

# “ENDURANCE”

- 2 Timothy 2:1-13  
- Part 2

by Pastor Tim Dodson  
at JF Believers Church  
in Menomonie, Wis  
on July 7, 2024

**2:8–13** *Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the*

*point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.*

## 2:8-9

**Deut 4:9** *“But watch out! Be careful never to forget what you yourself have seen. Do not let these memories escape from your mind as long as you live! And be sure to pass them on to your children and grandchildren.”*

Paul calls upon Timothy...*and by way of scripture, us too*, to do something so very crucial to our Christian standing. He tells Timothy to “remember.” How easily...how quickly, we forget! We tend to forget how God has blessed us...how His grace has covered us. One of the great aspects of community is the fellowship...the interaction, the reminisce. If we fail to share the story...OUR story, we stand in danger of forgetting what God did to bring us through it all to this moment. The miraculous. The intervention on our behalf. What our brothers and sisters...our church, did for us...how they intervened...how they held us up.

When we forget these things, we begin to slide back into the world. So very many have done so, never to return! Therefore this must be a part of our battle cry! **“Remember.”** Remember the journey. Remember Jesus Christ and His action in our lives...!” And know this: we can just as easily forget Christ and His ‘good news’ through the plethora of religious activity as we can through the activity and involvement in the things of this world. Whenever we forget to keep the “main thing the main thing”...whenever we forget **why** we do what we do, we are apt to lose our way. We can find ourselves busy even with religious activity but not remembering why or how we got there. This ‘practice’ of remembering...to be our habit really, is not a “Sunday ritual” but rather a very core part of our daily devotional life.

**Ps 119:93** *“I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life.”*

Paul mentions specifically to remember that Jesus was “raised from the dead.” In this, we are to be forever aware that our Savior lives today and the gospel is still in play. It’s ‘game on.’ Furthermore, that for us too, there is no end. We too, will live forever. Because of Paul’s unflinching belief in this fact, he would suffer

greatly at the hands of both the world as well as the hyper-religious folks who effectively reject the true gospel and are unwilling to receive the grace of God.

Nothing has changed on this account. If a man...*if a church*, stands according to the grace of God and the sovereignty and integrity of the scriptures, he will pay for it. Indeed the vast majority of folks will accept the moral and social gospel. But preach salvation, eternal life, a different lifestyle and one's personal reciprocation to it all, and you will be persecuted as an "evil-doer." Such a position is considered cultic today by even a vast segment of the greater "church," if it can still be called that.

Despite the fact that they had persecuted Paul...*and they will do the same to us*, the Word of God "is not chained." Despite centuries of trying to stomp it out, the gospel continues on unabated. Lives continue to be radically changed and God's incredible redemption story plays on!

## 2:10

Paul says "therefore" or "because of such," I endure it all! Because I know that God is relentlessly continuing his work, and true believers are faithfully placing the kingdom of God first, I can endure whatever comes my way. I endure, **IF** that remains true...

Jesus Himself in Matthew 6:33 unabashedly and absolutely calls us forward... "*But seek ye **first** the kingdom of God, and his righteousness...*"

**But do we?** Or is this one of those passages we choose to ignore? Are we able and willing to "endure" persecution, reject the worldliness, and push forward despite the trials of living through the knowledge that God is still on the throne and is ultimately in control of everything? IS the kingdom of God first or not?

The idea behind the word "endure" is more than just a "make it through somehow" scenario. It means to remain moving forward even beneath the heat and the trials and glorify God despite such. Truth be told, most of us are just happy to make it through in one piece, even if we fail to further God's kingdom in our actual living! True Christian perseverance is more than just tenacity. It's the active manifest work of 'God the Holy Spirit' in a believer's life. Endurance is an imperative Christian trait. Unless we have endurance, we will never embrace so many of the truths that God wants us to learn and live out. Without endurance, we will not finish this race, and the years we spent sitting in the pew will come to nothing. We cannot ignore such passages as Matthew 24:13 "...the one who **endures to the end**, he shall be saved." Not *survives*, but *endures*...

**James 1:12** "*Blessed is a man who **perseveres under trial**; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*"

1 Corinthians 13: the proverbial 'love chapter' tells us that "love **endures** all things."

Paul says he endures...not merely for himself, but for the sake of others. The great obstacle for many of us is to "get over ourselves." So often the only thing standing between where we are and where we could be...*should be*... is simply us! Paul loved not only Jehovah, but he loved mankind also, and wanted everyone to find salvation and a disciplined walk. Therefore it wasn't just about Paul. It was about everyone else too.

Today we seem to think we can have a vertical relationship with the Master, while failing to live out and nurture a horizontal relationship with our fellow man. The fact remains...and scripture bears such out, we cannot say we love God and fail to love our fellow man!

We are reminded that in our difficult times it is only by God's great grace that we can endure and glorify Him. And...as Paul knows well, "His grace is sufficient" through the power of His Spirit living within us.

## 2:11

Herein lies the master key to all of it: ***I must die with Him in order to live through Him.*** This aspect of faith is not some additional or "optional addendum" to salvation, it IS salvation! Note the word "must." The greater church today has been dealt a great disservice through the popular promotion of the "sinner's prayer." Such advocates the idea that if I believe that Jesus is the son of God and died for my sins...and then I respond to that truth by saying those magic words inviting Jesus into my heart, that I'm done and that's all there is to it! But the scripture doesn't promote believing *of* Jesus, it promotes believing *in* Jesus! The Jesus that called upon us to "die to ourselves." Believing IN Jesus requires a living out of that truth to the end.

**Matthew 16:24 -25** *"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.'"*

Such is certainly not a fringe doctrine, for Paul extensively elaborated elsewhere on this same issue:

**Romans 6:8** *"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him..."*

**2Corinthians 4:10** *"...always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body."*

**Galatians 2:20** *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

**Colossians 3:3** *"For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."*

Let us acknowledge a crucial little word in verse 11: **"if"**. *If* we died with Him, then we will live with Him. Thus it takes no extrapolation to state if we do *not* die, we **will** not, we **do** not, "live with Him."

So how many of us have said that "sinner's prayer," only to strive and struggle through the subsequent years...never finding that proverbial 'peace.' Never knowing any success in their walk, joy in their relationship with Him, nor fruitful results in their service. No doubt this is because you are still alive to yourself. **Your** plans, **your** wants, and **your** power! This is a recipe for not only frustration, but ultimately, disaster!

Some folks just have never looked at this issue through these eyes. The problem may be a lack of understanding of just what true salvation really is. But sadly...*in many cases*, a lot of folks simply do not want to make that kind of commitment. So they settle for 'plan B'. But guess what? There is no plan B. There is no junior varsity in this league!

The only salvation is to die to yourself and Christ then lives through you. Your plans, dreams, and schemes, your ambitions, they are gone. Now you trust God to live through you and to fulfill in you what He created you for. Many folks see this as an incredible sacrifice, instead of what it is and what Christ promised: fulfillment, wholeness, completeness. But the fact is, many "Christians" just don't believe that.

Remember the promise: We will *live* with Him! We live in the land of miracles, joy, understanding, and purpose, because that's where HE lives! What we lose can never compare to what we gain!

## 2:12

Paul already said "*IF we died with Him we will live with Him.*" Now he speaks again with the same prerequisite... "*IF we endure, we will reign with Him*"..."*IF we deny Him, He will deny us.*"

The original word rendered "endure" herein was a military term used of an army's holding a vital position at all costs. Every hardship and every suffering was to be endured in order to hold fast, even as Paul was continually enduring. It was a position that could not be surrendered no matter what!

Paul speaks throughout this letter concerning the ultimate of traits that he desired to see manifested in Timothy; *faithfulness*. Such faithfulness can never be realized except through true Spirit-filled endurance. The reality concerning Christianity is that it is free to receive, but not free to live out. The walk of the true disciple of Christ can often be difficult, and not without suffering.

We must note that while the Word is clear concerning the doctrine of the security of our salvation, we cannot ignore passages such as this one. Apparently, "endurance," even through suffering, is crucial to our eternal standing with him. Apparently...all things considered, when a person is indeed reborn he *will* endure. If he fails to endure...truly endure in faithfulness, he is *not* reborn.

**Luke 12: 8-9** "*Also I say to you, whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.*"

**Mark 8:38** "*For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.*"

**"If we deny him, he will also deny us."** The context here is more than just the eternal (note "*we shall reign with him*"). So we thus must draw the conclusion that his reference is to the denial in our actual living, not just in verbal confession. This is no doubt why in that day of judgment Christ will say to many church goers and religious servants as well as mere observers "depart from me, I never knew you!"

Time and time again, scripture shows us that upon real spiritual renewal...real salvation...a true born again experience, there is new birth. We are **new** creatures: "*old things have passed away, all things become new*" (2Cor 5:17) As new creatures we have **new** desires...**new** direction...**new** life. And in addition, we have been given the power through the Holy Spirit indwelling us to go on to live out this new God given life. If salvation (i.e. new birth) has occurred we have been dramatically **changed**.

Many here will claim "*well, I haven't really denied Him.*" That's a game of semantics and it is one where you will lose if you are playing it! If you haven't truly accepted Him, embraced Him, been reborn by Him, and regularly testify of his reality with your voice and your life...then you have affectively "denied Him." He is not to be an ideal, or a concept, or a philosophy. He is to be your Savior, your redeemer, love of your life, your chief priority! That elicits a profound and deep motivation and lifestyle, period.

The present tense herein calls for **continuous** enduring. We are to keep on keeping on. If ever we turn back, we were in fact never His.

**1 John 2:19** *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”*

This is a hard doctrine to accept, but absolutely critical that we understand. For countless souls will be ultimately lost because of the failure to grasp what is being said herein! True faith always has the quality of permanence and in this sense all true believers will continue to endure.

Now this idea can cause great fear in people. However, 1 John 4:18 tells us that *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.”* If we know that love, and we love Him in return...absolutely and firstly, then there is nothing to fear. Our salvation is secure and our standing promised and assured! But if we live a life of wavering, then we need to be concerned!

So don't let this verse confuse you. Jesus is not saying we will "earn" our salvation by our endurance. Endurance does not save anyone. The point is that the one who is genuine will endure to the end not by gritting their teeth, but because the Spirit of Christ indwells them and empowers them and He will never lose them! Our endurance is not about our efforts, but rather God's presence and power expressing Himself in us and through us. If He IS in us, He WILL show Himself!

So this in no way means that when I fall...when I have slipped up and sinned against Him that I am ‘out of the club.’ This speaks of a heart state and a lifestyle manifest. We are not to take this as *“I have to endure or I will be rejected.”* It is rather, *if I am truly reborn and have died to self, then I will endure*, because...as He says in the next verse, *“He is faithful, even when we are not!”* He cannot deny himself, and He promised us that kind of security!

If someone turns their back on Christ after first professing Him, and persists (not a momentary event like Peter's three denials) in that apostasy, they demonstrate by their failure to endure to the end that they are not genuinely saved. The same idea of the so-called "perseverance of the saints" is seen in numerous other NT passages, especially in the epistle to the Hebrews, where we read, *“Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are **if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.**”* (Hebrew 3:6)

*“So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away. But we are not like those who turn away from God to their own destruction. We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved.” - **Hebrews 10:35-39***

*“And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations...”* (Rev 2:26)

Again, this “proof” is not optional!

1 John 5:4-5 reminds us that *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”*

Scripture goes so far as to warn us to avoid these pretenders. Those that *“...hold[ing] to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; ... avoid such men as these.”* (2 Timothy 3:5) Titus 1:16 describes these as *“Such people (who) claim they know God, but they deny him by the way they live. They are detestable and disobedient, worthless for doing anything good.”*

So what do you do if you fear this is all speaking *of* you or *to* you today? There is only one thing TO do! Repent and come home. While you are still breathing there is still opportunity for true salvation. But remember: the problem no doubt began with a mere surface approval of Christ and mental ascent concerning scripture. This time, you must truly deny yourself...this time, you must *“put to death the old man.”* You must *“pick up your cross”*...the signature element and sign of our death, and *“follow Him.”*

**Romans 6:3-12** *“Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus. Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires.”*

**Ephesians 4:22-24** *“...put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”*

True faith is a radical reformation of the life of the individual. There is no ‘part way’ or a ‘little bit Christian.’ If you are reborn, your whole world is different now. Your living and serving Christ is now forefront on your lips and your time. Calvin put it like this: *“Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone.”* Albert Barnes writes... *“We must be ashamed neither of the person, the character, the doctrines, nor the requirements of Christ. If we are; if we deny him in these things before people; if we are unwilling to express our attachment to him in every way possible, then it is RIGHT that he should ‘disown all connection with us,’ or deny us before God, and he WILL do it.”* (Barnes, A: Notes on the NT)

To reiterate, Paul is not saying a momentary failure or temporal denial of Christ indicates one is not a believer and will be denied by Christ. But scripture tells us that *“real repentance [turning away] is a repentance not to be repented of [turned away from].”* (2 Corinthians 7:10). Meaning if I have given up that old life...if I have died to self and selfish ambitions, then even though I fall, I get back up and return to the Masters feet in repentance and worship. I will never turn back.

Preceptaustin says: “*John gives us an example of those who initially claimed to believe and accept Christ but who later denied Him when the cost became too high. John writes that because many of the things the Lord Jesus had taught in the preceding verses proved so distasteful "many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore."* (Jn 6:66)

John's language indicates that the abandonment was decisive and final. In other words, many of the Jews who had previously followed Him, now left Him and were no longer willing to associate with Him. These "disciples" were never true "disciples" or genuine believers. They followed the Lord for various reasons, but not out of genuine love for Him or acceptance of who He was. (See also John 8:31, 32 and notice these were Jews who had "believed" Jesus.

Paul speaks in Hebrews 10:39 of another kind of believer: one that never turns back: “... *we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved.*”

One thing is for sure; no matter what we do, HE remains faithful and consistent. He never changes. He never changes His mind or His methods or His call upon your life.. “*If we die with him, we live with him. If we suffer, we will “reign” (rule), If we deny him, we will justly be denied...*” And God won't be moved! Whether we believe this statement or believe in Him at all, it makes no difference in the truth or the carrying out of his words.

“*No pains, no gains.*” Or “*no cross, no crown.*” The cross of Christ is something we are to both die upon, as well as carry. So “pick up your cross and follow him.” Paul says in 1Corinthians 15:31, “*I die daily.*”

## **2:13**

One thing is for sure; no matter what we do, HE remains faithful and consistent. He never changes. If we are truly in, He has got us firmly in His hands and He will not...He *cannot*, drop us. He promised. **But did you really?**

God won't be moved on either account. Van Oosterzee writes that “He is just as faithful in His threatenings as in His promises.”