

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## Promises on Which You Can Bank, Pt 4

2 Timothy 2:11-13

**Keywords:** Salvation, Reigning with Christ, Died with Christ, Apostasy, Faithfulness

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** NONE

**SermonAudio Blurb:** Paul brings to an end a key section of this final letter. He does so through apparently quoting an ancient hymn that sums up the various experiences of a professing Christian, but more importantly key promises given by God.

### I. Introduction.

- A. We come again to a passage that has become at least four sermons. We are considering certain promises that are found in this ancient creed or hymn that are designed to urge a Christian to persevere.
- B. If you are Christ's then you cannot lose (11-12a).
  - 1. We shall live with Him.
  - 2. We shall reign with Him.
- C. This is the kind of promise must set deep into your heart for there are many things that seek to draw you away from a persevering faith in the sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

### II. If you abandon Jesus you can only lose (12b).

- A. Here are the consequences of not enduring. And it gives us a sense of what not enduring means--denying your Lord.
- B. The path for a Christian is a fixed path, it starts with a cross and then a crown. Now Paul takes us to the idea of what happens to the one who does not endure but rather he denies.
  - 1. To deny here means to renounce or disown. It is that terrible moment when a person who has confessed Jesus says he is now done with Jesus.
    - a. He walks away and denies Jesus.
    - b. If we deny Jesus then He shall be the one who denies us (think Matthew 7:21) and it will be a testimony of denial before His Father.
  - 2. This is not always clear for us and we need to be careful.

Preached on May 5, 2013 AM

Notice that  
verbally they  
have  
not  
denied Him

Also Mt 25:1-13

M i s s i o D e i F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- a. The parable of Tares reminds us that all is not as it appears, you can read about it in Matthew 13:26ff.
- b. It is unwise to assume every person confessing Jesus right now shall continue to confess and follow Him 10 years from now.
- c. It is at the final judgment that some shall finally be revealed as for who they really are.

3. Nor should we assume that somehow the warnings in Jude and 2 Peter have nothing to do with us.

4. Matthew 10:32, "Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven, but whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."

C. I think here is a good place to speak briefly on the nature of what the gospel demands of those who hear it.

- 1. It is nothing less that a call to believe that Jesus truly is the Risen Lord and is our Sovereign King and to follow Him in that light.
- 2. It is in contradistinction to the foolish idea of "making a decision" or "asking Jesus into your heart" where the focus is on you and your decision rather than the person and work of Jesus and the natural demands that are connected to it.

3. MacArthur makes a helpful point here: "Accepting Christ is not really used in Scripture. What the Scripture does in inviting a person to Christ is call them to be a follower of Jesus Christ. That's the issue. You don't say to someone, "Jesus died and Jesus rose again and He wants to change your life. If you just accept Him He'll change your life." That's simply a short-term kind of thing, you just do this and you'll get that. That is a very confusing thing and that kind of evangelism, I think, has produced a lot of still-births. What we should say to people is if you believe that Jesus is the Son of God who died and rose again, if you believe that He's the Savior who paid the penalty for your sin, if you believe that He desires to forgive you and you are willing to follow Him in obedience and live to His glory, then come and follow Christ. We should be calling people to discipleship, not to decisions. We should be calling people to follow Christ, not accept Christ. And we see here again that you will reign if you continue under persecution faithful to Christ, if you're a follower. No one is elect who does not endure."

Go to Jude  
1-4, 10-13,

16-25  
↑  
offers solutions

2 Pe  
2:1-9  
12-22  
Notes  
9 "under  
penitence  
for..."

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- D.    **What are the causes of apostasy?**
1.    **It seldom occurs overnight.**
    - a.    **Judas gave every appearance to be a believer. Remember Matthew 10:1-4.**
    - b.    **What led up to Judas' apostasy? An inordinate love of money.**
  2.    **It happens when teaching reveals sin (John 3:19-21).**
  3.    **Tribulation and persecution will turn many hearts from the gospel (Matthew 24:10)**
  4.    **A desire to have ears tickled.**
    - a.    **Matthew 24:11**
    - b.    **1 Timothy 4:3-4: For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.**
  5.    **A general state of unrest/lawlessness (Matthew 24:12).**
  6.    **Hebrews has 5 warning passages, each getting progressively worse and stronger. They serve as a solid final examination of the nature of apostasy. We have time to look at 3 of them.**
    - a.    **(2:1-4)**
      - (1)    **This letter is not merely a theological treatise.**
        - (a)    **It is intensely practical and needs to be seen in that way.**
        - (b)    **The Christian faith is too often trivialized and treated as an intellectual or emotional event.**
        - (c)    **As a pastor I find that more people do not take their faith serious than those who do.**
      - (2)    **“For this reason” is the connector back to chapter 1.**
        - (a)    **That connection is vs 2—the Law given to Moses was given through angels.**
        - (b)    **Remember what is happening in these people’s lives.**

**M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p**

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- i) **Professing faith in Jesus Christ.**
- ii) **But beginning to go back to the “old.”**
- iii) **Remember that as we go on.**
- (c) **So the writers says that they need to pay closer attention what they had heard.**
  - i) **And what he is warning them about is the gospel, which is obviously Christ centered.**
  - ii) **The concern is that they were ‘drifting’ away from the gospel.**
    - a) **This is a key principle that I have seen played out time and time again.**
    - b) **People who make a strong declaration of faith. Their lives appears to be unique and different.**
    - c) **But they do not keep the gospel and its promises central.**
    - d) **And when this happens, they begin to drift (there is no such thing as ‘coasting’)**
- (d) **So what is the author’s point?**
- (e) **God did not wink at the breaking of the Law. Ultimately the whole of Israel’s history proved that out. Even at the writing of this letter they were still in captivity, under God’s judgment.**
- (f) **The promise in the Law was very clear, obey and you will be blessed, disobey and you will be cursed.**
- (g) **And it is here that he makes an argument from the lesser to the greater.**
  - i) **If angels’s, who are lesser than the Son, words are unbreakable.**

**M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p**

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- ii) Then how much greater is the Son's (cf 1:1-3)?
  - iii) They mediated the Old Covenant. The Son is the mediator of the New Covenant—something the author is going to remind them of later on in the letter.
- (3) Apostasy starts by thinking God is not faithful to His Word.
- b. (3:7–4:13)
- (1) A large passage so I will break it down to the key points.
  - (2) An entire generation failed to actually enjoy the fulfillment of God's promise of the rest in the promised land.
  - (3) They all left Egypt in faith, but they did not remain in faith.
  - (4) Therefore the author tells us that we must care for one another that none end up falling away (3:11-12).
    - (a) So apostasy comes when we stop fellowshipping and confessing sin to one another.
    - (b) It comes when sin has become your friend. You believe its lies.
  - (5) In 4:1 What is the conclusion that the writer makes? Fear.
  - (6) Fear what?
    - (a) On first glance it appears that we fear not entering God's rest.
    - (b) But, really it is back in 3:19.
      - i) The kind of unbelief that keeps you from enjoying God's rest.
      - ii) That rest is reigning with Christ and entering into eternity.
    - (c) Which takes us to vs 6 and 11. Apostasy comes when we are comfortable in our disobedience.
- c. (6:1-8)

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- (1) They are forgetting basic things that they had learned. These doctrines are Old Testament teachings that were foundational.
  - (2) There is a subtle difference in translations here that perhaps is helpful.
    - (a) ESV, KJV make 6:1 as “doctrine of Christ.”
    - (b) NASB has it as “teaching about the Christ.”
    - (c) The point in NASB is that these elementary teachings are teaching about who the messiah was to be.
    - (d) And once we saw the messiah, then these should be left behind.
  - (3) vss 4-8 gets to the heart of it all.
  - (4) Now he speaks of the real threat of apostasy again.
7. What is the main point in vss 4-6?
- a. If you fall away it is impossible to be brought back to repentance.
  - b. This is key to grasp for anyone who will determine that a Christian, a true Christian, can lose their salvation.
  - c. If true, then there is no second opportunity. Which is completely contrary to what most positions hold to who believe in the loss of salvation and appeal to this passage and chapter 10.
8. AH gives six realities that proclaim one who is impossible to restore to repentance. What are they?
- a. Professed repentance (4).
    - (1) They had to have professed this to desire to be renewed to it.
    - (2) 2 Corinthians 7:10 “true repentance does not have regret.”
    - (3) “Have been enlightened”
      - (a) Used in John 1:9 of Jesus enlightening mankind.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- (b) I see this as those who have been taught the gospel message, have given evidence that they have repented and understand it. They are not in the “dark” regarding what a Christian and what the gospel is.
- (4) “Tasted of the heavenly gift.”
  - (a) Some see this as the same as the Holy Spirit, but if you diagram it, it is a separate phrase.
  - (b) I see it as a taste of what a converted life and a forgiven life feels and looks like.
  - (c) They have participated in the community of believers and how redeemed people live and act.
- (5) “Been made partakers of the Holy Spirit.”
  - (a) Here is the key one for anyone looking at this text.
  - (b) In some way or another these people have shared in the Holy Spirit.
  - (c) Here is my question:
    - i) Born again? If so, no other place does a regenerate person become unregenerate.
    - ii) Baptism with the Holy Spirit? Then this would be one who is truly saved losing salvation.
    - iii) Filled with the Holy Spirit? Then this would fit.
- (6) “Tasted of the good word of God.”
- (7) “[Tasted] of the powers of the age to come.”
  - (a) This could be things such as miracles and wonders (2:4).
  - (b) But should also include a different way of living (Romans 14:17).

b. Summary of these:

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- (1) They are all in the passive, these are things that have happened to them, or they passively experienced; rather than actively did themselves.
- (2) Key interpretive point is the illustration:
  - (a) land = professing Christian.
  - (b) drunk the rain = tasted [whatever]
  - (c) brings forth vegetation = practicing what you believe [good or bad].
  - (d) cf Matthew 13, the soils.
  - (e) The point of this section is that it is less important what you have experienced and more important on how you response (bear fruit) as a result of that experience.

### III. If you struggle in your faith you will find that Jesus supports you (13).

- A. Here we find him ending with a word of hope and encouragement.
- B. Some see this verse as saying that if you have no faith, Jesus is still faithful in that He shall judge and punish you. I don't think that is the point at all.
- C. Instead, it had in view the idea that points to those lapses of loyalty to Christ.
  1. This could be a good word of encouragement to repent and return for the many who have fled and abandoned Paul in his shame.
  2. When the bible speaks of God's faithfulness it is almost always in the fact that he is utterly faithful to his promises. And that is bound up in his nature, he cannot deny himself.
- D. If it is a promise then it speaks to the persevering work of Jesus in the lives of His people.
  1. All Christians experience times of faithlessness.
  2. It is not a denial of Jesus, it is the battle of continuing in faith in those multitude of ways all of you experience.
- E. Listen, this is at the core of what is known as the doctrine/teaching of perseverance.
  1. The trick is not to put it all on yourself and just "make faithfulness happen."



# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

2. It is remembering that salvation was and is all through the grace of God in Jesus Christ.
3. Hebrews 12-1-2:
  - a. It is Jesus who began your faith and it is Jesus who will finish it.
  - b. So you do not focus on your level of faithfulness *per se*. Rather, you focus on Jesus and in doing so you make it your habit to put off anything that distracts from Him.
  - c. But in those times you are slow to do so, he is ever the faithful one.
  - d. And in the end you will find that because of His work on the Cross and because of His resurrection and because of His active obedience while on earth and because of His faithful priestly intercession, if you continue to hope in Him he will bring you through to the end.
- F. He is unable to deny himself because salvation is ultimately rooted in the faithfulness of God. Praise God that this is true.
- G. This reminds us of the essence of the gospel message, that though we were dead and helpless, enemies of God; He in his rich mercy came to us through His Son Jesus and lifted us up and said, "Live."

## IV. Conclusion.

- A. So I remind you of the verses I quoted at the beginning and I tell you that there is nothing you will lose in following Jesus to the end.
- B. Fight the good fight, run the race set before you in endurance for in the end you shall live and reign and delight yourself for all eternity in the one person who truly satisfies.

---

## Small Group Questions

- This doctrine of apostasy is simply a sobering subject. I would recommend you simply discuss what stands out most in your mind. What struck deepest? What troubles you most? Where are your tendencies? Then end by talking about Jesus.