

Suffering for the Gospel

Description

2 Timothy 1:1-10

Young Timothy is pastoring a broken church struggling to thrive, while nearby false apostles are offering a glitzier gospel telling people all they want to hear. Timothy only has the mundane and messy incarnational gospel which means hard work in the real world.

So Paul encourages Timothy to stir up the low embers of his faith, fanning them into full flame, and to join Paul in suffering for the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul himself writes all of this while in chains, his own missionary endeavors stalled while he sits in prison. It all smells of failure, yet Paul is convinced that the gift of God's call persists and the Spirit enables them even now with theological power.

The gospel gives us a power not to avoid suffering, but a power made perfect in weakness. It's the paradoxical truth that Jesus revealed and embodied while hanging on that painful cross with the most powerful love.

How might God be calling you not to timidity, but to power, love, and self-discipline in real challenges?

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