

Abounding Grace Christian Church

A Study of Paul's Second Letter to Timothy – Part 6

I. Exposition of Chapter Two (Continued).

A. Verse 9 – “for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, *even* to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained.” – The apostle Paul was suffering trouble for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Of course the phrase “...even to the point of chains” refers to his Roman imprisonment.

1. The word “evildoer” means; “criminal”¹ Concerning this Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin write:

“Paul elaborated on the fact of his suffering and expressed his optimism despite hardship. Paul's imprisonment involved ‘being chained like a criminal.’ The chains impeded Paul's movement and added to his misery. The term ‘criminal’ (*kakourgos*) is used in Luke 23:32 to refer to the brigands who died with Jesus. Its use shows that Paul had serious charges lodged against him. The harshness of this second imprisonment made his earlier imprisonments seem mild (cf. Acts 24:23-27; 28:23-31).”²

2. “...but the word of God is not chained.” – The word “chained” means; “to tie together, to tie up”³

Paul is basically saying that you can tie up the messenger but you can not stop the message. Andreas Köstenberger states:

“...The apostle was convinced that the power of the Christian message far transcended his own proclamation of it. As Chrysostom (*Stat.* 16.5) remarked, those who seek to ‘chain God's word’ may as well try to ‘bind a sunbeam.’ The burden of spreading the gospel, therefore, ultimately does not rest on us but is assured by the gospel's own inherent power (cf. Ro 1:16). In Acts as well as in Paul's letters, the gospel frequently takes on almost personal dimensions as it goes forth and spreads irresistibly in the face of great opposition (Ac 6:7; 12:24; Ro 9:6; 1Co 14:36; 1Th 2:13; 2Th 3:1).”⁴

B. Verse 10 – “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.”

1. “...endure...” – Dr. Robert Utley states this means; “voluntary, active, steadfast endurance.’ Paul chose to remain under the load of gospel ministry for the sake of others.”⁵

2. “...for the sake of the elect...” – The word “elect” means; “that which has been chosen”⁶ Those who adhere to the theology of “Calvinism”, basically believe that this means God chooses some people to be saved and others not to be. We reject this notion completely. Dr. Leighton Flowers in quoting Ralph Martin and Paul Wright writes:

“Election is...universalized to include all who are in Christ.” Since Christ is the elect One (See Matthew 12:18), “those who hear the gospel and respond to it in faith are then declared to be [God's] people, His elect.”⁷

3. “...that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” – Of course Paul is not saying that his suffering is what provides God's people salvation, but the fact that he keeps going and continues to preach the Gospel is going to help people come to salvation.

C. Verses 11-13 – “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.” – Most scholars believe that this was a hymn that both Timothy and the Ephesian believers were familiar with. Gary Leggett writes:

“Verses 11-13 comprise a ‘faithful saying’ that is considered by most scholars to be lines from an early Christian hymn. Of the five ‘faithful sayings’ in the Pastorals (1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; here; Titus 3:8), this is the longest.”⁸

1. “...For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him.” – This expression of dying is not referring to

¹ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

² *The New American Commentary*, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, Vol. 34, Thomas D. Lea & Hayne P. Griffin Jr. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 1992)

³ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 221.

⁴ *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Andreas Köstenberger, (Zondervan Publishing, 2006)

⁵ Robert James Utley, *Paul's Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, vol. Volume 9, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 149.

⁶ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 361.

⁷ Leighton Flowers, *The Potter's Promise: A Biblical Defense of Traditional Soteriology* (Trinity Academic Press, 2017), 80-81.

⁸ *The Complete Biblical Library: Acts – Revelation, Volume 2*, (Empowered Life, Tulsa, OK, 2016.), 919.

physical martyrdom here but of our identification with Christ's death on the cross. God considers us to have died with Christ and to have received the life of Christ (cf. **Romans 6:1-11; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:1-4**).

2. **"If we endure, We shall also reign with Him."** – The word **"endure"** here means; **"to continue to bear up despite difficulty and suffering"**⁹ It implies the idea that one remains steadfast even when others are giving up. Dr. Thomas Constable writes:

"If the believer successfully endures temptations to apostatize, he or she will one day reign with Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 4:8; Rev. 3:21; 5:10). While all Christians will reign with Christ in the sense that we will be with Him when He reigns, the faithful will evidently reign with Christ in a more active sense (cf. Matt. 10:33; Luke 12:9)... The Bible seems to teach that there are differences in reigning just as there are differences in rewards (cf. Luke 19:11-27; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21)."¹⁰

3. **"If we deny Him, He also will deny us."** – The word **"deny"** means; **"to refuse to give thought to or express concern for—'to disregard, to pay no attention to, to say No to.'"**¹¹ This also seems to be connected with apostasy or turning away from the Lord. A. Duane Litfin writes:

"If we disown Him, He will also disown us speaks of the possibility of apostasy (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 10:38–39; 2 John 9) and the Lord's ultimate rejection of those who professed Christ only temporarily (cf. Matt. 10:33). Instead of identifying with Christ, the apostate finally dissociates himself with Christ"¹²

"If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny *and* disown *and* reject Him, He will also deny *and* disown *and* reject us." – II Timothy 2:12 – Amplified Bible

4. **"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself."** – The word **"faithless"** can mean either **"to not believe"** or **"to be unfaithful."** Due to the context, it seems the latter makes more sense. It's contrasting man's unfaithfulness with God's faithfulness. (cf. **I John 1:9**). Dr. Bob Utley writes:

"In what sense is the believer faithless? Does this mean (1) faltering under persecution or trial; (2) following the false teachers; or (3) ungodly lifestyle? ...Ultimately the hope of believers is on the unchanging character and promises of God. YHWH's faithfulness is both a descriptive title (Deut. 7:9; Isa. 49:7; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Thess. 3:3) and a characteristic (Ps. 36:5; 40:10; 89:1, 2, 5, 8; 92:2; 119:90; Heb. 6:17–18; 1 Pet. 4:19) which is fully revealed in Christ (Heb. 6:13–20). Because some abandon the faith does not imply that God abandoned them! Free will functions at every level. God's grace and faithfulness are not in jeopardy because of the false teachers and their followers' faithlessness!"¹³

D. **Verse 14 – "Remind *them* of these things, charging *them* before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers."** – Paul now instructs Timothy to remind his congregation and maybe especially the **"faithful men"** mentioned in **verse 2**, to stay strong in their faith in Christ and not submit to temptation to fall away. The words **"...strive about words..."** mean; **"to argue or quarrel about the meaning or use of words"**¹⁴ This apparently was a big problem in the church at Ephesus. Some of this was probably due to those who were teaching false doctrine arguing with those who were faithful to the Gospel. Paul states that this can lead to **"...the ruin of the hearers."** The word **"ruin"** means; **"to do serious harm to, with the implication of misleading."**¹⁵

E. **Verse 15 – "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** – Timothy is commanded to be **"diligent"** which means; **"to be eager to do something, with the implication of readiness to expend energy and effort"**¹⁶ The words **"rightly dividing the word of truth"** mean; **"to teach correctly, to expound rightly"**¹⁷

⁹ Louw and Nida, 307.

¹⁰ Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on 2 Timothy* (<http://www.soniclight.com>: Sonic Light Publication, 2023), 32.

¹¹ Louw and Nida, 355.

¹² A. Duane Litfin, "2 Timothy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 754.

¹³ Utley, *Paul's Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy*, 152.

¹⁴ Louw and Nida, 439.

¹⁵ Ibid., 229.

¹⁶ Ibid., 297.

¹⁷ Ibid., 414.