

# How to Faithfully Endure

## Part 3 2 Timothy 2:8-13

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

LTS: Rev. 3:7-13

We are now three weeks into our study of 2 Timothy 2:8-13. We are taking our time here because I believe the importance of settling these five weighty doctrines in the depths of your souls cannot be overstated. In fact, I suspect that the doctrines we learn about today may prove to be the most important of all because I am praying that by them some will be awakened and saved.

For the sake of time this morning, let's begin as always by standing together and reading God's word.

Read 2 Tim. 2:8-13

This text turns our attention to several weighty doctrines (great ballast stones) given by God to enable us to endure suffering and to keep our ship of faith upright in stormy seas until we arrive at our final destination; namely heaven.

First, we discussed the doctrine of Christ - Jesus Christ is Risen and reigning (8). Second, we have refreshed on the doctrine of Scripture; that The Word of God is Never Bound (9). We relished the doctrine of election; that The Salvation of the Elect is Ever Sure (10)

Today, by the grace of God, we aim conclude with the final two teachings which really combine into a single doctrine; namely, the Doctrine of Perseverance Paul will point us to this doctrine by reminding us of its two binary truths:

- First, that those who continue in the faith to the end will live and reign with Christ forever.
- Second (and more sobering), that those who fail to persevere in the faith will be disowned by Christ forever.

Let's notice first that...

## **IV. The Faithful are Promised Blessed [eternal] Reward (11-12a)**

1. To begin, let's take a step back to our study of Election. We learned that 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. The Doctrine of Perseverance then comes along and says, all who are elect will not only be saved, but kept by God's power and will persevere in the faith until the end, and that those who DO persevere until the end are truly saved.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand (and this is the sobering part), those who fail to persevere to the end are NOT saved.

3. The question that this doctrine naturally provokes is how can I know if I am one of the elect? That's a really good question. The doctrine of Perseverance tells us that the elect persevere until the end. And that seems to be what this text is reminding us of. IN fact, it is likely that this “Trustworthy saying” (*Pistos Logos*) was an ancient hymn designed to frequently remind believers of these truths.

A. Notice v. 12 “If we endure [persevere] we will also reign with him;

B. However, notice also in v. 12 “If we deny Him, he also will deny us.”

4. Now, someone is going to say, “Hold on there!” I don't want to wait until the end to find out! Is there any way for me to know now whether I am one of the elect?

5. Well, the apostle Peter thinks so. It was he, after all, who said (2 Peter 1:10) “brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election...” So, there must be a way to know whether you are one of the elect.

6. Now, I want to answer this question in two ways. First, I want to point you to some historic theologians who have answered the question rather succinctly. Then, we will look at the Scripture to see if they are right.

7. How do I know if I am one of the Elect?

A. Puritan Pastor, Matthew Henry said, “None can know their election but by their conformity to Christ; for all who are chosen

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<sup>1</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, (Zondervan, 1994), 788

are chosen to sanctification.<sup>2</sup>

- B. Charles Hodge wrote, “Holiness is the only evidence of election.”
- C. J.C Ryle weighs in with the following: “The names and number of the elect are a secret thing, no doubt... but if there is one thing clearly and plainly laid down about election, it is this - that elect men and women may be known and distinguished by their holy lives.”<sup>3</sup>
- D. B.B. Warfield adds, “We can never know that we are elect of God to eternal life except by manifesting in our lives the fruits of election.”<sup>4</sup>

8. Now I said that the text before us points to the doctrine of Perseverance. But each of these old divines have said that the way our election is made evident is through our holy living. But is that what our text teaches?

9. Notice Paul’s words (11-12), This saying is trustworthy, for if we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him.”

10. At first blush Paul seems to be saying, if we meet the condition of embracing Jesus’ death on the cross, we will live with him forever, and if we meet the condition of enduring to the end, we will reign with him forever. To this interpretation I would propose that while Paul is NOT saying less than that, he seems to be saying more.

11. The reason I think he means to say more is because of what is true about his first condition: “If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him. This statement should arrest the Bible student’s attention because it is borrowed from another letter written by Paul. So, turn with me briefly to Rom. 6.

- A. In verse one, Paul asks a very important rhetorical question. He asks, “What shall we say? Shall we continue to sin so that grace may increase?” And then he answers the question (Meganota) “May it never be!” How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”
- B. Is he talking to Christian people? Yes. But he is teaching us that those who truly

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<sup>2</sup> Mark Walker (General Editor), *The New Encyclopedia of Christian Quotations*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2000), 304

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 304

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 305

have salvation have a new relationship NOT only with God but with sin. True believers have a new relationship with God and a new relationship with sin. Whereas we once loved our sin, now that we have died and been raised with Christ, we HATE our sin, and want to be loosed from it.

C. We know that Jesus died to free us NOT only from the penalty of sin but also from the power of sin. Charles Wesley was right: “He breaks the power of canceled sin!” Therefore...

- 1) V. 1 We don't “continue in sin so that grace may abound.”
- 2) V.4 We were raised with Christ that “we too might walk in newness of life.”
- 3) V. 6 Our old self is “crucified with Him”
- 4) V. 7 we are no longer “enslaved to sin.”
- 5) V. 8 we have been “set free” from bondage to sin
- 6) V. 11 Therefore [action point] “consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus”
- 7) V. 12. [another action point]“Do not let sin reign in your body...”
- 8) V. 14 “For sin will have no dominion over you.” I.e, sin is not sovereign.”
- 9) And remember (V. 23) the wages of sin is death. But the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

D. Paul's concern here is that he doesn't want people going around saying that they are saved by Grace when they are clearly still enslaved to sin. The grace that saves us for the pleasures of heaven also saves us from the power of sin. Its power is canceled! You don't have to serve that old slave master anymore! You have been set free! So be free!

- 1) Grow in grace!
- 2) Become progressively more like Christ!
- 3) “Be holy for I am holy.” (1 Pet. 1:15)
- 4) “Work out your own salvation” (Phil. 2:12-13)
- 5) “Everyone who has this hope purifies himself!” (1 Jn. 3:3)

E. Yes, as long as we live in a sinful world, we will wage war against sin. But the death of Christ has made it possible for us to gain ground and be victorious. We CAN grow in holiness. We CAN become more and more like Christ.

F. In fact, if you are a child of God by grace through faith, then God Himself is sovereignly working in you to make you more like Christ.

- 1) Rom 8:29 “For those he foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His son.
- 2) Phil. 2:12-13 “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who is at work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.
- 3) Yes, you are responsible to kill sin, but God is also working sovereignly and infallibly to finish the work he began in you. (Phil. 1:6)
- 4) Jude 21 & 24; (21) “Building yourself up in your holy faith, and praying in the H.S., Keep yourselves in the love of God.” (24) “Now to Him who is able to keep you...”

G. Holiness is simply the manifestation of the glory of God. He is holy by nature (Isa. 6). His holiness is what makes all his attributes beautiful beyond description. Hence the Psalmist says, “Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness” (Psa. 29:2).

H. Holiness is a delight the believer’s soul. Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart.” And it is our holiness – the beauty of God seen in our integrity, kindness, purity, hard work, humility, love, self-control, and truth – that shines forth like a light by which men see it and glorify God.

I. Holiness is the glory of God. But here’s the thing: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” By nature, we are unholy. But if you have died with Christ, that’s not true of you anymore. IM NOT SAYING you can be perfect. God doesn’t expect you to be perfect! But if you are alive in Christ, you will be growing.

12. So you see, beloved, if you are one of the elect you will Persevere to the end. But perseverance is NOT just saying to yourself and others “I still believe, I still believe, I still believe in Jesus.” Rather, it says, “I still believe in Jesus, and the evidence that my faith is real and saving is that it is marked by killing sin and growing in the beauty of holiness. I believe in Jesus and I love Jesus. And I strive to be like Jesus Knowing that God is at work to make me like Jesus.

13. So here is the blessed promise that the early Christians sang: “If we have died with him (in a Rom. Chapter six kind of dying) we will live with him. If we endure, we will also reign with him.”

14. This is the answer to our Question: “How does one know if he is among the elect?  
Answer:

- A. “None can know but by their conformity to Christ.”<sup>5</sup>
- B. “Holiness is the only evidence of election.”
- C. “elect men and women may be known and distinguished by their holy lives.”<sup>6</sup>
- A. We know by the fruits of election.”<sup>7</sup>

15. Therefore Peter says, “*be all the more diligent, to make your calling and election sure.*”

10. So, The Faithful are Promised a blessed [eternal] Reward. On the other hand...

## **V. The Faithless are Warned of Certain Doom (12b-13)**

Read 12b-13

1. To deny him means to speak and live in a manner that belies your profession of faith. You don't have to deny Jesus the way Judas did – selling him for money and betraying him with a kiss. You can deny him simply by treasuring everything in life BUT him. .

2. In Paul's day there were already people who claimed to be Christians and even attended church, but

- A. They weren't waring against sin.
- B. They weren't gaining any ground in Christlikeness.
- C. Truth be told, they weren't even trying.
- D. Practically speaking, there relationship with God was no different than their unbelieving friends.

3. Unfortunately, many commentators hamstring the meaning of the phrase before us. Paul says “If we are faithless, he remains faithful.” They tell us that Paul means Jesus will accept the faithless anyway. But that can't be true.

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<sup>5</sup> Mark Walker (General Editor), *The New Encyclopedia of Christian Quotations*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2000), 304

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 304

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 305

- A. There are two couplets in each stanza. The first conditional phrase of the couplet affirms the consequence of the second: “If we have died with him, we will also live with him. If we endure, we will also reign with him.” (Unmerited, conditional grace).
- B. Then, when we come to the second stanza we should expect once again to hear the first conditional phrase affirm the meaning of the second. And so, it does. But this time we find not a song of blessing but a dirge of warning: we read “If we deny him, he will also deny us. If we are faithless [i.e. if we continue to practice unbelief] he remains faithful. For he cannot deny himself.”

4. The warning is this, that as gracious as Jesus has been to sinners in giving His own life as a ransom for many, on the final day he will be faithful to the Father. He will be faithful to his own message. He will be faithful to his own nature. He will be faithful to follow through on his own warning. He will do what he has promised.

5. He will do exactly what God has declared in every book of the Bible that he will do to the unbelieving in the Day of Judgment! He will cast them into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Why? Because “He cannot deny himself.”

“LORD, Lord” many will say to him on that day, “did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?” <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

6. Now, you may be thinking, how is this a great ballast stone to keep your ship afloat? In a word: Divine Warnings are good for us. They keep us safe. The proverbs are FULL of warnings! Many of them were for Solomon’s children to keep them safe.

7. One thing I like to do when we go backpacking is to take photos of warning signs. There is one in particular at Nevada Falls in Yosemite Ntl. Park.

The warning sign reads,

“Stay out of the water! Powerful hidden currents will carry you over the fall. Stay back from slippery rock at the water’s edge. If you go over the fall, you will die.”

8. This is the gift Paul is offering us. It’s a sobering warning to help us remember the grave danger we are in if we fail to take our sin seriously.

9. One of Paul’s danger signs is found in Romans chapter eight.

A. This text is all about the security of the believer. There is probably NO

chapter in the N.T. that offers more security in Christ than this “the Great Eight” as it is called.

B. Nevertheless, notice 8:12-14 (Read)

C. What is Paul saying? He’s saying, “If you surrender to sin/the flesh and quit battling temptation You will perish

D. For, “How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”

10. The message is plain: If you don’t care about your sin, you are not a Christian. You are not persevering in the faith. And you should have no confidence you are one of the elect. And your only hope is that even now, you will repent and believe.

11. Beloved, do you see the motivation and encouragement Paul is laying on Timothy and us? Christians are people who in God’s economy have died with Christ and have risen with Christ. The fruit of that reality is that we take sin seriously and endure in the pursuit of holiness.

12. And here is the promise: true Christians are able to look to the enduring reward: Namely, that one day our battle with sin will finally be over and we will actually live and reign with Jesus!

### **Gospel:**

*Until your sin has been canceled it can never be conquered.*

Ordination of

Rod May & Jason Kruis

Precedent for laying hands upon new leaders:

- 1 Tim. 5:22 “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands...
- 2 Tim. 1:6 “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands...”

Qualifications for and Elder - 1 Tim. 3:1-9

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not a



drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. <sup>8</sup> Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.