

# How to Faithfully Endure

## Part 1 2 Timothy 2:8-13

*All disciple-makers suffer. But Paul offers five weighty truths to enable us to faithfully endure.*

LTS: Rom. 6:1-14

This week at the Shepherd's Conference in California, we heard Mark Dever say something like this: "If you are not obeying the great commission by either evangelizing the lost or discipling a believer, I'm not sure what you mean when you say that you are following Christ."

This raises the question of why Christian men and women don't actively engage in the great commission labor through personal ministry to others. I suspect there are a number of reasons, and most of them have to do with fear.

- I'm afraid that I'll say something wrong
- I'm afraid I will be rejected
- I'm afraid it will consume time that I have already committed to other good things
- I'm fear the person I know I should speak to may never speak to me again.
- I fear that I'll be passed over for the promotion I have been working toward.
- In some places, believers fear they will be arrested.

If you are a child of God and you are NOT fulfilling your part the great commission through gospel ministry or personal discipleship, what fear is holding you back? If your life were a ship, what do you fear will capsize you and sink you to the depths. And what if I told you that there is a way to keep your upright ship upright no matter how rough the sea around you becomes?

If you have been here for any significant length of time you know that I am fond of using the metaphor of a ship's ballast for stability in the Christian life. A ballast is a heavy weight in the bottom of a ship (sometimes its water, or sand, or large rocks) that ensures that no matter the forces

that slam against it to capsize it, the ship will always return to its upright position. The Christian life is NOT like a ship afloat on a sea with no storms, but like a ship at sea that no storm can destroy. And the reason no storm can capsize the believer's life is because there is such a weighty ballast in the deepest recesses of the of your soul that keeps you upright and faithful no matter how fierce the storm.

In our text for this morning, Paul offers Timothy (and us) five huge ballast stones that we should put in the depths of our souls to enable us to take risks (whether real or imagined) with strength and courage to fulfilling our part in the great commission.

Let's begin by reading the text.

Read 2 Tim. 2:8-13

There are four main points I want to emphasize. The first is: When you are tempted to be ruled by fear remember...

## **I. Jesus is Risen and Reigning (8)**

1. When Paul says that we should remember Jesus Christ is a descendant of David, he is saying that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Every Jew understood that when Messiah comes, he will come as the "seed (Lit. the spermatos) of David. That is, he would be the great, great, great, great, grandson of David, King of Israel. That is why Matthew begins his gospel narrative with a genealogy rather than a story. The first words of Matthew's gospel are "The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David..."

2. That is to say, Jesus is God's promised King! He is the preeminent One. He is the One who possesses all authority in heaven and earth. He is the protatokos - the firstborn over all creation.

3. You will remember from Luke 1, that the angel, Gabriel, said to Mary:

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

4. In John chapter one we are told that Jesus created everything that exists, and in Matt. 28 Jesus Himself declares that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to him. What does that mean? Well, if there is NO authority in heaven or earth that is higher than Jesus’ authority, then He is King.

4. So Paul is reminding Timothy (who struggles with timidity and fear) that the One whom he serves is King of all.

- He is sovereign over nature
- He is sovereign over all peoples and nations
- He is sovereign over angels
- He is sovereign over demons
- He is sovereign over all circumstances
- And he is sovereign over your next opportunity to fulfill your part of the great commission.

5. So, Timothy, remember that the King of kings has commissioned you to go into all the world and make disciples, and he has the authority to use you in every opportunity to accomplish the mission through your faithful speaking, teaching, and serving.

6. How can we be sure this is true? How can we know with absolute confidence that Jesus is God’s sovereign King? We know it because his resurrection proves it.

7. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cardinal fact that substantiates Jesus’ claim to be Messiah.<sup>1</sup> Anyone can claim that he is God’s promised Messiah. But Jesus proved it, first by the miracles he performed, and then by the fact that death could not hold him. “He has risen, just as He said.”

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<sup>1</sup> Larson, K. (2000). [\*I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon\*](#) (Vol. 9, pp. 283-284). Nashville, TN: Broadman

6. And by the way, Paul says that because Christ has been raised, we will likewise be raised to everlasting life. Therefore, there is no need to be afraid – even of death itself.

7. So that first ballast stone that Paul puts in our boat is this: Remember Jesus Christ is Risen and Reigning.

## II. The Word of God Cannot be Bound (9)

Read v. 9

1. Remember, the context of these verses is Paul's admonition to Timothy to (v. 3) "suffer hardship with me." Now we know what kind of suffering he means. The gospel of the resurrected Messiah King whose name is Jesus has landed Paul in Jail. He is suffering the hardship of imprisonment.

- A. Paul is not asking Timothy to be willing to suffer in ways that he himself is not willing to suffer. Nor is Paul making light of the suffering that Timothy might experience.
- B. Paul is really suffering. He's suffering at a level that you and I will likely NEVER experience! The word for "suffer" refers to physical pain and distress. The word for "bonds" (NASB "imprisonment") is a word that means chains. We don't know if the chains were on his feet or hands, but they hurt. He is experiencing physical discomfort, physical pain in his imprisonment.
- C. Moreover, he is being treated as if he is a criminal." Criminal means "evildoer." It refers to one who has been examined, charged and condemned as guilty in the eyes of the law. The only other place this term is used in the NT is in Luke 23 where we are introduced to the two thieves who are crucified on either side of Jesus. For preaching the gospel of the resurrected Messiah Jesus, he is cast into the ranks of men whom the state deems so wicked that they deserve to die.
- D. Paul is saying, Timothy, you must be willing to suffer for the sake of the great commission. In fact, you should be willing to suffer even to the degree that I am suffering. And don't think for a moment that such suffering will keep the gospel from going forth. Because, while it is true that imprisonment has restrained ME, the word of God is not bound.
- E. Because Jesus is Sovereign King, the word of God is always on the move accomplishing everything for which God sends it. And Paul's ministry is a testament to this reality.

F. You may remember back in our study of Philippians where Paul, in reference to his first imprisonment said, (Phil. 1:12-14),

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, <sup>13</sup> so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. <sup>14</sup> And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

2. Do you know what will likely happen if you end up suffering for the sake of the ministry of disciple-making? Your faithful, courageous suffering may be the very thing that inspires other believers to be more bold with the message of Jesus.

3. Even if you are restrained from speaking anymore in your context, the word of God is not bound. The Lord is able to use your faithful ministry to encourage others to pick up the mantle and accomplish what you could not. You may be under your boss's authority, or parental authority, the civil authority in your town, BUT the word of God is under no one's authority.

4. The word of God CANNOT be defeated. You may be bound. I may be bound. But the gospel of Jesus Christ and all of the word of Scripture cannot be bound!

5. Put that ballast stone in the bottom of your boat and you will be confident and bold with the message.

6. So, ballast rock # 1, Jesus is Risen and Reigning. Ballast Rock # 2, The word of God Cannot be Bound!

To Be Continued....