

# CHARGE ONE: ENDURE ABUSE FOR THE GOSPEL 2 TIMOTHY 01:06–12

## *Introduction*

This passage begins a series of strong charges — charges directed to Timothy but applicable to us all. Charge one is an eye-opener; it strikes fear in some believers. Nevertheless, it is a charge that must be heeded by everyone of us: *endure abuse for the gospel*.

- I. Stir up the gift of God: fan into flame the gift of God. (v. 6).
- II. Do not fear — God has not given us the spirit of timidity (v. 7).
- III. Do not be ashamed of the gospel (v. 8).
- IV. Share in the sufferings of the gospel (v. 8-10).
- V. Look at Paul's example (v. 11-12).

## **I. 2 Timothy 01:06 Stir up the Spiritual Gifts**

First, stir up the gift of God, fan into flame the gift of God. What is the “gift of God?” This probably refers to spiritual gifts, the gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to every believer — the spiritual gifts which equip the believer to minister. The word “stir up” or “fan into flame” (*anazopureo*) can mean to keep blazing and to keep the flame of the fire burning. But it can also mean to rekindle and to restir the flame, indicating that the flame was about to go out. Which is meant here? No doubt Timothy faced what we sometimes face: times when he needed to be restirred and rekindled. But there is no indication that Timothy's flame was about to go out.

Keep this in mind: Paul was facing death; he was about to be executed. He clearly states this fact (2 Tim.4:6-8). Therefore, Paul sensed the need to give Timothy charge after charge. One of the very first things Timothy needed to do was to keep his spiritual gifts blazing and burning to the hottest point possible. The idea is present tense, which means it is progressive and continuous action. The believer is to *keep on* stirring up his gift, never letting its flame lose any of its intensity. He is to use his gift to minister and minister, never slacking up nor losing his zeal. God has gifted the believer to minister, gifted him in a very, very special way; therefore, he must minister. He must do exactly what God has gifted him to do.

**Thought 1.** Note: the problem with most believers is that they do not even know what their spiritual gifts are. There is a great need within the church to study the gifts and the great price God has paid to secure the gifts for His people. (See Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:7-16.)

**Mat 25:20** “The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’”

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*1 Tim 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.*

*2 Tim 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*

*Rom 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.*

*1 Cor 12:31 But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.*

*1 Cor 14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.*

## **II. 2 Timothy 01:07 Fear of Using Gifts**

Second, do not fear. God has not given us the spirit of timidity. Too often believers — laymen and ministers alike — fear using their gifts. They fear speaking up for Christ and the gospel — they fear...

- ridicule
- criticism
- embarrassment
- opposition
- mockery
- abuse

Being very honest, we have all experienced these fears at one time or another. We failed to witness — to use our gift in speaking up for Christ and in proclaiming the gospel lest we suffer persecution. But note the charge; it is clear and forceful: we are not to fear.

=> We are not to fear the face of man.

=> We are not to fear the trials that may come our way because we are living for Christ.

=> We are not to fear the ridicule and persecution that may be launched against us because we are witnessing and ministering for Christ.

Is it possible to keep from fearing if we live for Christ in this world, a world that is so evil and abusive? How can we keep from being apprehensive if we witness for Christ day by day? How can we keep from being cowardly when the world thinks that religion is to be kept in the church and not out in the world? How can we stand up for Christ when people mock and poke fun at anyone who lives for Christ?

This verse tells us how: we let God equip us. God's equipment does not include fear. The fact is clearly stated: God does not give us the spirit of timidity; God gives us the spirit of love and power, and of self discipline. The word *spirit* means the believer's spirit: the Holy Spirit of God actually injects power, love and self discipline into the spirit of the believer.

1. The Holy Spirit actually infuses power into the believer's spirit. But note: we do not receive power until we begin to minister. Power is not needed if we just sit around and remain silent about Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us power only when we begin to minister and actually need it. It is when we begin to live for Christ — to use our gifts to bear witness for Him — that the Spirit of God injects power into our spirit. When we begin to live and proclaim Christ, the Holy Spirit endows us with power, enormous power...
  - power to face the strain of difficulties and trials.
  - power to stand tall in living and witnessing for Christ.
  - power to take on the job and to do it well — to the very best of our ability.

*Acts 1:8* “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

*Acts 4:33* With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

*Eph 1:18-19* I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength.

*Micah 3:8* But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin.

*Eph 3:16* I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.

*Eph 3:20* Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.

*Col 1:11* Being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully.

*2 Tim 1:7* For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

2. The Holy Spirit infuses love into the believer's spirit. This is *agape* love, the kind of love that loves people even if they are sinners and enemies. It is a love that arises within the mind and will, not in the emotions. It is the kind of love that says, “I will love this person no matter what he does to me. I will care for, nourish and nurture him. I will share Christ with him. I will treat him just as I would want him to treat me if he knew Christ. I will love him and be responsible to him, no matter how he treats me.”

Note: this kind of love — the kind of love that can love sinners and enemies — is a gift of God's Spirit. No man can stir or work up *agape* love. *Agape* love is God's love.

God alone possesses it: therefore, God alone can give it to men. He gives it to all who live for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and who proclaim Him (cp. v. 8-10).

**John 13:34-35** “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

**Gal 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**Eph 5:2** And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

**Col 3:14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

**1 John 4:16** And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

3. The Holy Spirit infuses self-discipline into the believer’s spirit. “Self-discipline” (sophronismou) means self-control; the ability to control one’s emotions, feelings and thoughts in the midst of trials and circumstances, no matter how severe and stressful. It is just as it says, self-discipline — the mastery over one’s mind, over one’s heart and life despite the trial or opposition. When the believer begins to live and bear testimony for Christ, the Holy Spirit gives him self-discipline — a most glorious gift.

**Thought 1.** Think for a moment. Picture a genuine believer...

- who is living for Christ: walking in Christ and sharing Christ all day every day.
- who honestly loves people and treats people just like he should — no matter how they treat him.
- who is controlled — who controls his passions, feelings, behaviour and thoughts.

Picture such a person: Could God let that person live in timidity? Could God fail to keep from giving that person strength, that is, spiritual power and love and self-discipline? The answer is obvious. The person who truly lives for Christ and bears testimony for Christ is delivered from timidity:

=> he is given power, enormous power.

=> he is given love, great love for people, no matter who they are.

=> he is given self-discipline, peace, stability and security in a dying and insecure world.

**Rom 8:5-7** Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled

*by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.*

*1 Th 5:6-7 So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night.*

*2 Tim 1:7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.*

*Titus 2:6 Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled.*

*1 Pet 1:13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

*1 Pet 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.*

### **III. 2 Timothy 01:08 Witnessing the Gospel**

Third, do not be ashamed of the gospel nor of strong believers who are living and witnessing for Christ. The point and verse are clear enough. No believer is to shrink...

- from identifying with the gospel and the Lord of the gospel.
- from identifying with strong believers who are living for and sharing Christ.

We are to share the gospel — share by living for Christ and by speaking up for Him, bearing testimony of His saving grace. We are to stand up for those who share Christ when they are being ridiculed and persecuted. In fact, note the verse: we are to share in the sufferings of the gospel. Any of us who truly live for the gospel will be opposed and misunderstood by the world. Why? Because we do not live like the world; we do not live sensual, immoral, ungodly and worldly lives. We do not follow after the things of the world. Therefore, our righteous and godly lives convict the world of its ungodly deeds. Hence, the world ridicules and persecutes us. But we are not to let this stop us: we are not to shrink from living for and sharing the gospel. We are to jump right in with the strong believer and share the gospel with a starving and lost world that reels under the weight of evil, corruption and death.

*John 15:20 “Remember the words I spoke to you: ‘No servant is greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also.”*

*John 16:1-4 “All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known*

*the Father or me. I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you.”*

**Phil 1:29** *For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him.*

**1 Th 3:3** *So that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them.*

**2 Tim 3:12** *In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*

**1 John 3:13** *Do not be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.*

**1 Pet 4:12-13** *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.*

#### **IV. 2 Timothy 01:08–10 *Sufferings of the Gospel***

Fourth, share in the sufferings of the gospel. As stated above, this is the duty of believers. If we live for Christ — live for the gospel, live godly lives — the ungodly of the world will persecute us. There is no escape from it. But we are not to shrink from our duty. We are not to fear, nor are we to be ashamed of the gospel. We are to live for the gospel and proclaim the gospel. Scripture gives three strong encouragements, three strong reasons why we should stand up for Christ and the gospel.

1. We are to stand up for the gospel because God has saved us and called us with a holy calling. And note: God saved us by grace, that is, freely. We did not have to work one iota for salvation. We did not have to pay a cent nor do a single thing for salvation. God Himself saved us...

- He has delivered us from sin and the bondages of the flesh (sinful nature).
- He has delivered us from death. Think about it: we shall never die. When our time comes — at the last moment, in an instant of time, in a split second — God will transfer us from this world into His presence. We are saved from ever having to taste death.
- He has saved us from judgment and condemnation, from the punishment of hell.

God has done all this for us, and He has done it by grace — freely — simply because He loves us and wills to save us. How, then, can we deny Him? How can we dare be ashamed of Him and fear living for Him? How can we be ashamed of telling the world about His glorious salvation?



**Rom 3:20** *Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.*

**Eph 2:8-9** *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*

**Titus 3:4-5** *But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

2. We are to stand up for the gospel because God's purpose for salvation is eternal. Salvation was planned by God before the world was ever created. The gospel of salvation was given to us *in Christ* before the world was ever created. The point is this: the gospel of salvation — wrought through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ — is God's eternal plan. It is the only plan God has whereby people may be saved. If a person misses this plan, he will miss salvation; he will never be acceptable to God. Therefore, we — all believers — must not be ashamed nor fear proclaiming Christ. Salvation through Christ and the gospel of Christ is the only way any person can ever be saved. We must proclaim the gospel even if men oppose it, for they shall forever be lost if we fail to lead them to Christ.

**John 8:24** *"I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins."*

**John 14:6** *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

**Acts 4:12** *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

**1 Tim 2:5-6** *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men - the testimony given in its proper time.*

3. We are to stand up for the gospel because God has *now revealed* His purpose of salvation to the world. Note how God did this: "through the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus." What did Jesus Christ do to reveal God's purpose?
  - a. Jesus Christ destroyed death. How? How *in this world* can anyone ever destroy death? Very simply, Jesus Christ died *for man*. All that is within man — all that causes man to die — Jesus Christ took upon Himself. Jesus Christ took all the evil, sin and corruption that causes death — took it all upon Himself and died for man. Now think for a moment: since He has died for man, man does not have to die. Death is destroyed for man: man is freed from death; death no longer has a hold on man. (See *Jesus Christ, Mediator*; 1 Tim. 2:3-7.)

- b. Jesus Christ has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Man can now live forever and receive immortality. How? Through the gospel of life and immortality provided by Jesus Christ. When a person believes in Jesus Christ — truly believes by committing his life to Christ — God takes that person’s belief and counts it as the life of Christ. God actually counts the person as being *in Christ*. Christ is eternal and immortal; therefore, if a person is *in Christ*, he becomes eternal and immortal. He is immortal because he is *in Christ*. How can such a thing be? Because God *counts* it so. God takes our faith in Christ and counts it as immortality. God loves His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, so much that He will honour any person who honours His Son. God will honour that person who truly honours His Son by believing in Him — honour the person by doing exactly what the person believes about Christ. Christ proclaimed that any person who believed in Him would never die, but have eternal life. Therefore, if a person believes in Christ, believes the gospel of Christ, God gives that person life and immortality. (See *Justification*, Rom. 5:1.)

This is the *light of the gospel* — the glorious revelation of the gospel. Jesus Christ has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to man.

**John 3:16-18** “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”

**John 5:24** “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”

**John 8:51** “I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”

**John 11:26** “And whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

**Rom 8:1** Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

**Heb 2:14-15** Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

## V. **2 Timothy 01:11–12 Paul’s Testimony**

Fifth, look at Paul’s example. Paul endured abuse for the gospel. Paul says two significant things about himself.

1. Paul had been appointed and called to serve the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Three appointments are mentioned.



- a. Paul was appointed to be a preacher of the gospel. The preacher is a herald, a person who is appointed by a king to go forth and proclaim the message of the king. The minister is a preacher who is sent forth by God to preach the truth about Jesus Christ...
    - that He has destroyed death.
    - that He has brought life and immortality to light.
  - b. Paul had been appointed an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostle is a person who has been sent as a very special witness and on a very special mission. The minister is sent forth on the special mission to bear witness that Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and men. Jesus Christ has paid the ransom price for man.
  - c. Paul had been appointed as a teacher of the Lord Jesus Christ. The teacher is a person who instructs people in the faith and truth of God's Word. It is the gift to root and ground people in doctrine, reproof, correction and righteousness. God had called him to proclaim and teach the salvation that is in Christ Jesus.
2. Paul was not ashamed to suffer for the gospel.
- a. He knew that his faith was sure; he knew Christ. The point is this: Paul knew Christ on a personal and intimate basis. He walked with Christ day by day — was in fellowship and communion with Him. He had a personal relationship with Christ; therefore, he knew that his belief in Christ was true. This was the reason he was willing to suffer for the gospel: the gospel was true. A person could actually be saved from death and receive life and immortality; a person could actually live face to face with God forever and ever. Paul knew this — knew it beyond a shadow of a doubt. How? Because he knew Christ personally and intimately.

***Rom 8:16-17** The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

***Eph 1:13-14** And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.*

***1 Th 1:5** Because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.*

***2 Tim 1:12** That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.*

**1 John 1:3** *We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

**1 John 2:3-5** *We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him:*

**1 John 4:13** *We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.*

**1 John 5:10** *Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son.*

- b. Paul was persuaded of God's keeping power. Paul had entrusted both his life and work to Christ — all that Paul was as a person and all that Paul did upon earth was entrusted to Christ. The word "entrusted" (paratheke) means to deposit. A.T. Robertson says that Paul means, " 'My deposit' as in a bank, the bank of heaven which no burglar can break (Mt. 6:19f)" (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. 4, p. 614). Paul had deposited, turned everything he was and had over to Christ. Why? Because he knew that Christ could keep it and take care of it forever and ever. What exactly did Paul turn over to Christ? His life and work. Imagine!

=> Paul deposited his life into the hands of Christ; therefore, Christ *increased* his life, guided his life to bear the richest interest and the greatest return. Paul's *deposit of life* was *increased* to eternal life.

=> Paul deposited his work into the hands of Christ; therefore, Christ increased his work to bear the richest interest and the greatest return. Paul's *deposit of work* was *increased* to eternal responsibility and management for God. (See *Rewards*, Lk. 16:10-12.)

**2 Th 3:12** *Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.*

**1 Pet 1:5** *Who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.*

**Jude 1:24** *To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.*

3. Paul was sure that judgment was coming. Therefore, he committed his life and work to Christ in order to receive the reward of God and not the judgment of God. Paul knew that he had to stand before Christ some day and give an account for his life and work. This is the reason Paul did exactly what Christ said: he trusted Christ, and gave Christ

his life — totally. He deposited his life and work with Christ; staked everything he was and had upon Christ. Why? Because he knew that Christ would keep him and present him faultless on that day. Christ would present him to God as a follower of His, and God would accept Paul because Paul had followed God's one and only Son. Paul knew beyond question who it was that he was following: he was following the Lord Jesus Christ, the very Son of God Himself.

***Mat 16:27** “For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done.”*

***2 Cor 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*

***1 Pet 1:17** Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.*

***Jer 17:10** “I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve.” ■*