

ENDURANCE

TEXT: II TIMOTHY 2:1-14

INTRODUCTION:

1. An important word in II Timothy is the word "endure" (II Tim. 2:3; 10; 3:11; 4:3, 5).
2. Second Timothy 2:3 says a soldier must "endure hardness." Sadly, few Christians today (at least here in the USA) are willing to "endure hardness."
3. The apostle Paul often used military terms (2:3, 4; cf. I Tim. 1:18; 6:12; II Tim. 4:6-8).
4. In Philippians 2:25, Paul referred to Epaphroditus as "his fellowsoldier."
5. And in Philemon 2, Paul referred to Archippus as "our fellowsoldier."
6. Ephesians 6:11 says, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."
7. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 2:3).
8. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines "endurance" as, "Continuance; a state of lasting or duration; a bearing or suffering; a continuing under pain or distress without resistance, or without sinking or yielding to the pressure; sufferance; patience."
9. Hebrews 11:27 says, "By faith he (Moses) forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."
10. Hebrews 12:2, 3 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

I. THE DEMAND FOR ENDURANCE

II. THE MOTIVATION FOR ENDURANCE

III. THE REWARD FOR ENDURANCE

I. THE DEMAND FOR ENDURANCE

1. The apostle Paul gives us three pictures setting forth the demands of the Christian life -- the picture of a soldier (2:3, 4), the picture of the athlete (2:5), and the picture of the farmer (2:6).
2. We spent a lot of time last week with the picture of the soldier.

3. The athlete must "strive lawfully," i.e. he must compete according to the rules. Some churches resort to unscriptural methods in an effort to draw crowds, but Paul said, "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (2:5).
4. Paul is comparing athletes competing in the popular Grecian games with the demands of the Christian life (cf. I Cor. 9:24-27).
5. Paul says in Philippians 3:14, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
6. Next Paul gives us a picture of "the husbandman" (2:6), i.e., the farmer. The lazy farmer who does not toil does not produce fruit, and likewise the lazy Christian who does not toil does not produce fruit.
7. Our Lord said in John 15:8, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."
8. The farmer represents the Christian who sows the seed of the Word of God. He has his reward in this life (spiritual blessings and a fruitful ministry) as well as in the life to come when he will be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ.
9. "Consider" (2:7) means to think it over. "And the Lord give thee understanding in all things." Our Lord said in John 7:17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."
10. James 1:5 says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."
11. D. Edmond Hiebert said, "The apprehension of spiritual truth is not primarily a matter of mental acumen but of spiritual teachableness" (*Second Timothy*).

II. THE MOTIVATION FOR ENDURANCE

1. We are motivated by the constant remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ (2:8 -- "Remember...").
2. We are motivated by the example of the apostle Paul (2:9, 10).
3. We are motivated by the certainty of a future reward (2:11-13).
4. The verb "Remember" (2:8) in the original Greek text is literally, "Keep on remembering" (present imperative). It indicates steadfastness in our endurance.
5. "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David..." (2:8). The Old Testament prophesied that the Messiah would come from "the seed of David." That is why Matthew begins his Gospel by saying, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1).

6. In the Gospels, Jesus is frequently called "the son of David."
7. "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (2:8). Our Lord rose from the dead and is alive forevermore.
8. Our Lord said in Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." This is our motivation for endurance.
9. Our Lord said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25, 26).
10. One of our members' mother recently died. At the funeral home they had a crucifix on the wall, but family members told the funeral director to remove it.
11. We are motivated by our risen Saviour!
12. *Up from the grave He arose,
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes,
He arose a Victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever, with His saints to reign.
He arose! He arose!
Hallelujah! Christ arose! -- Robert Lowry*
13. Paul says, "according to my gospel" (2:8) because the Gospel was entrusted to him. Paul says in I Thessalonians 2:4, "We were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel."
14. Paul suffered for the Gospel, and he endured all things "for the elect's sakes" (2:9, 10). Paul was willing to suffer if others might get saved.
15. Paul suffered and was imprisoned and was treated as an "evil doer" (2:9). President George W. Bush was ridiculed by the liberal news media because he referred to Muslim terrorists as "evildoers."
16. But they are evildoers, and "evildoers" is a good Bible word.
17. Psalm 37:1 says, "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity." Then Psalm 37:9 says, "For evildoers shall be cut off."
18. The Greek word translated "evil doer" in II Timothy 2:9 is the same word translated "malefactors" in Luke 23, where it refers to the two thieves who hung beside our Lord.
19. "And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left" (Luke 23:33).

20. What the apostle Paul is saying in II Timothy 2:9 and 10 is that he suffered shame and disgrace as an evil doer (as a despised criminal) for the Gospel. This should motivate us!
21. Thank God, "The word of God is not bound" (2:9). Paul was imprisoned, yet he wrote several powerful epistles from his prison cell.
22. John Bunyan was bound in prison but he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*.

III. THE REWARD FOR ENDURANCE (2:11-13)

1. "It is a faithful saying..." (2:11). This is worthy of our careful attention. This formula is found only in Paul's pastoral epistles. Some think it was part of an early Christian hymn.
2. Paul says in I Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
3. Paul says in I Timothy 4:9, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance."
4. Paul says in Titus 3:8, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly..."
5. The same Greek word is translated "true" in I Timothy 3:1, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."
6. There are four "if" clauses in II Timothy 2:12, 13. The first two are positive, and the second two are negative. The word "if" does not imply uncertainty or doubt.
7. Some think Paul is referring to his impending death (2:11; cf. 4:6-8). But Paul says, "For if we be dead with him" (past tense). It is literally, "If we have died with him..." (see Scofield margin).
8. This is referring to our identification with Christ's death and resurrection. We have been saved from the penalty of sin by Christ's death; "and now we are being saved from its daily power by His resurrection life-power within us" (Guy King, *An Expository Study of II Timothy*).
9. This is what Romans 5:10 means, "being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Galatians 2:20 says, "I am (or "I have been") crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me."
10. Guy King said, "If, now that we are Christians, we try to live the Christian life of ourselves, we find how hard it is, and we have so many falls and failures; but if, reckoning upon our identification with

- Him, we realize His indwelling presence, and get self out of the way, so that He may do the living in us, and out through us, the life becomes a very different thing. Now it is life indeed; now it is fullness of life; now it is life...more abundant" (*II Timothy*).
11. This passage gives encouragement for believers to endure to the end. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (2:12) in the millennial kingdom.
 12. On the other hand, "if we deny him, he also will deny us" (2:12b). This is a serious warning -- denial and unfaithfulness will lead to eternal separation from God.
 13. "He also will deny us" (2:12b).
 14. Our Lord said in Matthew 10:33, "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."
 15. "He cannot deny himself" (2:13) means it would be a denial of Christ's very nature to save those who are unfaithful. God is holy; and He will not save those who have no interest in being holy.
 16. Albert Barnes said, "Let no one, then, suppose that, because he is elected, he is safe, if he lives in sin. The electing purpose of God, indeed, makes salvation sure; but it is only for those who lead righteous lives. Nothing would be mere dishonorable for God than to resolve to save a man that lived habitually in sin; and if that were the doctrine of election, it would deserve all the opprobrium that has ever been heaped upon it."

CONCLUSION:

1. Some Christians teach that it is possible for a Christian to lose his salvation and go to hell.
2. Second Timothy 2:12 and 13 does not refer to a temporary lapse of faith. It is not referring to a believer backsliding, like Peter when he denied Christ.
3. "If we deny him" (2:12) and "If we believe not" (2:13) means to abandon one's faith completely.