

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS

III. II Timothy: Church Ministry Amid Hardship

F. Security Amid Ministry Hardship

(2 Timothy 2:8-13)

I. Introduction

- A. Christ in Matthew 13:24-43 taught that a great war occurs in the discipling of people. The believer who serves the Lord is thus caught up in that war, and due to the superhuman forces at work in this conflict, God's servant can be quickly unsettled and turn insecure. He thus needs insight that offers him stability and security.
- B. Paul clarified this truth in 2 Timothy 2:8-13, so we view it for our insight and application (as follows):

II. Security Amid Ministry Hardship, 2 Timothy 2:8-13.

- A. Paul urged Timothy to remember the gospel for which Paul suffered trouble as if he were an evildoer, even to being chained, that Gospel being that salvation is by faith in Christ of the seed of David Who was raised from the dead following His death for sin on the cross, 2 Timothy 2:8-9a with 1 Corinthians 15:1-11.
- B. Yet, in spite of Paul's bonds, God's Word was not bound, but powerfully disciplined, 2 Timothy 2:9b; John 3:16.
- C. Paul then explained that he endured his troubles for the sake of the elect who would trust in Christ, that they might obtain the salvation which is in Christ with eternal glory, 2 Tim. 2:10. [This statement reflects the fact that God chose all He foreknew in eternity would trust in Christ to blessings following justification, Eph. 1:4.]
- D. However, Paul knew that his high level of commitment to suffer might seem too great for the less mature Timothy to be willing to follow, so Paul gave him a "sure saying" (Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 2 Tim. 2:11) that lists four axiomatic truths in 2 Timothy 2:11b-13 that provide stability and security in the ministry:
 1. We first note some grammatical observations on these axiomatic sayings that explain them (as follows):
 - a. The conditional clauses in these sayings all start with the particle *ei* and the verbs in the protasis are in the indicative mood, so they are first class conditions that assume the reality of the conditions proposed. (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 733; Dana and Mantey, A Man. Gram. of the Grk. N. T., 1957, p. 289)
 - b. We can thus treat the word "If" in each of the sayings in 2 Timothy 2:11b-13 as if it meant "Since."
 - c. In the context, Paul was discussing Christian ministry, not positional truths that are related to one's justification, so these sayings apply to the *experience* of *God's servants* in *ministry*.
 2. We thus view the axiomatic sayings that provide stability and security in Christian ministry (as follows):
 - a. Axiomatic Saying One - Since we died together with [Him], we will also live together with [Him], v. 11b: Paul here taught that if we die together with Christ in our death to sin (Gal. 2:20) and the world (Gal. 6:14) in life and ministry, we will live Christ's resurrected life in life and ministry! (Gal. 5:16)
 - b. Axiomatic Saying Two - Since we suffer, we shall also reign together with [Him], 2 Timothy 2:12a:
 - i. Christ suffered the cross on earth before the crown at His ascension, Dan. 7:13-14; Eph. 1:19-23.
 - ii. Similarly, suffering in ministry is a precondition to having ministry influence for Christ, so God's servant must accept the suffering God lets him face for righteousness to be influential for the Lord.
 - c. Axiomatic Saying Three - Since we will deny [Him], that One [He] will deny us, 2 Timothy 2:12b:
 - i. This saying does not refer to a true believer, but to an apostate who parades as a believer in his ministry but denies Christ in the end, exposing his unbelief, B. K. C., N. T., p. 754. (2 Peter 2:1)
 - ii. If one ends up going apostate and denying Christ in his ministry, he was an unbeliever all along, and Christ will deny him in the end, sending him to eternal damnation! (Matthew 7:21-23)
 - d. Axiomatic Saying Four - Since we are faithless, that One [He, God] remains faithful, for He is not able to deny Himself, 2 Timothy 2:13:
 - i. A believer may be unfaithful to God in ministry (Ibid.), becoming a "castaway," 1 Cor. 9:27 KJV.
 - ii. However, the Lord is not able to disown Himself (Ibid.), so "He will not deny even unprofitable members of His own body. True children of God cannot become something other than children, even when disobedient and weak," Ibid.

Lesson: To overcome the instability and insecurity God's servant can experience in the spiritual war of discipling, he must apply the truths that (1) in dying to his sin nature and the world, he will experience Christ's resurrection life in ministry; (2) in willingly suffering for righteousness, God will grant him ministry influence; (3) in denying Christ as an apostate, God will deny him and (4) even in becoming unfaithful, his salvation in Christ is still secure!

Application: May we apply these axiomatic truths to enjoy stability and security in facing ministry hardships.