

# “GOD CANNOT DENY HIMSELF”

## II TIMOTHY 2:11-13

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

### INTRODUCTION

Paul had just reminded us why he suffers hardship, why he endure all things for the sake of the elect in vv. 9-10. Later in 3:12 he states “and indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” Now Paul follows with a quotation, evidently from an early Christian hymn—possibly adapted from Paul’s letter to the Romans—see Rom. 6:1-8; 8:17; and 3:3. Maybe this hymn was used by the church in Rome and Paul had become acquainted with it.

The question for the believer who takes seriously his walk with God may be, “Is it worth it?” The answer is:

“If we died with Him—we shall also live with Him.

If we endure—we shall also reign.

If we deny Him, He also will deny us.

If we are faithless, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself.

#### I. IF WE DIED WITH HIM, WE SHALL ALSO LIVE WITH HIM (Rom. 6:1-8)

##### A. Dying with Christ

A believer must be fully resigned to dying with Christ if necessary and to all the afflictions which precede such. He must say “I have given myself up once for all to a life that involves exposure to pain, torture, reproach, and finally to the martyr’s death. We have, accordingly, *died* to worldly comfort, ease, advantage, and honor.” **The point is, every Christian in a sense does this when he trusts Christ;** all of this is involved in our initial commitment in dying with Christ! It is only a matter of degree and strengthening commitment throughout life.

##### B. Living with Christ (Col. 3:1-4)

1. Living now: being with Him, fellowship, delighting in, becoming like Him, glorifying Him, etc.
2. Living forever in Heaven

#### II. IF WE ENDURE, WE SHALL ALSO REIGN WITH HIM (See Rom. 8:17; I Pet. 4:13, 5:1; II Cor. 4:17).

See I Cor. 13:7—“Love endures all things. Mt. 10:22—He that endures to the end will be saved.

A. Endure the suffering, hardships, like the soldier, athlete, farmer, Christ, Paul of vv. 3-10.

B. Reign now in victory (Eph. 2:6), but primarily later: Mt. 25:34; Lk. 22:28-29; Acts 14:22; Rom. 8:17; I Cor. 15:24-25; Rom. 5:17; Rev. 1:6; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4; and 22:5.

#### III. IF WE DENY HIM, HE ALSO WILL DENY US (Mt. 10:33)

A. The denial is a “disowning”; a final rejection and apostasy

1. Not a temporary denial like Peter in Mk. 14:70
2. Like the false teachers in II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4

- B. The Lord's denial is like that of Mt. 7:23—"Depart from Me, I never knew you." Mt. 25:41—"Depart into the eternal fire." Mt. 10:33—same statement as here.

IV. IF WE ARE FAITHLESS, HE REMAINS FAITHFUL

- A. Believers are at times "faithless, unreliable".
1. Does not mean, become apostate.
  2. Believers fail to fully live up to their profession.
  3. At times they become unstable during trials and temptations.
- B. The Lord remains Faithful.
1. This is comfort to us when weak and failing: Paul shows here that not every weakness of faith will call down the awful judgment 'He will deny us'; for man's faith in God is not the measure of God's faithfulness to man.
  2. Note many passages stressing His faithfulness: Ps. 146:6; I Cor. 1:9; 10:13; II Cor. 1:18; Phil. 1:6; I Thes. 5:24; II Thes. 3:3; Heb. 10:23; 11:11.
  3. Because Christ is consistently faithful to Himself, to His Word, and to His promises, the believer has the utmost security. No contingency can cause God to become unfaithful. However, these truths do not give one encouragement for sin and apostasy, but rather a consolation for a frightened conscience.
  4. Moreover, the fact that God must be consistent with Himself and His principles shows that He cannot acknowledge those who deny Him.
  5. But the primary point still remains that however wayward and faithless men may be, God's love continues unalterable and he remains true to his promises; the faithlessness of men only serves to show up the faithfulness of God; after all, he has saved us, 'not in virtue of anything we have done, but in virtue of his own purpose and grace.
- C. The Lord cannot deny Himself. Compare the words of Heb. 6:18 which state that it is "impossible for God to lie"; also see Num. 23:19—"God is not a man that he should lie": I Sam. 15:29—"The Glory of Israel will not lie or change his mind; for He is not a man that he should change his mind"; Mal. 3:6—"I the LORD do not change"; and Tit. 1:2—"God, who cannot lie."
1. **God's omnipotence does not include acts of self-contradiction; omnipotence for a perfectly moral and holy Being is conditioned by that morality and holiness.** Since God is essentially the unchangeable Truth, He cannot be false to His own nature.
  2. Once we are saved, our new nature is in affinity with God's; therefore, when we lie or are faithless, we are untrue to who we really are in God. Therefore, the **primary point** of all this is *not simply* that "God won't break faith with us; he won't. But it is that since we are unable to affect the constancy of God, we should determine to exhibit moral courage, as being His 'true children.

CONCLUSION

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