

# Day 195, 2 Timothy 2

by David Servant

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*The biblical principle of discipleship emphasizes the importance of entrusting truth to faithful men who will teach others, and the role of gentle correction in helping others obtain eternal life.*

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 2:10

**Topics:** "Discipleship", "Salvation"

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## Description

David Servant preaches on the biblical principle of discipleship, emphasizing the importance of entrusting truth to faithful disciples who will pass it on to others. He highlights the characteristics of a successful minister who seeks out faithful men to teach and compares them to good soldiers, athletes, and hard-working farmers. Paul's letter to Timothy underscores the conditional nature of God's choosing, the need for endurance in the faith, and the consequences of rejecting the gospel, showing that repentance and salvation are not solely God's decision but also involve individuals' response.

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## Transcript

The biblical principle of discipleship is well illustrated at the beginning of today's reading, as Paul writes to Timothy:

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2).

This principle is violated every time ministers entrust truth to unfaithful pew sitters who have no intention of obeying it, much less teach it to others. The successful minister seeks "faithful men" whom he can instruct, knowing that they will teach others what they have learned. Dear pastor, look for disciples who are comparable to good soldiers who are willing to suffer hardship, athletes who compete according to the rules, and hard-working farmers who enjoy the fruit of their labors (2:3-6).

Paul was certainly one who was willing to suffer hardship as a good soldier. As he penned this letter to Timothy, he was imprisoned for the sake of the gospel, and he would soon pay the ultimate price. He wrote, "For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory" (2:10).

Paul clearly believed the possibility existed that "those who are chosen" might not "obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory." If their being chosen was unconditional---an arbitrary act

of God's sovereign choice---then there would be absolutely no possibility that those chosen ones would not "obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory." This being so, Paul must have believed that those who are chosen of God are conditionally chosen, and thus there exists the possibility that they may not meet His conditions in the end, falling away from the faith. Being one of God's chosen at the present is not a guarantee that one will be among God's chosen in the future since God's choosing is conditional.

In the very next verses, Paul underscores this very fact. His words are undeniably addressed to believers, and he writes, "For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us [just as Jesus promised in Matt. 10:33] (2:11-12). Notice all the conditional "ifs."

Those who reject the gospel invite God's curse upon them, not only when they die, but immediately upon their rejection of the gospel. This is one reason why Jesus told His disciples to shake the dust off their sandals as they departed from any city that rejected their message. Scripture is clear that those who harden themselves against the truth stand in danger of having God Himself harden their hearts or darken their understanding to a greater degree. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians of this form of God's judgment:

For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness (2 Thes. 2:11-12).

But is there no hope at all for those who initially reject the truth? Is their doom sealed? No, as long as they are breathing there is hope that God might be merciful, which is why Paul wrote to Timothy:

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will (2:25-26).

Again, if people's repentance was purely God's decision, with individuals themselves playing no part at all (as some try to make Paul say here) there would be no reason for the Lord's servants to gently correct "those who are in opposition" (2:15). Gentleness can help soften hard hearts. So let's be gentle, "kind to all," and "patient when wronged" (2:24). We might help someone obtain eternal life.

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