

## Daily Bible Study

### *“Metaphors of The Christian Life ~ Lest You Forget”*

#### *2 Timothy 2:8-13*

*June 15 – June 21, 2014*

**MONDAY** – As we continue our study of **2 Timothy** we take a break from actually looking at specific *Metaphors of the Christian Life*. We have seen the Steward, Soldier, Athlete and Farmer and will continue next time with the Workman. But now in these next verses; namely, **2 Timothy 2:8-13** we see the Apostle remind Timothy of the fact that suffering is actually a condition of blessing and there are examples of endurance leading to victory in front of him from Jesus Himself down through the Apostles. He is telling him the call to endure hardness, to suffer long, to work hard before realizing the sweet taste of “success” as the farmer is “par for the course” in living the Christian life. Sadly, these words are foreign to many Christians for in order to understand and appreciate them fully, you must by The Holy Spirit’s empowerment be living for Jesus and trying to work hard and endure for Him. If you’re caught in the grip of the world and its luxuries and leisure and pursuing YOUR interests over Christ’s this may as well be written in Japanese for it will make no sense. I want to list a quote taken from a speech given by President Theodore Roosevelt in Paris, France 23 April 1910. This text is for as the President would say, “the man actually in the arena”. “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.” Read our text for the week from **2 Timothy 2:8-13**: “<sup>8</sup>Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, <sup>9</sup>for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. <sup>10</sup>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.<sup>11</sup> This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.<sup>12</sup> If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. <sup>13</sup>If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, teach me from Sacred Scripture how I need to both remember these calls on how to live and then to look to examples of victory You have given me to not be discouraged.*

**TUESDAY – 2 Timothy 2:8:** “<sup>8</sup>Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,” Nothing worthwhile is ever easy they say and this text drives home that point. No soldier, athlete or farmer expects results without difficult, intense labor or suffering. So it is in the Christian life. Paul has illustrated this with his use of metaphor but now goes further and enforces the point by using real life examples from experience. He starts with Jesus then his own experience and then finally the experience of all of us that are true believers. *Remember Jesus Christ* is quite a way to start off and who could forget Jesus, right? You and I could and we do as human memory although extraordinary is also notoriously fickle. We forget the most basic things from pin numbers to passcodes to phone numbers etc... God’s people had a terrible track record and often in Scripture it is recorded, “*they soon forgot*” (**Psalms 78:11, 106:13**). Jesus gave us The Lord’s Supper so that we would not forget but rather “*do this in remembrance of Me*”. Regardless, the church of Jesus has often forgotten Jesus being absorbed in something or someone else. We need to remember Jesus for many reasons but here we see because He is the Gospel and His life & death make up the heart and message of the Gospel. This was the “*deposit*” Paul, Timothy and we have received FROM Jesus for it is His. We remember *the seed of David, was raised from the dead* and see Jesus as both fully God and fully man; the Divine Human person necessary to save a people from sin and its penalty and make them right with the only true God Almighty. He is Savior and King, King David’s greater Son who has borne the sin of His people and established a Kingdom that never ends (**Luke 1:32-33**). Paul says remember this example Timothy because Jesus life illustrates the point I’m giving you that suffering, difficulty and death is the gateway to life and the path to glory; it is humiliation to exaltation displayed. For the One who died, rose from the dead, and the lowly man born from David’s seed is now reigning in glory on David’s throne. So Timothy and dear saint of God, when you are tempted to avoid pain, humiliation, suffering or death in your ministry and calling, remember Jesus Christ and think again.

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, help me not shy away from difficulty but embrace it for Your glory as I look to You Jesus. Thank You for being more than a mere example but for in reality being the Savior and King that has forgiven me my sin and has set up the everlasting Kingdom of which I’m part.*

**WEDNESDAY – 2 Timothy 2:9-10:** “<sup>9</sup>for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. <sup>10</sup>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.” After pointing Timothy to Jesus he points now to himself as he has previously taught Timothy to look to faithful men and follow their example. Paul has (**2 Corinthians 1:6, Colossians 1:24**) and is suffering for the gospel as here he is *suffer (ing) trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains*. Here he is like a common criminal, an *evildoer* in his words. The only other place in the New Testament this word *kakourgos* is used in in **Luke 23:32-33** where the “malefactors” (KJV) are mentioned who were crucified with Jesus. As Isaiah said, He made his grave with the wicked (**Isaiah 53:9**). Here,

ironically is Paul an innocent Roman citizen *chained like an evildoer*. Paul practices what he preached as he remembers, *but the word of God is not chained*. God's word is working and was working then even though almost imperceptible to the human eye. Because of this fact Paul says, *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*. Notice the doctrine of election does not remove the necessity of preaching the gospel. Paul has preached and is now suffering for it but it is essential for it (preaching) is the means Gods uses for the elect to hear and believe the gospel and to *obtain the salvation*. Finally, an astonishing and almost hard to believe thing is here mentioned by Paul. He says it is not just the preaching but also the resultant suffering from preaching which are the means of the *elect's salvation*. Obviously Paul's sufferings do not have any redemptive and saving power like Jesus' but make no mistake that the elect are saved through the gospel and that he could not preach the gospel without suffering for it. The endurance of the Saints (**Revelation 14:12**) is used by God in His big plan in saving his people. Timothy, chin up man, take heart, your suffering will pay big dividends.

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me compete hard with all my heart, soul, mind & strength. Not competing against my brothers and sisters but against my sin and self as I strive to both obey & serve.*

**THURSDAY – 2 Timothy 2:11-12a:** *“<sup>11</sup> This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.<sup>12</sup> If we endure, We shall also reign with Him.”* Paul, unlike us much of the time, is now turning to song which states the true facts concerning living the Christian life. This *faithful saying* speaks first to those who remain true and endure then also to those who fall away and are false, faithless. He isn't sugar coating things with a billboard hit that consoles me by feeling sorry for self and pacifying my little selfish “poor me” itch. He finds comfort in the truth not in make believe fantasy and fairy tale as he quotes from what scholars say is an excerpt of an early church hymn which he calls *a faithful saying*. It is true and it calls it as it is. It starts, *For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him*. Please remember “context is King” as Bible students are taught and the context of this passage is clearly one of suffering and difficulty in living for Jesus and His gospel. With this in mind, the death with Jesus that is here mentioned must not merely be seen as our spiritual death to sin through union with Jesus in His death, but also to our death to self, comfortableness, and safety as we take up the cross and follow Jesus (**Mark 8:34-38**). We see Paul address both these aspects in Scripture. He addresses the spiritual death in union with Jesus in **Romans 6:3** and then speaks of the physical putting to death of his self-interests and selfishness in **1 Corinthians 15:31** and **2 Corinthians 4:10**. This death to self seems to be the primary meaning here in this hymn from the fact that *died with Him* and to *endure* are parallel expressions. So The Apostle like Jesus Himself explains the Christian life as one of *dying* and *enduring*. Eternal living, Heaven, and reigning with Jesus in future glory is for those who in the here and now, endure and share in His sufferings. The way up is the way down, the way to life is death, and the way to glory is suffering (**Romans 8:17, 2 Corinthians 4:17**).

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, please save me from this delusion that life is merely about me being comfortable and happy. Help me see that I must suffer with You and endure if I am going to live eternally with you and reign. I need Your help dear God to have this mind and live like this.*

**FRIDAY – 2 Timothy 2:12b-13:** *“If we deny Him, He also will deny us.<sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”* If the last portion we looked at describes the positive aspects of *enduring* and *dying* with Jesus this portion views the horrifying aspect of proving to be *faithless*. I've mentioned before that this passage contains some points to which there are some differing interpretations. If we use the context and think, we can see the picture that the Apostle is wanting Timothy and us to see. Don't miss by speculation and question “the forest for the trees” in what The Holy Spirit is putting before us. The first phrase, pretty straightforward and easy echoes the Lord's words in **Matthew 10:33**, *“whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven”*. The word here in the Greek translated *denies* and *deny* is arnehomahēe which means “to deny, to deny someone, to deny one's self (to disregard his own interests or to prove false to himself, act entirely unlike himself) not to accept, to reject, to refuse something offered”. I think we get the point from this definition that in short, those who in words and actions done and not done, *deny* Jesus, actually prove that they are not in Him and do not have His DNA as children and therefore will be *denied* by Jesus at the judgment and will go to hell. The last verse is the one that has some degree of question and it reads, *If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself*. John Stott comments, “It has often been taken as a comforting assurance that, even if we turn away from Christ, he will not turn away from us, for he will never be faithless as we are. And it is true, of course, that God never exhibits the fickleness or the faithlessness of man. Yet the logic of the Christian hymn, with its two pairs of balancing epigrams, really demands a different interpretation. ‘If we deny him’ and ‘if we are faithless’ are parallels, which requires that ‘he will deny us’ and ‘he remains faithful’ be parallels also. In this case his ‘faithfulness’ when we are faithless will be faithfulness to his warnings. As William Hendriksen puts it: ‘Faithfulness on his part means carrying out his threats ... as well as his promises.’ So he will deny us, as the earlier epigram asserts. Indeed, if he did not deny us (in faithfulness to his plain warnings), he would then deny himself. But one thing is certain about God beyond any doubt or uncertainty whatever, and that is ‘he cannot deny himself’.” Stott and Hendriksen remind us that God will be faithful to Himself and His Word even if that means bringing judgment upon disobedient people. God chooses to do good, acting according to His perfect character, consistent with Himself. The only thing He can't do because He will not, is deny or act contrary to Himself. He remains forever faithful, fulfilling His promises of blessing or of judgment, giving us life if we *die* with Jesus and a kingdom if we *endure*, but *denying* us if we *deny* Him. Paul has shown that blessing comes through pain, fruit through toil, life through death, and glory through suffering. It is an law of Christian life and service so why would we expect our Christian life to cost us nothing?

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me meditate & digest these truths and help me remain faithful.*