

PODCAST START:

Brian: Welcome to the Queer Theology podcast!

Fr. Shay: Where each episode, we take a queer look at the week's lectionary readings. We're the co-founders of QueerTheology.com and the hosts for this podcast. I'm Father Shay Kearns

B: And I'm Brian G. Murphy.

B: Hey, there! Today is Sunday, October 6, 2019. Today we are going to be looking at 2 Timothy 1:1-14. I will read it to you now from the Common English Bible.

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, to promote the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus.

To Timothy, my dear child.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

I'm grateful to God, whom I serve with a good conscience as my ancestors did. I constantly remember you in my prayers day and night. When I remember your tears, I long to see you so that I can be filled with happiness. I'm reminded of your authentic faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice. I'm sure that this faith is also inside you. Because of this, I'm reminding you to revive God's gift that is in you through the laying on of my hands. God didn't give us a spirit that is timid but one that is powerful, loving, and self-controlled.

So don't be ashamed of the testimony about the Lord or of me, his prisoner. Instead, share the suffering for the good news, depending on God's power. God is the one who saved and called us with a holy calling. This wasn't based on what we have done, but it was based on his own purpose and grace that he gave us in Christ Jesus before time began. Now his grace is revealed through the appearance of our savior, Christ Jesus. He destroyed death and brought life and immortality into clear focus through the good news. I was appointed a messenger, apostle, and teacher of this good news. This is also why I'm suffering the way I do, but I'm not ashamed. I know the one in whom I've placed my trust. I'm convinced that God is powerful enough to protect what he has placed in my trust until that day. Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching that you heard from me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Protect this good thing that has been placed in your trust through the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

Oh my gosh, Shay. I can not, can not wait to dive into this. There's so much in this passage. I knew kind of a little bit about what I wanted to talk about beforehand, and reading it, there was like "more, more, more". So I can't wait! What's your LGBTQ Christian take on 2 Timothy?

2 Timothy 1:1-14

FS: I mean, first of all, I love this lineage of ancestors in this very first part. That's the thing that always jumps out at me first when I read this passage both Paul saying, "I'm grateful to God, whom I serve with a good conscience as my ancestors did.", but also this calling out of where Timothy's faith comes from, right? His grandmother, his mother. Often 2 Timothy is attributed to Paul, and Paul the kind of anti-woman person that he is often made out to be in this passage is calling on the very genuine, and rich, and authentic faith of two powerful women. That's where Timothy's, not only where his faith comes from, but also this gift that is in him to do this work. I think that that's really beautiful and it makes me think of both the ancestors in my life of faith, and also the ancestors in my life of queer and transness. Specifically, the women that I've learned from. I think that's a really powerful reminder, it's a moment to reflect on, and give thanks for those people that have influenced my faith, and that have helped me stay in it in the midst of suffering, and in the midst of kind of rethinking and reframing my faith that I had to do from childhood, and teen years, to today. In order to have a faith that is actually good news and life-giving. You know, that's really hard work and I've had a lot of mentors along the way who have helped me at pivotal points both mentors in person, but also mentors from books that I've read, and from preachers that I've heard. I think it's important to reflect on that every once in a while to give thanks, to remember on whose shoulders I stand, and in whose lineage I am. And that's really powerful. So that's the first thing that comes up for me. What about for you, I know that you got multiple things?

B: Haha yeah! So one of the first things that jumped out at me is reading the Bible literally versus metaphorically, and a certain type of Christian often says that they read the Bible literally and then turn around and read it very metaphorically in all of the places that are very clearly literal. So what they actually mean by literal is "I'm gonna pick and choose what I want to emphasize, but I'm gonna call that literal because it sounds better." Paul is a literal prisoner, he's not a prisoner in his sin, or shame, or whatever. He is literally been a prisoner, and that's so important to remember to think about the way in which everyone in America for the most part, looks at prisoners, or "criminals", or breaking the law. We hear, see protest happening especially if it's queer folks, people of color, poor people, immigrants, it's like "Oh, why can't they just do it in a way that doesn't break the law." Right? People really have this, my propensity towards "law and order", and we look down on prisoners. The whole Bible, we talked about this last week, is full of love and liberation for prisoners. This idea of then Paul later is talking about, "Don't be ashamed of the gospel. Please don't be ashamed of me." Paul had a reason why people might be ashamed. People are looking down upon him, he's been in prison, he's a persecuted, religious and political minority, and so this isn't Christians who have lots of political power in the US. Thinking like, "Oh, my co-workers don't get it that I like don't drink a lot." You know? They think it's kinda weird that I go to Bible saying, that's not the shame we're talking about here. The shame of growing up queer, or trans in a world that completely marginalizes or racist, mocks us. The shame of having HIV, of living with HIV. The shame of who you are and how you exist in the world being this thing that is scorned. We queer people know shame.

A little while ago we did an issue of our digital magazine Spit & Spirit, all about pride and shame, which you can get at queertheology.com/pride. Looking at like, God is powerful, and God can protect us, and this like who we are that might be a source of shame for us, is actually a source of pride, and power, and goodness. So I think that's the message for queer folks.

October 6, 2019

Gender, Shame, and Faith

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2 Timothy 1:1-14

[outro music plays]

B: The Queer Theology podcast is just one of many things that we do at QueerTheology.com which provides resources, community, and inspiration for LGBTQ Christians and straight cisgender supporters.

FS: To dive into more of the action, visit us at QueerTheology.com. You can also connect with us online: on Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, and Instagram.

B: We'll see you next week.

PODCAST END