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## ***GOD'S CALL TO FAITHFUL ENDURANCE***

*(Part 1: 2 Timothy 2:8-13)*

The crucial question we need to address as we begin this New Year of 2021 is this: *"Will I endure in the faith to the end? Will my faith in Christ remain firm and fixed to the end amidst life's afflictions and adversities? Or will I fall away? Will I give up the faith and turn away from Christ?"* Faithful endurance is one of the hallmarks of true and genuine salvation. **Those who are truly saved endure in the faith to the end and will reign with Christ without end.** This is the heart of Paul's exhortation to Timothy and to all of us who are in Christ. 2 Timothy 2:8-9 reveals the first two keys to faithful endurance.

**1. Remember the power of the \_\_\_\_\_.**

In light of the threat of persecution and death, the painful reality of spiritual cowardice and the difficulties and dangers of the last days, Paul encouraged Timothy to remember Jesus' powerful resurrection and present reign (2 Timothy 1:7-8,15; 2:8; 3:1-5). The earthly tomb of Jesus is empty and the heavenly throne of God is occupied by the risen Christ who rules and reigns far above all power and authority. Jesus' resurrection not only secured our salvation and future glorification; it also empowers us today to endure in our faith to the end, overcome our spiritual battles and remain firm and strong in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:14-18, 52; Philippians 3:21; Ephesians 1:19-20)

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**2. Remember the power of \_\_\_\_\_.**

Paul suffered a second imprisonment in Rome because of his faithfulness in preaching the gospel. In his own words, it's the gospel which caused him to suffer and be bound in chains as a criminal (2 Timothy 2:9; Acts 28:30-31; Luke 23:32). Though he was incarcerated and awaiting his certain death, there was no hint of despair or self-pity in Paul. Rather there was optimism, hope and confident power in his testimony when he essentially said, *"I might be bound in chains, but the Word of God is not bound!"* The unchained and unbound Word that Paul refers here is the gospel message of Christ. The Word of God always advances with irresistible divine power (Philippians 1:12-14; 2 Timothy 4:17; Isaiah 55:10-11; Hebrews 4:12; Romans 1:16). The gospel of Christ is unstoppable because the Christ of the gospel Himself is unstoppable!

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