

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • TV113B

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, MARCH 23RD, 1980

By

HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
JANUARY 15TH, 2016

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Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

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 Bible today to the book of **2 Timothy chapter 1**. I am going to be speaking on the subject: **“WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?”**

When Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, he was chained in prison, in danger, 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 **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.”* Then, in **2 Timothy chapter 4: verse 16**, he said: *“At my first answer; no man stood with me but all forsook me.”*

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

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

He says: *“Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.”* Paul said in **Romans**, *“I’m not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

Then, twice in the book of **Romans** Paul said: *“Whosoever believeth shall not be ashamed.”* “Do not be ashamed of the gospel Timothy.” Then he said, *“Do not be ashamed of those who preach the gospel.”*

If you look there at **verse 8** you will see that. He said: *“Don’t be ashamed of the gospel and don’t be ashamed of me the prisoner of Jesus Christ.”*

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 on the behalf of Christ 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 1:8** the apostle Paul begins this letter to young Timothy who he called *“his son in the ministry,”* this old man of God awaiting execution and 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**; this is very important, I want you to take your Bible and while I am speaking to you, you look down and read these verses that I am going to quote to you.

Now, **2 Timothy 1 verses 9 and 10**; Paul identifies this Gospel of 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 of. 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 love 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.

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

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

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 righteousness’s are filthy rags.*” They are 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 presence.*”

Thirdly: The first mark is this: It’s a work of God for us and it’s not in return for our works or because of our works but according to his grace.” What’s 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 from 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.*”

The Lord 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, (and not because of our works), but according to his purpose and his grace which was given to us, (when, before the foundation of the world), which was given us in Christ before the world began.*”

Fourthly: Now, watch **2 Timothy 1:10**: It is the gospel of divine visitation. Look at **verse 10**; it says there in **verse 10**: “*It is now manifest; (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 will look at the Old Testament you will find in the Old Testament many prophecies about the Messiah. Those prophecies are about Christ.

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

If you look in the Old Testament you will find many sacrifices: There are the turtledoves, the lambs and the sheep, and the goats and the bullocks, and all of these different sacrifices. These are all pictures of Christ.

You will find Feast Days, you will find the priesthood. You will find the tabernacle and you will find furniture in that tabernacle. You will find a brazen serpent. You will find a smitten rock.

You will 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 that were born under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons, (the righteousness of God). The Word of God was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

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, don’t be ashamed of those that preach it, and Timothy; dare to bear the afflictions and the persecutions for preaching the Gospel.”

Fifthly: It is the Gospel of a completed work; it’s the Gospel of an effectual work!

Paul says: *“Christ our Lord hath appeared and He hath abolished death.”* He hath destroyed the power of sin. He hath conquered the great serpent. He hath conquered sin and death and hell. He hath appeared and He hath destroyed death, abolished death, and *“brought life and immortality to life through the gospel.”*

When our Lord was on the cross He said: *“It is finished,”* the work is done!

**“Tis done, the great transactions done
I am my Lord’s and He is mine,
He drew me and I followed on
Charmed to confess His voice divine.”**

Christ bears 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.

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

God doesn't demand that I bring 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 has finished it.

Now, in **verse 11**, "*Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*" 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."

Now, 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 have committed to him against that day.*"

There are three things that I want you to see here, the definition of saving faith, and I think it will help you; it has helped me. I have looked through the years and I have been preaching now 29 years and I've looked through the years to find 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 and material faith and miracle faith and all of these different faiths. James says, "*The devils also believe and tremble.*"

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 Paul gives us here the definition of his faith, what Paul knew:

First of all: What Paul knew; he said: "*I know whom I have believed.*"

Now, here's a key word w-h-o-m; "*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 and their laws, their rules, their regulations and their peculiarities of their particular, religious denominations.

But Paul doesn't say "I'm willing to suffer for 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 is an experience they had many, many, years ago and they will be glad to take you back to the old country church or they will take you back to the old place behind the barn or out in the field when they had an experience.

But Paul didn't say: "I know when I have believed." That's not nearly as important as "*I know whom I have believed.*"

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And then Paul did not say: “I know how much I believed.” 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.”*

The Gospel my friend is concerning a person. If you will take your Bible and turn to **Romans chapter 1, verses 1, 2, and 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 is a parenthesis. It says: *“He promised before by the holy prophets in the scriptures.”* But **verse 3** says: *“concerning his Son.”* Now, the Gospel of God is concerning His Son. That’s what it is all about.

It is not, “I know what I believe or when I believed or how much I believed.” Paul said, *“I know whom I have believed.”* This is what he is 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: *“Thy throne O God is forever. Unto the Son he saith, thy throne O God is forever.”*

When Paul was speaking to 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 came from Mary’s womb in Bethlehem? That was God in human flesh. Who was that walking the dusty streets of Jerusalem and Judea and the shores of Galilee? That was God in the flesh.

Who was that hanging on Calvary’s cross pouring out His soul unto death? That was God in the flesh. Paul said: *“I know whom I have believed.”* I know He 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 acceptance by all men that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners.” I know Him *“who is the friend of sinners.”*

Paul said, “I know Him who was numbered with the transgressors. I know him who bears the sin of many. I know him who was 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 bears 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. I know Him who will come

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

again and receive me into glory. Christ said, *“If I go away I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also.”*

The Lord Jesus Christ 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 living Lord. Do you know Him? *“Eternal life is to know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.”*

Saving faith is the knowledge of God! *“Timothy, do not be 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 where I was saved; I was there when it happened.”

Or they say, “I know how much faith I’ve got.” It’s, *“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’s Christ.

Second: 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 friend, 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, cancels that great, enormous, debt. He must be not only willing, but he also must be able.

Paul said: *“I know whom I have believed and I’m persuaded (I’m confident) that he’s able.”* Able to do what? **First**, Paul 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 alright, to the uttermost extent of sin, to the uttermost extent of failure, to the uttermost extent of infirmity, to the uttermost extent; Christ able to save.

Why? 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 beloved 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 plea, *“by his stripes we are healed.”* Paul said, *“I’m persuaded that he is able.”* Able to do what? Save me!

Second: He is able to do everything he promised to do!

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

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, *“Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling.”* He is able to keep me saved, I need that.

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

Third; now watch this, I’m going to die someday, I’m getting older and someday I am going to die and they are going to bury my body. My Redeemer is going to have to raise it. No one can raise the dead but Jesus Christ.

He proved it at the tomb of Lazarus. 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 are safe in Christ. You are not safe in your experience. You are not safe in the church. You are not safe in your own holiness; you are safe in Christ.

**“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.”**

Because He is not only willing to save me, He’s able to save me!

This will close the message, a definition of saving faith. It’s knowledge of Christ. It is a trust or a persuasion of His willingness and His ability. What Paul knew was Christ. What Paul was persuaded of, that Christ was able!

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Thirdly: Now; Paul tells us something that he had done intelligently, willingly, and lovingly. He said, *“I have committed it unto him against that day. I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded that he is 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, and ridiculed by the leaders of religion. Paul confronts the whole world with a holy boldness and he says: *“I have 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 fare in that day? How will your experience fare in that day? Everything we believe and everything we hope and everything we cling to 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 will be with you in death. *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death; I will fear no evil for he is with me.”*

In the Judgment Christ 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 sins not in part
But the whole,**

**Are nailed to the cross
And I bear 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 has shed his own blood for my soul.”**

It is well; 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, his ambitions; he had committed it all to Christ.

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

2 TIMOTHY 1:12 • HENRY T. MAHAN

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 His.

And then he 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 will go back to the dust from whence it came.”

But my Lord is going to raise it 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 and I’ll be raised in strength. I’m buried in shame but I will 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 are going to see him and be just like him in that day.” I’ve committed it unto Him against that day!