhead is so rich that it needs a body to contain it. And that body is Christ.

Now Christ is so rich that He needs a body to contain Him. And that body is the church. We are that body.

Just think of that. It is not a matter of just being saved. We are called to be that body in which the fullness of Christ dwells.

All the riches of Christ are being stored as it were in that body. And because of that, it is being expressed through that body that the head may be glorified. Now this is our calling.

If we realize what our calling is, will that not give us that strength in time of trouble? Of course in Romans chapter 8 you find that we are called to be conformed to the image of Christ. You know oftentimes we think of the verse individually. Now it is true.

All things work together for good to you who love the Lord, who are called according to purpose. Now personally that is true. But as you read on you find that it is corporate.

Why? Because we are to be conformed to the image of His Son that He may be the firstborn among many brethren. It is not that He may be a brother to you and you alone. That He may be the firstborn among many brethren.

In other words, many brethren will take their character from Him. He will characterize all of us. And why He needs many brethren? Because no one little brother can express Him fully.

And this is the way we are to be conformed to the image of Christ. Now do not think that you alone will be conformed to the image of the complete Christ. You cannot.

You are just one of the brethren. You know just like in New Jerusalem you will find that there are twelve foundations, twelve stones, precious stones. Not just one stone but twelve precious stones.

And all these precious stones are different. And yet when you put these precious stones together then you see the glory of Christ. The fullness of Him who fills all and in all.

So it is corporate. It is not just individual. Our calling is not only a glorious calling because we are called to be the body of Christ.

Our calling is an eternal calling because He called us even before the foundation of the world. And according to Philippians chapter 3 verse 14, our calling is an on high calling. You know our calling is not something very cheap, something very low.

Our calling is not an earthly calling. Our calling is an on high calling. Philippians chapter 3 verse 14, Paul said, I pursue looking towards the goal for the prize of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus.

It is an on high calling. It is a high calling. How high? Well if you read what precedes this you will find it is as high as Christ Himself.

That we may know Him and the power of His resurrection. The fellowship of His suffering. Being conformed to His death.

That we may attain to our resurrection from among the dead. That we may apprehend Him as He has apprehended us. In other words, that on high calling is none other than gaining Him.

That we may gain Him as He had gained us. That is our calling. And according to Hebrews chapter 3, it is a heavenly calling.

Because there you will find in chapter 3 of Hebrews, Wherefore holy brethren partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the apostle and high priest of our confession, Jesus. It is a heavenly calling. We are called to heaven.

That city that descends. There is nothing earthly about it. There is nothing worldly in it.

It is spiritual. It is heavenly. It is all Christ.

It is a corporate expression of Christ Himself. Now brothers and sisters, this is our calling. Now if we know what our calling is.

That we are called with such a glorious, eternal, on high, heavenly calling. Do you think that will encourage us? In spite of everything that around us is decaying and falling apart. That we have to press on.

Because we are called with such a wonderful calling. Now return to 2 Timothy. Verse 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.

We are not called according to our works. Do nothing that you are better than anybody else, therefore you are called. Do nothing that you have accumulated so much merit, that He calls you.

Not at all. You are called not according to your works. It has nothing to do with what you are.

It has nothing to do with what you have done. As a matter of fact, according to what we are and what we have done, we don't deserve to be called. We deserve to be cast away.

We are not called according to our works. But we are called according to His own purpose and grace. Oh brothers and sisters, I just love this.

We are called according to God's own purpose. You know, sometimes I feel myself so unworthy. Sometimes I feel myself couldn't make it.

I don't believe I can make it. Because I'm such a poor material. Sometimes I feel like if it's left to me, I will just slip away.

But then, when I remember that He has called me according to His own purpose. Not because of what I am. Not because of what I do or not do.

But because He called me according to His own purpose. That it is the good pleasure of His will. Even before the foundation of the world, that He has called me according to His own purpose in Christ Jesus.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is the only thing I can fall back to. Where there is nothing that you can fall back upon, there's a rock there. He has called us according to His own purpose and grace.

Why? Because without grace that purpose cannot be reached. He has not only called us with purpose, but He has also supplied us with grace to fulfill that purpose. And why, where did He purpose that purpose? In Christ Jesus.

Not in you, not in me. He has called us according to His purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus. This purpose is in Christ Jesus.

This purpose is not in you, is not in me. It is in Christ Jesus and given to us. And because it is in Christ Jesus, it will never change.

And even the grace that is given to us is in Christ Jesus. And because grace is in Christ Jesus, it will never change. And when did He give us, call us with that purpose and grace in Christ Jesus? Before the time began.

Even before time begins, God has called us according to His own purpose and grace in Christ Jesus. The root goes way back to eternity. And the root goes way back to Christ.

This is our firm foundation. This is the rock upon which we stand. We do not know that God has called us according to purpose.

We do not know that God has already supplied all the grace for us to fulfill that purpose until the day that has been made manifest now by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ. So remember, brothers and sisters, when the Lord came upon this earth, then what God has purposed in eternity past and the grace that He has already given to us in Christ Jesus become manifest. Now it is no longer a secret.

No longer something hidden. Now it is made manifest. Now we know.

We know we are called according to His purpose. We know that there is grace given to us to fulfill that purpose. Brothers and sisters, what else do you want? Everything is here.

He supplies the purpose and He supplies the grace who has annulled death and brought to light life and incorruptibility by the glad tidings. What is the gospel? The glad tidings that Christ has annulled death and has brought to light life and incorruptibility. Now what is death? Death is coming short of purpose.

Death cuts on the way to the fulfillment of purpose. But Christ has already annulled death and He has brought to light life and incorruptibility. In other words, it is by life, by that incorruptible life, as Hebrews say, indissoluble life, by that eternal life, that we are able to arrive at that purpose.

He has already taken death away. Anything that stands in the way of that purpose, He has already removed it. He has given us life and that life has an element in it which is incorruptibility.

It cannot be corrupted. And by that life, we are brought into the fulfillment of that calling. Dear brothers and sisters, it does not depend upon you or me.

It is all up to His grace, by His life and because of His purpose. It is not a matter of whether you want to continue on or you want to drop out. It is not just a matter of whether you will be faithful or you will not be faithful.

But dear brothers and sisters, a much bigger issue is before us. It is His testimony. We are called to bear the testimony.

And there is sufficient grace given to us to accomplish what He has called us. If only we look of unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Now dear brothers and sisters, this is the secret.

How can Paul stand under such difficult situations and be faithful? Not because he is stronger than anybody else. Not because he is better than anybody else. Paul is able to be faithful to the very end because he knows he has been called.

That calling is like an anchor. That anchoring him in Christ. Not because Paul is stronger.

It is because he knows the grace of God. He depends on the grace of God and he made it. Brothers and sisters, the same is true with us today.

If we make it, it is because we are called according to purpose. If we make it, it is because we know His grace. His grace is sufficient.

And I believe that when Paul shared this with Timothy, and we know in history that Timothy was able to carry on the torch of the testimony of Jesus. He was able to continue on with the testimony of Jesus. And dear brothers and sisters, this is what we hope.

By His grace, we will be. Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, how we praise and thank Thee that Thou hast called us with a holy calling. Not according to our works, but according to Thine own purpose and grace, which has been given to us in Christ Jesus.

We do praise and thank Thee that Thy purpose has already been manifested. And Thy grace has already been manifested, because Christ has already come. O Lord, we have heard the gospel.

We have received Thy life. We do pray that we may be those who know our calling, remember our calling, and who know how to depend on Thy grace. O how we praise and thank Thee that Thou will accomplish what Thou hast in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1897.mp3>
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