

## **Equipped to Endure (Part 2)**

### 2 Timothy 1: 7-10

Last week we began to consider this passage that Paul had written to Timothy, his son in the faith and fellow preacher of the gospel. These were times of great adversity for Paul and Timothy. Paul was in a Roman prison, awaiting his execution, and Timothy faced the opposition of those who refused to embrace the gospel message and Christ as Savior and Lord.

Many would assume that there was little reason to continue the effort. Timothy's mentor would soon give his life for his faith, and society wasn't receiving Timothy any more favorably than they had Paul. Most would have been tempted to abandon the effort and seek out an easier way of life. Paul knew the difficulties Timothy had endured and would continue face. He knew there would be moments of weakness, followed by the temptation to abandon the ministry. Paul did not seek to deceive Timothy about the certainty of continued difficulty, but he did seek to encourage him to remain committed to the cause. He knew that the final reward would far outweigh any struggles the Christian would face in this life.

We too face difficulties and struggles in our Christian journey. Most, if not all of us, have been tempted to some degree to alter our course or abandon our efforts all together. Troubles and trials will continue to abound, but even in the midst of them, we must remain focused and committed to the work of the Lord. We need to embrace the principles Paul has shared in this great letter, and seek to apply them to our lives as well. Let's take a moment for a quick review of the [qualifications](#) the believer has in Christ we considered last week:

### **I. The Possession of the Believer (7)**

#### **A. Courage (7a)**

#### **B. Confidence (7b)**

### **II. The Commission of the Believer (8)**

#### **A. A Word Concerning Affirmation (8a)**

##### **1. Affirm the Word**

##### **2. Affirm the Witness**

#### **B. A Word Concerning Affliction (8b)**

#### **C. A Word Concerning Anticipation (8b)**

**III. The Conversion of the Believer (9-10)** – Paul has already shared much with young Timothy to encourage him in the faith and challenge him to remain steadfast, but now he reaches the climactic moment in this series of thoughts. Paul now reveals the foundation upon which all that he has just shared rests upon. Apart from conversion, none of the other qualities will exist. This is the essential element in life.

- As I shared last week, the believer already possesses all they need to endure for the Lord through Christ. We all grow and mature in our faith, but at the moment of conversion we are filled with the Spirit and equipped to serve the Lord. Our conversion is the basis for everything else we do in Christian service. I am convinced that many struggle in their efforts for the Lord because they lack genuine conversion. Religion will not equip you to face the difficulties of life and the attack of the enemy; a relationship with Christ through conversion will. You may never be a Timothy or Paul, but you can endure for the Lord. Let's consider this conversion. Notice:

**A. The Presence of Salvation (9)** – **Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,** Paul reminds Timothy of the salvation he had received. He had been born again in Christ. He was not waiting for some special power or new found assistance; he already had the Spirit of God within him due to his relationship with Christ. The opposition often had to wait for approval from the authorities. Many were unwilling to stand alone, desiring the presence of others if they were to oppose the work of the Lord. This was not the case with Timothy. He had all the approval and authority he needed to stand for Christ. He may have to stand alone physically, but he could stand knowing the Lord would always be at his side.

- That thrills my heart and encourages me to remain committed to the Lord. I have been saved, born again in Christ. I have the assurance of Christ standing with me in every circumstance I face. The world may not approve and those in places of authority may oppose my efforts, but I have been saved. I have the Spirit of God dwelling within me, filling me with His power, enabling me to fulfill the work God has given me. **1 Cor.1:18 – For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.** **Ephes.2:5 – Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)**

**B. The Peace of Salvation (9)** – **Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,** Next Paul reminds Timothy of the holy calling that accompanies salvation. Those who opposed him had committed their loyalty to man, following the philosophies and teachings of mortals. Their motives and desires were unpredictable and subject to change, but Timothy had received a divine calling. The Lord of glory had saved him by His grace and placed a holy

calling upon his life. He enjoyed a peace in the midst of adversity the world had not given or contributed to and they could not take it away!

- We often think of a “calling” in regard to preachers, pastors, and missionaries. There is nothing wrong in that line of thought. In fact, I believe in the call of God to ministry and feel confident that it needs to be emphasized in our day. However, we are dealing with the context of salvation. This calling is given to all who come to Christ, receiving Him as Lord and Savior. It has the idea of “*being called into the body of Christ, accompanied by all the duties, privileges, and joy of the Christian life here and hereafter.*”

- I rejoice for the calling that every child of God has received. With that calling comes responsibilities and privileges, but it also affords a peace in trials. We can serve the Lord in every situation with peace that comes from Him. We have the assurance of being a part of the body of Christ, knowing that He will equip us in this life and keep us for the life to come!  
*Rom.8:30 – Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* (This reveals the continual process involved with our salvation. The born again are as saved as they will ever be, but our salvation will one day be completed as we are glorified in His presence.) *1 Pet.2:9 – But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

**C. The Providence of Salvation** (9) – *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,* Paul also reminds Timothy of the grace and providence of God involved with salvation. Timothy was not saved due to any merit or effort of his own; his salvation was the direct result of the providence of a gracious and merciful God. This must have been especially encouraging to Timothy. Much of his life had been lived in ridicule and shame. His father was a Greek and his mother was a Jew. This was not acceptable in society at that time. The world may not have cared for Timothy or placed any value on him, but the Lord did, and He proved it by saving his unworthy soul.

- Isn't that amazing when we take a moment to consider it? There isn't a one of us that was worthy of God's grace. We were born in sin, separated and condemned before God. We were all in a hopeless situation. But God in His great love and grace chose to provide and means for our salvation through His Son. He then chose to draw us unto Himself, revealing our need for reconciliation, and saved us by grace through faith! *Ephes.2:8-10 – For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: [9] Not of works, lest any man should boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before*

ordained that we should walk in them. Titus 3:5 – Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

- There is another element of this providence we need to consider. The world operates and depends on its ability and the abilities of others. The opposition Timothy faced, and the opposition we face, looks to themselves for strength. We were not saved according to our works, and we are not expected to serve the Lord in and of our own ability. He saved us by His grace and He will enable us by His power!

**D. The Person of Salvation** (9) – Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, **which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began**, Paul now takes a moment to remind Timothy of the gracious Savior he served. It was Christ who gave Himself upon the cross for the redemption of men. Our salvation was made possible because of the righteous sacrifice He made. All who come to Him in salvation have His righteousness imputed to their account.

- The world looked to others for direction and security. They were depending on those in places of authority and the programs and benefits of society. Timothy could lay claim to a personal relationship with the One who bled and died for his sin. He had received salvation of Christ the Lord. That is what separates us from the world in which we live. Our strength and eternal hope is not in men or manmade institutions. The saved have the privilege of looking to the Lord and depending upon Him! “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus’ name!”

**E. The Provision of Salvation** (9) – Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, **which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began**, Paul knew there would be times when Timothy would face doubts and fears. He knew the enemy would cause him to question his faith. He might even wonder at times if God really loved Him. Here Paul seeks to put those fears to rest before they even arose. Long before Timothy was ever born, God loved him and had made provision for him. In fact, long before mankind was created, God already had a plan for redemption. Before Timothy even realized his need of salvation, God had worked on his behalf.

- If for nothing else, we could praise the Lord for that very fact from now throughout eternity. God knew the lives we would live. He knew the sins we would commit. He knew our weaknesses and our frailties. He knew that even after we were saved, we would sin and cause Him hurt. Even knowing all of that, He ordained our salvation before the world began! What a Savior. What a merciful, compassionate God we serve!

- When the enemy seeks to discourage and defeat you, remind him that you are somebody in Christ. Tell him that you were so loved that God made provision for your salvation before He ever created the world.

**F. The Preservation of Salvation** (10) – But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour

Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the

**gospel:** Keep in mind that Paul faced death at any moment, even as he penned these words.

Timothy had likely entertained the idea of possibly being called upon to give his life for his faith as well. Paul assured him that death wasn't all that bad for the believer because it wasn't the end. Christ had already abolished death, bringing the believer out of darkness into His glorious light. Physical death would eventually come, but eternal life would begin following the departure from this life.

- Trouble and difficulty will continue as long as we live upon this earth. I can't say what we may face before the Lord takes us home. We too may face intense persecution, but this world is not all there is for the children of God. We are promised life eternal in the Lord. Death will be the last enemy we face, but even death is powerless in the face of Christ. **John 6:37 – All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. John 10:28 – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. John 11:25 – Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:**

How could the children of God not endure the difficulties of life when we have received so much in the Lord. If you belong to Christ, you already possess everything you need to continue on in service to Him. Life may be difficult and trouble may abound, but you have a source of strength that will never fail. Maybe you need to come and seek the Lord. Maybe you need to rid your life of things that hinder. Whatever the need, why not come to the Lord today?

If you are here and you have never been saved, you do not enjoy the benefits of being a child of God. You do not have the peace and strength that is found in the Lord. You can't rest in the assurance of eternal life. Please know that Christ died for your sins as well and He wants to save you. Why not come to Him in salvation so that you too can be assured of eternal life and the benefit of His guidance in this life?