

A Charge To Keep!

I greet you all in Jesus's name. I am **Sanjaykumar Bardhan**, Senior Pastor of Kingdom Dominion World Ministries (KDWM) India and Minister of Communications for the network of Kingdom Dominion World Ministries. It is my joy to pen down a few encouraging words to rejuvenate your soul and spirit.

In 2020, the COVID-19 Pandemic hit the globe, the entire world was full of fear and tension. There was a common saying, "that it will be good if we could remove 2020 from our calendar". It was not possible for us to say goodbye to 2020 but instead, we had to fight to survive this deadly virus. While many lives were lost to COVID-19, those of us who still remain have developed a fighting resolve to trust God and live healthier lifestyles.

Writing of what the world faced in 2020, brings me to highlight the Epistle of Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7, when he said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith". Many times, some of us do not want to face challenges in life; we want an easy process to complete our goals. It is said by some, "we like to swim but without training"; in other words, we want things in life, but we do not want to work hard for it. While Paul was writing to Timothy his spiritual son he was conveying to him, he was able to accomplish completing his mission, by keeping his faith in God despite challenges and personal weaknesses.

There are a couple life lessons worth highlighting from Paul's testimony of having strong faith:

The **first** and foremost thing I could recognize from his mission was his willingness. He was assured of his calling from God, and he was faithful to his call. What is willingness? According to the definition from Oxford languages, willingness is defined as "a state of being prepared to do something or readiness".

Jesus Christ appointed Paul as an Apostle and he served Jesus as one of His twelve disciples. Serving and following Jesus became the primary purpose and focus of Paul's life. Like many of us today, Paul experienced much suffering and hardships during his lifetime serving and following Jesus. Yet through it all, Paul was fully submissive and committed to God's high calling. Paul's willingness to serve was confirmed in scripture when Paul encouraged Timothy, to endure hardship like a good soldier (2 Tim. 2:3). Paul also shares with Timothy in 2 Tim. 1:10-13, "And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him."

We should allow Paul's testimony to be a great reminder to ourselves about the callings and purposes we have for Kingdom work. We are all called to serve God in some capacity, whether

as leaders - Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers (Ephes. 4:11); or in whatever way we are called to serve God, we must have a willingness to serve God despite life's challenges and personal weakness.

Secondly, Paul had a wonderful experience receiving vision directly from God on the road to Damascus. The vision Paul received, helped him to come to fully know who God was and what God had called him to do in his kingdom work. Paul's road to Damascus experience also helped him to know the Gospel of Jesus Christ and he developed strong vision for his purpose as an Apostle and follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Before Paul received his vision from God, he was living outside of God and working to destroy God's people and the kingdom work. However, as is stated in Proverbs 29:18, "where there is no vision, the people perish". Therefore, like with Paul, we must receive vision and purpose from God to know what it is we are called to do for the kingdom of God. Once we come to know, once God reveals vision to us, as with Paul, we are to be fully committed despite challenges and personal weaknesses.

Dear friends, we all go through different problems and difficulties but the same God that helped Paul, can help us to stand firm with His grace to face life's challenges. Paul mentions in 2 Corinthians 12:10, "...for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." He could say this because of the grace of God which was sufficient for him. As we remain willing and obedient to complete our kingdom work, we can say as Paul said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith". (2 Tim. 4:7) By this Paul was saying, he has done all that was revealed to him by God.

As I conclude, I bring your attention to a game called, hitting the bullseye; in which the arrow has to hit the target in the center. Likewise, when we receive vision and purpose from God, we must focus on our destination and purpose to finish our race as Paul did. No matter the challenges we face in life, no matter what painful events hit the globe, the faith that made Paul to finish his goal and accomplish the vision God entrusted to him, is the same faith we must have in Jesus Christ to help us finish our race. Let us all have willingness and vision to focus on the goals we have for the Kingdom work God has entrusted to each of us; and let us determine to finish well as Paul did and be able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith".