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Introduction. The opening of this letter seems to have well established that Timothy is at somewhat of a crisis in his faith. The context of how Paul tries to encourage Timothy implies that there is sadness (v.4, i.e., the presence of tears), discouragement (v.6, i.e., he is encouraged to stir up his gift), and fear (v.7). As the letter continues, we read Paul's continuing attempt to build up his young protégé.

This second half of Chapter 1 gives further insight into what was going on. Timothy is told not to be ashamed of Paul or of the Gospel, the implication being that others had become ashamed. Paul did not want to lose Timothy! Paul was zealous, uncompromising, unapologetic and even confrontational when necessary (though he never lacked love, compassion, graciously spoken or written words, endless patience, etc.). This brought much persecution his way, especially at the hands of his former colleagues, the unbelieving religious Jews of virtually every city he traveled to. But as time wore on, all of this - the conflict with the Jews, the persecution, the battles, the constant need to defend the ministry, etc. - seems to have taken a toll on the church; Paul expresses his awareness that, shockingly and tragically, the Asian church had by-and-large deserted him, even naming two apparently prominent deserters. But he also points to one Onesiphorus, an exceptional one who apparently remained committed through it all, speaking eloquently of him as an example of steadfastness and loyalty for Timothy.

What is the centerpiece of all of this?: Paul's faith in Christ. He suffered, but he also knew the One he had believed and was suffering for. Though life had gotten hard to the point of near-total abandonment and imminent death, Paul was persuaded that the Lord Jesus would by no means forget him. He was confident in salvation in Jesus the Messiah, and IT WAS ENOUGH. Therefore, even though all others might abandon the narrow road, Paul urged Timothy to hold fast, to stick with that exclusive way of salvation, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to stick with his own gift to teach sound doctrine based on the words of Scripture. Both, even today, are seemingly always threatened from one quarter or another - the Gospel itself, and the practice of teaching all Scripture (3:16). Because Christ is worthy to be trusted, you and I must never swerve from either.

1. Verses 8-12 - Confidence during trials: the unashamed Christian.

- v.8 - Grammatical note: vv.8-11 are one sentence. **Therefore...** What follows is a conclusion being drawn from the fact that the spirit of a Christian is one of power, love, and a sound mind (v.7), not fear. *Fear in a Christian leads to being ashamed* - ashamed of Christ, of the Gospel, of the church, of the Bible, of fellow Christians who faithfully serve and suffer for their service, etc. But since fear is not part of the spirit of a Christian, we must **not be ashamed** of the **testimony of the Lord** (i.e., the Gospel of Jesus Christ) or of our faithful brothers and sisters who preach it, even to the point of enduring humiliation from this world for it. *Stand together, stand strong, resist fear, do not be ashamed!*

NOTE: **prisoner...** Paul was in prison for his stand. We might tend to want, out of self-preservation, to distance ourselves from people who suffer shame for their stand. Assuming the stand is correct - and certainly Paul's was - don't be ashamed; rather, seek to **share** in it!

- vv.9-11 - The rest of this sentence supports the admonishment to not be ashamed of the Gospel or of Paul. Basically, Paul does this by 1) affirming the nature of the **gospel** for which he suffered (sovereign **grace**, not human **works**, v.9); 2) affirming the identity of the **Christ, Jesus**; 3) affirming what Jesus accomplished in bringing the hope of **life and immortality**; 4) affirming his own apostleship; and 5) affirming the nature of that apostleship, that he was sent to **Gentiles**. In other words, *don't be ashamed, all of this is intended and correct, embrace it and endure it.*

NOTE: Spiritual success often looks like earthly failure. Don't be so persuaded by outward appearances.

- v.12 - Paul knew he suffered mostly for the final statement of the previous sentence: he preached a *Jewish* Messiah and hope in the *Jewish* God to *Gentile* people. Unbelieving religious Jews hated this and stirred up persecution everywhere Paul went. However, Paul was **not ashamed**. Nor should Timothy be. Nor should you or

I be. Why? Paul knew who he **believed**. And he was convinced, because of his intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus, that all of his labor and suffering were not in vain. *We must strive for that intimate relationship with Jesus! We must **know whom** we have **believed!***

2. Verses 13-14 - Sound words and doctrine: the committed Christian.

- v.13 - Now here comes the command: **Hold fast**. Don't move. From what? The **pattern of sound words...** that is, sound teaching received from Paul, sound **doctrine**. *Just as fear turns confidence to shame, so it turns sound doctrine to compromised falsehood*. What combats this fear leading to bad doctrine?: **faith and love**.

- v.14 - Hand-in-hand with doctrine is the **practice** and **working** of Timothy's gift, the gift of teaching. It was a gift of the **Holy Spirit**, and it needed to remain in use! The Spirit **dwells in us!** Do not quench Him. *Fear will do that.*

NOTE: The Holy Spirit is here referred to as **who** and not "what."

3. Verses 15-18 - Deserters and true co-laborers: the loyal Christian.

- v.15 - The Asian church deserted Paul, he who had founded it, for the most part. **Phygellus** and **Hermogenes** were apparently leaders in the church, and perhaps they led the desertion, all rooted in fear, shame, and compromise.

- vv.16-18 - In contrast to Phygellus and Hermogenes, **Onesiphorus** is presented as an example of one who was not overcome by fear, was **not ashamed**, and remained loyal even as Paul was imprisoned. His loyalty is set forth as an example for Timothy and for us. He is one who sought to share in Paul's sufferings (v.8). *We must be loyal to those who faithfully preach the Gospel and sound doctrine from the Scriptures, even if they are unpopular, mocked, and persecuted.*