

Keep Going

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

Today, I'd like to have you turn to Matthew 10. Mack and I were having lunch on Monday, and he mentioned a sermon by Frances Schaeffer called - I think he said it was called "Keep On." I'm not exactly certain if that's the right title, because I was not able to find it at all. But, just Mack bringing that up got me thinking about "keep on." I'm calling my message this morning: Keep Going. My text: Matthew 10:22. Just this part of it: "But the one who endures to the end will be saved."

Let's pray. Father, we recognize that You have called us to live a life that we simply cannot live in our own strength. Lord, help. I pray You'd help. And I pray that You'd speak through Your Word in such a way that we would indeed have ears to hear. Help us hear and apply what we hear. Help me apply what I hear. I pray in Christ's name, Amen.

Keep going. Not hard to see where that comes from in light of the passage. "The one who endures to the end will be saved." Matthew gives us that very same quote again in Matthew 24. Mark gives it to us in a parallel account in Mark 13. Brethren, it's like there's this voice in Scripture that says: Keep going. Keep going. Keep on. You know, this past summer I did two things with my son and my son-in-law that tested all of us. We climbed to the top of Mount Massive. And we also rode our bikes up to the top of Loveland Pass. Both of those were tough. And you know, you felt like giving up at times. We have to really ask ourselves, would you tend to believe that the Bible makes out the Christian life to be easier than Mount Massive? It was difficult. Riding the bike up going up to that pass - Loveland. Have you ever forded a river? Or I remember one time with my buddies fighting the waves, and there was such an undercurrent down in Florida that we barely could make it back. I remember getting back to the shore and laying down absolutely exhausted. Because we swam out to a sandbar, and coming back, the current was so strong. Just trying to take every step in that undercurrent was taking the sand out from under our feet and I got back and I was spent. I had nothing left. I laid down there on the sand. And you know what? I looked around. All my friends, they were back there. And I looked at those guys and I said I almost didn't make it back. And every one of them looked at me and said, "Neither did I."

Which is easier? That? Or the Christian life? Which is harder? Which would you imagine? When the Scripture warns us about such things as the fact we fight against angels and they're scheming against us. And the fact that we fight against the passions of the flesh which wage war against us and you know how they pull on you. Making it to the end. And you know what you find in Scripture and you cannot get away from this? And listen, I'll tell you this, the reason you cannot get away from what I'm going to hit right here on the head and what this text already hits us with, this idea of endurance, is God knows that this is the toughest thing anyone will ever do is to make it to the end. And so you have this constant voice in Scripture that is saying: Go. Keep going. Keep on.

Listen to this, the good soil. What is it with the good soil? "Those who having heard the Word..." Or, "Those who hearing the Word hold it fast." That's what it is to be good soil. You get this Word and you don't let go of it. That means it guides your life every single day and you keep

going, and you don't despise this Word and what it says you do. You're not a hearer only. You are putting it into practice and you hold it fast in an honest and good heart and you bear fruit with patience. You hear that: bear fruit with patience. That means you keep going. You just patiently keep on doing it. You're taking the Word of God. You hear what it says. You apply it to your life and you keep going. That's what the good soil is. All the other soils are not good. That's the only one.

Listen to this. You know this. "If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" Do you ever read that? "If the righteous is scarcely saved?" Like what? You know what that means. It means if the righteous with difficulty is saved. If it's so hard to make it to the end as a Christian, if they have to go through difficulties and trials, what in the world is the end going to be for the ungodly and the sinner?

Now listen to this, it's amazing to me that people oftentimes cannot hear the message of Romans - the true message of Romans. Because they come to the letter so programmed to think: justification by faith. The Romans letter teaches justification by faith, not by works. So that means it basically a book where we think about faith, we're justified, everything's okay. But you know the thing is this book is really about the righteousness of faith. That's what you find when you come into chapter 1. That's what you find when you end up with chapter 16. It's about the obedience of faith.

Listen to this, oftentimes people can't hear this. Romans 2, "God will render to each one according to his works. To those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, He will give eternal life." Did you get that? Patience in well-doing. That means you keep on. You're patient. You're not shaken out of this. You're not hastily running off. You're patient. There's patience. You just keep going. You keep going. You know what? To those: eternal life.

How about this? "Let us not grow weary of well-doing (or doing good), for in due season, we will reap, if we do not give up." But if you give up, you don't reap. This voice is everywhere in Scripture. It's saying to us: Christian, endure. Fight. Keep going. And this is from God Himself because He knows this. Brethren, the reality is it's not just that He knows this, He's designed this. It's like He wants you to be overcomers. So He's going to give you things to overcome. Keep going. Keep going. "Therefore, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it." Pay closer attention. Don't drift. What does pay closer attention mean? It means maybe you haven't been doing enough already that you need to actually pay closer attention because you don't want to drift away from this. Listen, one moment in hell, and you realize you do not want to drift away from this. And this is life and death. And few there be that find it. And you better take this seriously, because there are people falling out of this race all the time. And this voice says keep going. Endure. Endure.

We are His house. God's house. We're the dwelling place for God. If... you better catch the "if's" in Scripture. "...If indeed we hold fast our confidence," and we hold fast our boasting in our hope. God wants us to be boasters and He wants you to keep on boasting in the hope that you have. Keep going. Keep going. Hold fast that confidence.

How about Hebrews 3:14? We've come to share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. Or this, Hebrews 10: "Therefore, do not throw away your confidence which has a great reward." People do throw it away. Hebrews 10:38 "My righteous one shall live

by faith. If he shrinks back..." That's how Scripture talks. Don't shrink back. "My righteous one shall live by faith. If he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in Him."

Or this, "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast." This comes from James 1. Blessed is the man or the woman who remains steadfast in trials. Now trials are not always what we expect them to be. Oftentimes, a trial or a test isn't necessarily how we might anticipate. (incomplete thought) It's can be getting cancer. It may be that. But oftentimes it's the allurements of the world. It's something that just wants to lull you to sleep. Some enticement of the world.

Do you remember what was said? To all those churches? I'll just give you a few examples - those churches in Asia Minor. The Lord Jesus Christ addressing Ephesus says, "To the one who conquers, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God." But it's only if you conquer. That means every obstacle that's put in your way, you've got to conquer that thing and get to the end. You've got to endure. If you don't endure, you shrink back, no pleasure. And he actually says, "Shrink back and are destroyed." You see, the Bible doesn't only have this voice that's encouraging us onward, it's also got threatenings. You'll be destroyed. It's serious. It's severe. I know.

To the church at Smyrna, "Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life." Thyatira: "Only hold fast what you have until I come. The one who conquers..." Now listen to this, "...who keeps My works." "Keeps My works until the end..." "I will give him the morning star." You've got to keep on working the works of Christ.

Philadelphia: "I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have so that no one may seize your crown." Let me ask you this: are you protecting your crown? Isn't that interesting? Jesus Himself would say to you, Christian - because that's what He was saying right here to Philadelphia - and you better remember who Philadelphia is. They're a faithful church. He didn't find anything wrong with them. But He said this to them: There's something out there looking to take your crown. You better not let anybody take it. And you have a responsibility to protect that crown. That's how He talks. We just have to be honest with the way He talks. "Hold fast to what you have that no one may seize your crown." You have to hold fast. That's how you protect your crown. You recognize, it's not doing this. The way you protect your crown is by enduring. It's by keeping on. You go.

And you know what the thing is, our Bibles make no effort whatsoever to conceal the accounts of those who did not endure. All you have to do is look at certain people in the Scriptures. It's almost like every time I read the Bible again, you kind of hope that it won't turn out the same way that you know it's going to turn out with some of these individuals. We know the end of the story. But you know, there was a day when you looked at King Saul. Things looked pretty good. But he didn't make it.

Do you remember a king by the name of Joash? Do you remember the one time the Southern Kingdom actually had a woman on the throne? Her name was Athaliah. And she sought to kill all the bloodline, but you know what? She missed one. He was an 8 year old. His name was Joash. And do you know what Scripture says? He held true all the days of Jehoiada. But you know what? When Jehoiada died, he went off.

Do you ever read about Jehu? Do you remember who he was? God raised up a king in the Northern Kingdom to take the place of Ahab and basically to wipe out Ahab's bloodline. This

was the guy that killed Jezebel. There were good things said about him. He was prophesied about by a prophet of God that Jehu was going to wipe out this line, but he went bad.

You come to the New Testament. Who do you have? Simon. Remember Simon in Acts 8? Looked good, right? Got baptized. He believed. But it did not end well with him. Oh, who can forget the name of Demas? We know that name.

Or how about this? 1 Timothy 1. "Some have made shipwreck of their faith among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander." Now just listen to that. They made shipwreck of their faith. You know what Paul's doing? He's describing faith like a ship that floats through the ocean. He doesn't say that they didn't have faith. He says they had faith like this ship. And you know the problem is it never made it to the harbor. It was dashed on the rocks before it got there. That's what shipwreck means. It means the ship was there and then it was wrecked. That's how Scripture speaks. Faith like a ship.

We need to listen carefully to how the Scripture actually speaks. Sometimes we get unsettled. We have certain theological systems so we barely hear what Scripture is actually saying. Listen to this. "The Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith." See, we get all worked up. We've got our doctrines. And it's like wait, wait, if somebody's a true believer; if somebody has really trusted Christ... we want to talk that way. Depart from the faith? What's that mean? Does that mean somebody can lose their salvation? I'll tell you this, what it does mean is that somebody can believe something and walk away from believing that. That's what it means. And they "devote themselves to deceitful spirits." Here's these deceitful spirits again. Constantly trying to delude us and deceive us. Or this: "For the time is coming when people will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths." People wander off.

You know, it was mentioned in the first hour about Pilgrim's Progress. You know one of the things that's interesting about Pilgrim's Progress? Look at all the characters that Pilgrim encounters. How many of them actually make it to the Celestial City? I mean, by my count, three. That's not including the second part with Christiana, but who made it? Faithful, Hopeful, Christian. And yet they encountered many people. And you know what you find is Bunyan portrays them drifting off, wandering off, falling to destruction, going over the edge, falling. This is an accurate picture.

"As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is one who hears the Word..." Notice that. They hear the Word. Not some error. Not some false teaching of some cult somewhere. They hear the truth. They hear the Word of God. And what happens? "...Immediately receive it with joy." But what do they do? They endure for awhile. Luke 8 says they believe for awhile. "And when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the Word, immediately he falls away." Falls away. How do people fall away? There's a place there in Hebrews 3 that talks about falling away from the living God. How do people fall away? Well, they do. They do and our doctrine needs to deal with that. And see, the thing is the one who endures - you've got to endure. I've got to endure because falling away is real. And if you sit there and think: "it's not going to be me," listen, we need to work out our salvation with fear and trembling because the reality is people do fall away. This is how Scripture talks. The one who endures to the end will be saved.

So, let's think about that. The one who endures to the end will be saved? Wait a second, I thought I was already saved. Will be saved? Yeah, it's a future tense verb. (incomplete

thought) Just listen to the text. "But the one who endures to the end will be saved." What does that sound like it's saying? You know what it sounds like it's saying. It sounds like Jesus is teaching that being saved is future. You can't deny that. That's what it sounds like. It sounds like it's something I haven't obtained yet. It sounds like if I am going to attain it, there's a condition. This is conditional. What's the condition? Endure. I must do that. Whatever the end is, I must do it until then. And if I don't, conclusion? You know what the conclusion is. You're not saved in the end. That's what it sounds like the Lord is teaching. How many despise this type of thing? "This is works!" "I mean, certainly, this is works salvation. If I have to do something in order to get saved, if I have to do something like endure to the end in order to be saved, plain and simple, it's works. So whatever this means, it doesn't apply to me." People do that with these kinds of Scriptures all the time. Can't apply to me.

James and I were just recently dealing with somebody. All this sin in their life. There's no good indication of persevering and enduring in the works of Christ. This individual was enduring in sin. It's like asking him are you sure about where you're at spiritually? "Well, we're not saved by works." That just quickly came right off those lips. "Not saved by works!" "No, doesn't matter!" "It doesn't matter if I'm enduring or not. It doesn't matter what my life looks like. Not saved by works!" People don't hear verses like this all the time because they're just wired in such a way. But you need to hear what Jesus is saying. You've got to endure to the end. The reality is, say what we will, this is nothing other than biblical salvation that we're presented with here.

Listen, "Let us not grow weary of doing good." Don't be weary of well-doing. "For in season, we will reap if we do not give up." But what you need to remember is this: What do we reap? This isn't just talking about reward. You reap eternal life. You reap salvation if you endure to the end doing well, doing good. "We have come to share in Christ if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end." There's the end again. Firm to the end. We have to embrace the original confidence. Jesus Himself said, remember, remember, "The one who conquers, who keeps My works until the end..." There's the end again. That end shows up quite a bit in Scripture. The end. Look, we have to work while it's day because the end is coming. The end. Death, Christ's return, judgment day. Those things are hastening towards us at great speed. The one who endures to the end will be saved.

What is this enduring? Well, we see, you have to endure, you have to hold fast to the confidence. Not just any confidence, not some confidence in a past experience. This is holding fast my confidence in Christ and I hold fast in the works of Christ. Because remember this: faith without works? You know the answer. If the faith is held fast to, then the works - the obedience of faith will flow forth. That's the thing. This is enduring in confidence, enduring in Christ's works, enduring in doing good. That's the living faith that saves. The only true salvation is this. It's an enduring salvation. God always completes the work that He starts. There may be times of strain. There may be times of wandering. There may be times of coldness. But you know what Scripture says. We have such a Father that He is going to come along and He's going to discipline us. He is going to make certain, brethren, He's chosen us to be holy and blameless before Him. You can be certain He is going to see to this. But we're not dealing with God's sovereignty. We're not dealing with how God works. We're dealing with our own enduring. See, we have a responsibility here. We have to endure. You don't sit back and just say: Well, let go, let God. That's not what's happening here. You have to endure. You have to fight. Remember

how Paul said at the end? "I have fought the good fight of faith." I made it. I held fast. This is not salvation by works. This is salvation by Christ. Brethren, if you don't know the difference, you've got to get this straight.

Think about our Lord's words. He says to His disciples: You guys, stay dressed for action. Stay. You get that word? That's close to endure. Endure in being dressed for action. Stay. Don't let down your guard. That's what He's saying to these guys. "Be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast so that they may open the door to Him at once when He comes and knocks..." Listen to this, "Blessed are those servants who the master finds awake when he comes." You better endure. You better stay awake. You better keep fighting. In fact, He goes on to say this: He says, "Who is the faithful and wise manager whom his master will set over his household to give that household their portion of food at the proper time?" He said, "Blessed is the servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes." You see what He's saying? (incomplete thought) This isn't far away. This is right here. Blessed is the one who when death takes you or Christ comes, He finds you so doing. So doing what? Being faithful to Him, doing what He has called you to do as one of His servants. And you know how He's going to find you doing that? Because you didn't coast.

Brethren, I know this, I didn't really dive into this, but I just recently saw this. I don't know why I was looking at it. But I came across a message that Lloyd-Jones had done in his series on spiritual depression. I think it was the last sermon. I could be wrong about that. But he basically made this statement. He said it is commonplace for Christians to get in the middle of their walk with Christ and become depressed. In the middle. He said this is commonplace. I wonder are any of you there? Because the reality is this, even if you come to a place like the Galatians were or like perhaps some of the Colossians were or the Hebrews were or some of the Corinthians were, the reality is you can tell by the very tone of those letters that they're being told if you stay there, you die. And they're being called to press on. Come on. Come out of there. Come back. Don't drift. Get back on course. Confidence firm to the end. This is the way Scripture speaks to us. Stay dressed for action.

And you know what? This is exactly where the concern of the author of Hebrews comes in because you remember what he said to those guys? He said this, he said, "Recall the former days..." Oh yeah, what did those guys do in the former days? They suffered persecution. You know what they did? They sided with those who were in prison. They allowed their stuff to get taken, to get destroyed. They endured a hard struggle with sufferings. Sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach, afflicted, partners with those so treated. "For you had compassion on those in prison and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property."

Oh, brethren, when we get to place in our life where you have to recall the former days, and when the verbs about you serving Christ, walking with Christ, and enduring are past tense, that's bad and that is what brings a letter like the letter of Hebrews with all of its warnings and encouragements and admonishments. You don't want to get there. You don't want to get when you look at your life and it's past tense verbs. Remember when this was true. Remember that. Recall the former days. Brethren, we don't want to get to the place where you have to recall the former days when you were faithful and enduring. That means you are in a dangerous place. They were in a dangerous place. That's why they received the strongest warnings in the New Testament.

Are the verbs in your life present? Because after all, you have to endure today. I can't endure yesterday and I can't endure tomorrow. I have to endure today. Today. The one who endures to the end will be saved. But many are so accustomed to thinking about being saved as something that happens in the past that they can hardly hear these words. Well, I'm already saved. I mean, don't talk to me about "will be" saved. On the other hand, you get people that just become paralyzed by this kind of talking. "This destroys my security." "This destroys my assurance." "This means I can't be certain about anything until I get to the end." But do you hear what's being said? If you are to hold firm and hold steadfast to the confidence that you had at the beginning and hold that firm to the end, that's just the opposite of being full of doubt and lacking assurance. You see, what we're supposed to endure in is confidence. But you have to remember, you have to recognize there's a difference between being confident in Christ and being confident about where you're at. And that's a huge difference! You see, the confidence you need to hold firm to to the end - the book of Hebrews is all about the glories of Christ and what He's done and a new covenant and He's secured it with His blood. It's there. It's not you always looking and saying, hmm, I can't know really where I'm at. I can't be sure of where I'm at. Brethren, the confidence that the book of Hebrews calls us to is not for you to specifically be gazing in the mirror all the time trying to figure out exactly where you're at. The person that has the hope, the person that's going to make it in the end is the person who's looking at Christ and saying: I'm confident. However you may be shaken, however your feelings may be, the confidence you've got to hold to the end is: I'm not moving away from Him. He is my only confidence. I have no other. What He accomplished there as a High Priest, He saves me to the uttermost. I need that. You see, we must hold our original confidence firm to the end. That's what Scripture says. This is the Lord speaking. He's the One that says this: "The one who endures to the end will be saved." It's not my opinion or my teaching.

See, we need to become more accustomed I think with the way Scripture speaks about salvation. Because this present idea of being saved - we are being saved, and future - we will be saved, very, very prominent in Scripture. And yet, it's amazing, we just read through Scripture - it's like I was talking about earlier, brethren, we need to pay close attention to what Scripture actually says. We can become so programmed by our theological systems to think it says something and we don't really actually hear what it says. "The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God." Paul looked at himself and the Corinthians and he says, "We're being saved." I had a young lady come up to me at the Fellowship Conference New York and she said, "Can I ask you a question?" She said, "I ask the Lord to save me everyday. Is that wrong?" I said, oh no, that is not wrong. I said I pray that too. I'm not saying it's right to pray that way just simply because I pray that way. I pray that way because I hear that we have us such a High Priest who is able to save us to the uttermost and I need to be saved today from certain things, from certain enemies, from certain powers. And you do too! And we're being saved. We need the power of God in our life today to overcome today. When do you overcome? Jesus is saying those who overcome, I'll give you the crown. But again, you don't overcome yesterday. I can't overcome Mount Massive standing here talking to you. I overcome it in that day when I climbed up the side of it. That's when you overcome. You overcome in the thing that you're involved with presently. That's where overcoming always takes place. You never overcome for some other time. That doesn't happen.

Brethren, we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved. "I would remind you, brothers, of the Gospel that I preached to you which you received and in which you stand and by which you are being saved..." 1 Corinthians 15, "...If you hold fast." "If you hold fast to the word I preached to you." You see, we hold fast to the truths. We keep confident in them. We keep believing them. We hold fast to the commandments of Christ and what He's called us to do. We hold fast. You see, drift happens when you begin to fall away from those realities of Scripture. Your confidence isn't there. The Christ that's portrayed there, your confidence isn't there anymore.

Oh brethren, the truth is I need to be saved today. And even more, I'm going to be needing to be saved tomorrow, especially on that day when the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Brethren, when the wrath of God is unleashed, when it's judgment day and we come to stand before Him, I need to be saved from the wrath of God. And this is precisely the way the Scripture speaks. It does speak this way.

You have this reality. "Since, therefore, we have now been justified..." Listen to the verb tenses here. We have now been justified. What a truth! My sins are forgiven. I am just in the courtroom of God. But... "We have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Christ from the wrath of God." That's future. "For while we were enemies, we were (past tense) reconciled to God..." So we're justified as Christians. We are reconciled to God. But "much more now that we are reconciled shall we be saved." We shall be saved "by His life." Scripture speaks like this. Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. Do you think that way? Salvation is nearer. See, we're so past tense oriented. I think it just comes from this prominence of Arminianism which so reigned for so long in this country. "Once saved always saved." That mentality is just so pervasive. And yet Scripture does not speak simply - now it does, it does. There are past realities. We can't get away from that. "So Christ having been offered once to bear the sins of many will appear a second time." What happens when He appears? "...Not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for Him." When He comes, He saves us. It's a future thing. "A salvation ready to be revealed in the last times" is what Peter says. After we've endured. See, it's future. If you endure, you will be saved.

A man begins to build a house. He lays the foundation. If I drive by and I see that, am I going to say: there's a builder for you! Well, if I say it like that, I'm only being sarcastic. A guy lays a foundation, but he doesn't build a house, he doesn't make it. I wouldn't call a guy a mountain climber if it's like he never makes it out of the treeline. This is the reality. Do we give football players praise because they had one good drive down the field and scored a touchdown? We say "praise him!" No. It's the guy who does it 50 times in a season. Do we look at a guy and say: There's a warrior! There is a conqueror! There is a great knight or a great warrior or a great soldier. Do we put these accolades? Oh, he's special forces. What's special about him? Well, he made it up a hill in one charge one time. No, we don't do that. The truth is it's the people that persevere. It's the people that stay in the war right to the end. Napoleon said this, "Conquest has made me what I am and conquest must maintain me." And so it is with the Christian. Under God, conquest has made us what we are: more than conquerors. Isn't that how Scripture speaks? Conquest must sustain us. The one who endures to the end will be saved.

And you know, the enduring is not just enduring and remembering the past. And I don't just mean what we were in the past like we used to allow our stuff to be plundered. Sometimes

we get so absorbed with the past just with experiences that we had, some event that took place. You know what? For the one that's enduring... are you enduring? You ought to be able to look to today because that's where you endure. And we've got lots of people, this once saved always saved mindset and generation is pervasive.

I remember one time when I was down in Stockdale. We were trying to plant a church down there back in the years when I was at Community Baptist Church. I remember there was a young man. I said, "When did God save you?" And he looked at his mom and he said, "Uh, I think it's written in the cover of my Bible." What? What? It's written in the cover of your Bible "yes" or "no"? What he probably meant was some date. But that's not how we need to think. The reality is are we enduring today? Are you pressing on with the Lord? Do you view this book as just: Come on, get real... (incomplete thought) What's all that stuff? It's a bunch of religious stuff. I've got to live my life. You can't expect me to apply this. That's not enduring. Enduring is: we hold fast to the Word of God firm to the end. You don't let go of it. You keep going. Persevering, pressing on. Keep conquering. That's the idea. On and on.

Remember how the author of the Hebrews put it: "Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the living God. Exhort one another every day as long as it's called 'Today' that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end." As long as it's called "Today." You see, it's all about today. As long as it's called today. We fight today. We don't fight tomorrow. We never fight yesterday. It's always today. Today. We must endure to the end, but we endure today. Tomorrow hasn't come yet. There's one way to Heaven. What does it say? Strive to enter in. But you can say, as long as it's today you strive to enter in. Today. Because you can't do that another day. You can't do that another time. You've got to think, what does that mean about my day now? What does that look like? That looks like something. A Christian who's enduring, a Christian who makes it to the end and is saved, at any point in that line, there's a way that their life looked. And what did it look like? Well, Jesus is saying it looked like they were enduring. They kept going. They weren't falling out of this thing. On and on.

When do you resist the devil? "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." When do you do that? Are you going to go home today and you're just going to bait him, you're going to tempt him, you're going to go look at things that tempt him? "Well, I'll get that right tomorrow." Well, that's not how people endure. That's exactly how you let the deceitfulness of sin in and you become hardened because you begin to play with this and it begins to harden your conscience. That's how people fall away. Just toy with sin. The deceitfulness of sin is what it talks about. "Pay much closer attention to what you've heard." (incomplete thought) Today. You do that today. Jesus said, "Watch and pray." When are you going to do that? Tomorrow? People who always live in the tomorrow - see, there are people who live in the past. They're always looking at this past experience, this past event, this past thing. There are also people who live in tomorrow. They're procrastinators. They're always going to get it right tomorrow. They're always going to fix things tomorrow. No, no, no. It's today. Today is the day to endure. We're told: "Take up the whole armor of God." When are you going to do that? "Do everything to stand." When are you going to do that? It's got to be today. It's got to be every day. As long as it's called "Today." "Make no provision for the flesh." That's what the Bible tells us. When? Well, there's

only one time you can do that. There's only one time you can be applying that. Exhort one another every day so as not to be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin so as to not fall away from the living God. (incomplete thought) "Flee youthful lusts." When do you do that? Today! "Don't forsake meeting together." That's in Hebrews too. Don't forsake, why? We have to be stirring up one another to love and good works. It's the habit of some. These are the things we do in the now. Yes, we're saved by faith in Jesus Christ. But this faith will and must overcome, must be vigorous, aggressive, endurance one day at a time.

You get this word. He says this: "The one who endures to the end will be saved." This is address to individual souls. The one. Do you remember how Peter put it to the multitudes there? I recognize he wasn't saying this to people who were already disciples. But there's a truth to be found. Remember when he looked at those people and he said, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." Isn't that interesting? Aside from: what? We save ourselves? Again, we really need to listen to what Scripture says. But save yourself from this crooked generation? Look, what I'll tell you about that statement is the urgency ought to be obvious. Repentance is individual. Faith is individual. Persevering? Individual. If you endure, you endure. We don't start with the general. For one thing, it's not just: save the crooked generation. You know what? This present evil age is going to remain evil. And you're not going to change it. This world? It's under the dominion of the devil. What happens? We don't save the whole world. We don't change the whole world. These people have this idea of social justice and all these other things and we're just going to fix the whole world. That was never it. It's one soul at a time. That's what's being dealt with here. One soul at a time. This is very personal. It's always personal. If you make it to the end, you make it. And I'll guarantee you this, when your life is put on the screen, you will have fought, you will have put to death idols in your life. You will have been on your knees. You will have been desperate to have Christ's help to carry you through. You will lean on Him and depend on Him and cry out to Him. You will have had your eyes upon the cross and your trust will be there. And you will have been a people who will be fruitful. And you will bear fruit in the power of the Spirit. And you will press on because that is the endurance of Scripture - enduring in His works, enduring. Not becoming weary in well-doing. Praying and not fainting. You keep going. You keep on. You run this race with eyes that are set on Jesus Christ. That's what will be seen. You didn't give way to the strangling effects of this world, those pleasures, those deceitful riches that this world brings to you. You didn't get caught up in your hobbies and your little things to where it pulled you away. Yes, there's a place for rest. Yes, but in the rest and in the work and in the Word, you didn't fall away. You kept going. You kept moving. There was constantly a momentum that was taking you in a certain direction.

And listen, it is like being in a river and the river is over your head and it's flowing. And that current is strong. And you've got to plant your feet based on this cross and Person, this confidence, this Rock of God and Christ. And you push because sin is there. And it wages war. Those sinful passions wage war against our souls. All you have to do is be neglectful. Don't be watchful. Give advantage to the devil and see how fast you fall off your feet. Give way to pride. See how fast you fall on your face. Be negligent to the Word of God. You see, you're being saved if you hold fast to the Word. Those people who endure, the good soil - not like the ones who fall away who heard the Word and for a season were there. The current is strong! Cosmic forces of evil. What do you think? This is no lightweight deal. And what happens is the only way

you maintain the course is the power of God flowing through you, flowing through you. But you've got to tap the sources.

Why do you think Scripture says things like: Don't forsake meeting together. Because God has His ways. He is going to focus that power through you. Stay on your knees and don't faint. Why? Because there's a way that you cling to the God you trust in. It's not by being silent. It's not by not fasting. It's not by getting caught up in the things of the world and getting distracted.

And I don't know, I need to give more time and attention to this, but if Martyn Lloyd-Jones is right and people hit a time when they begin to coast, and they've got to be called out of it, I don't know what he saw or what he was dealing with or maybe there's more reality to this right here in our own midst than I'm aware of, but if you're in one of those seasons where you're coasting, you better be very careful. Because coasting is nothing else than drifting. And if you begin to drift, suddenly you wake up one day and you hardly know where you are. And that can happen. And I'll tell you this, Hebrews 3 talks about the deceitfulness of sin. And it hardens you. And the reality is it's deceitful. That means you don't even know you're drifting. You don't even know where you're at. Why? Because you're deceived. Oftentimes it's the people who think it's okay that are in the most danger. They're not desperate. You remember how Kevin said he found confidence in Psalm 102 because God hears the cries of the destitute. But you get to where you're comfortable. Things are okay. And you take your eyes off Christ and you begin to become relaxed in this place. And this place is not a playground as Tozer said. You better know that there is an adversary and you need to watch and you need to pray. And that's what Scripture calls us to.

Don't lull your own self to sleep by saying: Well, I'm saved! I got saved! So I don't need to fear this. Listen, you don't endure in crowds. You're not born again in crowds. You aren't saved in crowds. And you're not going to die in a crowd. This is individual. You individually come into the Kingdom and you individually are saved from this wicked and crooked generation. And we individually repent. We individually lay hold on the Lord Jesus Christ. We individually call on the name of the Lord and are saved. And we individually endure. Now, we can help one another and we can stir up one another. That is true. But Jesus is not talking about you helping the other guy. He is saying, "The one who endures..." You have to endure.

And listen, look at your life. One of the telltale warning signs is when you can look at your life and you can say like those Hebrews, past tense I used to do this. Past tense I used to do this. Past tense I used to do that. That's when you're in trouble. That is a dead giveaway. Brethren, you need to remember something. Faith is a confidence in things that are not seen. And you know what Scripture says? All those saints who made it to the end? They had an opportunity to go back, but they didn't go back. You know why? A confidence in something not seen.

You know what's said. Noah. What about Noah? By faith, what did he do? By faith. Do you know that chapter, Hebrews 11, it talks about Noah, it talks about Abraham, it talks about Moses, it talks about all these different people. You see, they made it. What was going on with these guys? You know what he says? Faith is the confidence of things not seen. A confidence of something not seen. You know what it says? We believe that everything that is seen was made not by anything that is seen. It's made by the Unseen. You see, we live in light of realities

that we cannot now see with these eyes, but they are so real to us. We have a confidence. He's gone through the veil. I can't see the veil. He's gone through that veil to the other side. I can't see the other side. It's an unseen Christ. I can't see Him. He's gone to His Father's side. I can't see the Father. There's glory ahead. I can't see that. They couldn't see it either. You remember what Abraham was called to do? He was called to go to a land that he did not know, he had never seen before. "By faith, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out of the place that he was to receive as an inheritance and he went out not knowing where he was going." Why did he go? He didn't know where he was going. What was he looking for? He was looking for a city. "He was looking forward to the city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God." And it says "these all died in faith not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar." See, the thing that can't be seen, they saw.

I would just say this: do you see it? Is it ever before your eyes? You see, sometimes the things that get in our eyes is the stuff of this world. We get taken up. We get absorbed. And Scripture's constantly saying: Don't let go of the confidence that you had at the first. Don't let go of it. Keep on going. The end of this thing is eternal life. And it's not that far away. And don't get distracted.

Because listen, you say, how could somebody fall away from the living God? The same way somebody can fall away from that door without actually going through it. You could walk over to that door, not actually go through it, and then fall away from it. That's how it happens. Yes, you could liken it to: going through the door is genuine salvation. But you know what? My eye cannot discern, and your eye cannot discern whether people are on this side of the door or that side of the door. But what our eye does discern is we watch people fall away from that door. Now it may prove whether they were God's house or not. You're God's house if you hold fast your confidence to the end. But we haven't reached the end yet. And you better beware of presumption and pride because that will be the first way you'll fall on your face.

Brethren, our confidence - our confidence is in our God. That is where we need to be. Our confidence. Brethren, don't grow weary of prayer. That is one of the hardest things to maintain. That is one of the hardest things to battle through. See that with your eyes which they saw which cannot be seen. See the realities. We have a God in Heaven, a God Who is the Father of lights and Who rejoices in giving to us. We have us a Savior Who spent His blood to redeem us. You can't see justification. I can't see it. You can't see that blood. But you know what? We live on promises. "If they had been thinking of the land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return."

Don't walk away from the door. Go through it all the way. How do you know if you're in or out? Well, I'll tell you this, it's going to be persevering. It's going to not be falling away. It's not going to be giving yourself to some kind of drift that takes you off or some kind of error that takes you away, taking your eyes off of Christ. "As it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God. He has prepared for them a city..." And you know how this was. Isaac, he blessed. Those are future blessings. You see Joseph. He blessed. Future blessings. You see Joseph himself, he says take my bones out. He didn't see the exodus out of Egypt, but he believed it. See, these guys were believing in things that they hadn't seen. Moses: "Moses considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the

treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. By faith, he left Egypt, not being afraid of the anger of the king, for he endured as seeing Him Who is invisible." That's it. That's it. Faith. The confidence in things that are not seen. He had confidence in something that was invisible. You know what is visible? The riches of this world, the stuff of this world, the entanglements of this world. The stuff.

Just ask yourself this: Is it true of you like it's true of the Hebrews that you have to be called to recall former days because basically those were your best days? Those were your good days. Those were the days when you walked with the Lord. But something's happened. Mid-life crisis? Mid-life drift? Is Lloyd-Jones right? I don't know what you call it, but I'll tell you it's dangerous. The author of Hebrews makes it very dangerous. He tells them you better be careful because you can go to that door. You can be enlightened. You can taste of the power of the Spirit of God. You can come real close to the people of God and to the Word of God and to God Himself and then fall away. And it had been better that you had never known than for you to know that truth and turn away. And Peter's talking about real people there who have fallen away.

Brethren, this isn't about doubting whether you're saved or not. And that you can't hardly, possibly know if you're real until you get to the end. This is just the opposite. This is holding fast your confidence. This is being confident in Him that I cannot see. I'm confident He's there. He's real. He's died. He shed that blood. I believe that. I believe He's my only hope. I believe that Heaven is real. I believe that God the Father sent His Son to redeem me. I believe that. I want to endure. I want to work out my salvation with fear and trembling. Today! I want to keep going. I don't want to fall out of this race. Because I believe it's real. I'm looking for a city. I'm looking for an end. I'm looking for a better country. I'm looking for a Paradise in which my Savior is the King and reigns and sits on David's throne. That's my hope. Brethren, we need to keep going. Not in doubt. No, in full assurance of your first confidence. Firm to the end. That He's just as capable of saving you today and will save you today and will save you tomorrow as He was when He justified us in the past and reconciled us to God by His blood in the past. We need to keep on. Brethren, keep going. We haven't made it to the end yet.

And Satan seeks to trip you up. He seeks to give you an everlasting fall. You be careful. The world, its cares, the riches... keep your eyes fixed on Christ. Don't get distracted. Endure in doing good. Endure. Endure in being sacrificial. Endure in loving one another. Endure in doing the things that encourage your faith. What's that? What are the things that kill faith? What are the things that feed faith? I'll tell you, being around people with faith will help your faith. Remember the example of your leaders, their faith. Surround yourself with that. Surround yourself with the biographies of those who are men and women of faith. Surround yourself with people who believe. Not the people who doubt all the time. Not the people who are cynical all the time. Don't surround yourself with them. Be in the Word of God. Look at those promises. Go there. Stay there. Support the Gospel. Redeem the time. Use the opportunities. Don't slow down! Don't coast. He bestows a crown. And you remember this: The crown is for the faithful. Don't let anybody steal that crown. Because crown-stealers are out there. They're looking to reach out of the computer screen, out of the TV, out of companionship, family, out of your own heart, and grab that crown. And if it's gone...

Go on. Go on. Go on... in His power, in His glory. Those that behold the glory of the Lord, they're being transformed. Go in that power. Behold the Lord. Keep your eyes on Him. Walk with Him. Talk with Him. That's where the power comes from. That's where the enduring power, that's where the resurrection power - that's where it's to be had. Keep going. Keep going. Keep going. We have boldness and access with confidence. If you've got access, you keep going there. Stay there. Live there. Live in the presence of God. Do all to stand in the evil day. Today is no day for coasting. Our salvation is closer than when we first believed. But people slip away all the time. All the time. It's no day to be casual. Keep your priorities right. Do right. Live right. Act right. Follow Christ. Buy the truth. Sell it not. The one who endures to the end will be saved.

Help us, Lord. We ask it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do everything. Do all that is required to keep us fervent, zealous, on track, headed in the right direction, pursuing that prize, enduring, overcoming. We want to be overcomers. We know that if You would call us overcomers You'd give us things to overcome, but please, Lord, with every obstacle put in our way, give us grace to overcome it. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.