Unbending Loyalty

2 Timothy 2;11-13

Objective: Inspire Christians to maintain their faith through all struggles and tribulations and discouragements.
Reading: 2 Timothy 2:8-13.
Memory: 2 Timothy 2:13, ***"…if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself."***
Introduction:

1. Why are there so many warnings in the Bible against falling away? Because we are so prone to it!
2. Why are there so many warnings in Scripture against growing lax and not standing faithful? Because it is such a danger to each one of us.
3. Christ is the answer. Christ is the only way to heaven. Satan is battering at us from every possible angle we can imagine, and many we can't imagine to wear us down to where we no longer carry a witness for God, to where we try to blend in with everyone else and pass unnoticed, to where we grow lazy and apathetic and no longer follow Him as our first love.
4. We must not yield to these temptations. Brothers and sisters,

We need to give Christ unbending loyalty. (WHY?)

The utility of songs and hymns to remind us of truths and to uplift and bolster our courage and faithfulness is well known. In 2 Timothy 2:11-13, the Apostle shares an old song, expressing confident truths intended to strengthen and encourage and motivate Timothy as Timothy faces some very difficult tasks and ordeals in his Christian walk. These trustworthy facts are motives for unbending loyalty to Christ.

The first part of the song relates with confidence that we have…

I. A motive to "die". Verse 2:11b, ***"…If we died with him, we will also live with him;"***

A. "Die" means self-denial.

1. Jesus expresses it in Luke 9:23-25 when he says, ***"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. [24] For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. [25] What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?"***
2. It means you don't do what your natural self wants to do. Don't do what animal instincts tell you to do. Don't do what selfishness tells you to do – you die to that and do what Jesus would do.
3. Jesus illustrated this himself in this sense; John 6:38, ***"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me."*** For us it is to not do our own will but the will of Him who died for us.
4. Sometimes things are opposite what our natural reactions would tell us. Cf. If you want to see something in the dark, don't look at it – look next to it (better receptors for that light on the side of your eye.
5. Why would you die to self, set your desires and inclinations aside for the needs of others? Out of love. From housing the very spirit and nature of God. *Because it is the means to life*.

B. The promise is life with Christ.

1. John 10:10, ***"… I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."***
2. Not a miserable existence that you wonder if it's worth living. Not a miserable existence here temporarily that many say is hell on earth, but life to the full! Both eternally and in the present.
3. Such death leads to union with Christ. As in Romans 6:5-10, ***"[5] If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. [6] For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—[7] because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. [8] Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. [9] For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. [10] The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God."***
4. Means no real fears. Hebrews 13:6, ***"So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"*** My life is secure in heaven with Christ.

There is a second encouragement to our faithfulness. We have …

II. A motive to endure. Verse 2:12a, ***"…if we endure, we will also reign with him."***

A. "Endure" means "don't quit".

1. Christianity calls for patient endurance. Determine to be faithful no matter what.
2. Endure sufferings. Timothy had to put up with a lot. Paul did too. Even Jesus did! Why should we expect it any different? Prepare for it:
   a. Might be a struggle to get up in the morning. That is not a reason to fail to be at worship.
   b. Might be called upon to love your enemy? Folks might tease and call you goody-goody.
   c. Figure out what making Him truly "Lord" of your life means, and be entirely faithful always.
3. Endure temptations.
   a. Satan is always at work. He will help you rationalize why you can sidestep what you know is honorable and true and right.
   b. If we let them, the pressure of our own inclinations will lead us to error. James 1:14-15, ***"[14] but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. [15] Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."***
4. Following Christ means going against the flow of natural inclinations and that call for endurance.
5. Following Christ often means going against the flow of society, and that calls for endurance.

B. The promise is that we will ***reign*** with Him.

1. A seat in heaven with Him. An assurance of glory.
2. Revelation 20;6, ***"Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years."***
3. Revelation 22:4-5, ***"They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. [5] There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever."***
   a. Sitting in glory with Christ sounds better than being a slave to Satan doesn't it?
   b. Glory better than cast into darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth?
4. Somehow this will involve a sharing in His glory as children of God; Romans 8:17, ***"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."***
5. 2 Corinthians 4:17, "***For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."*** (We get to reign with Him)
6. 2 Thessalonians 2:14, ***"He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."*** (even to reign with Him as sons of God!)

In addition to these two positive motivations for continued effort and faithfulness, the song also presents a

III. A motive of fear. Verse 2:12b, ***"…If we disown him, he will also disown us;."***

A. "Disown" means to quit being faithful.

1. Like when your are embarrassed to be seen with someone and pretend you don't know them.
2. Like when folks get discouraged and just walk away. Maybe they stop worshipping. Maybe they stop fellowshipping. Act like they have better things to do. The "Lord" is not important!
3. Like when folks have lapses back into sinfulness; They pick up a Playboy magazine and lust over the pictures. They take time out of Christianity to gossip a little. Times are tough so they steal a couple of dollars or lie a couple of times. They get to longing after the old times and go on a marijuana spree again. Luke 9:62, ***"…No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."***
4. Jesus says the same truth quite bluntly in Matthew 10:32-33, ***"[32] Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. [33] But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven."***
5. Might even involve some false teachings; 2 Timothy 2:18, ***"Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, [18] who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some."***
6. Sometimes people's *actions* disown Jesus even though their words *sound* good; Titus 1:16, ***"They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him."***

B. Don't ever quit Christianity.
   1. Not ever! Not even for a moment. Christians don't take vacations from Christianity.
   2. You can't take a vacation from who and what you are.
   3. A good soldier can not have a lapse in who he is.
   4. Christian can not have a lapse in bearing witness for Christ.
   5. I would rather hear "Clean your room and you can watch TV, than clean your room or get a spanking." I like the positive motives better, but have to admit the negative is also powerful!

C. The solemn promise is that Christ will disown those who disown Him.
   1. You don't want to stand in Judgment without Christ.
   2. Hebrews 10:26-27, ***"[26] If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, [27] but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God."***
   3. What a fearful concept to lose the friendship of Christ. To loose the benefit of His sacrifice.

Sometimes we goof and falter. Not intentionally. Its just the way it is. There is a tendency for people to be frail and faulty and to fall short of expectations from time to time. Not so with God; He is always reliable. It is simply His nature to be so. To encourage our unbending loyalty, we have a

IV. A motive of total reliability.

Verse 2:13, ***"…if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself."***

A. Sometimes people disappoint us.
   1. Has a human ever let you down? Church leaders. Mentors. Trusted friends and loved ones.
   2. You might even get disappointed in whole congregations!
   3. Don't let this be a reason to let up on your Christian effort,

B. Sometimes we disappoint ourselves.
   1. We don't live up to what we know we should do.
   2. You wish you had done better. You keep slipping up and say, *"What's the use!"*
   3. Maybe you got discouraged for a while? Maybe you hesitated to speak up to defend a truth when you should have or could have.
   4. Maybe you sinned and are embarrassed to see the brethren!
   5. Don't give up. God is faithful and will not desert you. He is powerful and can and will bring forgiveness and healing!
   6. Remember Peter's denial? – God stayed faithful! Others may disappoint us, but

C. God will never disappoint us.
   1. God can and will take care of those who are His. We can rest assured of His reliability.
   2. God is always faithful. He will help us. He will succeed. He will win. He will see us through!
   3. God will always does what He says He will do. Save us, rescue us, (or deny us if we disown Him!)
   4. God may not always DO what you want, but guaranteed, He is doing what is right, good and best.
   5. Romans 10:11, ***"As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."***
   6. Like a parent who is always there to catch a child when they fall, God will always be there for you.
   7. Hebrews 13:5, ***"…because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."***

So What?

Though people may fail you and disappoint you, God never will. Though the going gets tough, never falter or grow lax in your Christianity. You have good reasons to hang in there with courage and determination, faithful to the end.

Closing Prayer:

Unbending Loyalty

2 Timothy 2;11-13

Reading: 2 Timothy 2:8-13. **Memory**: 2 Timothy 2:13

"…i_ w_ a_ f_, h_ w_ r_ f_, f_ h_ c_ d_ h_."

We need to give Christ unbending loyalty.

These trustworthy facts are motives for unbending loyalty to Christ.

I. A motive to "die". 2 Timothy 2:11b

A. "Die" means self-denial. Luke 9:23-25 John 6:38

B. The promise is life with Christ. John 10:10 Romans 6:5-10 Hebrews 13:6

II. A motive to endure. 2 Timothy 2:12a

A. "Endure" means "don't quit". James 1:14-15

B. The promise is that we will *reign* with Him.
Revelation 20;6 Revelation 22:4-5 Romans 8:17 2 Corinthians 4:17 2 Thessalonians 2:14

III. A motive of fear. 2 Timothy 2:12b

A. "Disown" means to quit being faithful.
Luke 9:62 Matthew 10:32-33 2 Timothy 2:18 Titus 1:16

B. Don't ever quit Christianity.

C. The solemn promise is that Christ will disown those who disown Him.
Hebrews 10:26-27

IV. A motive of total reliability. 2 Timothy 2:13

A. Sometimes people disappoint us.

B. Sometimes we disappoint ourselves.

C. God will never disappoint us. Romans 10:11 Hebrews 13:5

So What?

You have good reasons to hang in there with courage and determination, faithful to the end.