

How to Faithfully Endure

Part 2

2 Timothy 2:8-13

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

LTS: Eph. 1:3-14

Intro:

I want you to know that God loves you and I have a wonderful plan for your life. Now, when I use the pronoun “your” (“your life”) I am speaking of “you” as Calvary Bible Church.

What is my wonderful plan for your life? It is that you (and we) as a church would become more faithful and effective with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our study of 2 Timothy has been pressing this priority upon us as we study Paul’s letter to his young protégé who will soon inherit Paul’s ministry.

Paul lived to make the gospel known. He was willing to do whatever was necessary to take the gospel to the ends of the earth so that men and women from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue would hear the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. Why? Well, because he understood and believed with all his heart because there is salvation in no one else (Acts 4:12), for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

If you are a Christian, then you have been given the same essential mandate as Paul and Timothy. The reason God didn’t take you to heaven the moment you believed was because he has a purpose for your life. While you are alive this side of heaven you exist to proclaim the excellencies of Christ, calling all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel. This is what followers of Christ do.

Last week I began the message by quoting Pastor Mark Dever who recently said the following: “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.”

Why aren’t we more effective with the gospel than we are? I want to suggest to you that it’s primarily because we as a church often fail to live “on mission.” And

there is probably more than one reason for that. Last week I suggested that one significant reason is fear.

- I'm afraid that I'll say something wrong
- I'm afraid I will be rejected
- You could probably insert 30 more sources of fear that come to mind.
- So, fear is a deterrent to sharing the gospel.

Other reasons we fail to live “on mission” include complacency, and lack of love for the lost. But Timothy’s primary problem was fear. And I suspect that might be the case for many of us as well.

We understand that to live on mission will probably cost us something. We don’t like suffering. We avoid suffering at almost all costs. But suffering is a part of life... and especially the Christian life. Paul told Timothy, “All who desire to live godly lives will be persecuted.”

So, if you picture your life as a little boat on a turbulent sea, it makes sense to ask what provision God has made to keep your little bark upright and afloat when the wind and waves of resistance push-back and threatens us.

As we pick up where we left off last time, I want to suggest again that in our text for this morning, Paul offers Timothy (and us) Five huge ballast stones (five weighty truths) that we should put deep in the hull of our souls to keep us upright, and seaworthy as we strive to live on mission in the world.

Let’s begin once again this morning by reading the text.

Read 2 Tim. 2:8-13

There are five main points I want to emphasize, the first two we considered last week. The first is: When you are tempted drift off mission because of fear, remember...

I. Jesus is Risen and Reigning (8)

Read v. 8

I. Jesus Christ is Risen and Reigning

1. When Paul says, “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David,” he is pointing us to the weighty ballast stone called the Doctrine of Christ.
2. What is the doctrine of Christ? Well, much could be said here but Paul focuses on two things. First, that Jesus is a living Savior, not a dead one. Second, when He says Jesus is the offspring of David, he means to remind us that Jesus is King. He is the Christ, the Anointed of God, the King who possesses all authority in heaven and earth. And it’s NOT as though Jesus possessed that authority once upon a time. No! He still wields that authority because after they killed him, Jesus rose from the dead.
3. It is NO coincidence that upon giving his disciples the great commission he first declared, “All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Only then does he say, Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He then finishes by declaring, “And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” I want you to see that I am not forcing evangelism and disciple-making upon this text. The fact that Jesus is alive and still wields authority over heaven and earth is what gives us hope that our mission in this world will succeed. He is not sending us out on our own. He is with us, exercising his authority on behalf of God’s mission even to the end of the age.
4. The first great ballast stone in your ship should be this weighty truth: that Jesus is risen from the dead, the offspring of David. The second weighty ballast stone Paul offers us is that. . .

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

Read v. 9

1. Now this is a great promise. Your role in this grand mission is NOT to save anyone. Your role is simply to get the message out there and call people to repent and believe.
2. Now as you attempt to do that, you will periodically face obstacles. Paul faced a really big obstacle. He was arrested for preaching the gospel and he was put in jail – chained to a wall, or the floor, or to a soldier. And one might think that would sabotage his ministry, but it didn’t. Why? Because no power on earth can thwart the gospel.
3. You see, beloved, don’t need a big church with a big program to minister the gospel effectively. You don’t need a slick presentation to be effective with the gospel. You don’t have to have access to celebrities to be effective with the gospel. All you have to do is faithfully deliver the message. It is the will of God that the simple proclamation of the gospel will be the means of creating faith in the heart of the unbeliever. Once delivered, the word of God cannot be bound.

4. So the first weighty truth God has given you is that Jesus lives and reigns. The second is that the word of God cannot be bound. Third...

III. The Salvation of the Elect is Sure (10)

Read v. 10

1. Paul is saying: Because Jesus is the Risen and Reigning Messiah, and because the word of God cannot be bound, I am willing to suffer. "I am willing to endure all things for the sake of the elect..." (NASB says "for the sake of the chosen").

2. Why is this statement a great ballast stone to put in your little boat? Because it communicates the absolute certainty of God's mission being accomplished through the ministry of His faithful followers.

3. Our efforts at evangelism may often seem random and erratic. And if we think that it is our job to sell the gospel and compel people to buy it, we will quickly lose heart. But that's not the way evangelism works. You see, God has chosen a people from before the creation of the world to whom he would grant eternal salvation by His sovereign grace.

4. Now, let's pause for a moment and think about what Paul is saying here. "Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the elect." Is this a controversial teaching in your mind? It shouldn't be, because it is EVERYWHERE in the Bible.

5. Can we just stop for a few moments and indulge in a little lesson in theology? (I don't know why I'm asking, because that's what we're going to do").

6. When I use the word "Gospel" in a sermon, you probably think about Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead. And that is appropriate and true. But as you carefully study your bible you begin to see certain words, and concepts that speak to the doctrine of salvation using various terms. In fact, in centuries past a number of excellent men of the book have found that you can take all the pieces of the doctrine of salvation and place them in a certain order. It's commonly called The Order of Salvation or theologians refer to it as the Ordo Salutis.

7. In the Ordo Salutis there are ten essential components of the gospel as revealed in Scripture.

1. Election (God's choice of people to be saved)
2. The gospel call (proclaiming the message of the gospel)
3. Regeneration (being born again)
4. Conversion (faith and repentance)
5. Justification (God grants a right legal standing)
6. Adoption (we become members of Gods family)
7. Sanctification (growth in Christ-likeness)

8. Perseverance (remaining a Christian)

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¹ Wayne Gruudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 670

5. Justification (God grants a right legal standing)
6. Adoption (we become members of Gods family)
7. Sanctification (growth in Christ-likeness)
8. Perseverance (remaining a Christian)
9. Death (going to be with the Lord)

8. I want you to notice that the very first component of salvation is Election. What is the doctrine of election? Election in the Bible is the “act of God before creation in which He chooses some people to be saved, NOT on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of his sovereign good pleasure.”²

9. “The question that should concern us about election is NOT whether one understands it but whether the Bible teaches it. If indeed the Bible teaches election, then one is obligated to believe it.”³

10. One of the most important passages of Scripture on the doctrine of election is Ephesians chapter one (So turn there with me for just a moment).

A. Read Eph. 1:3-4

- 1) Notice that while the word election is NOT used here, its synonym “chosen” is used.
- 2) And when did God choose His elect? (4) “Before the foundation of the world.”
- 3) Do you know what this tells us? It tells us that our election is not grounded in our own good works but in God’s saving choice.
- 4) Paul says as much in Rom. 9:16, “So then it depends NOT on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.”

B. Read v. 5.

- 1) Notice Paul says, “In love he predestined us to adoption. Again, Paul uses a synonym for election (predestined).
- 2) Notice the exact wording, “In love he predestined us for adoption.” At Calvary Bible Church we have quite a few children who have been adopted. And do you know what motivated those parents to make the extraordinary sacrifices for those adoptions? LOVE. Election was an act of divine love for sinners.
- 3) And noticed whose WILL was the motivating factor in our salvation.

² Grudem, 670

³ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago, Moody Publishers, 2014), 341

NOT our will, but God's will: "According to the purpose of HIS will."

C. Read v. 11

- 1) Beloved, what can we conclude but that God is sovereign over the salvation of sinners.
- 2) Salvation is of God from first to last and we are the unmeriting recipients of His kindness, and mercy, and grace.

10. Glorification (receiving a resurrection body)⁴

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9. "The question that should concern us about election is NOT whether one understands it but whether the Bible teaches it. If indeed the Bible teaches election, then one is obligated to believe it."⁶ I want to start considering what the Biblical text says about election beginning with the teaching of Jesus, Himself, in the gospel of John.

- A. John 17:2; 7-9; 11-12; 24
- B. John 6:39; 44; 65
- C. John 10:24-29

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- 2) Salvation is of God from first to last and we are the unmeriting recipients of His kindness, and mercy, and grace.
- 3) But let’s consider some other Scriptures.

G. Acts 13:48 When Paul and Barnabas began to preach to the Gentiles in Antioch in Pisidia, Luke writes, “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified God; and as many as were ordained for eternal life believed.” On this passage Wayne Grudem writes, “It is significant that Luke mentions the fact of election almost in passing. It is as if this were the normal occurrence when the gospel was preached. How many believed? “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.””⁷

H. Rom. 8:28-30

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

I. 2 Tim. 1:9 (read). “When Paul talks about the reason why God saved us and

⁷ Grudem, Ibid.

called us to himself, he explicitly denies that it was because of our works, but points rather to God's own purpose and his unmerited grace in eternity past."

J. Rev. 13:7-8

In John's vision in Revelation, those who do not give in to persecution and begin to worship the beast are persons whose names have been written in the book of life before the foundation of the world" (Grudem, 672)

K. Mat. 24:31

Jesus told his disciples that one day "He (the Son of Man) will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

11. Why did God reveal this mystery to us? There are at least three reasons.

A. To comfort the saints:

Paul's wants believers who face the prospect of suffering to know that God has always acted for the good of those whom he has called. When Paul ponders the distant past before creation, he sees that God has already chosen them in love. When considers the recent past, he remembers that called and justified the people whom he had predestined. And when he thinks about the future return of Christ, he remembers that God has determined to give glorified bodies to those who believe in Christ. From eternity to eternity God has acted with the good of his people in mind. And if God has always acted for our good and has promised to always act for our good, then can we not safely conclude that he is at work for our good in every circumstance?⁸

So, the doctrine of Election is for the believer's comfort.

B. To Promote Worship

Eph. 1:12 tells us that God predestined us in love through Jesus Christ. . . to the praise of His glory.

To the Thessalonians Paul said, that he is bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning be saved." Paul felt obligated to give thanks to God for the Christians at

⁸ Adapted from Grudem, p. 673

Thessalonica because he knew that their salvation was ultimately due to God's choice of them. In light of God's electing grace, it is appropriate for Paul to thank God for them rather than praising them for their own saving faith.

C. To encourage evangelism and discipleship

In our text this morning (2 Tim. 2:10) Paul says,

“Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

- 1) Paul knows that God has chosen some people to be saved, and he sees this as encouragement to proclaim the gospel, even if it means enduring great suffering. The Doctrine of election is Paul's guarantee that there will be some success for his evangelism, for he knows that some of the people he speaks to are the elect, and they will believe the gospel and be saved. (Lydia, in Philippi - the Lord opened her heart to believe”).

We never know who God has elected and is calling to himself. Sometimes those who come are the least expected.

- Less Trammel ministered the gospel to his hostile coworker for years, and then one day, much to his own surprise, he repented and believed.
- My own father came to Christ unexpectedly at a men's retreat here as part of the ministry of our church. No one was more shocked and awed than he on that day.

12. You see, beloved, God has not only called us to follow him by making disciples of all nations, he has also given us the irrevocable promise that some (many!) will come because he chose his elect from before the foundation of the world.

All disciple-makers suffer. But Paul offers five weighty truths to enable us to faithfully endure and bear fruit for His great glory and our own marvelous Joy.