

"I Am Not Ashamed ..."

"... whereunto I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher. For which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:11-12).

"Whereunto I was appointed." Immediately preceding these words is Paul's declaration that Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; so when Paul says *"whereunto I was appointed"* it is of the gospel he wrote. He was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the gospel. Paul had been called to be an apostle of Christ, preaching the gospel as all His apostles were commissioned (Mt. 28:18-20).

"For which cause I suffer these things." Paul's preaching the gospel was responsible for his present state: He had preached that the gospel is the power of God to salvation to all; that in it is God's righteousness revealed and that righteousness is apart from the law which was given by Moses (Rom. 1:16-17; 3:21). His message that *"neither circumcision availed anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation"* (2 Cor. 5:17) did not "set well" with Jewish teachers. The unbelieving Jews persecuted Paul from place to place because they believed the law provided them everything they needed and that circumcision was essential to salvation. To those Jews who accepted Jesus as the long-anticipated Messiah but who would not turn loose of the law and circumcision, they sought to undermine Paul and his work and they stirred up his enemies against him. When the second letter of Timothy was written, the decree that Paul was to be executed had likely already been pronounced and the trials he experienced and the looming death which faced him came about because he was a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Yet I am not ashamed." The indignities Paul suffered as a Christian, being treated as a malefactor and guilty of such horrendous crimes that he deserved to die, would have been, to some, an embarrassment. But not Paul. He was not ashamed of the gospel for he knew it to be the power of God to salvation to all (Rom. 1:16). Paul believed that his trials were something to rejoice in. *"Let none of you suffer as a murderer or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or a meddler in other men's matters; but if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed but let him glorify God in this name"* (1 Pet. 4:15-16). These words from Peter describe Paul's attitude exactly.

Paul unashamedly suffered because of his confidence in Jesus in whom he had placed his trust. *"I know him whom I have believed and I am persuaded he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day."* "That day" doubtlessly is the day of Christ's appearing and the day in which all the secrets of men are to be laid bare. Paul had committed his whole being, life, and fate into the hands of Jesus Christ. He did so with utmost confidence for his faith in Christ was such that he believed Christ would secure or safely guard the things entrusted to his care. Paul was confident that when that day dawned that Christ should judge the world; bring to light the hidden things of darkness; and make manifest the counsels and thoughts of the heart that the genuineness of Paul's devotion and dedication to him would assure him of a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge would crown him with on that day.

Is my or your confidence so secure as was Paul's? It can be -- it should be -- it must be if we are crowned with life on that day.

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