

**II TIMOTHY 1:8-14**  
**STAND TALL!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to II Timothy chapter 1 as we continue our in-depth study of Paul's second letter to his son in the faith, Timothy!

Keep in mind that Paul is back in prison, placed there by Nero as the persecution of Christians is on the rise after Nero burned Rome and blamed the Christians for it.

Here in the Mamertine prison in Rome, which was nothing more than a hole in the ground, Paul is writing a letter of encouragement to Timothy to continue on in the faith, not to give up.

Paul knew that his life was coming to an end, Nero would shortly be putting Paul to death. So this is kind of his last will and testament and how important this letter is.

He will remind Timothy of his spiritual heritage and the responsibility he has in getting the church there in Ephesus back on track. And Paul loved Timothy and reminded him of this and that he was praying for Timothy!

Now I do realize when we look at men like Paul, we see him as a giant in the faith, and he truly was. And thus, we think, ***"I could never be like Paul. How could God ever use a person like me? I am a nobody!"***

God is so good and what we see here is someone like Timothy, someone like you and me, God can use. You see, he was not like Paul. I don't see him as bold as Paul. I see him more as a little timid and he needed lots of encouragement to go forward.

And I will let you in on a little secret. God uses nobodies to do great things for Him because He then will get the glory!

One writer put it like this,

Again, consider what Oswald Chambers wrote, *“All through history God has chosen and used nobodies, because their unusual dependence on him made possible the unique display of his power and grace. He chose and used somebodies only when they renounced dependance on their natural abilities and resources.”*

If this is true (and it is!), then Timothy was the right man for the job. He was not endowed with a powerful body and iron constitution – he was frail.

He was not bold but reticent [quite]. And he was not a natural leader.

If the job was to get done, he would have to rely upon God. Everything would have to be the result of Timothy’s profound dependence upon God’s power and grace.

- R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, 1-2 Timothy and Titus, p. 189

Maybe some of you or even all of you feel like Timothy this morning and we probably all should. We can’t depend upon ourselves, but we must depend upon the Lord to see us through. When we try on our own, we will fail or fall far short of all that God wants to do in us and through us.

And thus, this study is for you and for me. I have called it – ***STAND TALL!***

Which is funny for me because I have never been called tall, but the amazing thing is, it doesn’t matter how tall you are, your stature, but are you standing strong in the Lord and the power of His might!

If you try to do it on your own, with your own plans, your own ideas, you are going to be in trouble. Let me explain it like this and I think you will see what I mean.

A *“Do it yourself”* catalog firm received the following letter from one of its customers. This is what he wrote to them.

*“I built a birdhouse according to your stupid plans, and not only is it much too big, it keeps blowing out of the tree. Signed, Angry”*

The firm replied back to this man and wrote,

*“Dear Angry, we’re sorry about the mix-up. We accidentally sent you a sailboat blueprint. But if you think you are mad, you should read the letter from the guy who came in last in the yacht race.”*

You see, the plans you have are either going to allow you to see the victories in the Lord because you are following His plans, or they will cause you to see defeat because you are doing it on your own!

Now, in saying that, it is not always easy as we are going to see.

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at this morning into the following points. They are,

***STAND TALL AND SUFFER – II TIMOTHY 1:8-12***

***KEEP THE FAITH – II TIMOTHY 8:13-14***

So with that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in II Timothy chapter 1, starting in verse 8 and let’s see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic –

***STAND TALL!***

## II TIMOTHY 1

### VERSES 8-12

Paul opens up with the word “**Therefore**” and it links us to what he was just speaking of.

And Paul just finished speaking of the gift that God had given to Timothy and not to let fear cause him to stop using that gift.

And what Paul is speaking of is “**the testimony of our Lord**” or the Gospel message!

Listen to what Paul said in II Timothy 1:7, “**For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**”

I like the way The Amplified Bible puts this verse. It reads, “**For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control.**”

Why was Timothy so afraid?

Because the preaching of the Gospel had become a dangerous practice and if you were now connected with Paul and his ministry, that was even worse.

And we see Paul tell Timothy not to be afraid, not to be ashamed of the Gospel.

Don't be afraid of Paul's imprisonment.

This is kind of like a pep talk or a motivational speech. You can just see as Timothy is reading this he is getting pumped up and then Paul says, “**. . . But share with me in the sufferings for the gospel . . .**” II Timothy 1:8.

Are you kidding me. What kind of motivational speech is that?

It was just reality. If you are going to share the Gospel message with people, understand that you will suffer, not might, you will!

Now maybe Timothy was wondering how in the world he was going to accomplish this. He was not like Paul.

And yet, Paul wanted Timothy to stir up that gift that God had given to him, to use it, to not be afraid, don't be ashamed of the Gospel in spite of the persecution that you will face.

But how?

Because God has **EMPOWERED** him for the work!

Because God has given to him **AGAPE** love to exercise it!

Because God has given him a **SOUND MIND** to keep him on course!

Thus, don't be ashamed of the Gospel, don't be ashamed of Paul, even though he is locked in prison awaiting his execution.

Keep moving forward even though he was facing suffering for his faith.

For Paul, he saw many drop out of the race of faith, they distanced themselves from the Lord and from Paul because of the sufferings, the persecutions, some getting into false doctrine.

Tragically, today, we have sanitized Jesus and disinfected the cross, making it all safe.

But in the day Paul wrote this, it would seem strange indeed to follow a crucified man and call him Savior. And many feel the same way today, they think it is strange to look at a crucified man and call him Savior! Thus, they attack those that are bringing forth this message. They don't want to hear it. They want to do what they want when they want to do it and they don't want anyone telling them that they can't or that it is a sin! Thus, persecution!

Listen to what Paul endured for the faith.

In II Timothy 1:15 we are told, **“This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”**

In II Timothy 2:16-17 we are told, **“But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort.”**

In II Timothy chapter 3 we are told, **“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was . . . But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”** II Timothy 3:1-9, 13.

And in II Timothy chapter 4 we are told, **“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables . . . for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica - Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia . . . Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words. At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them.”** II Timothy 4:3-4, 10, 14-16

Paul poured his heart into people and when he needed them most, many were not there for him.

Folks, it can be tough, but remember the Lord is with you, press on!

And think of it like this. Rome, that empire and all the power it had, all the persecution it perpetrated against Christians, is gone and the Gospel message, the message of Jesus Christ continues on.

Therefore – ***DON'T BE AFRAID!***

And when you put things into perspective, look at all that the Lord has done for you, for me!

You see, God not only saved us, but He uses us for His glory not because we are so special, so talented, but because of His Grace!

We don't deserve any of it and yet He freely gives it to us. God has a plan for each of us, may we walk accordingly!

And I want to drive this point home, as Paul said, “**... not according to our works ...**”

II Timothy 1:9.

Paul is saying that we are not saved by good works, the things that we do, we are saved by His grace, and you can't add anything to grace because then it would no longer be grace.

That is what Paul said in Romans 11:6, “**And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.**”

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, “**But if it is by grace (His unmerited favor and graciousness), it is no longer conditioned on works or anything men have done. Otherwise, grace would no longer be grace [it would be meaningless].**”

If grace is a free gift, not based on anything we have done but it is based upon what God has done and what He wants to do. If I add my good works to grace it is no longer a free gift, I paid for a part of that gift by my good works. That is the point that Paul is making. It can't be grace and works, it is all grace, or it is all works!

And thus, as Paul said in Ephesians 2:8-9, “**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**”

And then God has a plan, a purpose for our lives, as I have said. And we need to walk in them, do those things that God has called us to do, not for salvation, but because we love Him, we serve Him! I hope that makes sense.

Also, keep in mind that Paul knows he is going to be put to death shortly, and thus, he speaks of Jesus abolishing death, which does seem strange.



Now we still have physical death, we all know that, and we are very aware of that. If that is true, and it is, then what is Paul talking about?

He is talking about the sting of death is gone, Jesus removed it and to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.

Not only is the sting of death removed, but the power of the second death has also been abolished, our separation from God!

You see, for the Christian we don't speak of death but of sleep and in reality, it is moving day as our spirit and soul moves out of this tent and into a mansion that the Lord has created, an eternal body.

Thus, Christ removes the sting of death!

In knowing that, why would you be fearful to give people the Good News of Jesus Christ?

Your fate is sealed in Him, theirs, outside of Christ is not! They can come to saving faith but if they don't, they will be eternally separated from God in the Lake of Fire!

Thus, they need to hear and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior of their lives and no matter what may happen to us, God has a plan, and He is in control, and even in death, Satan loses!

That is why Paul can say in II Timothy 1:12 that he is "**not ashamed**" and the idea here is that he is not ashamed of the hope he has in the Lord; he is not ashamed of his decision to follow Jesus.

Now some may wonder what the big deal is. The big deal was the sufferings, the persecution that he faced as a believer. He said prior to his statement of not being ashamed, "**For this reason I also suffer these things . . .**"

What reason?

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is offensive to people, and they try to put out those who are bringing that Good News into the world. And we see it even today!

I know I keep saying that but today we see Christians who don't understand why this is happening. They think that the Christian life should be like a playground instead of a war zone. But understand we are in a battle for the souls of men and women and the Devil is trying to destroy them and our witness. It truly is a battle!

Listen to what Paul said in II Corinthians 4:8-12, **“We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed - always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you.”**

You read that and you wonder how Paul could endure all that suffering, and in his other letters and in the book of Acts we see what he went through. So how could he endure those things?

Because he had a correct perspective of the situation and thus, he could rest in the Lord.

He goes on to say in II Corinthians 4:16-18, **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”**

Do you see the eternal perspective he had? He knew that these bodies of flesh would pass away, but he also knew he would spend eternity with the Lord.

And Paul tried to encourage Timothy regarding this perspective. Remember what we read this morning in II Timothy 1:8, **“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.”**

And I believe the Lord is encouraging us to do the same. Don’t focus on the temporary, keep your eyes on the eternal and as you focus on the Lord He will direct your life, the things He wants you to do, and then go forth in the power of God and do them!

Now think about this for a minute. Paul is not ashamed and the reason he can be so confident, the reason he could suffer so much for his faith, is that, as he said, **“... for I know whom I have believed . . .”**

First of all, you better know what you believe, because if you don’t, people are going to trip you up.

It is as Paul said in II Timothy 2:15, **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”**

You better know what you believe and cut it straight, don’t make it say what you want, but speak forth what God is saying!

Now, as important as it is to know what you believe, Paul tells us here that it is also important to know *WHO* you believe! That is so important!

Think about it like this.

Christianity, unlike the other religions of the world, is not only built on the teachings of Christ but also on the Person of Christ.

Look at all the other religions, like Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam, Mormonism, Jehovah Witnesses and the founders of those movements are all dead.

But Jesus is alive, and He is not only alive, but He lives in us through the Holy Spirit!

And that is our heart's desire, or it should be, to know Him more and more so that we might be made more like Him?

Paul put it like this in II Corinthians 3:18, **“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”**

Now, in saying all that, look at II Timothy 1:11 once again and see how this all plays out. Paul wrote, **“To which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”**

That Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, our salvation is based upon His finished work on the cross of Calvary and Paul was commissioned by God to preach, to be an apostle and to be a teacher to the Gentiles.

To preach speaks of ministering to the lost, the unsaved and once they are saved, they are then taught the things of God, built up in the faith.

We truly need more teaching in churches today and less preaching, the sheep truly need to be built up in the faith!

And Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles, he had the authority of God in what he said, what he taught.

Make no mistake about it, Paul believed upon Jesus as His Lord and Savior and thus, he knew that He would be able to keep him safe, to protect him, sustain his faith until he went to be with the Lord, or the Lord returned for him and all believers living at that time in the Rapture, or as Paul put it – ***THAT DAY!***

Once again, if you have that perspective, as you look to that day, if it is precious to you as it was to Paul, you will not be shaken, moved from the course that God has set for you!

It is as Spurgeon said, ***“‘Know thyself,’ said the heathen philosopher; that is well, but that knowledge may only lead a man to hell. ‘Know Christ,’ says the Christian philosopher, ‘know him, and then you shall know yourself,’ and this shall certainly lead you to heaven, for the knowledge of Christ Jesus is saving knowledge.”***

Amen to that!

Let me put this into a real-life experience.

[Several years ago] an Alabama school bus driver named Charles Poland was shot to death trying to protect his kids from a crazed man seeking a hostage.

Poland has been hailed a hero in Dale County, AL.

When his wife was interviewed, she spoke of nights on the porch where she and Charles would sip coffee while they watched the sun set.

She quoted the reporter their favorite Bible verse. It’s 2 Timothy 1:12, ***“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.”***

Lydia Poland commented of this verse, ***“That is what I hold onto right now. God knows. He is the only one who can bring closure to my heart right now.”***

And her faith should be commended. She not only knows the words of 2 Timothy 1:12, she knows what it means.

Paul suffers inexplicable trials. He's treated as the dregs of the earth. Life isn't always fair. What he endures doesn't always make sense, but He holds on to his hope in Christ. Paul is persuaded that come what may, Jesus is committed to his ultimate triumphed.

Apparently, Lydia Poland has the same confidence.

That is what Paul is saying to Timothy – ***STAND TALL AND SUFFER!***

But how can we accomplish something like that?

We talked about it a little already, and we will see that as we read on, but here it is –

***KEEP THE FAITH!***

#### VERSES 13-14

Keep in mind that Timothy was struggling, he was afraid, ashamed of the Gospel because of the persecution that it brought upon his life. I think we can relate to Timothy here.

So how can we – ***KEEP THE FAITH!***

This is not complicated, and you don't need to know Hebrew or Greek to understand it. This is very clear. Paul told Timothy, "**Hold fast the pattern of sound doctrine . . .**" II Timothy 1:13.

Why would he have to hold fast to sound doctrine?

Because if he doesn't, someone will try to snatch it away from him.

And Paul will deal with those who are trying to snatch away healthy or sound doctrine, the false teachers with their false doctrine or doctrines of demons. In fact, it will cause some to depart from the faith because of these unhealthy teachings, these demonic doctrines!

In fact, in II Timothy 1:15 listen to what Paul says, **“This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.”**

We don’t know anything about these men except what we are told here but they were leaders in the church and well known, even there in Ephesus!

And keep in mind that when Paul speaks of Asia, he is not speaking of the far eastern continent but the Roman Province of Asia or mostly modern-day Turkey.

Ephesus was located in the Roman Province of Asia and thus, Timothy was aware of the situation.

Paul does not want Timothy to be swayed by these men, but he wants Timothy to hold tight the pattern of ministry that he had sketched out for him when he was with him.

Keep feeding the flock healthy words or sound doctrine, not the words of man or the worlds philosophies!

And what we see today is that many have not held tight to sound doctrine and it has been snatched away and replaced with garbage, with entertainment!

In fact, many churches across America have become atheological or they are without any solid theological convictions, the Word of God is not important to them.

What tends to be important is the latest fad, the newest technique to grow a church, this new band, and the list goes on.

I can’t tell you the last time someone called looking for a church to attend and they asked me ***“What do you teach?”*** or ***“Do you teach from the Bible?”***

They tend to ask me, ***“Do you have any single women or men at your church?”*** Or ***“Do you have a kid’s ministry?”*** Or ***“How big is your church?”*** And that list goes on!

Paul wants Timothy to hold onto sound doctrine or healthy doctrine, not to let go of it, but to teach it to others!

How important that is for us today to hold fast to healthy doctrine and not be tossed to and fro by the winds of doctrine that come blowing through the church.

One pastor said this,

During a radio interview some years ago, I said, ***“What is particularly tragic about the many scandals that plague evangelicalism today is the fact that so many churches, and so many individuals who call themselves Christian, have little concern for biblical truth and biblical standards of living. In the name of love, understanding, and peace within the church and with society, almost any theology is accepted, or at least not challenged, no matter how much it may contradict Scripture.”*** (John MacArthur – II Timothy 1:13)

I think he nailed that.

You see, once you don’t have Biblical truth then your Biblical standards for living is going to be off.

And we see that today with the acceptance of all kinds of immoral behavior, accepting it or saying that there is nothing wrong with it or even being involved in it from homosexuality to transgenderism to abortions, to divorces, and the list goes on and on.

Listen to how this plays out. We are told,

At a former church, a youth leader came up to me one day and said, ***“I’m trying to figure out the way God judges sin. The best I can figure it, I assume he grades on the curve like they do at school. You know, 70% good is a passing grade.”***

I had bad news for him. God has a standard and it’s not 70%. James 2:10 tells us, ***“For whoever keeps whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”***



This means we can be like Ivory soap, 99 and 44/100% pure, and still miss the mark if being graded on who we are and what we've done is our plan for justification.

This is precisely why salvation by grace is so necessary.

- Source Unknown

You might not see this as a big deal, but did you know that a majority of people who describe themselves as Christian (52%) accept a ***“works-oriented”*** means to God's acceptance.

In other words, they added works to grace and thus, I don't believe that they are saved if they think by working your way in is needed. We are either saved by Jesus, the work is finished, or we will never be saved!

In contrast to that we see a minority of adults (46%) who describe themselves as ***“Christian”*** expect to experience eternal salvation because of their confession of sin and acceptance of Christ as their savior.

As I have said, that 52% is going to be shocked when they die because works don't save a person, Jesus does!

The study also found that ***“huge proportions of people”*** associated with churches whose official doctrine says eternal salvation comes only from embracing Jesus Christ as savior ***“believe that a person can qualify for Heaven by being or doing good.”***

That includes close to half of all adults associated with Pentecostal (46%), mainline Protestant (44%), and evangelical (41%) churches. A much larger share of Catholics (70%) embraces that point of view. (<https://bit.ly/3S3Q61x>)

Again, this is what happens when you move away from the truths of God found in the Word of God. You have no moral compass to guide you and thus, what sounds good, what feels good is what we end up embracing!

Make no mistake about it, today, we want to experience God and that is fine, as long as it is in accordance with the Word of God.

We all experience God every day, but now experience has replaced the Word of God and anything and everything goes.

Like I have said before. We see today that there are Christian witches, Christian mysticism, Christian yoga, Christian Ouija boards, we see that all roads lead to God, it doesn't matter what you believe and so on!

Listen to what Eugene Peterson, the author of the Message, had to say with regard to this idea of spending time in the Word of God.

This is what he wrote,

***“Why do people spend so much time studying the Bible? How much do you need to know? We invest all this time in understanding the text which has a separate life of its own and we think we’re being more pious and spiritual when we’re doing it. . . . [Christians] should be studying it less, not more. You just need enough to pay attention to God. . . . I’m just not at all pleased with all the emphasis on Bible study as if it’s some kind of special thing that Christians do, and the more they do the better.”***

That is funny to me because he wrote the blasphemous – The Message Bible! Go figure!

Maybe Eugene Peterson is so offended by those who read the Bible because it exposes the fact that he is teaching doctrines of demons and thus, he wants to keep people in the dark.

Now don't be upset with what I just said, it is true.

The Bible says, **“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”** Joshua 1:8-9.

So who are you going to listen to? Will it be Eugene Peterson and the many, many others who are steering you away from the Word of God, or will it be the Lord who wants us to meditate and read His Word so He can guide us?

It is up to you, but I don't want junk food, I want healthy food, healthy doctrine, sound doctrine that is in the Word of God!

And let me ask you this. When you die and go to be with the Lord do you think He is going to say to you, to me, ***“Hey Joe, man you spent too much time in the Bible. Come on, no one spends that much time reading it. Read and then move on! Don't be a fanatic about it!”***

Of course He isn't and like we have seen, we are to be in the Word of God. We are to read it, mediate upon it, and apply it to our lives!

And we see here that Paul is reminding Timothy that God had committed to him the Good News, the Gospel Message and by the power of the Holy Spirit, he will fulfill the work he was called to do if he would only exercise his faith.

Where does the Holy Spirit dwell?

The Bible and Paul tells us here in II Timothy 1:14 that the Holy Spirit dwells in us!

What does that mean?

That this is the key to faithfulness. God requires a faithfulness from us that is greater than we can fulfill by our own resources.

Unless we walk in the Spirit and are filled with the Holy Spirit, we cannot keep faithful to what we must keep faithful to.

Paul spoke of this in Galatians 5:16, “**I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**”

Paul is commanding believers to continually walk in the Spirit, not just when you feel like it!

He uses the Greek word *PERIPATEO*, (per-ee-pat-eh'-o) for “**walk**” and it is in the present tense, which speaks of a continuous action, a habitual way of life!

How does the Holy Spirit influence our lives?

First of all, the Holy Spirit influences our lives by the Word of God, the Bible.

Also, He uses others to minister to us.

And he also speaks to our hearts as we are sensitive to His leading, His guiding.

The result of walking in the Spirit is that you will become more like Jesus!

Now here's the thing. If we truly walked continually in the Spirit then we would not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

But inside these bodies of flesh there is a war going on between the flesh and the spirit, a battle of the wills you might say.

Our will and the Lord's will for our lives.

Think of our bodies as having two hard drives, one that is programmed according to the flesh nature and the other according to the Spirit. Thus, we must choose which drive to use, each will work but the outcome will be completely different.

You can't live off the flesh drive or make it work better. God wants you to work off the Spirit drive and as you use the Spirit drive, it will make the flesh drive better and as we receive our new bodies, we get an upgrade of resurrection proportions!

Make no mistake about it, there is a spiritual warfare going on and thus, we are told to walk in the Spirit, fill yourself up with the things of God, feed the Spirit so the flesh will not manifest itself in your life!

Now you may be thinking I am going overboard on this, ***“Is this really true? Is there this spiritual battle going on?”***

You bet there is, and Paul goes on to show us this battle in Galatians 5:17, as he wrote, **“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”**

We too need to hold onto, keep guard, what God has given to us – ***HIS WORD!***

God is faithful in what we commit to Him. Are we faithful in what He has committed to us?

We need to be!

The key of course is the power of the Holy Spirit working in us, like I have said.

We need to be careful that that we don't hinder what He is trying to do; we don't grieve Him by our actions or inactions but submit our lives to His control!

Richard Niebuhr once said, ***“The great Christian revolutions come not by discovery of something that was not known before. They happen when somebody takes radically something that was always there.”***

We don't need new truths, but a faithful reminder of all that's biblical. We need a ***“pattern of sound words.”***

Make no mistake about it, we need to – ***STAND TALL AND SUFFER!***

In other words, when we stand up of the truths of God found in the Word of God, when we present the Gospel message that says that Jesus is not just a way to God, but He is the ***ONLY*** way to God, the world will come against you.

Stand tall and don't be fearful, don't be ashamed of the Gospel, but God has called you and God will work things out according to His plans and His purposes. We just need to walk!

And the sufferings of this world don't compare to what the Lord has for us as Paul reminds us, **“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”** Romans 8:18.

Paul is telling us that as Christians we will suffer before we are glorified just as Christ did. And in that it shows that we are joint heirs with Christ, children of God.

Now, here in Romans 8:18 Paul is saying that these sufferings are only temporary, they don't compare to what God has for us.

In other words, suffering prepares us for heaven, so we must prepare for suffering. And as Paul is telling these believers that they would suffer for Christ, the Holy Spirit is teaching us that we too will suffer for Christ!

As one writer put it,

***Sufferings cannot be compared to the glory that is yet to be revealed. Even the creation waits for the revelation of the sons of God, and it also groans to be released from its corruption. Believers in Christ also groan to be adopted. Because of human weakness, children of God do not know what to pray for, but the Spirit makes intercession with God for us. All things work together for good for those called of the Lord according to His purpose.***

While we may be thrilled at being heirs of God and fellow heirs of Jesus Christ, there are consequences to our position that may not thrill us. Suffering is the necessary prelude to glory.

Glory awaits us; the suffering is now.

- Woodrow Kroll, Romans – Righteousness in Christ, p. 135

How can we accomplish this in our lives?

Paul tells us how – ***KEEP THE FAITH!***

By the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God will empower us to ***STAND TALL*** in the midst of ***SUFFERING!***

Let me close with this. We are told,

It is located in Tennessee, on the Mississippi-Tennessee state line, and it is name ***“McNary County.”***

Many, if not all, will recognize this county by its reputation and story if not by name.

In the early 1960’s the area around the state line had become an area of ill-repute.

The story is told that either the sheriff was afraid of the organization or that he had been bribed to overlook the illegal activities.

In 1964 – a new sheriff was elected. A former Marine, former wrestler, Buford Pusser was a force to be reckoned with.

Over the next 6-8 years, he set out to clean up his home (county) which he dearly loved.

Several movies were made of his actions and activities as he sought to clean up the illegal and immoral activities.

Most of us remember the title, ***“WALKING TALL.”***

The mantra of Buford Pusser was ***“Walk Tall” and carry a big stick.***

I submit that “*walking tall*” is a term used for anyone who goes against the grain, the tide of society, and seeks to make a difference.

We can find, read, and understand the many people in scripture who walked tall.

Some of these would be Elijah, Daniel, Post-Pentecost Peter, Paul, Stephen, and the list goes on.

Today, our culture begs for people to “*Walk Tall*”, to stand for “*truth*” and “*right*” and to stand against evil and wrong.

Will you be one?

It takes no effort to go with the “*flow*.”

- Source Unknown

How true that is. It takes no effort to go with the flow but, for us, “**Do not blush or be ashamed then, to testify to and for our Lord, nor of me, a prisoner for His sake, but [with me] take your share of the suffering [to which the preaching] of the Gospel [may expose you, and do it] in the power of God. For it is He] Who delivered and saved us and called us with a calling in itself holy and leading to holiness [to a life of consecration, a vocation of holiness]; [He did it] not because of anything of merit that we have done, but because of and to further His own purpose and grace (unmerited favor) which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began [eternal ages ago]. [It is that purpose and grace] which He now has made known and has fully disclosed and made real [to us] through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, Who annulled death and made it of no effect and brought life and immortality (immunity from eternal death) to light through the Gospel. For [the proclaiming of] this [Gospel] I was appointed a herald (preacher) and an apostle (special**



**messenger) and a teacher of the Gentiles. And this is why I am suffering as I do. Still I am not ashamed, for I know (perceive, have knowledge of, and am acquainted with) Him Whom I have believed (adhered to and trusted in and relied on), and I am [positively] persuaded that He is able to guard and keep that which has been entrusted to me and which I have committed [to Him] until that day. Hold fast and follow the pattern of wholesome and sound teaching which you have heard from me, in [all] the faith and love which are [for us] in Christ Jesus. Guard and keep [with the greatest care] the precious and excellently adapted [Truth] which has been entrusted [to you], by the [help of the] Holy Spirit Who makes His home in us.”** (II Timothy 1:8-14, The Amplified Bible)

***MAY WE STAND TALL!***