

Suffering for Those Who Are Not Saved

2 Timothy 2:10

“There was a certain king whose son was sent upon an errand to a far country, and when he came into that country, although he was the lawful prince of it, he found that the citizens would not acknowledge him. They mocked at him, jeered at him, and took him and set him in the pillory [*the stocks*]¹, and there they scoffed at him and pelted him with filth. Now, there was one in that country who knew the prince, and he alone stood up for him when all the mob was in tumult raging against him. And when they set him on high as an object of scorn, this man stood side by side with him to wipe the filth from that dear royal face; and when from cruel hands missiles in scorn were thrown, this man took his full share; and whenever he could he thrust himself before the prince to ward off the blows from him if possible, and to bear the scorn instead of him. Now it came to pass that after a while the prince went on his way, and in due season the man who had been the prince's friend was called to the king's palace. And on a day when all the princes of the court were around, and the peers and nobles of the land were sitting in their places, the king came to his throne and he called for that man, and he said, "Make way, princes and nobles! Make way! Here is a man more noble than you all, for he stood boldly forth with my son when he was scorned and scoffed at! Make way, I say, each one of you, for he shall sit at my right hand with my own son. As he took a share of his scorn, he shall now take a share of his honor." And there sat princes and nobles who wished that they had been there—they now envied the man who had been privileged to endure scorn and scoffing for the prince's sake! You need not that I interpret the parable. May you make angels envious of you, if envy can ever pierce their holy minds. You can submit for Christ's sake to sufferings which it is not possible for seraphim or cherubim to endure.”²

--C. H. Spurgeon

Before getting started let us review Chapter two beginning at verse 1 and continuing through verse 10.

2 TIMOTHY 2:1-10 NAS:

¹ *You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

² *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.*

³ ***Suffer hardship*** with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

¹ Brackets added.

² Tan, Paul Lee: *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: A Treasury of Illustrations, Anecdotes, Facts and Quotations for Pastors, Teachers and Christian Workers*. Garland TX: Bible Communications, 1996, ©1979. Brackets added.

⁴ *No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*

⁵ *Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.*

⁶ *The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.*

⁷ *Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.*

⁸ **Remember Jesus Christ**, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel,

⁹ *for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.*

¹⁰ *For this reason I endure all things for the sake of **those who are chosen**¹, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.*

Paul is suffering as a bound criminal in prison and yet he says he *bravely endures, remains and holds out under every kind of condition, and perseveres under suffering because the Word of God will never be silenced.*” Because the Word of God is not bound, Paul is willing to endure all kinds of suffering. He knows God’s message will reach those to whom Paul delivers it, either by the written word as he is doing here with Timothy, or by those with whom he speaks while in prison.

Then, after hearing the truth about salvation and eternal life, the Holy Spirit of God will wait for individuals to receive and believe the Gospel. **For those who do believe and confess their sin, the Holy Spirit will by the grace of God grant those folks forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life in Heaven.** But remember this confession of sin and faith in Christ must be sincere. If you do not really believe it, salvation will not take place and the Holy Spirit will not become

“The elect” or *“those who are chosen”* are not, as Calvin taught, a fixed number of people whose names were written on a list before God even created Adam or Eve, to whom God would grant salvation and eternal life in Heaven. The people who were not on that list were destined for Hell according to those who believe in **predestination**. That would fly in the face of everything we know God to be, and that He reveals about Himself throughout Scripture. Do you think Christ would reveal in 2 Peter 3:9 that **He desired for everyone to be saved**, and then turn around and save only a predetermined few?

God is not a deceiver. That is Satan’s way of doing business. If God says He wants everyone to be saved, then He is somehow going to make it possible for everyone to be saved. Notice we are not saying that everyone will be saved. Unfortunately there are going to be plenty of foolish people who refuse the gift.

Remember, *“God is love.”* There can simply be no place in Heaven for anyone who does not love God and who has refused His free gift of salvation.

“Both Christians and unbelievers alike receive the kindness of God leading them away from destruction,”³ but all of them must make their calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). They must exercise their **free choice** to accept or reject what God is offering. Without this free choice how could a person express a true faith? If there was no free choice then the doctrine of predestination might have some validity. God would just stand there and say, “*You five people are going to love Me, so get on into Heaven and love and worship me always. Then He would say, “The two of you were designed and made by the plan of God just like these five before you, but I didn’t include you on the ‘**saved**’ list, so get out of my sight. The elevator to Hell is just over there.”*”

We hold to the conclusion that the **Doctrine of Predestination** has been misinterpreted and some interpreters may have had the best of intentions to honor the Lord by believing this doctrine, but we cannot see where it stands up to a complete understanding of Scripture as an entire work.

God’s character can be found throughout Scripture. For example, Exodus 34:5-7 (NLT):

⁵ *Then the LORD came down in a cloud and stood there with him [Moses]⁴; and he called out his own name, Yahweh.*

⁶ *The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, “Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.*

⁷ *I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations. **I forgive iniquity, rebellion, and sin. But I do not excuse the guilty.***

2 Peter 1:1-15 NAS:

¹ *Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:*

² *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;*

³ *seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of **Him who called us** by His own glory and excellence.*

⁴ *For by these **He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.***

Let us also read verses three and four from *The New Living Translation* for a little further clarification of Paul’s meaning.

2 Peter 1:3-4 NLT:

³ *By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to*

³ Hughes, Robert B. ; Laney, J. Carl ; Hughes, Robert B.: *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Tyndale House Publishers, 2001 (The Tyndale Reference Library), S. 700. See also Romans 2:4 and Matthew 5:45.

⁴ Brackets added.

himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence.

⁴ And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

Now we can return to the NAS translation: 2 Peter 1: 5-15:

⁵ Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,

⁶ and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,

⁷ and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹ For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

*¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about **His calling and choosing you**; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;*

¹¹ for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

¹² Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.

¹³ I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder,

¹⁴ knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

¹⁵ And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

R.C. H. Lenski has this to say:

"The entire **Holy Trinity**, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, directs all men to Christ, as the Book of Life, in whom they should seek the eternal election of the Father.' 'They should hear Christ, who is the Book of Life and God's eternal election of all God's children to eternal life: He testifies to all men without distinction that it is God's will 'that **all men should come to him,**' who labor and are heavy laden with sin, in order that he may give them rest and save them.⁵

⁵ R. C. H. Lenski, *Lenski New Testament Commentary – The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon*, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1964), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 785-792.

Matthew 11:28 NLT:

²⁸ Then Jesus said, “Come to me, ***all of you*** who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Lenski also encourages us to consider the subject of election (or predestination) in connection with the thoughts in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 NAS.⁶

¹³ But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because **God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.**

¹⁴ It was for this **He called you through our gospel**, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Greek word translated “from the beginning” also has the sense of “the firstfruits.” That suggests that the word does not necessarily mean “from the beginning of time” but rather it suggests that it is speaking of “the first who would believe.” Again for clarification let us look at *The New Living Translation*.⁷

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 NLT:

¹³ As for us, we can’t help but thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are always thankful that God chose you to be among the first to experience salvation—a **salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy and through your belief in the truth.**

¹⁴ **He called you to salvation when we told you the Good News;** now you can share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God’s call to salvation came through the Gospel message to **everyone, and They had to hear it before they could believe.** Back in chapter one of 2 Timothy, Paul wrote this:

2 TIMOTHY 1:9-10 NLT:

⁹ For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus.

¹⁰ And now he has made all of this plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News.

Romans 10:17 NAS:

¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

John 3:16 is considered to be the most quoted verse in the Bible. Let us look at it and some verses surrounding it.

John 3:14-21 NLT:

¹⁴ *The Son of Man must be lifted up,*

¹⁵ *so that **everyone who believes** in him will have eternal life.*

¹⁶ *“For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that **everyone who believes** in him will not perish but have eternal life.*

¹⁷ *God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but **to save the world** through him.*

¹⁸ *“There is **no judgment against anyone who believes in him**. But **anyone who does not believe** in him has already been **judged for not believing** in God’s one and only Son.*

¹⁹ *And the **judgment is based on** this fact: God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.*

²⁰ *All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed.*

²¹ *But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.”*

Does this passage sound like God made His decision prior to creation and that no matter what you do He is going to see to it that your chances of getting to Heaven are nonexistent? Of course not!

Now keeping all this in mind, please turn in your Bibles to Luke 14, beginning at verse 15. God chooses people to be saved the same way that He chose Israel to be His special people.

Luke 14:15-24 (NASB):

¹⁵ *When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"*

¹⁶ *But He [Jesus]⁸ said to him, "A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many;*

¹⁷ *and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.'*

¹⁸ *"But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.'*

¹⁹ *"Another one said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please consider me excused.'*

²⁰ *"Another one said, 'I have married a wife, and for that reason I cannot come.'*

²¹ *"And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of the household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and **bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.**'*

⁸ Brackets added

²² *"And the slave said, 'Master, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.'*

²³ *"And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and **compel**⁹ them to come in, so that my house may be filled.*

²⁴ ***For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner."***

This passage gives a clear picture of God's invitation to mankind and the multiple excuses mankind offers for not accepting His invitation. This scene is known as "*The Great Supper of God.*" "*The Great Marriage Feast Great Marriage Feast*" of Matthew can be compared to this passage. There are similarities, but there are also a number of differences.

⁹ "**Compel**" is used to mean by "authoritative command" or "persuasion," not "to force."