

# WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

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## 2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • TV-011A

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By

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### **2 Timothy 1:12**

*“For the which cause 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 that which I have committed unto him against that day.”*

I want you to open your Bibles today to the book of **2 Timothy chapter 1**.

Now, I’m going to be speaking on the subject: **“WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?”**

When Paul wrote this book to Timothy (the book of **2 Timothy**) he was chained in prison, in danger of any moment of execution. And besides all this, he had been forsaken and deserted by many whom he thought were his friends.

He wrote in **verse 15**; *“This thou knowest that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.”* Then he wrote in this same book **chapter 4:10**; *“Demas hath forsaken me.”* Demas was his companion and his friend. And he declares that *“Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world. Only Luke is with me.”*

And then in the **16 verse** of that **4 chapter of 2 Timothy** he said; *“At my first answer no man stood with me but all forsook me.”*

He was in prison. He was chained to a soldier. He was awaiting execution. He had been forsaken by his friends. And so at the beginning of **chapter 1** he exhorts Timothy to never be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.

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He said, *“Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.”* Paul said, *“I’m not ashamed of the Gospel. It is the power of God unto salvation and to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*

And then twice in the book of **Romans** he said, *“Whosoever believeth shall not be ashamed. Do not be ashamed of the Gospel Timothy.”* And then he said, *“Do not be ashamed of those who preach the Gospel.”*

If you look there at **verse 8** you’ll see that. He said, *“Don’t be ashamed of the Gospel and don’t be ashamed of me, the prisoner of Jesus Christ.”* And then in the latter part of **verse 8** he said, *“Be ready yourself to share in the afflictions of the Gospel and in the persecutions which will come to those who believe it and who dare to preach it.”*

The Bible tells us; *“It is given unto us not only to suffer for Christ’s sake but to believe. And all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”*

So there in **2 Timothy chapter verse 8**, the apostle Paul begins this letter to young Timothy whom he called, “his son in the ministry,” this old man of God awaiting execution, chained in prison, and he said, *“Now Timothy; don’t be ashamed of the Gospel and don’t be ashamed of those who preach the Gospel, who are even prisoners for the sake of the Gospel. And you be ready yourself to suffer persecution and affliction which will come to you if you believe and preach the Gospel.”*

And then in **verses 9 and 10**; now this is very important. I want you to take your Bible and while I’m speaking to you, you look down and read these verses that I’m going to quote to you.

**Now in verses 9 and 10 of 2 Timothy 1**, Paul identifies this Gospel for which he was in prison, for which he was persecuted, for which he had been forsaken by his friends, and of which he was not ashamed. He identifies this Gospel.

Now look at **verse 9** carefully, he says; *“Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling.”* The first identifying mark of the Gospel of God is this; it’s the work of God for us and not our work for God.

*“He hath saved us.”* We didn’t save ourselves and we didn’t contribute to our redemption. *“He saved us and He called us with a holy calling.”* Paul wrote in **Ephesians**; *“We are God’s workmanship created in Christ Jesus.”*

John wrote; *“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and gave himself for us.”* That’s the first identifying mark of the Gospel of God’s grace. It is God’s work for us. He saved us and He called us and He redeemed us.

Now look at the second mark of this Gospel, this Gospel of which Paul says, *“I’m not ashamed,”* and this Gospel which He exhorts Timothy to preach and to teach, and not to be ashamed of it.

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And he said, *“This Gospel is not according to our works.”* Look at it there in **verse 9**; *“He saved us, not according to our works. He called us not according to our works but according to His purpose and His grace.”*

It is not because of our works that God saves us or in return for our works. The Scripture says, *“When we have done everything required of us; we are still unprofitable servants.”* The Scripture says, *“It’s not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy, He hath saved us.”*

*“Our righteousnesses are filthy rags.”* They’re nothing. They do not commend us to God. We are saved, not according to our works. *“By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in God’s sight (in His presence).”*

Now; watch the third mark of this Gospel: The first mark is this; it is a work of God for us. And it’s not in return for our works nor because of our works but according to His grace. Watch the third thing, *“Which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”*

This Gospel is an eternal gift, it’s an eternal gift. There never has been but one Gospel. From before the foundation of the world there was one Saviour. *“Christ was the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.”*

God decreed before all eternity to have a people. Paul wrote in **Ephesians 1:3**; *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us; He blessed us, with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus according as He chose us in Christ before the world began.”*

He said, *“I’ve drawn you with an everlasting love.”* God loved us and chose us and gave us to Christ before the world began. It’s an eternal gift. That’s what it says; *“He saved us and He called us, not according to our works, (not because of our works) but according to His purpose and His grace which was given to us before the foundation of the world.”*

Now watch **verse 10, 2 Timothy 1:10**; it is the Gospel of divine visitation. Look at **verse 10**; it says there in **verse 10**, *“It’s now manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.”* This Gospel is the work of God for us; it’s not because of our works, it was given us in Christ before the world began, and it is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

If you’ll look at the Old Testament you’ll find in the Old Testament many prophecies about the Messiah. Those prophecies are about Christ. If you’ll look in the Old Testament you’ll find many sacrifices.

There are the turtledoves, the lambs, the sheep, and the goats and the bullocks, and all these different sacrifices. These are all pictures of Christ. You’ll find Feast Days, you’ll find priesthood, and you’ll find a tabernacle. You’ll find furniture in that tabernacle. You’ll find a brazen serpent. You’ll find a smitten rock.

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You'll find all of these things in the Old Testament and every one of them are types of Christ and pictures of Christ and promises of Christ and prophecies of Christ. *"To Him give all the prophets witness."*

And now He has come into this world to fulfill all of these sacrifices and all of these sin offerings and all of these types. Christ has come, the one to whom they pointed. He has been manifest in the flesh. He hath appeared and He hath performed and perfected all that these things pictured.

*"In the fullness of the time God sent His Son into the world to redeem those who were born under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons," "The Word of God was made flesh and dwelt among us."* Jesus Christ, the very righteousness of God dwelt among men.

Paul said, "I'm not ashamed of it. I boldly and courageously preach it. And if I'm sent to prison, if I lose my friends, if it costs me my life, I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I'm going to preach this Gospel."

"And Timothy; I exhort you; don't be ashamed of the Gospel. Don't be ashamed of those that preach it. And Timothy; dare to bear the afflictions and the persecutions for preaching the Gospel."

Now here's the fifth identifying mark: It is the Gospel of a completed work. It's the Gospel of an effectual work. He says, *"Christ our Lord hath appeared and He hath abolished death."* Christ has destroyed the power of sin. He has conquered the great serpent. He has conquered sin and death and hell. He has appeared. And He has destroyed death, abolished death, *"and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."*

When our Lord was on the cross He said, *"It's finished:"*

**"The work is done, tis done  
The great transaction is done  
I am my Lord's and He is mine  
He drew me and I followed on  
Charmed to confess His voice divine  
He bore my sins in His body on the tree  
And I bear them not."**

He performed before the law a perfect righteousness for every believer and that is not required of me. God doesn't demand that I bring a righteousness but that I receive one. God doesn't demand that I bring before Him a justification but that I receive one. It's a finished work. *"Christ hath finished it."*

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Now in **verse 11**, after identifying this Gospel, he said; “I preach this Gospel and I teach this Gospel. And now, in spite of the persecution and the prison and the forsaking of my friends; I am not ashamed.

And here’s our text, **verse 12**, “*For I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I’ve committed to Him against that day.*”

There are three things that I want you to see here, the definition of saving faith. I think it will help you; it’s helped me. I’ve looked through the years. I’ve been preaching now 29 years and I’ve looked through the years what we could call, “A definition of saving faith.”

I have people say, “Well what is saving faith?” There are all kinds of faith. There’s mental faith, material faith, miracle faith, and all these different faiths. James says “*The devils also believe and tremble.*”

Well I don’t want that kind of faith. I don’t want a presumptuous faith. I want saving faith. I want the kind of faith that would lead a man in prison, awaiting execution, forsaken by his friends, determined to know nothing but Christ. I want the kind of faith that man’s got.

And he gives us here the definition of his faith. What Paul knew; now here’s the first thing, what Paul knew; he said, “*I know whom I have believed.*” Now here’s a key word, “*whom.*” “*I know whom I have believed.*”

He did not say, “I know what I believe.” You can get people to talk and debate and argue about what they believe, their doctrines, their laws, their rules, their regulations, and their peculiarities of their particular religious denomination.

But Paul doesn’t say “I’m willing to suffer these things and I’m willing to endure these things because I know what I believe.” No sir! He said, “*I know whom I have believed.*” There’s a lot of difference.

Paul didn’t say, “I know when I believed.” You can get some people to tell you about their experience, about all the hope they have, as an experience they had many, many, years ago. And they’ll be glad to take you back to the old country church or take you back to the old place behind the barn or out in the field when they had an experience.

Paul didn’t say “I know when I have believed.” That’s not nearly so important as “*I know whom I have believed.*”

And then Paul did not say, “I know how much I believe.” Paul wasn’t boasting about his piety and his righteousness and his spirituality. He’s talking about a person with whom he was acquainted and with whom he had been brought into a living, vital, union. “*I know whom I have believed.*”

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The Gospel, my friend, is concerning a person. If you'll take your Bible and turn to **Romans chapter 1:1-3** the Scripture says, "*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the Gospel of God.*"

Now, in **verse 2** there's a parenthesis. It says, "*Which He promised before by the holy prophets, in the Scripture.*" But **verse 3** says, "*Concerning His Son.*" Now the Gospel of God is concerning His Son. That's what it's all about.

And Paul said, "*I know, (not what I believe, or when I believed, or how much I believe) but I know whom I have believed.*" This is what he's saying, "I know Him who is very God of very God."

Do you know who Jesus Christ is? The Bible says, "*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. God was in Christ.*" The Scripture says, "*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*" When the Father spoke of the Son He said, "*Unto the Son He saith, thy throne O God is for ever and ever.*"

And when Paul was speaking with those elders at Antioch He exhorted them in this way; he said, "*You feed the church of God which God purchased with His own blood.*"

Who was that one who came from Mary's womb in Bethlehem? That was God in human flesh. Who was that one walking the dusty streets of Jerusalem in Judea on the shores of Galilee? That was God in the flesh.

Who is that hanging on Calvary's cross pouring out His soul unto death? That's God in the flesh. Paul said, "*I know whom I have believed. I know Him who is very God of very God.*"

And I know Him who came to save sinners. Christ said, "*I came to seek and to save the lost.*" "*This is a faithful saying; (it's a certain saying) it's worthy of acceptation by all men that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners.*" I know Him who's the friend of sinners.

And he says, "I know Him who was numbered with the transgressors. I know Him who bears the sin of many. I know Him who made His soul an offering for sin. I know Him who died on the cross for my sins. The sinless was made sinful that the sinful might become sinless. He bore our sins in His body on the tree. I know Him."

"And I know Him who was buried and rose again and who ascended to the right hand of the Father where He ever lives to make intercession for me. And I know Him who will come again and receive me into glory."

Christ said, "*If I go away I'll come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also.*"

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He's not a myth. He's not just a historical character. He's not a doormat named Jesus. He's not a fire escape from hell. He's a living Lord, He's a loving Lord. Do you know Him? Do you know Him? *"Eternal life is to know God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent."*

Saving faith, first of all, is the knowledge of God. *"Timothy I'm not ashamed of this Gospel for I know whom I have believed."* We don't talk that way today do we? "I know what I believe. Well I know when I was saved; I was there when it happened." Or "I know how much faith I've got."

*"I know whom I have believed."* It all hinges on Him. It's because of Him. It's for His glory. It's for His sake. He is salvation. He is the Bible. He is eternal life. He is heaven. He is glory. It is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now watch the second mark of saving faith, what Paul was persuaded of. He said, *"I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that He is able."*

Now my friends, there are two requirements of one who would redeem sinners. He must not only be willing; he must be able. Now, if I could I would save my children, but I'm not able. I'm willing but I'm not able. If I could I'd save your soul. I would; I'd be willing but I'm not able.

So the one who saves a sinner from his sins, who pays the debt of sin and cancels that great, enormous debt, must be able, not only willing but also able. And Paul said, *"I know whom I have believed and I'm persuaded, (I'm confident) He's able."*

You're able to do what Paul? Well, he wrote in **Hebrews 7:25**; *"Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him."*

Somebody said, "He's able to save to the gutter most." Well that's all right, to the uttermost extent of sin, to the uttermost extent of failure, to the uttermost extent of infirmity, to the uttermost extent, He's able to save.

He's the Father's choice. He's the Father's anointed. He's the Father's elect. He is the Father's sent-one. He's the Father's Messiah. *"This is my Son, hear ye Him."*

He's able to save because He as God can satisfy the law, and as God can satisfy justice, and as man can suffer. He is able to save because He paid the debt in full. He is able to save because now He has wounds to plead; *"By His stripes we are healed."* Paul said, *"I'm persuaded He's able; (able to do what) able to save me."*

And then secondly, He's able to do everything He promised to do. Paul wrote in **Romans 4:21** about Abraham; *"Being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able to perform."* And Jude said this; *"He is able to keep us from falling."* He is able to keep me saved. Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling. I need that.

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If one sheep of Christ could fall away, I'd fall a thousand times a day; how about you? But He is able to save and He is able to fulfill every promise and "*He's able to keep us and to present us faultless before the throne of glory with exceeding joy and exceeding glory.*"

And then, watch this; I'm going to die someday. I'm getting older and someday I'm going to die. They're going to bury my body. And my Redeemer is going to have to raise it. And no one can raise the dead but Jesus Christ. He proved it at the tomb of Lazareth. He proved it at the widow's son's coffin there. He proved it there at Jairus' daughter's place.

He is able. "*He shall change my vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, for He is able to subdue all things unto himself.*" That's **Philippians 3:21**.

He is able to save to the uttermost. He is able to fulfill all that He promised. He is able to keep you from falling. He is able to change your vile body that it may be just like His risen body, His glorified body, because He's able to subdue all things to himself.

And watch this; Paul says, "*I'm persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ my Lord.*"

You're safe in Christ. You're not safe in your experience. You're not safe in the church. You're not safe in your own holiness; you're safe in Christ:

**“Under the blood of Jesus, under the blood of Jesus  
Safe in the Shepherd's fold  
Under the blood of Jesus  
Safe while the ages roll  
Safe though the worlds may crumble  
Safe though the stars grow dim  
Under the blood of Jesus  
I am secure in Him.”**

I'm secure because He's not only able, not only willing to save me; He's able to save me.

All right, now the third point and this will close the message, a definition of saving faith. It's a knowledge of Christ. It is a trust or a persuasion of his willingness and his ability.

And then last of all let's look at what Paul had done (what Paul knew was Christ; he was persuaded and Christ was able). Now Paul tells us something that he's done intelligently and willingly and lovingly; he said, "*I have committed it unto Him against that day.*"

*“I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded He's able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.”* Sitting there in prison, chained to a soldier, weak in body, awaiting death, forsaken by friends, believed to be crazy by the multitude, ridiculed by the leaders of religion; Paul



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confronts the whole world with a holy boldness and he says, “I’ve committed it all to Christ against that day.”

That day is the day of death. That day is the day of resurrection. That day is the Day of Judgment. That day is the day of life and death, eternal life or eternal death.

How will your religion fair in that day? How will your experience fair in that day? Everything we believe and everything we hope, and everything we cling to, it ought to be measured and considered in the light of death, in the light of judgment, in the light of God’s holy presence.

Christ will stand up in those things. He’ll be with you in death. *“Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I’ll fear no evil for He is with me.”*

In the Judgment He will be my Advocate, my Mediator. I don’t want some ecclesiastical ruler pleading for me. He can’t help himself in that day. I don’t want some friendly pastor to pray for me in that day; I want Christ to plead for me.

And Paul had committed his soul to Christ.

I like this hymn:

**“My sins, oh the bliss of that glorious thought  
My sin, not in part, but the whole  
Is nailed to the cross  
And I bear it them no more  
It is well; it is well with my soul  
  
Though Satan should buffet  
Though trials should come  
Let this blessed assurance control  
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate  
And He has shed His own blood for my soul.”**

It is well with my soul because Christ is the Redeemer of my soul; *“I’ve committed it to Him.”*

Now Paul had committed not only his soul to Christ but he had committed his possessions to Christ, his family, his health, his friends, and his ambitions. He’d committed it all to Christ, like Job who said, *“The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.”* Or like Eli when Samuel said, *“God is going to kill your sons.”* Eli said, *“Well, it’s the Lord; let Him do what He will.”*

It all belongs to Him anyway. I’ve committed it to Him. I’ve given it to Him, not a part of it, not even a tenth of it, all of it, it is all His.

And then Paul committed his body to Christ. He said, “One of these days I’m going to be buried in corruption. The worms will destroy this flesh. It’ll go back to the dust from whence it came.

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But my Lord will raise it up someday. He's going to speak and the graves will open. And I'm coming forth, not in corruption, but I'll come forth in incorruption. I'm buried in weakness. I'll be raised in strength. I'm buried in shame; I'll be raised in glory. I'm buried in weakness; I'll be raised in power."

*"Beloved, now are we sons of God. It doth not yet appear what we shall be but when He shall appear we're going to see Him and be just like Him, in that day, in that day."*

I've committed it unto Him against that day!