

Entrusted with the Gospel:
Studies in 2 Timothy, #2
Nov. 12, 2017

"Do Not Be Ashamed"
(2 Tim. 1:8-2:2)

--CEFC 11/12/17; 5/19/91

There is a lot of talk these days about "values"--
What are the values you want to teach your kids?
What are the values that ought to be taught in the public schools?
What are American values?

It's a tricky subject—especially when you talk about values in the public square.
For the question is immediately asked--
"Whose values?"

So the ideal is to find some set of universal values
that are somehow neutral--
that is, they aren't tied to any particular
religious, cultural or ethnic tradition—
in other words, values that are acceptable to everybody.

What would you include in such a list?
Certainly there would be honesty--
everybody would agree that you need to be honest,
without that, there could be no real relationships.
Then there's respect for authority,
without which there can be no civil society.
There's generosity—
that's a value that everybody appreciates—esp. in other people.
And there's tolerance and inclusiveness,
you hear a lot about those these days.
But there's one more that I find
gets very little attention in our public discussion, and that is loyalty.

I think loyalty ought to be included in any basic list of virtues
because it is a fundamental principle of ethics.

Loyalty is a faithfulness to one's allegiances, commitments and obligations.

Some loyalties are entered into voluntarily--
like the loyalties of marriage and of friendship.
Others are simply given to us as a part of who we are--
like the loyalties of kinship, or community, or country—
a loyalty we call patriotism.

Loyalty is required of a citizen—
its breach is called treason.

And loyalty is valued in a friend—
there, its violation is called betrayal.

Loyalty is that cohesive principle which forms the bridge
between the free individual and the claims of the social world.
For every form of loyalty lifts the individual out of themselves,
and binds them into relationship with others.

It's the glue that makes social life possible.
Without loyalty, it would simply be every person for themselves.

That's why the Greek moral philosopher Seneca called loyalty,
"the holiest good in the human heart."

But all virtues are shown to be real only when they are tested or challenged.

So courage is seen when one acts in the face of fear.
Or real honesty is displayed
when lying would be to your advantage.

And obedience is most virtuous
when you are given a command you don't like.

And loyalty?

Loyalty is proven to be authentic
when the one to whom you are devoted seems to have let you down
or appears to be somehow unworthy of your allegiance.

Right now, there are a lot of University of Florida Gator football fans
whose loyalty is being put to the test!
Will we really "all stick together in all kinds of weather,"
as the traditional Gator song puts it so poetically?

And loyalty is put to the test when it will cost you something—
Will you stick with someone whose reputation has been tarnished,
knowing that your loyalty may tarnish you?

That's why false friends are like a shadow,
keeping close to us while we walk in the sunshine,
but leaving us when we cross into the shade.^{1/}

In this second letter to Timothy,
the Apostle Paul's circumstances have become dark.
He is suffering the disgrace of a Roman prison--
and his friends have disappeared like a shadow in the shade.
v.15--"**You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me,
including Phygelus and Hermogenes,**" he writes

¹Christian Bovee, *Illus, Unlimited*. p. 227

Does Paul have any real friends, any loyal friends?

This letter has that question at its very heart--

it's an appeal to loyalty.

Paul is addressing a friend--one could even say--his dearest friend--

Timothy is "**his dear son**" he says in v. 2.

He misses Timothy's deeply--

**"Recalling your tears, I long to see you,
so that I may be filled with joy"** (v.4).

"Do your best to come to me quickly," he writes later in the letter.

"Though I am in prison, Timothy--do not be ashamed of me--

do not turn you back on me,

but join with me in suffering for the gospel."

There is great poignancy in this epistle when viewed in this way--

the pathos of a man in pain

appealing to the loyalty of a trusted friend.

But this letter is not just about a personal loyalty to Paul--

No, it is even more about Timothy's loyalty to Christ

and his loyalty to the gospel message of Christ now entrusted to him.

And in that, it is of great importance to us also.

It's about our loyalty--

our loyalty to Christ;

our loyalty to Christ's people;

and our loyalty to Christ's message in the gospel.

It's about a loyalty that stands firm and is not ashamed.

Please turn with me back to 2 Timothy.

Remember, as we said last week,

Paul is writing this letter from a Roman jail.

We begin with 2:8--

"So do not be ashamed to testify

[or, as it may be translated]

do not be ashamed *of the testimony* about our Lord,"

Why should Paul feel the need to give Timothy this kind of admonition?

I could understand him saying,

"Do not be afraid to testify about our Lord."--

it could land you in jail.

But why should he speak of being ashamed?

The answer must be that the gravest challenge

to the believer's loyalty to Christ
 does not come from the blatant coercive power of force
 that attacks one's body;
 but from the more subtle psychological threat
 that attacks one's pride.

We all feel a need to fit in,
 to be socially accepted,
 have a sense of value and honor.
Shame is an attack on all of that.
 Shame involves a sense of dishonor,
 of social disapproval,
 of rejection and humiliation.

That's why shame is such a powerful form of punishment—

In earlier days in our country, there were scarlet letters for adulterers
 and stocks in the public square for thieves.
 Now those forms of public shaming
 are considered cruel and unusual punishments.

We've turned to the power of the internet and social media instead.

I think of the case in 2013 of Justine Sacco.

Sacco was a 30-year-old senior director of corporate communications.
 As she was beginning a vacation,
 feeling rather frisky,
 she tweeted some rather offensive comments and ethnic jokes
 while she waited at Heathrow Airport in London
 for her 11-hour flight to South Africa.

By the time she had arrived in Cape Town,
 her tweets had become the no. 1 trend on Twitter.
 By the time Sacco had touched down, tens of thousands of angry tweets
 had been sent in response to her comments.

There was someone at the gate to take her picture when she arrived.
 Workers were threatening to strike at the hotels she had booked
 if she showed up.
 She was told no one could guarantee her safety.
 Within three weeks she had lost her job.²

Sacco was held up to public ridicule--
 We say she was pilloried--
 a verb that comes from the pillory or stocks once used for that very purpose.

Many people today would rather spend time in jail
 than have their picture and name printed in the local paper
 and be required to have a bumper sticker on their car designating them
 as a drunk driver,

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/15/magazine/how-one-stupid-tweet-ruined-justine-saccos-life.html> accessed 11/10/17.

much less as a sex offender.

Shame is powerful.

But why should anyone be ashamed to testify about Christ?

Jesus is the Son of the God, the glorious Savior of our souls--

What could be shameful about him?

The simple truth is that Jesus Christ, the crucified Messiah

has always been a object of social derision--

a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, Paul says.

He was a stumbling block

first, because of his claims of divinity--

It was foolish, if not blasphemous, to think that this poor Galilean rabbi

should claim to be equal to God.

"**He who has seen me has seen the Father**," he said,

"**Before Abraham was, I am**," he claimed;

--and they tried to stone him for it.

I am God's Son, he asserted,

and they demanded that he be nailed to a cross.

Jesus Christ was a stumbling block because of his claims to divinity,

and the foolishness of this man Jesus

was only magnified by his crucifixion.

I don't think we appreciate what a scandal crucifixion was

in the Roman world--

Cicero condemned crucifixion as "a most cruel and disgusting punishment."

"To bind a Roman citizen is a crime," he said,

"to flog him is an abomination,

to kill him is almost an act of murder:

to crucify him is --What?

There is no fitting word that can possible describe so horrible a deed."

God's Son died as a crucified criminal!!--

the idea was crazy!!

You'd have to be insane to believe it.

But "**Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord**," Paul writes.

The foolishness, the offense, dare I say, shame of Jesus Christ

continues in our day—

Those ancient prejudices against Jesus still hold,

but we added some causes of offense of our own.

Some are offended simply by his antiquity--

we live in a world that prides itself in being modern—

Our is a world that worships progress,

a world that idolizes technology.
And in the world of modern technology, newer is always better, isn't it.
Who would ever want an old phone if you could get a new one?

How foolish it is to think that this man who lived 2000 years ago
could possibly have anything of value for our lives today!

Some are offended by Jesus' other-worldliness--
Ours is a scientific world—
a world in which the only truth is empirical truth—
Don't talk to me unless you have some scientific study to back up your claim.

Jesus doesn't fit into that kind of world.
Christians claim that Jesus performed miracles,
he cast out demons,
and, more than that, that Jesus rose from the dead.

That's ludicrous—
that kind of stuff just can't happen.
It's all legend, it's primitive folklore--
Nobody with any brains would actually believe in all that stuff--
not literally, surely!

Still others are offended by Jesus' exclusiveness,
Jesus said he was the Way, the Truth, and the Life--
no one can come to the Father except by him.

The first Christians said that there is salvation is no one else,
for there is no other name under heaven given among men
by which we must be saved.

But we live in a pluralistic world--
So how can Jesus be the only way?—
what about the sincere Muslim,
the Buddhist, the Hindu, or the humanist?
Jesus as the only way?--
It is an offense to talk in such exclusivistic terms today.

His divinity, his crucifixion, his antiquity,
his other-worldliness, his exclusiveness—

And now, for those who actually take what Jesus said seriously,
he is considered offensive for his moral teaching.

Our world is not only pluralistic, it is also permissive.
We believe in personal autonomy—expressive individualism.
each person has a right to determine what is right for them,
and everybody else has to respect that.

But Jesus didn't seem to talk like that—
He had some pretty strong views—

you might even say he was dogmatic and judgmental. about some things.

Some take offense at Jesus' words on wealth, for example—

it is dangerous, he said.

It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

He called people who wanted to hoard their material wealth fools.

Still others are offended by his teaching on sexuality, gender, and marriage—

Jesus taught that there is such a thing as a created order—

"at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female,'" he said.

**"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,
and the two will become one flesh.'**

So they are no longer two, but one.

Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." (Mark 10:6-9).

And he taught that even to look at a woman lustfully is to commit adultery in your heart.

This is not the kind of thing that people today want to hear.

Sure, lots of people like Jesus because they mistakenly think

that he just went around be nice to everybody

and accepting everybody—

the perfect model of tolerant inclusivity.

That's just not true—

Jesus believed in moral truth—

and he had some very strong things to say about how we ought to live.

Why would anyone who was simply nice and non-judgmental get crucified?

Jesus' teaching was provocative and controversial.

Some of Jesus' own relatives thought he was "**out of his mind**" (Mk. 3:21).

The religious leaders of his day accused him of being possessed by demons.

When they could stand him no more, they had him put away.

Jesus challenges us—all of us—

he did then, and he does now.

That's why Paul has to urge Timothy--

"Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord."

For what did Jesus say?--

"If anyone is ashamed of me and my words

in this adulterous and sinful generation,

"the Son of Man will be ashamed of him

when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

(Mk. 8:38)

Will you be shamed into silence?

Or will you remain loyal to Jesus Christ?

But notice how closely Paul aligns loyalty to Christ with loyalty to himself--
 v. 8--"Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord,
 or ashamed of me his prisoner ..."

They go together, you know--Christ and his people--
 as much as we may dislike it, it's true.

Some find this their greatest stumbling block to becoming a Christian.

Jesus Christ I like--
 it's all those Christians I can't stand.

There arises in their minds an overwhelming social and psychological barrier
 to becoming identified with Christ.
 I know this was true for me for many years.

So let me be the first to admit that some us Christians are obnoxious
 and disagreeable and downright ornery.
 Christians can give the impression of always being piously self-righteous,
 and overly somber and sober.
 Their idea of a fun is spending endless hours having Bible Sword drills,
 hardly the kind of people you want to spend time with on Saturday nights.

More serious though, Christians can be downright hypocritical--
 judging others for the very sins they are guilty of themselves.

And in recent days, we have seen the unfortunate identification of the term "Evangelical"--
 a term that rightly refers to the gospel in all its beauty--
 the term "Evangelical" has become identified in the popular press
 with a particular political party.

I don't have any problem with individual Christians engaging in partisan politics--
 I just don't want the church to do it.
 I don't want anyone to think that the values of the kingdom of God
 can coincide completely with any political platform.

And I would say that if you don't feel some tension
 between the platform of whatever party you support,
 and the teaching of Jesus, then something is wrong.

I am frankly grieved that the term "Evangelical"
 has become so closely associated with the right wing of the Republican Party.
 Again, I have nothing against Republicans--
 there are things that Republicans stand for that I can support.
 But the church of Jesus Christ must never be seen as the Republican Party at prayer.

That can be an unnecessary stumbling block for the gospel.

But even when our Christianity is serious and thoughtful,

and we are seeking to be a faithful witness to the gospel,
 I think the biggest obstacle for many people who come across
 is simply that Christians don't quite seem to be "with it"--
 they're not quite "in step" with the world around them.
 They think a little differently,
 the things they value are not the same as the popular consensus;
 They're social misfits.
 Who would ever want to be identified with them!

I remember thinking that way very distinctly as a high school student.
 I had it in my mind that all the Christians were Nerds,
 though we didn't use that term in those days.

Now we Christians today try to overcome that image--
 we try hard to become respectable in the eyes of the world.

We're seen as intellectual lightweights
 so we try to get degrees from respectable universities;

We're seen as those on the margins of society
 so we try to put the spotlight on Christian personalities
 who hold respectable positions in our culture--
 sports heroes, mostly,
 but also a few entertainers and successful business people.

But I want to let you in on a little secret--
 all that respectability stuff--it's all just propoganda--don't believe it.
 Being a true follower of Christ will never be completely respectable
 in this fallen world.

The one who walks in the footsteps of Jesus
 will always be out of step with the culture.
 The one who is led by the Spirit of God
 just won't conform to the spirit of this age.

Don't let anyone fool you.

What did Jesus say?
 "Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
 for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets" (Lk. 6:26).

**"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.
 If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own.
 As it is, you do not belong to the world,
 but I have chosen you out of the world.
 That is why the world hates you."**

Paul says, **"Do not be ashamed of Christ, or ashamed of me his prisoner."**
 for loyalty to Christ demands loyalty to Christ's people.

Again, I admit--Christians do all kinds of crazy things in the name of Christ--
things that embarrass me.
There are times when it is good and right to distance yourself from so-called Christians
that are defaming the name of Christ.

But I must not be ashamed to stand shoulder-to-shoulder
with any true brother or sister in the Lord,
who is rightly representing Christ in the world,
no matter how socially unacceptable they may be.

There is a proper loyalty to other believers that comes with our common confession.
Loyalty can include loving criticism and correction—
that's what family and friends do for one another.
But loyalty is called for, nonetheless.

I can also distinctly remember at the time of my own conversion,
recognizing that if I was to accept Christ
I also had to accept being association
with this somewhat odd group called Christians.

They had to become my spiritual family—
and family relationships demand one's loyalty.
Onesiphorus was not ashamed of Paul's chains,
and he is commended by Paul.
He will surely find mercy on that final day
when he stands before his Lord.

For however you treat the least of these my brothers, Jesus says,
that's how you treat me.

A challenge, then, to be loyal to Christ's people.
I know that can be a challenge—but what does loyalty mean when it is never tested.

A third charge to loyalty that Paul gives to Timothy and to us
is the challenge to remain loyal to the gospel, which is Christ's message.

It is a challenge, for Paul says in v. 11 that
"of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher.
That is why I am suffering as I am."

There is an air of inevitability in Paul's words--
to remain loyal to the message and to proclaim it
is to invite persecution.

It comes with the territory--it's an occupational hazard.
Paul will declare later in this letter that
"everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus
will be persecuted" (3:12).

Why?

Because the gospel is an inherently provocative message.
Notice how the Apostle describes it in vv. 9 and 10--³

1. First, this gospel insists that men and women need rescue--
through the gospel "[**God**] saved us"--
the gospel declares that men and lost and need to be found;
that men are sinners and need to be forgiven,
they are bound for hell and need to be rescued.
God must "save" us.

That's not a flattering message--

that's not what people want to hear.

Anyone who has an exalted view of themselves—

and thinks they are fine, upright, respectable people—

they will never embrace this gospel message.

We must first be humbled;

we must recognize our need;

we must admit that there is something deeply offensive to God
that we need to be saved from.

2. Second, this gospel is provocative because it insists on righteous living--
"**He has saved us and called us to a holy life.**"

The gospel message says that God not only saves us from punishment,
he saves us for his righteousness.

The gospel demands a moral difference in our lives--

a submission to the authority of Christ in the way you live.

Changes will be required.

You must turn away from all that is offensive to God

and turn toward his good will for your life.

This is what the Bible calls repentance—

it involves acknowledging that God is God and I am not.

I am created to live as he created me to live—

I am to reflect him in the world—

We are to be holy, as he is holy.

That means that becoming a Christian means becoming a new creature—

we must die to ourselves;

putting to death the practices of our old nature—

sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire and greed,

anger, rage, malice, envy, and stubborn selfishness.

We must die to our old nature,

and put on the new nature—the nature of Christ—

and clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience,
forgiving others as Christ has forgiven us,

³This is from Clements, sermon on this text, 1980

and over all these things, put on love which holds them all together.

In our fallen, sinful state,
apart from the new life of the Holy Spirit working within us
holiness doesn't sound very attractive.
All we can think of are all the things we must not do.
But by the work of the Spirit, our eyes are opened to see the beauty of holiness—
holiness is nothing less than the sum of all moral perfections of God himself.
Holiness is a glorious thing!

This is what God saves us for—
this is what God calls us to—a holy life.
We are to recognize that the moral quality of our lives
is the most important thing about us—
especially as this issues in relationships of love.

But again, apart from the Spirit of God giving us new eyes to see
the beauty of God's holiness,
this gospel call to holiness will never be very popular in our world.

3. Third, this gospel is provocative because it is a message of grace--
**"he saved us and called us to a holy life—
not because of anything we have done
but because of his own purpose and grace."**

There is nothing more insulting to human pride than grace--
You mean there's nothing I can do?
no way that I can contribute to my own salvation?
--no, nothing.

He saves us solely on the basis of his gracious will.
All we can do is receive his gift--that's all.
We can never earn it; we can never deserve it--
That's not very flattering to the human ego.

4. And finally this gospel is provocative because it is centered on
the historical revelation of God in Jesus Christ--
**"This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time,
but it has now been revealed through the appearing
of our Savior Christ Jesus."**

Again, this gospel is based not on some abstract philosophical or religious principle
but on a historical event—
the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.
the man who was born in an obscure village
who never wrote a book, who never held a political office,
who never traveled more than 200 miles from his hometown.
This gospel claims that this one man changed all of history forever.

He has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light--

he was raised from the grave
and now reigns at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

He is greater than any human authority--
no dictator or tyrant, or parliament or court stands above him.
He will render judgment on them all.

This is a provocative message.
I tell you, it will get you into trouble--

But I challenge you to remain loyal to it, Timothy--

v. 13--
"What you have heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching"

v.14--
"Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—"

2:2--
**"And the things you have heard me say
in the presence of many witnesses
entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."**

Remember the historical situation--
Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles is nearing death--
he likens his life to a athletic contest--
"I have finished the race"

But there is a bigger race going on here--
one that has more than just a single contestant.
This last verse, 2:2, reminds us that the Christian race is a relay.
You can see four legs of that relay listed here--
There's Paul, the Timothy, then Timothy's hearers and then their hearers--
there may be 200 years of church history represented in these words.

And of course, the crucial moment in a relay race
is the exchange of the baton.
Paul has finished his race, but the Christian race continues,
and now Paul is concerned with the exchange of the baton.
He wanted to be sure that the gospel message would be carried on faithfully.

Notice that he doesn't appeal to an infallible Pope,
or some authoritative council of Bishops
whom Timothy could turn to.

There was no need for charismatic prophecy
or for creative theologians.

Timothy is simply given the duty of preserving faithfully
the message that had been entrusted to him--
"What you have heard from me," Paul says.

Paul was an Apostle--an apostle by the will of God--

he held a uniquely authoritative position in the life of the church.

The twelve apostles were a first-generation phenomenon--
 when they died there would be no more like them.
 The church through all ages is to hold on to their words
 found in the books of the New Testament.

Paul calls it a "**pattern**" of instruction—
 the gospel has a shape that is to be preserved.
 It is a delicate balance of interlocking truths--
 don't twist it; don't distort it.
 Don't take just one part of it without the whole.
 "**Keep the pattern of sound teaching**" Paul urges.
 As one commentator puts it--
 Timothy is not to be a creative architect but a draftsman,
 carefully tracing out the pattern given to him.⁴

It is pattern,
 and it is a **deposit**--
 The gospel is not a vague subjective experience--
 it is a body of apostolic teaching.
 You are to defend this faith, you don't define it.
 It is a deposit put into your hands.

Timothy is to remain loyal to this message,
 and so should we--
 It is a message given to us once and for all--
 the first century apostolic teaching
 is normative for the church of every age.

That explains the importance of the Bible in our church--
 We hold on to the Bible, we teach the message of the Bible--
 not out of some narrow, fundamentalist conservatism,
 but because the teaching of the Apostles demands it.
 It is a deposit of truth entrusted to us--
 and we are to be those reliable people who will also teach others.

Now, we must beware of a dry orthodoxy--
 for Paul tells Timothy that he is to keep this sound teaching
 "**with faith and love in Christ Jesus**"
 The letter must be given life by the Spirit--
 we must speak the truth in the love of Christ, always.

The Spirit who lives in us, Paul promises in v.14,
 will aid us in our efforts.

We must remain loyal to Christ's message--

⁴Ibid.

with the Bible in our hands
and the Spirit in our hearts.⁵

Passing it on to those who in turn will be faithful also
so the baton may be exchanged, and the race may be won.

**"So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord,
or ashamed of me his prisoner. ..."** says Paul,
for **"I'm not ashamed..."**--
I've remained loyal,
I've kept the faith.

I am not ashamed, because, in v. 12, **"I know whom I believed . . ."**

For the Christian's loyalty ultimately depends
not so much on what one believes,
but on whom--
The Christian is not simply committed to a set of doctrines,
but to a person--
Jesus Christ.

Are you ashamed of him?
Can you think of who he is and what he has done
and still be ashamed?

The story is told of a mother who once saved her little girl
from a burning house,
but in the process, suffered severe burns on her hands and arms.
When the girl grew up,
she didn't know how her mother's arms had become disfigured.
She was ashamed of her mother's scarred, gnarled hands
and she always insisted that her mother wear long gloves
to cover up their ugliness.

But one day the daughter asked her mother
how her hands had become so scarred.
For the first time her mother told her the story
of how she had saved her life.
The daughter wept and said,
"These are the most beautiful hands in the world--
Don't ever hide them again!" /

Are you ashamed of the Christ who died on a cross for you?

Paul knew the love of that cross, and he was not ashamed of it--

⁵Ibid.

in fact he said, "**May I never boast
except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (Gal. 6:14).

He knew the love of his God and he knew his faithfulness--
"**I know whom I have believed,
and am convinced that he is able
to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.**"

Paul had entrusted his worldly prosperity
and his physical well-being to his Lord;
he had entrusted his personal honor to his Lord;
he had entrusted his very life to his Lord.

And he knew that his Lord was able to guard
all that he had entrusted to him until the end.

So where's your loyalty?

Are you loyal to Christ and his people and his gospel?
Some here may have never come to grips with that question before?
You may have to decide for the first time
if you will pledge your allegiance to Jesus Christ--
for that's what faith is, you see--
a lifelong loyalty to Jesus Christ.

And it is in baptism that that loyalty is formally declared.

There are some here who need to say Yes to being baptized
as a public demonstration of your loyalty to Christ.

Are you ashamed to confess your faith in Jesus before all these people—
are you ashamed to be associated with him and his people?
are you ashamed to stand by his message?

Don't be--
and he won't be ashamed of you!

Prayer—

quietness

Think of Peter who confessed absolute loyalty yet denied the Lord.

We need to confess that same failure.

May we think of Peter gazing into the eyes of Christ on the cross
this one whom he denied.

Closing Song: Different than Bulletin—
484—Who Is On the Lord's Side—vv. 1,3,4

Benediction:

May we not be ashamed of the Gospel
for it is the power of salvation for all who believe--
Lord, may that gospel prosper through us for your glory, AMEN.

Entrusted with the Gospel:
Studies in 2 Timothy, #2
Nov. 12, 2017

"Do Not Be Ashamed" (2 Tim. 1:8-2:2)

Loyalty doesn't get much attention as a moral virtue these days, but the Apostle Paul calls on Timothy to display it in the appeal he gives in this letter. That appeal now comes to us.

I. Remain Loyal to Jesus Christ

*"Do not be ashamed
to testify about our Lord" (v. 8)*

II. Remain Loyal to God's People

"Do not be ashamed of me" (v. 8)

III. Remain Loyal to the Gospel

*"Guard the good deposit
that was given to you" (v. 14)*

*In the light of his love for you,
will you be loyal to our Lord?*

Discussion *Questions*:

"Do Not Be Ashamed"
(2 Tim. 1:8-2:2)

- What is loyalty? Why is it a critical moral value?
- In your relationships in this world, here are you called to be loyal? How has your loyalties been tested? Where are those loyalties hard?
- Why might someone living in our culture be tempted to be ashamed of Jesus? of his people? and of the gospel message? How do you feel this temptation? How do you counter it?
- How can we be disloyal to Christ? to his people? to the gospel message?
- What does it mean to be "called to a holy life"? What does a "holy life" look like? In what areas of your life do you need to grow in holiness?