

Second Hand Preacher

2nd Sunday of Lent

March 12, 2017

2 Timothy 1:8b-10

So far this Lent, the cross has become very meaningful for me. I brought out a new addition to my growing crosses and crucifixes collection. It is a simple cross made of rusted barb wire. I took it to a KC meeting with me as a prop and found it a little tough to transport as the barbs stick to everything. I remember working with barb wire as a kid and finding it hard to handle. The wire was, however, effective in keeping cattle where they were supposed to be. Their interactions with the wire disciplined them to stay in the same place. This barb wire cross made me think of the pain which our Lord endured and we endure as well.

St. Paul tells Timothy of the crosses he will face as a Christian. Just because Timothy became a believer didn't mean he would be immune to the pain caused by hardship. Living a holy life does not free us from pain, but reminds us what the Savior has done for us. The death of Jesus, Paul explained, brought an end to death so that we might have life and immortality to come. The Gospel of Jesus makes this possible. Paul was trying to give hope to Timothy's community.

I had a relatively light braising with mortality, but I can have some empathy with those who suffer. Losses come in so many shapes and sizes whether that loss was to health, relationship, or material wealth they all come with a certain degree of suffering. Jesus didn't come to take all of that away, but he does suffer with us. This is the definition of compassion. Lent is a time for us to draw closer to the one who suffered for us. The one, who by dying set us free, loves each of us always. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the disciplines that bring us into a deeper relationship with Jesus. They are all actions of love and they expand our hearts that we may love others and trust in Jesus always.