

8/18/24 - 2 Tim. 2:11-13 - "A Faithful Message"

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- [0 : 00] Today's text is 2 Timothy 2, chapter 2, verses 11 through 13. Starting at verse 11, it says, The saying is trustworthy, for if we have died with him, we also will live with him.
- If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.
- This is the word of the Lord. Praise be to God. Well, good morning again, everyone. It is a blessing to be back preaching here after a few weeks.
- And to be continuing our series in 2 Timothy and looking at these few verses of this, as Paul says, trustworthy saying.
- And I think the saying is quite encouraging, but it also contains a warning. And so, I want to take time today to hear both.
- [1 : 22] To hear the encouragement and to hear the warning. But before we look at that, I have a question for you guys. I'd like to start with a question.
- So, does anyone here have a warning light on their dash in their car that's like permanently illuminated? Alright. At least I'm not alone, right?
- So, my Toyota has had this one warning light that's been on for 11 years. It hasn't burned out yet, but it's still there as a reminder. And speaking of tape, my dad had this old Ford Ranger and the check engine light was always on.
- So, he just covered it with electrical tape. So that it wouldn't be a distraction when driving at night. But, you know, I think it's a truth that we tend to ignore warnings, right?
- Especially in our cars. And often we wait too long until it's too late. And then the problem becomes bigger and more expensive to fix than if we had listened at the beginning.
- [2 : 30] Unfortunately, with warning lights in our cars, they don't give a lot of information. So, sometimes it could be something simple that you can ignore safely and nothing bad will happen.
- Other times, it could be moments away from catastrophic failure, right? But it doesn't tell you that. So, sometimes we just ignore it until it's too late rather than going and getting it scanned at the dealership and figuring out what's actually wrong and then deciding whether or not to fix the problem.
- And also, if the light is permanently illuminated and something else goes wrong, we have no way to know when something else goes wrong, the whole purpose of the light is kind of defeated.
- But the point is, it's easy to ignore these warnings, right? Just to forget that they are there. And it reminds me, I was at work the other day and I was going to Jimmy John's to get a sandwich and as I was crossing the street, I heard the tornado siren.
- And I was like, well, I really want a sandwich. Let's go get a sandwich. I lived in Arkansas for 11 years. So, after the tornado siren goes off a hundred times, most of the time it's a false warning.

[3 : 42] You just move on with life, right? So, we can ignore even very important warnings if they just blend in with the background.

And I think the same is true when we look at the Bible. The Bible is, in fact, full of warnings. And the more often we hear these warnings, we can grow dull to them.

We can grow to perhaps overlook them, read past them, or even ignore them. But I think we must keep our ears open to these warnings because unlike the lights in our cars, the consequences of ignoring the warnings of Scripture are far too great.

That being said, these warnings are not always immediately having consequences.

Sometimes these warnings in Scripture are about eternity in the future. And so, we may pass over them and think, oh, I'll deal with that problem when it comes.

[4 : 49] But then, the consequences are eternal. And if we waited too long, what is our hope then? So, we must address these warnings.

We must not cover our Bibles with tape. We must stop and we must listen. And so, as we read 2 Timothy 2, 11 through 13, it's just a few words.

It's 42 words in English and 21 in Greek. It's a very short saying. But it contains three encouragements and a stark warning.

And so, I want to take time to hear both the warning and the encouragement. This saying, Paul introduces it as a trustworthy saying.

It's not found elsewhere in Scripture, but it's presented in most Bibles as a quote. It's presented as a quote. We don't know where it's quoted from. Many commentaries believe it was from a hymn, a first century hymn that would have been sung in the church or perhaps just a saying that was passed between friends in the church.

[5 : 56] But nonetheless, Paul found it trustworthy and helpful to remind Timothy of some very important truths. So, he included it. And this, in the Greek, is actually a rhythmic saying.

It would be very easy to remember. It would be very easy to keep this in your mind and have it with you and frequently remind yourself of these truths. And so, I think it's a helpful monomic.

I can never say that word. I probably mispronounced it. But it's helpful to bring to mind these essential truths. And so, the truths that are presented, there are four of them.

If we've died with him, him meaning Christ, we will also live with him. If we endure, we will also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us.

If we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself. And so, I want to look at each of these four. I've broken my sermon into four points.

[6 : 58] I think my last sermon was two, so I'm making up the balance with a fourth one today. But I've titled this message, A Faithful Message, right? A trustworthy saying or a faithful message, as it could also be translated.

And so, I've broken it into these four truths, and I want to spend time looking at each one of them. But before we do that, I do want to take a moment to ask the Lord in prayer to guide us through these words.

To open our ears, to hear in our hearts, to receive these truths. The warning with the encouragement. So, let's pray. Heavenly Father, we do thank you for your word.

We thank you for the encouragement that we find to endure the things of this life. And also, we thank you for the warning. The warning that makes us stop and listen.

And not only to hear what we are warned of, but also to be more deeply encouraged when we are listening. And so, I pray that we would take this time to listen to what you have to say and remind us of through your word.

[8 : 03] Lord, I pray that you would be glorified in this time. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. So, as we look at this first warning, or this first encouragement, if we have died with him, we will also live with him.

I've titled this first truth, From Death to Life. So, if you're taking notes, this will be the first one, From Death to Life. And so, if you've been a Christian for any period of time, you're quite familiar with the biblical imagery of death and life.

But, if you're quite familiar with it, maybe you've grown dull to it. Maybe you have forgotten some of what it means to have death with Christ and to have life with Christ.

And so, I want to take a look at some of Paul's usage of this metaphor. Therefore, he most clearly, I think, uses it in Romans 6 throughout the entire chapter of Romans 6.

And really, he continues it into 7 and 8 if you want a deeper dive into what he means by death and life. But I like that in Romans 6, 3, he asks the question, somewhat of a rhetorical question, but do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

[9 : 19] So, baptism is a symbol of our being buried with Christ in his death and then raised to life, to newness of life with Christ.

And so, that's the image I think Paul is trying to bring to mind. We've died with Christ and we've been raised to life with Christ. And so, for those who believe in Christ, there's a newness of life within them.

There's a new creation for those who have died with him and now live with him. It's important to note, the metaphor holds true, that no person possesses the power within themselves to both die and raise themselves to life.

So, this is a miraculous work of God by his Holy Spirit that happens when we become a new creation. A new spirit is formed within us, as Paul says in Galatians 6.15.

And it is the power of God through his Spirit which raises us to life, to newness of life. But that's not Paul's only use of the metaphor, right?

[10 : 21] He's not just talking about the new birth and the new life. He's also talking about the process of overcoming sin, of putting to death the desires of the flesh.

And so, there's a second level to this. The idea of this continual, lifelong process of putting to death the desires of the flesh and following after in newness of life in Christ.

And so, we see this throughout the remainder of Romans 6. We get a lot more detail. Our old self, we see, was crucified with him so that sin may be put to death and that we may be freed from sin.

If we have died with him, we believe that we now live with him and that sin and death no longer have dominion over us. We have been freed from the dominion of sin. We are now dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus, as he says in Romans 6.11.

We no longer let sin reign in our mortal bodies by obeying the passions of the flesh. Paul explains that although we were slaves of sin, we have become obedient from the heart to the teaching and righteousness of Christ Jesus.

[11 : 33] This, again, is a miraculous work of the Holy Spirit that brings about a new creation in us, freeing us from the dominion of sin and empowering us to obedience and to righteousness.

And so, we have been called, as Paul says, to present ourselves as slaves to righteousness. No longer slaves to sin, but slaves to righteousness. That is what it means to have life in Christ, to be a slave to God, to righteousness.

Throughout Paul's writings, it's important to note that he uses these active imperative verbs, like to present, to not let, and to endure, because he expects Christians to actively submit to the teaching of Jesus.

This is not just something that happens within us. It is something that we participate in. It is a participation through the Holy Spirit in sanctification, in putting to death the desires of the flesh and pursuing righteousness.

Now, as an encouragement, we all know that if we've been a Christian for any length of time, this is not an easy task. This is not something that happens passively.

- [12 : 46] This is something that we are actively involved in. And that's why throughout all of Romans 8, Paul encourages us to set our minds on the things of the Spirit, that although the body is dead because of sin, the Holy Spirit in us is life because of righteousness, as he says in Romans 8, 10.

The Spirit of God dwells in us and gives life to our mortal bodies so that we may overcome sin. This is a partnership between the Spirit in us, which brings life to us, that we may overcome sin.

And so he has called and equipped us. He has called us to newness of life and equipped us by his Spirit that we may overcome and put to death sin. And then he reminds us that the wages of sin were death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.

So this is a gift from God, something he empowers us to by his Spirit. Summarizing, we receive death in life with Christ through faith in him.

His death and resurrection are and were and will be sufficient for the forgiveness of our sins, which is justification, right? Moreover, his Spirit at work in us is sufficient for our daily battle to put to death the desires of the flesh and to have abundant life in him, which is our sanctification, right?

- [14 : 12] It is a truth that has come to pass in the past and also a present reality that is at work in us in a future promise that we can trust in. And so it is to be encouraging that we have been baptized into death with Christ and raised to life in him.

And this is a process that we are living in. Moving into the second truth, Paul says that if we endure, we will also reign with him.

This is the beginning of verse 12. And so I've titled this point From Suffering to Reigning. From Suffering to Reigning. We will endure suffering and we will reign with Christ.

And so the fact that he uses endurance should remind us that the Christian life involves suffering. Those who have died with Christ and live with him will share in suffering.

This is a hard truth, but it is the truth of scripture. Paul says in Romans 8, 16 through 17, if you want to take a moment to turn there in your Bible, I encourage you to read it.

- [15 : 21] It should also be on the screen. Romans 8, 16, Paul says, the spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children, then heirs. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

The encouragement and the warning provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified. With him. Paul expects suffering for those who are heirs of God and children of God.

Jesus, of course, preached the same gospel and so in Matthew 10, 22, he says, you will be hated by all for my name's sake, but the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Jesus himself expected that his followers would suffer. So what does Christian suffering involve? We've talked about it a lot in 2 Timothy.

For Paul, we know he is in chains, chained as a prisoner and that he is suffering as a criminal for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of the elect that they may come to know Christ Jesus.

- [16 : 24] For Timothy, suffering looks different. He's not a prisoner, but he is charged to teach and to lead and to battle false gospels and false teaching and so each day of his ministry is a battle to overcome this false teaching and also to live a righteous life.

As we search the New Testament and the scriptures, we see that suffering often includes humiliation and shame. It also includes imprisonment, loss of possession, and often persecution for what we believe.

As the gospel spreads throughout the whole world in the New Testament, we see that there's resistance and persecution for those who stand up for truth. And this remains true to this day.

If you go to Voice of the Martyrs, you can see that Christians are actively persecuted in places like Central Africa, much of Asia, Indonesia, and parts of Central America, now in Colombia and Venezuela.

But, sorry. It's by the grace of God that we don't really face these things in America.

[17 : 35] We don't face the same level of persecution that the New Testament authors faced or that many in other countries face. We rarely face persecution that implies loss of life or loss of liberty, but that doesn't mean there's no persecution for those of us in America.

We face a culture that has begun rejecting God, that's turned against his people, and so following Christ does in fact require courage. It requires standing up for and defending truth against an increasingly hostile culture.

while we may face shame and persecution when defending righteousness, we live in a culture that glorifies sin, immorality, and unrighteousness, and more so every day.

And so we likely won't at this time face death and imprisonment. We will, as Scripture teaches us, face loss of job prospects, of promotions, of friendship, and of social status.

And because the culture is trying to pull us away from God, we will face temptation towards sin, towards apathy, ignoring the warnings, and also towards apostasy and departing from the faith.

[18 : 52] So we must remember that endurance in the face of suffering requires an eternal perspective. It says, if we endure, we will reign with him.

Regardless of what we suffer now, we suffer with our mind set on eternity. If you want to take a moment and look at Hebrews 10, 35 through 36, again, I think it will be on the screen where you can flip there in your Bible.

Starting in verse 35, the author of Hebrews says, therefore do not throw away your confidence, which has great reward. Again, speaking of the eternal reward. For you have need of endurance so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what is promised.

The same encouragement, keep your mind on Christ and eternity. And so the author continues in verse 38, my righteous one shall live by faith.

And if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him. Again, the warning in the midst of the encouragement. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and preserve their souls.

[20 : 11] We see that those who have faith, those who believe, they will persevere to the end. We must trust in Jesus, who is the founder and perfecter of our faith. We must remember that it was the joy set before him that enabled him to endure the cross.

Although he despised the shame, he is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Although we may despise the shame if we were chained as a prisoner like Paul, he knew and we know that we will reign with Christ for eternity.

Our third truth, we get to the warning, right? If we deny him, he will deny us. It's meant to be a potent warning, even in the midst of the encouragement.

I've titled this section from Denial to Death. Again, Jesus promised that persecution would come, that his followers would be flogged and dragged before governors and kings for his sake, so that they may bear witness before them and before the Gentiles.

Another cross-reference, if you want to turn to Matthew 10, 28 to 33, we get an encouragement and a warning from Jesus himself Jesus says, starting in verse 28, do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.

[21 : 48] Rather, fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. But then he continues, are not two sparrows sold for a penny and not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your father?

But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows. So anyone who acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge before my father who is in heaven.

But whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my father who is in heaven. This warning, summarized in just a few words, comes straight from Jesus' own words.

It makes me ask the question, why the warning to fear God in the midst of the encouragement that he cares for us? Why mix the encouragement with the warning? What is the purpose?

I think it serves three purposes. First, as it should be, it's a sobering reminder of the eternal consequences for those who believe and the eternal consequences for those who disbelieve.

[22 : 59] Everyone wants to hear John 3.16, right? For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. But how often do we read the next verse?

Or verse 18. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe in him is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God.

The encouragement is meant to be paired with the warning to awaken us to the reality of this truth and its eternal consequences. Those who refuse to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord will be denied by him before the Father.

That is the truth. If we love the world more than we love Christ Jesus, if we're unwilling to die to the flesh, to endure suffering to the end, then he will deny us before the Father.

But the second truth we find is that those who deny Christ, they never actually knew him. Those who deny Christ never knew him.

[24 : 07] We can look at Titus 1.16 to see this made plain. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

Although some profess to know God, their actions prove that they have not acknowledged him in their hearts as Lord of their life. John 2.23 says, No one who denies, rather 1 John 2.23 says, No one who denies the Son has the Father.

You cannot have faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and to deny him. They're two mutually exclusive states. You either believe and confess that he is Lord and that God raised him from the dead, or you deny him.

You have either died with him and been raised to life, or you are dead in your sins. But the warning is there because there are some who remain dead in their sins, who remain deceived in their hearts.

And so third, we see that this warning is a reminder that even when we suffer at the hands of unbelievers, the Lord remains faithful. He will vindicate his name and he will vindicate his holiness as many of the Psalms profess.

[25 : 30] As Paul was chained as a criminal, he knows his mission is not in jeopardy because the Lord is faithful. The Lord is trustworthy. When we're persecuted for the sake of the gospel, we can trust that the Lord will remain faithful even if we're humiliated or killed.

According to this world's standards, those who persecute us, they may seem victorious. They may be cheered on by the culture around us. But we have no need to fear because vengeance belongs to the Lord.

It's a hard truth, but it is the truth. But we must remember that also some of those who persecute us will be like Saul himself who persecuted the early church.

Some of those who persecute us are the very elect who will have their eyes open to the truth through our persecution and join the faith. We must love even those who persecute us as Christ taught us himself.

He died on the cross at the hands of those who persecuted him in order to save them. That's what Paul meant when he said that I complete what was lacking in Christ's suffering.

[26 : 46] We continue this mission that he began. We endure suffering in faith that God is faithful in hope that even those who persecute us may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

And so it's not just a warning. It's an encouragement that God will be faithful to deny those who deny him and that he will save those who believe in him.

So the fourth truth as we move it to verse 13 I've titled From Faith For Faith. So I have a Sunday school question for you.

See if you're listening. Is there anything that God cannot do? Wyatt, what do you think?

He can't sin? Amen. He cannot deny himself. He can't sin and he cannot lie. And so our faith is founded on one essential truth.

[27 : 55] The Lord is faithful to himself. If we look to human examples for faithfulness we will always be disappointed because people always fail.

But as Paul says in Romans 3 our faith is not shaken if some are unfaithful. Their faithfulness does not nullify the faithfulness of God.

God is not a man. He cannot deny himself. He cannot deny his character or his nature. He cannot lie. And he cannot sin. He remains faithful true and righteous because that is his nature.

Being that he is righteous truthful and faithful he cannot pass over sin. The penalty for sin is death and that price must be paid.

To those who are faithless to those who deny Christ Jesus they will face destruction of body and soul in hell. He will deny he will faithfully deny those who deny him.

[29 : 01] But as we read in Exodus 34 6 this morning he is also merciful compassionate slow to anger abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

to those who have faith to those who have faith in God the God who justifies the ungodly faith is counted to them as righteousness.

Jesus' death was sufficient to atone for our trespasses and his resurrection guarantees our justification. salvation. One more cross reference I want you to turn to Romans 5 1 through 5 we should have it on the screen I think this encapsulates exactly what we've been looking at very well.

Paul says in Romans 5 1 therefore since we have been justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ through him we have also obtained access by faith into the grace in which we stand and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Not only that but we rejoice in our suffering knowing that suffering produces endurance endurance produces character and character produces hope and our hope does not put us to shame because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

[30 : 24] Taking this truth and going back to 2 Timothy 2 Paul had faith to endure suffering bound as a criminal because he knows the word of God is not bound.

The Lord will remain faithful even if he should and he will die in prison but he is confident that he will live and reign with Christ for eternity and that the word of God will endure through the scriptures and through his people.

No matter how bleak things may be for Timothy in this moment he needs only remember and have confidence in Jesus Christ because he is trustworthy because he cannot deny himself.

In conclusion simply to reiterate the words Christ Jesus is faithful he cannot deny himself therefore we have confidence that though we may die with him we will be raised to life with him that if we endure with him we will reign with him but also that those who deny him will be denied by him.

One final thought perhaps you didn't notice would be tough in English but when Paul says the saying is trustworthy this word trustworthy is the Greek pistos the exact same word that he uses when he says God remains pistos faithful trustworthy faithful the same exact word in the Greek.

[32 : 00] Also this word deny is the same in the Greek if we deny him he will also deny us he remains faithful because he cannot deny himself and so we see there are two choices there is faithfulness which is to believe and there is to deny which is to disbelieve God cannot deny himself he cannot disbelieve in himself because he is faithful all that this scripture is calling us to is to believe in the faithfulness of God and we will be saved all that we must do is believe in the faithfulness of God that's it to those who believe he has sent his Holy Spirit to lead us as sons of God as heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ let's pray to those to the people who breathe in the f of God whouego they put through their