

Norman C. Schwab
Yacolt EV Free
November 29, 1998

Put Your Eggs in One Basket
II Timothy 1:9-12

In 1970 Katherine Powers, a student at a University in Boston, was a leader of the radical National Student Strike force. She and several other members planned to raise money to buy arms for the Black Panthers, by robbing a bank. Kathy drove the getaway car, but the robbery went bad. A silent alarm was quickly answered by patrolman Walter Schroeder. Shots were fired and one of Kathy's accomplices killed Schroeder. That night Kathy began a life of 23 years on the run, listed as "very dangerous" on the FBI's most wanted list. In the late 70's Kathy moved to a small town in Oregon. She settled down under the assumed name of Alice Metzinger, gave birth to her son, entered the restaurant business, bought a house and married. She was an active part of the community on the outside the picture of peace. But at age 44 Kathy powers was desperately tired, tormented by guilt and shame, chronically depressed. Finally she did the only thing she felt she could to end her agony. In September 1993 she went to Boston and turned herself into the authorities. When asked why she did it, Time magazine quotes her saying, "I am now learning to live with openness and truth, rather than shame and hiddenness."

Shame is a powerful emotion and will rear its ugly head whenever falling short of Truth. One who experiences no shame in opposing truth, has become callused to Truth itself and failed to honor the God of Truth Himself. We can choose to honor the God of Truth and experience the shame and suffering from the gods' of this world, or we can choose to honor the gods' of the this world and be shamed in the eyes of the God of Truth. One brings life and freedom the other brings imprisonment, depression, guilt and an overwhelming feeling of wanting to quit. Whose eyes will choose to honor?

Turn your Bibles to the book of II Timothy. The letter of the dying Apostle Paul to young Timothy is filled with powerful emotion from a man who shares his concerns Timothy desperately needs to hear. Paul is on

his deathbed. He is in prison and will soon die. II Timothy captures the last words from a dying man, and we do well to listen carefully. In the face of intense persecution. With the prospect of many deserting the faith. Paul passes the baton to Timothy and says, now run well. Don't give up. Keep the faith. Guard the gospel that has been entrusted to you. Don't be looking around at others. Don't be caught looking over your shoulder at what the world honors. Don't be ashamed of standing for the Truth. Look to His eyes for honor. Choose to suffer for the gospel. Join me in suffering for the right things. It is no waste to suffer for Truth. What you are doing is worthwhile. Don't we all need to be reminded of that? Pursuing Truth and righteousness is worth doing. We will not be honored by most of the world for standing up for the truth, in fact we are guaranteed to take some heat. But, Paul wants to keep us on track..what we are pursuing is worthwhile. We are on the right track.

In the late 80's when I told my boss and co-workers I was turning down another promotion in Management Engineering with PG and E, to instead go study four years at a seminary in Dallas. They gave me the strangest look and said, You seem like a normal kind of guy, why would you want to go to cemetery school? This choice did not raise my esteem in their eyes or in the eyes of some unsaved family members, but I told them. I enjoy what I do, but I want the best that God has for me. I know that if I'm doing what God wants me to do, I am going to find the most joy in life, for there is nothing better than doing what God Almighty has crafted us to do. It was a choice for shame in the eyes of those who did not love the same God I loved. It was a choice of foolishness for those who logically looked at the financial hit I would take stepping off the corporate ladder. But, I Corinthians 1:27, 18 "God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong." v. 18 The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God."

We are called to honor our Lord even in the face of shame by the world, for it is by the power of God, not the world that we are saved. Read with me in II Timothy chapter 1:8-12 (READ)

Do not be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord. or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the

power of God. We will be doomed to a lifeless existence of boredom and spiritual deadness. We will feel like giving up, quitting, if we consistently decide to be ashamed of God, His name, His testimony, ashamed of the gospel, ashamed of His people. How can we turn from imprisonment to freedom and life and walking in the joy of the Spirit? Not only must we look to His eyes for honor. Not only must we be ready to suffer for truth. Here comes point number one. We must #1 Draw from His power source. Look at the bottom of verse 8, according to the power of God. When you feel like quitting you will feel like you have to do everything all on your own and you are unable to even lift a finger. It will feel like it is all up to you and there is no help in sight. Paul reminds Timothy. It's not your power, but God's power...not your working hard, but God who is the One at work. We did not save ourselves, but God saved us. Look at verse 9 who has saved us? (God) who has called us? (God) not according to our works, but God's own purpose and grace. We are saved by God. Empowered by God and resting in His purpose and grace. When we feel like quitting it helps to remember to draw from His power source not ours, to do that it helps to remember what He has done for us. His justice; getting what I deserve. His mercy; not getting what I deserve and His grace, getting what I don't deserve. When you think about quitting think about all He has given you and the power of God available to you to make it through even the most difficult suffering and shame. Freedom comes from honoring the God of Truth and being willing to be experience the shame of the world. When you stand for truth you will know that it is God's power that is lifting you up. Draw from His power. You are not alone.

Point number 2 that Paul reminds Timothy and we too who are in danger of giving up in discouragement. We need to be reminded that what we are doing is worthwhile. Point 2. Be confident in God's plan. Look again at verse 9 this section of scripture is just packed with truth. God not only saved us but he called us with a holy calling. It was His own purpose and grace granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity. He planned this thing long ago. In fact he planned our involvement in His plan since before the beginning of time. He knew you would be sitting here listening to God's word being preached. He has called each of us to a holy calling. His divine requirements ring loud and clear, Be holy for I

am holy. That incredible calling made possible only through the power of His grace. Grace for forgiveness and grace to live righteous lives before Him.

We did not think up this plan on our own. This was God's idea. We were considered not only in a general way, but in a very specific and special way. He planned our part in it. Ephesians 2:10 "We are his workmanship created, crafted in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

God has crafted each man, woman boy and girl in the universe as unique. No one else in the world is as good at being you as you are. We tend to look around and compare ourselves with others. When we compare we tend to look at their strengths against our weakness. We look at the part that God gave them to play in His incredible plan, and then look at our part and feel pretty insignificant. Folks, God did not choose us to make us look good. He did not choose us to be significant. He is significant, and because we are connected with Him and His plan. Because we are identified with Christ. Romans 6. Buried with Him and raised in resurrection power with Him. We are significant and part of something incredibly significant because He is significant. Be confident in His plan. Enjoy your part in God's plan.

Three men were digging in a trench. A man passing by asked the first man. What are you doing. He looked up from his shovel with a very tired and worn out face and replied I'm just digging a hole. He approached the second man in the trench and asked, what are you doing. He replied more business like, I'm putting in a water pipe to that building. He had to interrupt the third man because he was so intent on shoveling his dirt. He asked him the same question. What are you doing? The man smiled and replied, "Look over there...I'm building a cathedral!"

These guys were doing the exact same activity but had a totally different perspective and grasp on the ultimate purpose. Paul says to Timothy, don't get discouraged by the mundane. Don't be put off by others who are abandoning ship. Don't get down from the ridicule, the persecution, the shame. Look at what you are a part of. You are involved in something fabulous. When you are tempted to become discouraged, feel like your getting no where, feel like your just out there all alone shoveling dirt, remind yourself, "I am involved in a timeless purpose of a

timeless God. I have been chosen before the foundations of the earth were poured. Be confident in His Plan and enjoy your part of His plan. Jesus being the climax of the plan. The plan revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolish death and brought..Abolished is the word Katergeo, the same word in Romans 6 in referring to the death, of our sin nature. It does not means to wipe out and annihilate death, but to nullify it's effects to render powerless the grip of death. Death has many different meanings in the Bible. Death can refer to physical death, spiritual death, eternal death, separation from God. Here death refers to Jesus who has conquered the sting of ultimate and eternal death. I Corinthians 15:55 "death is swallow up in victory. The victory of Jesus Christ. O death where is your victory, O death where is your sting. We do not need to fear. He has replaced our eternal death warrant with eternal life. He has brought us out of darkness and into His marvelous light, through the gospel. What a fabulous plan. And each believer here today is a part of the that great plan. Paul says his part in verse 11. "for which I was appointed..a prophet, apostle, teacher. Are you feeling like giving up? Feeling like quitting? Then remember you are involved in a timeless purpose of a timeless God. Be confident in His plan and enjoy your part.

Point number three. If we want to move away from things that will discourage us, get us down and make us feel like quitting. We must not only draw on His power source and be confident in His plan, Third, We must keep our eyes on His watch. Watch His watch. Be in tune with his timing. His plan and our participation in His plan was not only His idea but it came in His timing, granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity. All eternity. When we get discouraged about the ridicule and suffering. When we feel like quitting because it seems like the bad guys are always winning and the good guys end up looking ridiculous. From whose perspective are we viewing our situation? If you believe that this life here on earth is all there is and there ain't no more...you will be doomed to a life of discouragement and frustration. Thank God there is more to this life. We must get over becoming overly enamored with the baubles of this world. There is more to this life. More than just living and dying, trying to make it through this life. Keep your eyes on His watch, His timing not our own. John 10:10 Jesus says, "I have come that they have LIFE and have it more abundantly. True light casts out fear, it casts out darkness.

In Him was life and that life was the Light of Man. Jesus Christ the One who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. If you are in Christ...you are going to live eternal life, overwhelmed by a peace and freedom you could not even imagine. When you feel like quitting think about that. Reset your watch to His time, divine time.

In order to keep on the right track. In order to help us keep from discouragement and those aching feelings of quitting, we need to be drawing from the right power source. Be confident in His plan, enjoying our part in the plan. Keeping our eyes on His watch and finally, put all our eggs in one basket. Conventional wisdom says, hedge your bets, limit your risk, cover your losses, don't burn your bridges behind you, make sure you leave an out, keep your backside covered, don't put all your eggs in one basket. Then we come to verse 12 of II Timothy. Wow! what a great verse. This would be one to memorize. READ. Paul knows whom he has believed and is convinced, persuaded. Paul is sold out, burned all bridges of the past. God is the only one whom he is trusting for His soul, his salvation, his life. For that stand..because he stands for truth. Because he preaches what is not necessarily popular, he suffers. But he is not ashamed. He may suffer for his faith, but he refuses to dip into the self inflicted emotion of shame. He has honored the God of Truth instead of the gods of this world...in that there is no shame. To suffer? yes that's a guarantee. To be ashamed. Never. Because the eyes are looking up to God for honor, not around to see who is looking at them. His eyes are looking to a different source for honor. The world would love to be the giver and taker of honor. Don't let the world be the focus of your honor. Don't allow the world to set your standard. Don't let others be your honor broker. Look only to His eyes for honor.

Paul says, I know WHOM I have believed. Not I know what I have believed, or when, or how, or why. Paul's confidence is based on WHOM he knows. What we know is important. Truth and doctrine are vital to real faith, but Christianity is not in essence a commitment to a doctrinal statement or creed. It is founded on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The one Who is worth placing our faith in. We can get the facts all right and miss the most important part of faith. That our faith is in a person who lived and died for us. Died for our sins that we might have life and have it more abundantly. He is the life that pushes out the

darkness and confusion. Don't look to others...get to know Him. God's ways are different for different people. We can't smash others into the mold He used to draw us to himself. God is bigger than denominations. Bigger than church constitutions. Bigger than different styles of worship. If you are growing with God. If God thrills and excites you then Know Him! Truth is important. Even more important is knowing the One who is Truth.

Paul says I know Whom I have believed and am convinced that He will guard what I have entrusted to him. Knowing Whom we have believed will help shift our thinking in the middle of suffering. Shift from the "God..why me" question. to the "God..what now" question. Joni Earackson Tada is a quadriplegic since her late teens in a diving accident. She writes that all handicap people start out in the God, Why me stage. That is normal to question, to wonder what in the world God is up to, why is He picking on me. She says that people who suffer from long-term pain and suffering must make the shift from Why me God to what now God or else they will be doomed to a slow, silent spiral down into the blackness of a very deep depression. Many of whom will never look up to see the light of day.

Are you ready to make the shift, from darkness to light? Some of you have never taken the essential step. You have never put all your eggs in one basket. In a few moments I'm going to ask if some of you are ready to make the shift, from darkness of your sin, to the light and life found in Jesus Christ. Are you ready to trust God and God alone for your very soul, life and salvation? Are you ready to entrust to God your unanswered questions? your failures? your suffering? your feelings of inability? your hopes? your fears? your blown expectations? Some of you may feel like quitting but have realized you never have even started. You want to get right with God. You realize you are a sinner. Romans 3:23 All have sinned. We know the result of that sin is death. Eternal death, separation from God. The Bible says the wages of sin is death. But..the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Are you ready to look only to Him for honor. To admit your a sinner. To believe and receive Him as your Lord and Savior. To put all your eggs in the One basket of Salvation...Jesus Christ. To trust Him alone. Not because of any good things or bad things that you have done, but because Christ has

provided for you salvation. His power..not your. His Plan..not your. His purpose..not yours. His choice..not yours. His timing...Is this the morning you will come and experience the power of salvation. Paul said. I am not ashamed of the gospel of God, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes. That person can be you this morning. Do not be ashamed. Do not think about what someone else may think. This is eternal business totally between you and God. Are you ready? Are you ready to make the shift out of darkness into His light? If you are I'd like you to pray silently with me right where you are sitting. Right there before God. You may think this is not your timing that you need to think about it some more...but it may be God's timing for you..don't shut him out. If He is talking to you...listen to Him. Pray with me. God I am a sinner. This morning I put all my eggs in your basket. I trust only in you and you alone for my salvation and very life. I believe Jesus died for my sins, I accept Him and receive Him now into my life. Thank you Lord for saving me, clean me and make me new. God, I look forward to getting to know you better in the coming months. Amen.

Everyone keep their heads bowed in prayer for just a minute longer. If you prayed that prayer, Life up your catch me in the eye. I want to pray for you. I want to encourage you.