

What Will He Deny Us?

2 Timothy 2:11-13

I. All too common interpretations of this Passage

A. Arminian interpretation:

B. Lordship interpretation:

II. The Context in which this passage appears will help us interpret it correctly.

A. Preceding Context

1. Paul challenged Timothy to endure spiritually, in spite of hardships.
 - a) *Timothy was Paul's spiritual child.*
 - b) *He needed to rely on God's grace to give him strength required for ministry to others. (2:1)*
 - c) *The Christian life is taught. Disciples are made, not born. The Word of God must be taught to others. (v. 2)*
2. Paul used three illustrations of the importance of endurance.
 - a) *Endure hardship like a good soldier. (vv.3-4)*
 - b) *In order to receive a crown one must play by the rules. Our rules are commands in the Word of God. (v. 5) (1 Cor. 9:24-27 run so that you may obtain the prize)*
 - c) *Like the hardworking farmer, Timothy must do God's work in God's way in order to be rewarded for our work. (v. 6)*
 - (1) Others also benefit from our spiritual endurance.
3. Paul supplied three motivations to endure spiritually.
 - a) *Timothy should be motivated by the enduring obedience of Jesus Christ. (vv. 7-8) (Heb. 12:2)*
 - b) *Timothy should be motivated by the example of Paul who is enduring suffering until the nearing end of his physical life. (vv. 9-10) (4:6)*
 - c) *The third motivation is given in verse 12, which we will come to understand in a few minutes. (But first:)*

B. Subsequent Context

1. Present yourself to God (at the Judgment Seat of Christ for your evaluation) to receive approval rather than shame. (2:15)
2. An example is given of two men whose teaching has swerved away from the truth. (believers can stray from the truth) (2:16-19)

3. Cleanse yourself from what is dishonorable in order to be useful to God for good works. (2:20-21)

III. Interpretation of 2:11-13

A. Verses 11 and 13 are eternal security verses

1. Structure:
2. The believer has been crucified with Christ (v. 11b) (Gal. 2:20)
3. Eternal Life is promised by God. (v. 11c)
 - a) *Future tense- While we already have eternal life (Eph. 2:5) we are not yet living with Jesus in His kingdom, but it is guaranteed (1 Thess. 5:10)*
4. The word “faithless” in verse 13 probably should be translated “if we are unbelieving” since all other NT uses of this verb refer to unbelief, not to unfaithfulness.
5. He cannot deny Himself.
 - a) *He cannot deny what He Himself has promised (that all who believe in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16; 6:35; 11:25-26)*
 - b) *Even if we stop believing, we remain eternally secure because He cannot break His promise.*

B. Verse 12 is a verse about eternal rewards

1. “If we endure” (same word as in v. 10)
2. The reward here is to “reign with Him”. (Rev. 3:21)
3. The second half of verse 12 is antithetically parallel to the first half of the verse.
 - a) *“Denying” is to fail to endure in our confession of Christ.*
 - b) *Then “He will also deny us” what? -the privilege of reigning with Him.*
 - c) *Paul is interpreting Matt. 10:32-33 for us here (see vv. 40-42 for clear reference to rewards (3) in this context)*
4. The issue here is rulership, not entrance into Christ’s kingdom.

IV. Conclusion

- A. This passage does not threaten the assurance of eternal life for those who have believed in Christ. Rather it assures them.
- B. Receiving the gift of eternal life is not the final goal for our life here on earth. After we receive the gift of eternal life by grace through faith alone in Christ alone, we are challenged to earn eternal rewards which will affect our quality of eternal life by living for Jesus Christ here on earth.