

REMEMBER THE TREASURE OF THE GOSPEL

2 Timothy 1:3-18

What makes you ashamed or embarrassed? Paul, at the end of his life, is in prison and reminded of the most important parts of life. He's pondering his own humanity and all the men and women who have abandoned him because of his faith. Paul is suffering. In the midst of suffering, what is God's purpose? How could we possibly get through it all? What are we supposed to do?

Remember God's calling and purpose

Paul's suffering is clearly a result of him being a Christian. You could experience physical suffering because of the gospel, but you will most definitely experience the pull of shame. Shame is identifying with something that makes us look foolish, weak, backward, or cost us socially.

"Only foolish and low individuals, and persons devoid of perception, and slaves, and women, and children, of whom the teachers of the divine word wish to make converts" (Celsus)

Suffering doesn't mean failure, nor that you're wrong, it could be; the means of grace that God is using to mold and make you into His image. No matter the circumstances or whether your life is victorious and thriving, God is working His purposes.

Remember the treasure of the Gospel

The Gospel is the treasure worth living for. It's His to give and He gives it generously. He's not holding back or wondering or waiting; He's giving generously. Remember that there is a greater treasure that no amount of social pressure or shame could ever take away.

Suffering exposes the heart; it reveals what we really treasure. Is the Gospel worth taking blows for?

Remember the pattern He has entrusted to you

The pattern with which we live our lives corresponds to what we treasure. We are all following a pattern. What pattern are you following? What do you want to look like at the end of a few years here?

If Timothy is ashamed of the Gospel, then it reveals he doesn't really treasure the Gospel. If you're ashamed of the Gospel, you are revealing that you don't treasure the Gospel. God is at work, and if He's a treasure, then He requires the sort of attention, thoughtfulness, strategic planning, and execution that befits a treasure.

Key Idea: Remember and guard the treasure entrusted to you.

Application Questions:

How does biblical confidence and motivation differ from the world's view? Think of phrases like "nobody cares, work harder," or "you are in danger of living a life so comfortable and soft that you will die without ever realizing your true potential."

What patterns are you following in your life? Who are your role models? What books are you reading? What type of model or pattern are you setting for others?

What do you treasure? How do you talk about it? What are you doing to guard it? What would others say that you treasure? (Jesus—what you treasure will spill out of you in words.)

How does your foundation of Jesus spur you on toward godliness, humility, and good works? What is your calling? And what is God's purpose and grace?

What does following Christ cost you? Will you remain faithful when faithfulness is costly?