

Read: 2 Timothy 1:3-10

Feel Safe in the Midst of a Storm

2 Timothy 1:7,8

God did not give us a timid spirit, but a spirit of power and love and sound judgment. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Instead, join with me in suffering for the gospel while relying on the power of God.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Do you like thunderstorms?

Thunderstorms can be okay when you're inside of a house with your family and the windows are all shut. Thunderstorms aren't scary when you feel safe.

But what if you were camping in a tent, and a big thunderstorm started dumping rain onto your tent. The wind is blowing, the lightning cracks—BOOM! That thunderstorm would be a little scary, wouldn't it? Thunderstorms like that don't make you feel safe.

Today, Paul talks about being a prisoner. He was put into jail because he was preaching about Jesus. Paul even said that he would probably die before being released as a free man. Talk about scary!

But Paul was safe. Paul felt safe because he knew that Jesus had forgiven his sins. Paul knew he was safe, because Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to live in each Christian when they are brought to faith. Even though Paul was in a scary place, he was safe.

And scary things aren't scary when you are safe.

That's why Paul says these things in our reading. He basically says, "Friends! You're safe! You've got nothing to worry about. You have a Savior who rose from the dead. You have a Savior who made you his witness. You have nothing to be scared of, nothing to be ashamed about—because Jesus has taken away your sin!"

In other words: Dear young Christians,—you are always safe. And the Jesus who has made you safe wants to make you his witnesses. Witnessing to Jesus means talking about Jesus and remembering that the resurrection of Jesus means all sin has been forgiven.

It's true that talking about Jesus might bring some difficulty. After all, Paul was put into prison for talking about Jesus. That probably won't happen to you—but you might feel a little uncomfortable at first. That's okay! You're safe! You have nothing to fear; you have a Savior who has broken the power of death and opened the door to heaven. Nothing can hurt you... not even a thunderstorm!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Name something that is scary for you.
- When you're scared, what makes you feel safe?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- How can God use suffering to teach us to trust him?
- What is an easy way to practice talking about Jesus?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why would God allow suffering in our lives—especially if it is a result of our witnessing? (For instance, Paul was imprisoned for preaching about Jesus.) What good does God accomplish through suffering?
- Paul closes with a statement: “Join with me in suffering for the gospel while relying on the power of God.” Why must suffering as a Christian go hand in hand with relying on God's power?

Closing Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for making me safe. Give me the willingness and words to speak as your witness. Amen.