

Suffering for Jesus and the Church

Let us turn to our Bibles to 2nd Timothy, 2nd Timothy chapter 2, verses 8 and following. 2nd Timothy chapter 2, verses 8 and following. Let us listen attentively to the Word of God.

And in these exhortations to the young Pastor Timothy, Lord, may we see as well that we are called to suffer for Christ as opportunity arises in your providence, Lord, and to submit therein and to do so, Lord, knowing that you use all things for your glory and for the good of your saints. And so, God, may we be encouraged, therefore, here in these words given to the young Pastor, that we too, although not often in the public way and to the intensity certainly as the leadership of old has done, especially through persecution, God, yet we are still encouraged to endure, to stand firm, to even suffer, God, knowing that you are with us and you cannot deny yourself. We thank you for this truth.

Amen. So pastors, of course, have the same qualifications as other Christians. Perhaps you haven't thought about it that way.

We too have to fulfill the Ten Commandments. We have to be honest. We have to have fidelity and holiness like all believers.

The Ten Commandments apply them as well as to everyone else. But some of those qualifications and attributes must be found in greater abundance is really the difference. One such is the courage needed to take a public stand, as Timothy is called to do, as Paul himself had done, to endure ridicule and hardship for Christ and the church, and not just occasionally or when convenient.

As a leader, this should be expected among them. Even so, we in our own way are called to be courageous, even though we are not called to be church officers. Not always in public, of course, we're not looking for a fight.

You're not looking for a fight. Yet it comes to you at times and we're called therefore to confess that we are indeed believers and we'll take his word to heart and not ashamed to be around other believers. It is not a game for us.

So we tell the world when the opportunity arises that we follow Jesus. But others, of course, mock this and even make life hard for us, the unbelievers and the like and those even near to us, at home even, as we read a little bit here or said together in Psalm 88. So we see that these verses, although directed to the young pastor Timothy, are still relevant for us today, that we must persevere in our own troubles and hardships to follow our Lord and Savior and not be embarrassed of Him.

Remember the Gospel

So the first point here in which he urges Timothy to remember the gospel, of course Christ is the heart of the gospel, remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead. Don't lose sight of this fact, is what he's emphasizing here. He's not saying merely as an intellectual exercise, as though somehow Timothy woke up one day and forgot all this stuff.

It's a figure of speech to emphasize this is important stuff. Take heed, pay attention to this gospel message in which you are, of course, given as a pastor to pass on to others or perhaps an encouragement to re-embrace the gospel truth with boldness in times of persecution as a pastor. To be preserved in Timothy's teaching would be the implication, not just remember up in the head, okay, I recall it, this is great, wonderful things.

What's he going to do with it? Of course, he ought to present it to the world to equip the next generation, as we talked a little bit about before, to raise up new pastors, to preach the truth, to teach it wherever he finds himself. Whoever will hear the truth, if they don't kick him out. And standing with Jesus, in fact, with persecution because he slides right into that point about himself there in verse 9 and verse 10, enduring, which can also be translated as suffering.

Obviously the two go together in the best sense of the word. In other words, Paul the apostle is urging him to bring back to the foreground of your mind and never lose sight of this important fact as a pastor, as a minister of the gospel. And of course, the same urging is important for us today.

As hardships come upon us, temptation is there that we should not forget these comforting truths that Jesus is our Lord and Savior. He has fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies that he is there for us. He is Yeshua, God in the flesh, and Christ, Jesus Christ.

Christ is a title, remember? It means Messiah or Anointed One, appointed by God to deliver us from Satan. He's not just some guy who came up on the scene, another prophet or amazing person, but especially set aside and gifted by the power of the Holy Spirit as we know him as baptism for the world to know that he has been given a unique task for his people, fulfillment of the covenant for us, that he is there as the God-man, in fact. Jesus as both God and man, therefore with unique responsibility.

He is of the seed of David. What's he saying here? He's further clarifying this picture of who is this Jesus, the Christ. Some of the heresies that came up in the early church as we run across the Sunday school class going through church history include believing that Jesus wasn't fully a man, it looked like he had a body, but it wasn't a real body, things like that.

But when Paul says here, of the seed of David, he doesn't mean that in some spiritual sense, some metaphorical, vague sense, but the reality of having a body that came from a woman who came from another woman all the way down to the time of David. The lineage here highlights his humanity, that he is one of us. He became a man and walked among us as a man.

He also had the feelings of a man. He dealt with hunger and tiredness and the like. It's a great and high claim.

It's an important claim. When we back up a little bit beyond the particulars of this, therefore implies that he is also a man. But of the seed of David points to the Old Testament prophecies given to David himself and to those before him, that there shall be a seed of David who will raise up and rule over his people and protect and deliver his people.

This is Jesus, the Christ, who has fulfilled those promises of old. And so the Jews would, of course, understand this language of the seed of David. They know who David is and the promise given to him in 2 Samuel there in the covenant of David, of the king, that there will be of his loins who will sit upon the throne and rule his people.

And this lineage, this language of the seed is important as well because it recalls Genesis 3. What do we have in Genesis 3? And I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel. So from the very beginning that there would be a human, but more than a human, right? The God-man, Jesus Christ, was there in the gospel, the good news promise given to Adam and Eve, carried on by probably verbal tradition to the time of Abraham in which things started to get written down by the time of Moses.

As we have the Pentateuch all written from his hand for us to show us these promises of this truth that God would save his people from their sins, save us. This is part of our heritage, our lineage. So that's why it's one reason why it's important to know the Old Testament.

We understand the language of the New Testament. It talks about who is the seed of David? Why talking about David? What's the significance of David? He's a king. The promise was given to him from Genesis 3.15 onward.

And so this second Adam, the son of David, this savior for us, he is the seed of David. And as the seed of David, what else does this imply? Who was David? Just another Jew, kind of a cool guy or something? He was a king. That's the promise there, that a king will sit on your throne forever and ever.

Which already points to the fact that this lineage, this person, is more than just a man. He is God. How else could he survive forever and ever? And so, he is a king.

Jesus, the Christ at the seed of David, is essentially saying, Jesus Christ is king. And implies, therefore, a kingdom. And as a kingdom, that means there are those who are ruled over under the kingdom.

And that we are called, therefore, to honor Christ as our king and to submit to his lordship and his kingdom. So remembering that Jesus is the Christ, that he is the anointed one for a special job. But that anointing involves not just the priesthood, but also the royalty, the seed of David.

His anointing wasn't just as a priest. His function in delivering and saving us, brothers and sisters, was never and only reducible down to him being the great high priest. Well, that's a wonderful picture.

And it's emphasized there in the book of Hebrews, of course. But he's also our prophet, the one who instructs us, teaches us, admonishes us, as he did in his ministry there, as we have in the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. He's teaching, he's admonishing, he's even prophesying as a prophet.

But he's also a king. He has all three offices in his anointing upon him. Thus, he is unique among all the prophets, among all the kings, among all the priests.

The closest you get is Mechizedek. He was what? A priest and a king, and that was it. But Jesus is all three and fulfills them to the greatest extent.

Now, this good news that the young pastor, Timothy, is called to remember, that is to bring forth and to always keep before him in his ministry, that Jesus is the Christ at the seat of David, was raised from the dead. The resurrection is significant and important from the Gospel. Without it, Jesus is just another prophet who died.

Many of the prophets, as we know, were stoned or killed or even sawed asunder. But with it, the resurrection, the sin and death, are proven impotent and helpless. They cannot hold him down.

The grave cannot sustain him, because he is greater than all that. The effect of sin is death, and Christ has overcome the effect because he's also overcome the cause, sin, the consequences of sin, the punishment of sin, the guilt of sin, for you and for me, brothers and sisters. This is what he's highlighting here.

This is what he's telling them in short order. He doesn't give all the details. As you know, you can't say everything in one verse.

He says it elsewhere in the Bible, to be sure. These are just short and to the point. That's what confessions are like, often.

We read the Apostles' Creed. It's just trying to highlight certain things, but we know there's a lot more depth to it, right? More is being implied in these words. Jesus Christ, of the seat of David, was raised and resurrected from the dead.

According to my Gospel, my good news, that which was, of Paul the Apostle, and all the Apostles, he's not claiming it's uniquely his, but this is his job and his responsibility, is what he's highlighting here. And these three salient points, Jesus Christ, of the seat of David, who was resurrected from the dead, of course, there's more to the good news. This isn't just all of it.

Oh, this is sufficient. People ask questions. We give more answers.

We have more detail in the Bible. But Paul is focusing on important teachings perhaps being attacked at that time. This is common in the Bible.

You'll see, why is he talking about this and that? Because apparently that's what they needed to hear at the time. That's what needed to be reinforced in their congregation or their church or this pastor in this case. So don't lose sight of this.

And so, therefore, their particular situations are not always our particular situations. This is a temptation sometimes to read a text and say, well, look, it's talking about this, so this is what we must always talk about. Only verse 8. This is all we should ever talk about.

Jesus Christ, the seat of David, and the resurrection. That's it. We're done.

No. This is what he needed to hear in this time. We have other things.

We have the whole depth of the Bible as needed to what people need to hear, here and now.

Suffering for the Gospel

Now, the second point, suffering for the gospel, verses 9 through 13. So he describes here, Jesus is raised from the dead, according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains.

So Paul starts out with an admonition, encouragement, and he ends up talking about his situation. This is how Paul writes, of course, how we even talk at times. We speak and it reminds us of something, we go off to another direction at times.

And so Paul is going in a slightly different direction, but he's still tying it to the gospel, because he's suffering for the gospel, for the good news. He would not back down. Suffering as an evildoer.

And of course, he's not saying he literally is an evildoer, but people are claiming he's an evildoer. It's a false charge against him as a disturber of the peace. And of course, the Jews claimed he was a heretic as well.

But that meant nothing to Rome. It's just a little squabble between you guys. These kind of Jews and those are the Jews.

Leave it to yourself. But you bring it to the public, it becomes a disruption. We're going to deal with it.

That's how Rome handled these matters. And that's why they went that direction, the Jews did, to take out Paul. Of course, he's innocent of all the charges, and yet he suffers in chains.

That is a hard condition. You've heard about what he has to do if he was in prison for a bit, which he was, in which you don't even get fed. Today, you get prison food here.

At least you got fed. Back then, you didn't get fed. Someone had to come to you and bring you food in prison.

Here, we find out later in his life, his last chains here on his way to Rome. They gave him some freedom. He had a soldier with him.

He was probably chained to the soldier, and was able to write some of his letters, and people would come and talk to him, as you re-read there at the end of Acts, for example, the book of Acts. So he had a little more freedom. That's good.

But it's still no fun being in chains. It's still an embarrassing thing in many ways, certainly socially and publicly. Paul, through all of this, nevertheless, was patient in his suffering.

There's the implication here, of course, when he says, I suffer or endure, and therefore I endure or suffer, verse 10, all things. And of course, the enduring here, the suffering, is not just complaining and whining about it. We use that word.

Maybe it's just me. We talk about, I just got to endure this day, just one more hour, and I could get out of this meeting. That's not what Paul means by endure.

Although, I'm certainly, you'd be glad not to have to suffer. That's true. It's not like we're looking forward to it.

We're not looking for trouble. The early Christians were never looking for persecution, or they shouldn't have been, although some of it did happen at times. They thought they were going to get closer to God or something.

Paul's certainly not the case at all. Here, it's just the idea of patiently suffering, is what he's really saying. Knowing this is his life, and there's not much you can do about it, he's locked in, right? Legally, he's locked in.

He appealed to Rome, and to Rome, he will go, the leadership tells him. You can't just say, well, I changed my mind. Sorry.

You're locked in, and you're going to suffer this. He's not whining all the time about it. That's not why he's bringing it up.

He mentions it for a greater point, about the honor of suffering for Jesus, as he says elsewhere, as we know, about the power of God in spite of Paul's chains, is what he's highlighting here. But the Word of God is not chained. I am chained, but that has not stopped the Gospel.

Paul's suffering, however, did not mean for him that he rolled over, right? If you recall in Acts, they started beating him, and he's like, okay, by the way, I'm a Roman citizen. And they had a cow. I mean, they were just like, okay, this is, that's really bad stuff, beating a Roman citizen for no cause.

And so, he appeals to Rome for innocence, they get the guards, they put him in chains, and he's on his way to Rome. So he did exercise something to stop the suffering. That's not what he means here when he says, I'm enduring it, I'm just going to always look for trouble.

That's what I'm highlighting. Nevertheless, his, by God's providence, is such that once he did that, he is now stuck with the chains, and he can't back out. There's still suffering.

At least he's not being physically beaten, praise be the Lord, but it's still a hard thing to go through. And so his suffering here, that is, while exercising his civil rights, he still suffered. So even when you try to do the right thing and protect your family in accordance with the sixth commandment, for example, preserving life, and so you use the laws of the land, it still may not come out the best way.

And there's nothing you can do about it but suffer or endure. As a believer, as a Christian, I mean, think of those Christians who had to go to court because they would not bake the cake, take the photograph, what were they doing? They were suffering for Christ's sake. They did what they could, they went to the law courts, but going to the law courts, in its own way, can be brutal.

It takes lots of money, lots of time, lots of stress. But they did it for Christ, because they did not want to back down and wanted to be an example, I believe, for other Christians that this is what we got to do. We got to push back.

They're not ministers, but they still had to do what they had to do, and you may have to do it as well. Now the gospel unchained here, it's a clever play on words, of course, and Paul likes to do this. Yes, I'm suffering for trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains.

I have chains, but the gospel of Jesus Christ is not chained, is not held down, it is not held back, it is not subdued, and it cannot be subdued, is obviously the implication. He doesn't unpack it any further, he just says negatively, the Word of God is not chained, which means positively, it is unchained, it is free, and it is, of course, freeing, it liberates us from our sin and the guilt of sin, which is a wonderful truth. So he jumps from the Word to the concept of the great news of our Lord and Savior, that it is not hindered by man or nation.

That means, in other words, it is powered by God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, He is behind the gospel, He is the propagator of the gospel, of course, by the power of the Spirit, through His chosen vessels, even when it looks like their vessels are falling down, in chains, and even muted, it doesn't matter, it will not stop the good news and the spread of God's kingdom. This is our freedom. Unchained, condemned from the power of sin, we are freed from that condemnation, freed from sin tying us to Satan and his dominion.

This is the newness of life that we have here, because the Word of God is not chained. We who believe in the Word of God, we who believe in the gospel of God, of course, which is what he was specifically highlighting in verse 8, that Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, and thus we have freedom in believing and trusting in Him. And this is the reason for Paul enduring false charges and hardship, because he believes in the gospel, he believes in the power of the gospel, but he goes further, therefore, I endure all things for the sake of the elect, for God's people.

And it's interesting here, he doesn't say, therefore, I endure all things for the gospel, therefore, I endure all things for Christ, and of course, he's doing that for Christ and for the gospel. You can have multiple reasons why you do something. But here he wants to highlight his communion and his fellowship with the body of Christ.

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. His heart was thinking of others, even while his chains held him down. He endures these things for the elect, the chosen ones, is what the word means, of course.

And it's used in two different senses in the Bible. One is that those who are separated publicly, specifically by baptism, of course, in the New Testament, that as parts of the visible church, we are all elect in that public sense. People see us, we're members of the church, we're children, we're all baptized, and there you go.

Also, of course, it means the elect from eternity past, the spiritual church, those who are really born again, because people can be members of the church, baptized in the church, and never have a regenerate heart, and care nothing for the things of the Lord. They're just here because of peer pressure, or their parents, or whatever. So those are the two different senses of elect, typically, in the Bible.

And I think Paul means here the spiritual church, because of his talk of obtaining salvation, which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, that is living in heaven with him forever and ever and ever. So whoever they are, Paul is suffering for them. So it's not just those who are baptized and confessed, although he does it for them, because of course, at the end of the day, we don't know the difference, and so you just take the baptism, you take the confession at face value, unless there's a clear contrary, and they're excommunicated, and you say they're a believer, and I'm suffering for you.

And that's what Paul is doing. Paul's motivation is to gather the elect into the church, and he's willing to endure to that end, to be ridiculed, and even put into chains. And this is why he preaches, and pastors preach, to bring the truth to people, so that they would follow Jesus.

Of course, any of them, in the case of the unbeliever, you preach to the unbeliever, and you pray the Spirit of God moves in their heart, and they're born again. But we also preach to the believer, and pray that they too would have the fullness of salvation, because with respect to sanctification, it's an ongoing process. So when he talks about salvation in heaven, it means all of this, being justified, being sanctified, and ultimately, of course, eternal glory, meaning being glorified.

And so Paul preaches both to the unsaved, to the saved, because some of the unsaved could be called by the Spirit of God to be fully justified, and the believers need to hear the message as well, that we would grow in grace, and continue on to persevere. And so this verse could actually be used as a proof text to say, yeah, you need the Bible, yes, you need to pray, you need to be born again, it's your faith, it's your repentance, I don't do it for you, God doesn't do it for you, that's true, but you still need the church, you still need a pastor, Paul is here, the apostle, and he's saying, I have a job, and I have a duty, I'm here to help you. So the flip side is, you ought to be there, they ought to be there, saying, we want to hear from Paul, we want to hear from Timothy, we want to grow, we want to learn, we need each other, this is the community of the saints in verse 10, the pastor concerned about

the sheep, the implication being, it's reciprocal, the sheep should be concerned and care about the pastor.

And that's his motivation, it's love, and to suffer for them, and I think, therefore, on the flip side, to the extent that the sheep may suffer for the pastor's sake, that is, they're brought to embarrassment, as it were, because the pastor's taking a stand, and they sustain it anyways, because they love him and love the gospel. And thus, it's showing the communion or the fellowship of the saints, we have an entire chapter on that in the Confession, of the love of the pastors, of the flock, of the officers, to one another. Also, Christians should have a similar desire as well, that although not exercised in a public way, with a public office, but as we have opportunity and ability, that we support our fellow Christians, and of course, our leadership, and pray for them, and even defend them before unbelievers who will ridicule us and look down upon us.

Oh, you're one of those. Oh, you go to church on Sunday. They don't always outright say it, you can kind of tell, they're looking their nose down at you, we say.

Maybe whisper, maybe they tell you outright, I don't know. And it's a faithful saying, he continues here after highlighting his desire for God's church, this is a faithful saying, and it looks like this comes out of the blue. For if we died with him, we should live with him.

If we endure, we should also reign with him. If we deny him, he will also deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful, he cannot deny himself.

Now, your translation probably has it offset a little bit, and sectioned off, perhaps like a poem, as opposed to a block paragraph, because it suggests something of a poem, or a song of some sort, but we don't know for certain. But we do know it's about standing for Jesus. So he goes from, remember Jesus, and that I suffered as an evildoer, and I'm suffering for God's people, I'm enduring for them, and now he has this faithful saying, if we died with him, we should live with him.

If we endure, it's the same word, it's verse 10, or suffer, we should also reign with him. So he's saying, enduring also has the idea of standing and not denying Jesus, is what this faithful saying is highlighting here. They go hand in hand, standing for him and suffering for him, clearly go hand in hand, because if you're suffering for Jesus, you're saying, I'm willing to stand with Jesus, and I'm not backing down.

Now, this faithful saying involves a warning as well. Encouragement and warning, verses 11, 12, and 13, it's kind of split in half there, verse 12b, we could say, if we deny him, he will also deny us. So it's two pairs of sayings, if you look at it.

One, encouragement to stand for Jesus, so that's verse 11, a part of verse 12, if we died, if we endure, there's the encouragement. And then the second pair of sayings that are a warning, if we deny him, he will deny us, in verse 13, if we are faithless, nevertheless, he is faithful, and we'll see how that plays out in a bit. Now, the first part of the saying, if we died with him, we should also live with him.

Dying with Jesus is, of course, about our identification with him, not that we take our body, go to the grave and bury ourselves. That's not what he's saying. He's saying we're so identified with our Lord and Savior, that what he had done in history is done for us, as our covenantal head, the second Adam.

And as he died, we died to sin's power and sin's effect. So that now death is no longer the gateway to hell, but the gateway to heaven. And the implication, of course, is any suffering we have here is temporary.

For if we died with him, that's a form of suffering, enduring. We shall also live with him, here and now, of course, ultimately into heaven. And that's further unpacked in the second pair here, of if we endure, we should also, what? Reign with him, clearly future-looking, in the ultimate sense.

Reigning with him in eternity. Enduring here, through suffering, as Paul talks about in verse 9 and 10. He himself in chains.

Of course, young Timothy was not in chains, though he had his own suffering. He had, you know, troublemakers in the church, for example. That's a hardship, coming out, preaching false lies and whatnot.

And Paul here, I think, is saying the same thing that as whoever, he wrote this, and if it's a well-known saying, he says it's a faithful saying, perhaps it's well-known in those circles, is repeating himself in a different direction in verse 12. If we endure, to persevere, not to give up, we should also reign with him. Reign with him in eternity.

Reign with him, of course, now, in the fact that he is with us, and we are in his kingship, and that we are over sin and death, in that sense. That we are born again, but ultimately in heaven when he returns. That we will be with him forever and ever, and reign with him.

The end of the race, brothers and sisters, is a new heaven and a new earth, where we will reign in a perfect world without pain or suffering or enduring, which is to say, the suffering here, if we endure, we can say in parenthesis now, we shall eventually also reign with him forever and ever. What we are going through now is temporary and short compared to eternity, I think is what he's highlighting here, and therefore worth it. The cost is worth it to spend eternity in heaven reigning with him.

So we should never lose sight of that, brothers and sisters, for we will suffer, we will have hardships, suffering against our own sin, of course, is always there, suffering from externalities, people around us looking down upon us. We'll read a little more about this in the sermon this afternoon, Psalm 69, where he cries buckets of tears, because he's outnumbered and outgunned, and he has no comforter except our Lord and Savior. Even his own brothers turn away from him.

So he suffers, but he's enduring. He does not give up on Jesus. He does not deny him, say, what's the point of all this? I give up.

I'm done. I'm out of here. No, no, a thousand times no.

So I believe Paul here is emphasizing for Timothy, both indirectly saying, I have suffered, not bragging, I've suffered, I've endured for the elect, the implication being, you too should suffer for the elect. That's part of what you need to do as a pastor. And so I now want to give you this faithful saying as a further encouragement, Timothy.

Now the second part here is important as well. We read there in 12b, we shall call it, if we deny him, he will also deny us. If you read that, it reminds you of an echo of Matthew 10.33, I think for all of us.

There we read of Jesus who says, but whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven. Those are scary words. He says it there.

Jesus says it. The Lord of good news gives us a little kind of scary news here. If you deny me before men, I will deny you before my Father who is in heaven.

And then it's picked up here again. If we deny him, he will also deny us. That is, of course, Jesus here.

Verse 12. This is about the ultimate and final denial of unbelief. Not a temporary denial in the sense of the weakness of the flesh.

And we know this because who denied Jesus and did it three times? Peter. Peter did. So the warning is real.

If you are not his, you're going to deny him. You're going to deny him with your whole heart because you've never been a follower. But if you are his, if you are the elect, the warning is still here to keep you away from denying him because means and causes in this world still exist.

They're real. They make a difference. How do you sustain life? By just praying to God and being holy? No, you've got to eat.

And you avoid poison. And last I checked, you still warn one another, oh, that's bad food. You don't just sit there and say, well, if you're one of the elect, don't worry about the bad food.

Just eat it anyways. Nobody does that. We all know why because cause and effects are real.

It's just that the effectiveness of it for the elect is real because the Spirit is behind it. And they will never deny, even though the denial may be temporary. It may look pretty scary here as Peter, three times in one night, he even cursed.

I swear to heaven, I have not been a follower of Jesus. But he ultimately what? Repented. He cried out to God.

And the Lord had mercy upon him. As Matthew Henry puts it, in describing here these, I mentioned B, if we deny him. Verse 13 is tied to this in this sense.

If we are faithless, paralleling the idea if we deny him, just like before, if we died with him and we endure with him, similar ideas unpacking each other. If we are faithless, he remains faithful. That is, God Almighty is faithful to his blessings and his warnings.

So this part here is, he's saying, if we deny him, he will deny us. If we are faithless, he remains faithful in spite of your faithfulness and he will be faithfully prosecuting his promise that he will deny you if you deny him. That's what he's saying.

I always read this as, if we are faithless, yet he remains faithful in spite of it, therefore I'm still saved. That's not the point here, actually. Yeah, that's how exactly I always read it.

And I looked into this and you can see the parallelism here, I hope, although it's implied he doesn't unpack it, which is pretty typical of Paul. If we are faithless, that is, if we deny him, same idea, he will deny us because he's faithful to his promise that he will deny you if you deny him. I mean, that's what he's saying.

Because he cannot deny himself. It's a warning to Timothy, to anybody, any Christian. It's the same thing because Christ gives this warning to everybody in Matthew 10.33. Matthew Henry summarizes it this way.

If we deny him out of fear or shame or for the sake of some temporal advantage, he will deny and disown us and will not deny himself but will continue faithful to his word when he threatens as well as when he promises. That's the implied idea here in verse 13. Remember, brothers and sisters, we are called to bear one another's burdens, as I want to leave us with the thought from verse 10 in particular.

That is, we may have to suffer for each other. That's what he's doing here in verse 10. I endure all things for the sake of the elect.

I'm bearing a burden for them. Got that from Galatians 10, right? Bear one another's burdens. This is a particular application of that principle.

We may suffer for each other, not suffering in the sense of, again, enduring for the shortcomings of believers. I got to put up with this guy again. No, but enduring the social humiliation of standing with each other as believers and a common cause.

Being looked down upon and ridiculed for being Christians, for standing for the truth when others will not. Pray, brothers and sisters, for each other in this regard and pray especially for the pastors and church leadership, the ruling elders to stand firm in their public testimony of our Lord and Savior, that they persevere through any unfair difficulties in their life, legal or otherwise, to be an example of the body of Christ for suffering for Christ himself and for the elect. Let us pray.

Indeed, spirit of truth and might and power embolden us to do the right thing, to fulfill our obligations and to love you and to stand for you, regardless of how much humiliation we may go through. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, give us more of your strength, we pray, and God, that we would not be discouraged but encouraged by these words, that we can, and

this is our calling, to move forward and to endure and suffer for you wherever we find ourselves, God, in such a situation, to always trust you. Therefore, we pray these things by your Son's mercy upon us.

Amen.