

*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 5

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.

Read in B. about V+V

I. Introduction.

- Introduce Nadine & Little Muffy Angus (ods) Bobby*
- A. How does one live for Jesus Christ when all that surrounds him seems to contradict the value and joy of serving and follow Jesus?
1. This is what the Apostle Paul is teaching Timothy.
 2. It is time for Paul to die because he values and treasures Jesus more than the Emperor, more than physical comfort, more money and more than reputation.
 3. And he is telling Timothy to take his place and continue in the race and call to follow Jesus.
- B. In all of this he gives Timothy what is likely an ancient hymn or creed to cap off all that he has taught and commanded. And in it are promises that are as certain as only the utterly faithful character of God can do.
- C. If you are Christ's then you cannot lose (11-12a).
1. We shall live with Him.
 2. We shall reign with Him.
- D. Last week we began to explore the second promise, if you abandon Jesus you can only lose. And with this we began to consider the sobering doctrine of apostasy.
1. In the current state of the Church it is common for people to assume that what appears to be true today will be true in ten years.
 2. But this is not the teaching of the Scripture. Only if you cherry pick verses outside of their context can you conclude that you invite Jesus into your heart and then just relax because you are "in."
 3. The bible describes following Jesus in some of the strongest of ways, that it is a fight or a marathon. That you need diligence and zeal. Using

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.*

hyperbole Jesus himself said that it is better that you cut off a hand or gouge out an eye and enter eternity that to keep them and suffer the wrath of God.

Though the Bible is replete w/ warnings

4. ~~Yet~~ I have never seen a person apostatize who thought they actually would.

E. So last week we began to unfold this serious doctrine, looking at passages like Matthew 7 and 25 where people who are currently in hell still think that God made a mistake and they just need to clear things up on the day of judgment—but it is they who are mistaken.

F. Then we considered Jude and 2 Peter 2 where we see the working of false teachers in the church who draw away people from Jesus Christ.

G. And it is here that we pick things up.

H. To apostatize means that at one point you declare your belief and hope in Jesus Christ and your intention to follow Him. Then, through a series of situations, you decide to reject and renounce Jesus.

1. It is not by accident, no one will ever accidentally apostatize.

2. And it is not the same and having times where you struggle in your faith, that is something we will cover in the last line of this hymn.

3. It is the willful choice to go a different path for a variety of reasons. Which is what we will consider today—how a person turns away from the only hope of eternal life, forgiveness of sins and the turning away of God's wrath.

Not: I had you but I lost you.
or
I had you & you left.
etc

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

A. ~~What are the causes of apostasy?~~

Change to "How does apostasy come about?"

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. Probably also realizing that Jesus was not going to do the things Judas wanted him to do.

Remember how at last supper J. knew that one would betray & still no one knew

c. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But flee from these things, you man

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 might add that afterward it is easier to see 2. the steps where the person ~~with~~ made key decisions

of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. (1Ti 6:10-11)

It happens when teaching reveals sin (John 3:19-21).

It involves a rejection of sound doctrine—especially the gospel.

- a. Colossians 1:21-23.
- b. 1Timothy 4:1-6.
4. Tribulation and persecution will turn many hearts from the gospel (Matthew 24:10)
5. A desire to have ears tickled.
 - a. Matthew 24:11 — keep place here
 - b. 2Timothy 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.
 - c. There are six basic groups of people in a typical church. Pastor and teachers, strong Christians, weak Christians, apostates, unbelievers, false teachers.
 - d. One thing that happens with the false teacher is that they are used by God to draw out the apostates.
 - e. 1 John 2:18-19.
6. A general state of unrest/lawlessness (Matthew 24:12).
7. A life according to the flesh (Galatians 5:12-26)
8. 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.

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) 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.

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?

Not in trepidation —
"Oh I sure hope I don't
Soul..."
but
a lack of concern about
how their decisions affect
their heart/soul.

When you drift you move
in whatever way the world
moves. No longer is it
a life focused on X.

A has
- provided
the way
of Life that
only
Made Right

and the "old"
life whispers
& waves
at them

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.*

- (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.
 - 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.

Just like Israel
didn't think I would
curse them
we don't think
I will
deny us

- * (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 fellowshiping 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?

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) 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 vss 6 and 11. Apostasy comes when we are comfortable in our disobedience.
- c. (6:1-8)
- (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.
9. 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.

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.*

- 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.
10. 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.
 - (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.

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) **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:**

(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.**

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. 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."
 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.

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.*

- 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

- Looking at the various ways one moves toward apostasy, which is the one perhaps you can see would tempt you most? How can others pray and help you battle against it?
- Discuss the nature of biblical fellowship in relation to apostasy. Why is real fellowship necessary? What are some false types of fellowship, perhaps, that we replace true fellowship with?
-