

## Overcoming The Fear Of Suffering

### 2 Timothy 1:1-12

#### Sermon Series: Fear{Less}

#### **Introduction:**

- Example of coaching basketball
- Suffering tests our confidence and how we handle it shows whether or not we are really trusting Jesus
- Talking about spiritual suffering or suffering for God and not suffering due to circumstances
- Examples of fear related to thinking of this kind of suffering of how we may shrink back: a call from God to do something (like me and preaching), witnessing, going on a mission trip, ostracism/being made fun of, persecution
- What's coming and me not wanting it and why this is important and also how the opposite is taught so much in the United States

**2 Timothy 1:1-12:** “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, a beloved son:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, 4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, 5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. 6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 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 which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”

**1. We are called to suffer for the Lord (v. 8).**

-Commands: "I remind you to stir up the gift..." "Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord," "Do not be ashamed of me His prisoner," "Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel."

- Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin write that Gordon Fee writes that the [commands] "of this verse entreat Timothy to the three basic loyalties; to Christ (and his gospel), to Paul, and to his own ministry." These loyalties involve our God, our friends (especially believers), and our God-given opportunities for service."

- Doesn't fit with the prosperity gospel

- Groeschel clip (When Christians Get It Wrong sermon, 9:38-12:08)

- Philippians 1:29, Colossians 1:24, 2 Timothy 2:3, 10

**Illustration:** In *By Their Blood*, James and Marti Hefley write:

"In the 19th century Protestant evangelical missionaries brought the gospel to the Armenians with stirring freshness. This precipitated an evangelical renewal movement within the staid old Armenian church.

At that time much of Armenia was under a Turkish Muslim government and conversion of a Muslim to Christianity was punishable by instant death. This law was suddenly lifted in 1856 and complete religious liberty declared. Scores of Muslims became Christians.

The opportunity proved to be short lived. In 1864 the Turkish government began rounding up and sentencing to prison Muslim converts to Christianity. From 1895 to 1896 government soldiers killed up to 100,000 Armenian civilians. In the spring an attempt was made to kill every Armenian Christian within Turkish borders. Lawyers, doctors, clergymen, and other intellectuals were rounded up and charged with subversion. Many had their heads placed in vises and squeezed until they collapsed.

April 24 was the day set to kill the rest of the Armenians. As many as 600,000 may have died on that fatal April 24. One of those who escaped was a young girl of 18 who stumbled into an American camp.

"Are you in pain?" a nurse asked when she arrived.

"No," she replied, "but I have learned the meaning of the cross."

The nurse thought she was mentally disoriented and questioned her further. Pulling down the one garment she wore, the young girl exposed a bare shoulder. There, burned deeply into her flesh, was the figure of a cross.

"I was caught with others in my village. The Turks stood me up and asked, 'Muhammed or Christ?' I said, 'Christ, always Christ.' For seven days they asked me this same question and each day when I said 'Christ' a part of this cross was burned into my shoulder. On the seventh day they said, 'Tomorrow if you say "Muhammed" you live. If not, you die.' Then we heard that Americans were near and some of us escaped. That is how I learned the meaning of the cross."

**2. We are equipped to suffer for the Lord.** We may think that there is no way I would ever want to be able to face or endure suffering for the Lord. We are equipped by the power of God. We can face suffering through the power of God. How is His power manifested in our lives? In the first section, we saw what we are to do. The verbs referred to our actions. Now, let's look at what God has done for us. These verbs refer to His actions. What has He done?

**A. God gave us the resources we need to overcome fear (v. 5-7).** Timothy shows us that it's possible to have a genuine faith and still struggle with timidity and fear (reference what Mandy said last week).

- Power (Ephesians 1:19-20)
- Love (1 John 4:18)
- Sound Mind (Philippians 4:6-9) [most of our fear comes from "What If" thinking and dwelling on future possibilities; my experience of replacing it with "If What" thinking this week]

**B. God saved us (v. 9).** Explain salvation and share the gospel, Jesus suffered for us so we are to suffer for Him (soldier in Vietnam giving up his life to serve the soldier who lost his legs saving his life)

**C. God called us (v. 9).**

- He didn't call us to forsake us.
- He knew us before time began.
- He will fulfill His purposes.
- So, our suffering purposeful instead of accidental. It is not coincidental. God will fulfill His eternal plan for our lives. We do not have to fear what God has a good purpose for.

**D. God gave us eternal life (v. 10).** Suffering is temporary and a better day is coming. Somebody can kill us for the sake of the gospel, but they are just threatening us with heaven.

**E. God appointed us to ministry (v. 11).** It is passive tense which indicates that God did it. He placed Paul in ministry so he cannot leave his post and the same is true for us (Covid, "hold this line" at the Battle of the Bulge)

**3. Therefore through the power of God, we can face suffering with boldness, obedience, and confidence (v. 12).** This is our conviction and confidence that enables us to endure and even embrace suffering.

## **“Whom”**

- Death or disobedience?
- Suffering or compromise?
- Is Jesus worthy?

Come back to the Groeschel clip

## **Conclusion: “Fellowship of the Unashamed”**

“I am part of the fellowship of the unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power.

The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of His. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away or be still.

My past is redeemed. My present makes sense. My future is secure. I'm finished with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, worldly talking, cheap giving, and dwarfed goals.

I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudity, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded or rewarded. I now live by faith, lean on His presence, walk by patience, am uplifted by prayer and labor by power.

My pace is set. My gait is fast. My goal is heaven. My road is narrow. My way rough. My companions few. My guide is reliable and my mission is clear.

I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed.

I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of the adversary, negotiate at the table of the enemy, pander at the pool of popularity or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I won't give up, shut up, let up, until I've stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, preached up for the cause of Christ.

I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go till He comes, give 'til I drop, preach till all know, and work till He stops me. And when He comes for His own, He'll have no problem recognizing me. My banner will be clear!”

- Challenge Christians
- Share the Gospel

- Communion prep

**Announcement:**

**-Difficulties of leading during COVID and thank them for following our leadership**

**-Going to online services only for the next two Sundays (the 20th and 27th)**

**-We are still allowing small groups to make their own choices about meeting, although practically we know that most groups won't meet much through the holidays**

**-Not planning on this being longer than that (but it could happen) and why we think that we need to stay the course in gathering unless it just seems to be completely unwise**

**-Why? number of cases, hospital situation, more TLC cases, protecting people during the holidays, plus we kinda shut down near the end of the year anyway so we think we can just ramp that up for safety's sake (vacation and office situation), we've been conservative then aggressive but think we need to be temporarily conservative because we hope to be aggressive next year**

**-Thank God for how well it's gone, excited, momentum**

**-Join us online, invite, giving (thank them for generosity)**

**-Please give us your info so we can stay in touch**