

(1:8-9) - Paul had encouraged Timothy to stand firm with him in conviction of the truth in Christ against the world. He had made it clear that the courage to stand and endure persecution was and is **“according to the power of God,”** and not our own power. This **“power of God”** by which we stand and endure is the same power by which God has saved us. It God **“Who hath saved us”** and not we ourselves. All of salvation is of God in and by the Lord Jesus Christ and all of His free and sovereign grace. God chose us in Christ, justified us in Christ, redeemed by Christ, regenerates and calls us by and unto Christ, and He keeps us unto glory in and by Christ. **“And called us with an holy calling”** - This is the invincible, irresistible call of God the Holy Spirit in the new birth (*John 1:12-13; 3:3-7*). God the Holy Spirit is the sovereign Agent of this calling, and the Gospel is the instrument (*1 Cor. 1:18-24; James 1:18*). This is a **“holy”** calling because it is uniquely special and powerful in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring dead sinners to spiritual life and faith in Christ. This **“holy calling”** is the fruit and effect of the work of Christ on the cross in our redemption (*John 6:37-45; 12:32*). It is the first evidence of election, redemption, and the work of the Holy Spirit within us (*1 Thess. 1:2-5; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 2 Pet. 1:10*).

**“Not according to our works”** - Neither salvation itself nor the **“holy calling”** is conditioned on or due to **“our works”** (*cf., Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7*). Our works before salvation are evil deeds, and our works after salvation are the work of Christ in us and through us by the Holy Spirit. At no time do our works save us or make us righteous before God. If our works could save us or give us spiritual and eternal life, we would not need Christ, God’s grace, or the power of the Holy Spirit.

**“But according to His own purpose and grace”** - All of salvation has its source and power in the **“purpose and grace”** of God in Christ. All of salvation, including our calling, is for God’s **“own purpose,”** which is to glorify Himself in the salvation of His people through Christ. God does not save and call His elect to Himself only to leave us to ourselves and our own ways and purposes. His purpose is *“to make ready a people prepared for the Lord”* (*Luke 1:17*); to take out from among the world *“a people for His name”* (*Acts 15:14*), i.e., for His glory; and to have a people to *“shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light”* (*1 Pet. 2:9*). He saved us and called us that we might be separated unto Christ, live by, for, and unto Him, and bring forth fruit unto Him. Again, all of this is by God’s **“grace”** in and by the Lord Jesus Christ.

**“Which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”** - Here is the eternal aspect of salvation. Our salvation and calling are the products of an eternal covenant made between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This is a great testimony to the absolute sovereignty of God *“who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will”* (*Eph. 1:11*). Grace was not an afterthought with God. It was His ETERNAL purpose from the beginning, even **“before the world began.”** It was always in and by the Lord Jesus Christ, conditioned on Him alone, and contingent upon Him coming in time to do His great work on the cross. Christ was set up as the Surety of His people **“before the world began”** (*cf., Eph. 1:3-11; Heb. 7:17-24; 2 Sam. 23:5*). His people are all whom the Father gave to Him, and they are all who in the power of the Holy Spirit come to and rest in Him for salvation. These truths may indeed go far beyond what our finite minds can comprehend, but they are glorious in exalting God and showing us our need of His grace in Christ.

**(1:10) - “But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ”** - Here is salvation in time. The eternal purpose and grace of God has “now” been “made manifest,” revealed, made public and visible, “by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ.” This refers to the incarnation, birth, life, walk, public ministry, and the crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. The work of Christ to redeem His people from their sins is the crux of eternity and time. “*He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*” (*Heb. 9:24*), and He accomplished this great work by establishing righteousness whereby God is just to justify His people (*Dan. 9:24*).

**“Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel”** - Christ, by His one sacrifice for sins, by His death, “abolished” eternal and spiritual death for all His people (*Heb. 2:14-18; 10:10-14*). This does not mean annihilation of death but that death is nullified or made of no effect, which is the result of Christ's death and resurrection. Death is reduced to powerlessness. Because of Christ's sacrifice, physical death loses its power or effectiveness over believers. In fact for a believer, death is the doorway leading to our entrance into the presence of our Lord and our Savior Jesus Christ (*1 Cor. 15:55-56*). This is all brought “to light through the Gospel,” i.e., by the preaching of the Gospel of Christ in Whom is “life and immortality.” He is the WAY of life (*John 14:6*), and the Holy Spirit reveals this in the preaching of the Gospel.

**(1:11) - Paul was chosen of God to be an instrument of His glory in preaching the Gospel.** He was given the authority and power of “an apostle,” one who received salvation and the message of salvation directly from the Lord and was commissioned in authority and power for the establishment of the New Covenant church. “**And a teacher of the Gentiles**” - This was Paul's special commission as a pioneer missionary to God's elect among the Gentiles. In this special commission he was sent all over the known world to preach the Gospel and used of God to write more than half the New Testament Scriptures.

**(1:12) - It was for this cause that Paul suffered opposition, persecution, and even imprisonment from the world. “Nevertheless I am not ashamed”** - In spite of all the hard times and trials, Paul was not afraid or discouraged from preaching the Gospel. His boldness and courage was not his own but of the grace of God - “**But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me**” (*1 Cor. 15:10*). Paul now states the source and motivation of His courage by the grace of God - “**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.**” This is the essence of true faith which is the gift of God and the operation of the Holy Spirit. Christ is the one object of true faith. Paul knew Christ and the power of His finished work to save him and make him righteous (*1 Cor. 2:1-2*). Paul was “persuaded” by the Holy Spirit that Christ was able to save him completely and keep him unto glory. Paul had “committed” himself and his whole salvation to one Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what gave him the boldness and courage to preach the Gospel in the face of all opposition.