

# The Enduring Life in Christ

Tim Conway | *illbehonest.com*

**Tim:** You know the problem is, we make God out to be a very small god when we say we can lose our salvation.

**(from the room)** Like He's not strong enough?

**Tim:** Yeah, He's not strong enough to keep us. But... He's not only strong enough to keep us, He's strong enough to keep us doing good to the end. He's strong enough to keep us persevering, all the way. You see, you make God weak either way. If you say, God can't keep us, you make Him weak. And if you say, we're going to make it, but we're not going to make it doing good works, you make Him weak too. Because you're saying basically, He's going to drop the ball. Those who bear fruit are the true deal. Those who don't bring forth fruit, aren't the real deal. And they fall out.

Why do people fall out? We know it. This has been true of Christianity for 2000 years. People start the race and they fall out. Why? You've got Demas. What type of soil was he? I'd say he was a pretty good indicator of the third type. What happened? Cares and riches. What'd he do? He loved the world. He fell out. Paul talks about others that made shipwreck of the faith. Why do people make shipwreck? What about Judas? He made shipwreck. People right in Paul's own company made shipwreck.

Brethren, it's been that way throughout history. People don't make it to the end. Christ says if you don't endure... So you have it from both standpoints. You have the truths that God gives to us that are meant to encourage us. Nothing can separate me from the love of Christ. My faith sinks its teeth in that. But you know what, there are some people that when the allurements of the world come along, they look at that, and they look at the world, and they'd rather have the world. It doesn't mean anything to them that the Bible says, nothing can separate them from the love of Christ. They don't care. They don't have faith to even lay hold on that. They're looking at the worldly things over here, and they weigh it out, and they go.

You know why the true Christian doesn't bail out when the trails come? Because he wants Christ more than anything else. He wants Christ. He loves Christ. And when trial comes, He doesn't like the trial any better than the other guy. But he wants Christ more than he wants ease. He wants Christ more than he wants money. He wants Christ more than he wants anything else. And so no matter how hard the trial gets, even Paul getting beat by the rods, and scourged, and in the sea, and false brethren, and all that came upon him, he never bailed out of the race, why? For him to live was Christ, and to die was gain to be with Christ. Be absent from the body and present with the Lord. Folks, when Christ is your all, you'll hold the line. No matter what comes, no matter what riches you're tempted with, no matter what trials come, no matter what persecutions come, no matter what pain, suffering, sorrows... you'll toe the line. Why? Because,

it comes back to faith. Faith believes in a Christ we have never seen. Bottom line: the only way people will hang on to Christ at the expense of everything else is if they have a faith that really believes if somehow in their faith, they've seen in their mind's eye the beauties, and the glory, and the preciousness of Christ. That in their estimation outweighs everything.

We love Him, folks, not having seen Him. We believe in an unseen Christ. You and I haven't seen Him. There was Thomas, "My Lord and my God." And Jesus said to him, "you believe - you've seen, blessed are those who believe and they haven't seen." Right? The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit. And if you read you see where that love's coming from; it's coming out of the cross. And I would say this, that bottom line, if somebody is truly saved, they love Christ, they believe Christ, they trust Christ, they look to the cross and they find hope in Christ, and the Spirit of God energizes that look to the cross and floods that person from one degree to another with assurance. And that Spirit is the Spirit of adoption that is bearing witness. And it's that Spirit of adoption that brings an inner compulsion now to look at God not as a far and a distant God, but as a God who is very close and who's a Father. We cry, "Abba, Father."

And so, bottom line is, the Christian feeds and finds his strength in Christ. The Spirit of God - Christ said that He was going to send a Helper or a Comforter. And He said that "He's going to glorify Me." I guarantee this, no matter what operation the Spirit is involved with, Christ is the focus, Christ is always the focus, not the Spirit. Christ is the focus. The man doesn't exist who has true assurance from the Spirit and no works. It's a strawman. The man who in the end falls out, was a man maybe who in self-righteousness was striving to please God in his own merits; he's a man who maybe was a Pharisee and he put up a good outer shell show; he had confidence in a lot of things, maybe in his church going, maybe in his efforts, but like Demas, he ends up falling out. But I guarantee you, whatever confidence he had was a vain confidence, and it wasn't a Spirit of God wrought thing. And so, no I would adamantly say that's not true.

The true Christian doesn't all of a sudden find out at the end of the race that he's true. The true Christian had that Spirit of God indwelling, and there was true, living manifestations of His presence that gave the believer confidence. And where the Spirit gives confidence, the Spirit also works love and works the fruits of the Spirit and works these works in us, giving us the desires, giving us the compulsion, giving us a love for God that compels us and constrains us by the love of Christ to carry this out. And the two go hand in hand. Where men and women fall out of the race, they didn't have that. They had confidence and they believed certain things, but in the end it was a vain confidence. And I believe the truth is the flags were always there, because Jesus Christ says this in Matthew 7, "Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness." And bottom line, it was there. There was lawlessness. The Spirit of God was not communicating with them the way the Spirit of God does. Because they weren't children. And in the end, it wasn't true.

We have a lot of people with vain confidence. A lot of people believing that everything is ok, but it's vain. The Bible never is going to give confidence to a person who's walking a wicked life to believe that the power of God has ever transformed them. They shouldn't expect to have any

hope. Think about 1 John. What are the proofs in 1 John that we're true believers? We keep His commandments. We walk as He walked. We have answer to prayer. We love the brethren. Basically, you go through all these proofs, and you get to the last chapter and he says I write things things that you might have assurance. And there's no question about it.

Folks, I don't know how it is with you... I look at the cross, and the Spirit of God assures me I am His child. Then I look at my life and I see, I'm not what I used to be, and that gives me assurance. And then I find out that when I stray, the Spirit of God - my Father comes for me. And He lays the rod on my back. And He brings me back. I have found that the corrections of God in my life they give me assurance like few other things do, that I see as faithfulness to me, that if ever I begin to stray, bang, He's there. He's on me, and He pulls me back. I mean, sometimes that has caused me to go to tears more than anything - He is so faithful. That gives me such confidence. He's not going to let me go. I'm in my Father's hand. I mean, if I start drifting, He puts the clamps down. This thing is real, it's living. I look at this thing and realize, I need to make it to the end. I pray, "God, get me to the end!" "Help me to the end!" Because I feel that if God let me go, I would run away. I mean, that's just prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. I feel it! If You let me go, I'm going. Not that I want to, but I feel that. I feel the battle.

But at the same time, I feel this confidence. Do I expect that God's going to take me to the end? Yes, I don't feel like I have to wait to the end to figure out whether I'm truly saved. I believe with all my heart that God has truly saved me. And I've seen a massive transformation in my life. And I think that's exactly what the Bible tells us we should see. And on top of that, I've known repeatedly the floodings and the sheddings abroad of the love of God in my heart at sights of the cross. I know that He has caused me to will in a way that I never willed before. I have wills and I have a desire now to do things that I never had a desire for before. I know I don't love the brethren perfectly, but I love the brethren. I want to be around Christians. I want to be where they are. I want to talk with them. I love the same Christ they love. I love being at church with them. I love hearing preaching. I love hearing about Christ. I mean the simple Gospel still... there are times when I'm studying for a message and I'm looking at the old truths, and they flood over me again, and I find myself falling out of my chair on the floor. Can you guys relate to this? This is Christianity. This is the living reality. This is life in Christ. This isn't make-believe.