

GOD'S CALL TO FAITHFUL ENDURANCE

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

Paul's calm assurance and confident hope in the face of severe suffering and certain death are a bold and forceful motivation for faithful endurance (2 Timothy 4:6-8). To endure means to fight the good fight of faith, to finish our race, and to keep the faith. To endure means to remain or continue under pain or distress without yielding to the pressure of giving up. To endure means to stand one's ground in the midst of opposition. To endure means to stay in the faith instead of fleeing from your allegiance to 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 2:8-13 reveals four spiritual keys to faithful endurance.

1. *Remember the power of the risen and reigning Christ.*

2. *Remember the power of God's unstoppable Word.*

3. *Remember the power of _____.*

When Paul challenged and urged Timothy to endure in his faith and ministry, his words were not empty words devoid of truth and example (2 Timothy 2:10). Paul himself endured every hardship and adversity imaginable (2 Corinthians 11:23-29). The compelling motivation for the endurance of Paul is the salvation of God's elect (Ephesians 1:4; John 6:37,39; Matthew 24:22,31). Even though the salvation of the elect is ordained by God from all eternity, it must be obtained in time. The God who has ordained the election of His people from eternity has also ordained the means by which they will be saved in time, and that means is the unstoppable Word of Christ. The salvation of God's chosen people will be obtained through the proclamation of the gospel (2 Timothy 2:9-10; Romans 10:14-17).

4. *Remember the promise of _____.*

Gospel endurance leads to the glory of eternal life and endless reign with Christ. But gospel denial leads to the judgment of eternal condemnation and endless separation from Christ. That's what Paul is teaching us in 2 Timothy 2:11-13. These three verses are probably quoted from the words of a familiar hymn which has become a confessional statement or a trustworthy saying. The first two statements of this trustworthy saying refer to true believers who faithfully endure. The last two statements refer to faithless unbelievers who deny Christ. True believers who are united with Christ have died to sin and have been set free from the penalty and power of sin. They are destined to live with Christ in eternal glory (2 Timothy 2:11; Romans 6:8). True believers also endure in the faith in the face of affliction, trials, persecution and Satanic opposition. They will be rewarded with the promise of reigning with Christ forever (2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 2:26; 3:21; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Romans 8:18; Psalm 16:11). But for those who deny Christ and are faithless, God will judge their unbelief with eternal condemnation and wrathful punishment in hell forever (2 Timothy 2:12-13; 3:5-8; Matthew 10:32-33; 7:23; John 3:18; Romans 2:5-8).
