

A Word to the Weary

2 Thessalonians

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Bible Text: 2 Thessalonians 3:11-13

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If you would, please, turn to the book of 2 Thessalonians chapter three. I am going to read tonight beginning with verse 10. We will read down to verse 15.

The Word of God says this:

For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.¹

Let's go to the Lord together in prayer.

Lord, we thank you for this evening. We thank you for this time together. We have all come into this place, Father, with a lot of things that happened between Sunday and tonight. Perhaps, Lord, we have—no doubt, Lord—we have faced individual challenges throughout this week so far and even today. We thank you, Lord, for the encouragement of the Scriptures. We thank you for the opportunity to encourage each other and all the more as we see the day approaching and I just pray that tonight through the preaching of your Word, there would be a powerful ministry of encouragement and at the same time, Lord, sometimes we are most corrected when we are most encouraged. And so wherever, Lord, we have been falling short, wherever we are in need of correction, we ask you to correct us even as you encourage us in the way. We trust the working of your Spirit in our lives and in this place and this hour. We thank you, Lord, for the special grace of preaching. Lord, help us not to underestimate it, but to recognize that you have ordained it for the spiritual health and the ongoing growth of your people. Bless tonight, Lord, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

¹ 2 Thessalonians 3:10-15.

I know you are aware of this, but I want to remind you of something as we begin tonight. There is a difference between a principle that you find in Scripture and the application of that principle in a particular context in God's Word.

Now as you study the Word of God there are going to be times that you see a principle emerge from Scripture and that principle is being applied in that particular context. So you see the principle and you see the application of it. And we need to recognize that whenever that happens, the principle is broader than the particular application. So it is legitimate. It is sound to lift the principle and then to ask: Now are there other contexts in which this principle needs to be applied in my life?

Do you follow? So you have a principle. You have an application. You see the principle in the midst of a particular context, but you have to ask: Where else does this principle apply?

Well, you find that in this section. You see that in verse 13. There is a principle in verse 13 and we find it in a particular context. I am going to point out the context in a moment. But I want you to see the principle.

Verse 13.

“As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.”²

One of the ways we know this is a general principle is if you look over in the book of Galatians. Keep your Bible marker here. We are going to come back. But go to the book of Galatians and we see the principle again. Galatians chapter six and we read beginning with verse six.

One who is taught the word must share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.³

How many of you remember that this past Sunday we talked about conditional grace, right? Do you see a conditional grace there?

“In due season you will reap.”⁴ What is the condition? “If you do not give up.”⁵

Verse 10.

² 2 Thessalonians 3:13.

³ Galatians 6:6-9.

⁴ Galatians 6:9.

⁵ Ibid.

“So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”⁶

Look back, if you would, please at 2 Thessalonians. The principle is: Don't grow weary in doing good. Now what is the particular context in 2 Thessalonians chapter three? Well, as you read this letter you discover that there were some in Thessalonica, in fact we see it right here in our text, who were living lazy lives. They were idle. They were not working. In fact, they were busying themselves in other people's business. They were busy bodies.

This is not the first time that Paul addressed this problem in this particular fellowship. He had already addressed it in the first letter to the Thessalonians, but they had not heeded that letter. They had not repented. They had not changed their ways. And so he is addressing it again. And as this is going on, those in the Church who are actually doing good faced some particular temptations, all of it having to do with growing weary.

One temptation might be that if you have used your material means, if you have used what God has given you to help people and they have taken advantage of you, they have continued to live, you know, wasteful lives even after you have helped them materially or financially, you might be tempted to close your heart when it comes in the future to other people who have needs. Right?

You say, “Well, I helped them and now look at what they have done with it. So I am not going to help anybody anymore. That is it. Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. I am not going to open my heart to anyone else who is in need. That is it.”

Well, that wouldn't be right, would it? So they were tempted to no longer do good, perhaps in the area of helping people in need.

Another aspect of this might be that you... you have been working hard to earn your living. And there are those in the congregation who have misunderstood the Lord's coming, because that is really what fueled this. If you read these two letters you discover there was some bad eschatology in the Church and some had given up working and they were misunderstanding the day of the Lord. And so you might be tempted to follow in their footsteps.

What is the use of working hard? These people are somehow being taken care of. Why not join them? So that would be another possible temptation here.

I think another temptation would have to do with correction, because he is obviously calling upon the congregation to take some kind of action toward these people who are doing this, right?

If you look down to verse 14:

⁶ Galatians 6:10.

If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.⁷

Well, the question is: Am I really willing to do that? Am I really willing to do what is good in this situation? Am I really willing to take my stand on God's Word, on the truth and participate in the loving, but the powerful disciplining of a brother? Or will I not? Will I neglect to do good? Will I refuse to do what is right?

So this principle, don't grow weary in doing good, it has multiple applications in this particular context. But the main idea, the main principle is this. We are not to grow weary in doing good in this sense. We are not to grow weary in the sense that we are unwilling to do what is right, that we are discouraged, that we lose heart.

That is the principle. And I want us to think about that tonight. I wonder if there is someone sitting here tonight that you are weary, you are tired when it comes to doing the right thing. You are facing the temptation in some area of your life. And, listen. It can be in just your attitudes. You know, I have kept the right attitude. I have thought the right way. I have spoken the right words. But I just keep facing this situation again and again and again.

And maybe you are facing the temptation to stop doing the right thing. I want to encourage you tonight. Don't do that. Don't grow weary in doing good.

There are five points I want to share with you tonight and I am going to close with some exhortations. The first point tonight from these verses and particularly verse 13 is this. I know this is simple. I know this is something we probably already all get, but I think it is important that we do this. First of all, I want us to recognize the specific kind of weariness that he is talking about.

“Do not grow weary in doing good.”⁸

You know, there is a weariness in doing good that is good. I mean, there is a kind of weariness that we should know in the course of doing good.

What kind of weariness is that? It is the weariness that you find in the midst of hard work. With the energy that God supplies, with the power that God gives us by his Spirit, you and I should work hard for Christ. It is good that we be tired, that we labor, that we toil in the ministry. There is a weariness in doing good that is good. The Bible is clear about this.

The apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 4:11, “To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are poorly dressed and buffeted and homeless, and we labor...”⁹

⁷ 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15.

⁸ 2 Thessalonians 3:13.

⁹ 1 Corinthians 4:11-12.

And that particular Greek word means to toil to the point of weariness.

“...we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we entreat. We have become, and are still, like the scum of the world, the refuse of all things.”¹⁰

1 Timothy chapter four verse 10 says, “For to this end we toil [same word] and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.”¹¹

I mean it is because we have a hope, Paul writes, that we will work to the point that we are worn out. I mean, we will toil. We will strive because we have our hopes set on the living God.

Colossians 1:29 says, “For this I toil [same word], struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”¹²

God grants the power. God grants the ability and I walk in it to the point that I struggle to the point that I toil.

Paul actually boasts in this for the sake of the Corinthian Church. I mean, this is one of the evidences that he really was a man of God.

2 Corinthians 11:23 he writes, “Are they servants of Christ?”¹³

The false apostles, the super apostles, are they servants of Christ?

“I am a better one—I am talking like a madman.”¹⁴

Now listen what he rattles off.

...with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 4:12-13.

¹¹ 1 Timothy 4:10.

¹² Colossians 1:29.

¹³ 2 Corinthians 11:23.

¹⁴ Ibid.

without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.¹⁵

Does this man ever say he was tired, physically tired in his service to Christ? What is the answer. Yeah. You see, there is a weariness in doing good that is good.

Do we know anything about that kind of weariness? Do we know what it is to work hard for the cause of the gospel, to work hard in the ministry, to work hard for the cause of Christ?

So that is not what he has in mind in verse 13 when he says, “Do not grow weary in doing good.”¹⁶

No, he is talking about a weariness in doing good that is not good. It is, as Galatians six pointed out, he says, “If you don’t lose heart,” that is the weariness he is talking about. To lose heart, to become discouraged to the point that you are tempted to stop doing what is right. I mean, to even be a candidate for this... Notice a couple of things.

Verse 13.

First of all, you have got to be a brother.

“As for you, brothers...”¹⁷

So this is addressed to Christians. This is a temptation Christians face. This is a temptation, I mean, real brothers face. But not only that, to be a candidate, to really take in this verse and apply it, you have to be doing good. Right? Don’t grow weary in doing good. And the implication, of course, is they have been doing good. He is addressing this to the people who have been doing the right thing.

And he says, “Now don’t grow weary in doing good. Don’t stop. Don’t give up. Don’t loose heart.”

This is not an exhortation to take a spiritual vacation. It is just the opposite. It is an exhortation not to take a spiritual vacation. Have you given yourself permission ever to take a spiritual vacation?

Look, we are physical creatures. We need physical rest. It is good for us that we take care of ourselves physically. There are times that it is absolutely appropriate that we have times of refreshing before the Lord and we physically rest and we physically recoup our energies, but there is never a moment, there is never a day when we should go on spiritual vacation.

¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.

¹⁶ 2 Thessalonians 3:13.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Every day we are a slave of Jesus Christ. Every day we are on call. Every day we are to remember that we are children of God and that all around us are opportunities to serve Christ every day. In fact, you will be doing your best spiritually when you are most alert and most ready to serve the Lord. And you will be doing, you will be in the most dangerous position when you decide that what you need is a break from your walk with Christ. You never need a break from your walk with Christ. So that even in our times of rest and leisure, they should be times of devotion and worship before God.

It is ok to be weary in doing good. We should never be weary of doing good, of doing the right thing.

That leads to the second point tonight and that is this. Weariness in the doing of good is a possibility for believers. God does not warn us about things that are not really a threat to us. He doesn't warn us about things that we don't need to be warned about.

Who knows our hearts perfectly? God does, right, the Holy Spirit does. Well, who is issuing this exhortation through the apostle Paul? The Holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of God who knows all of us perfectly, who knows the children of God perfectly, he is saying to brothers, he is saying to believers, "Beware of this. Beware of becoming discouraged in the doing of good. Beware of losing heart. Don't grow weary in the course of doing what is right."

Why does he say this? Because we can be tempted to do that.

What kinds of things make us weary? What kinds of things cause us to become discouraged? If we have very been tempted to say, "You know what? I have had enough, I am just going to quit," what kinds of things cause us to dangerously think that way?

Well, first of all, maybe a few thoughts. First of all, when the doing of good is hard. I mean, when doing the right thing is difficult, when it is costly from a human point of view, when it is dangerous, when it makes us afraid, when it would seem to us that it might be easier or safer not to do the right thing or when it is hard physically, when it is physically and emotionally draining.

Sometimes we get weary or we are tempted to get become weary of doing good when the doing of good has been abused. We have done the right thing and someone has taken advantage of us. We have done the right thing, but they have done the wrong thing. And so we are tempted to ask: Why do the right thing if this is what they are going to do with it? If this is how people respond to it, why do the right thing?

You know, one of those crushing things about betrayal is that very reality, right? Here is someone who has been your friend. Here is someone whom you have loved. Here is someone that you have been faithful to and they, in turn, take your love, your faithfulness, your friendship, whatever the relationship may be and they betray that trust.

And so you may say to yourself, “Why would I ever want to invest in another relationship like that?”

All the while knowing that the Bible calls upon us to really invest in other people’s lives and to really open ourselves up to other people’s investment. It is not the right thing to isolate yourself and shut yourself off. But you may be tempted to do it.

Sometimes we are tempted to be weary in doing good when the doing of good takes a long time, when it requires steadfastness. I think about the matter of church discipline because that is addressed right here in our text, isn’t it? What would doing good involve in the church at Thessalonica?

Well, part of it, verse 14, would be this, that if anyone didn’t obey this letter they would have to take note of that person and they would have to withdraw fellowship from that person.

And we are going to deal with this more as we move further in 1 Timothy chapter five because we get to the responsibility of elders we will deal with this subject. But I want you to notice something that one aspect of discipline is that the person might be ashamed. I know that might not sound right to our ears. Do you know what we do sometimes is we take the Word of God and we only take parts of it and we don’t take the rest of it?

If I were to ask you: What is the purpose of Church discipline? Most Christians would answer—and this is a right answer—it is just not all that is right about it—most people would answer: The purpose of Church discipline is redemption. The purpose of Church discipline is restoration. The purpose of Church discipline is to love someone out of their sin.

And do you know what? That is exactly right. But I want to ask you tonight. Is that all that Church discipline is about? Is it just about redemption? No. What else is it about? It is about the purity of the Church. It is about protecting the people who are not in the sin. And it is even about holding a believer, at least a professing believer, right, accountable to the point that they would recognize that what they are engaged in is shameful. It is not just about showing them love. It is also about protecting the rest of the congregation. And even in that there is love.

Verse 15.

“Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.”¹⁸

You can warn a brother to the point that he knows that what he is doing is shameful. It is not easy to walk through these things. The sheer number of the problem could make us weary, right?

You could say, “Well, perhaps in Thessalonica there many people doing this.”

¹⁸ 2 Thessalonians 3:15.

And you might look at all the folks living this sort of lazy, idle existence and say, “You know, how are we ever going to address this?”

Well, the answer is one at a time. The complicated nature of problems in the Church could make you weary. Do you know what? It is not always easy, is it? I mean, sometimes these situations are pretty involved and there are a lot of different threads that run through the story and to really deal with it in a God honoring way, you have to take time and be careful and sift through the issues and that can get tiring.

The stubbornness, the unwillingness of people whom you are trying to help. That can make it tiring. They are not cooperating. They won't listen. The extended time required to deal with it properly. That can make you tired.

You know, Church discipline is not mechanical. It is not step one, step two, step three, take it to the Church. It is not like that. It operates based upon the ultimate goal of this thing which is, first, redemption, restoration, salvation, at the same time the purity of the Church and all the rest. And so you walk through these things in a patient, wise manner. There is no mechanical thing set forth for us in Scripture that says, “Ok, two weeks for this step and three weeks for that step and six months for that step.” It is not there. It takes wisdom. It takes the leadership of the Spirit of God working through the elders of a church and then finally the cooperative efforts of the body of Christ as a whole. That is what we find in this context.

But there are other things that can make us weary just because it is extended. I mean you go through an extended trial, an extended test. It can even be physical. Right? Things that have wracked your body, things that make you... you don't feel well. And it is just a continual test and you become discouraged and you lose heart.

Something else that they make us tempted not to continue in good is when the doing of good is strongly opposed. It can be hard enough to do the right thing when everyone knows you are doing the right thing. But it can be especially hard to do the right thing when you are criticized for doing the right thing, when people misunderstand what you are doing, when people twist what you are doing. It can be hard to do the right thing when you are judged as doing the wrong thing.

Some of you may have known this in your own families. You strive to please the Lord, for example, in the way you raise your children and you have unbelieving family members who do not understand where you are coming from because they are unbelievers and you may face some major criticism from your own family for the way you conduct your household. And maybe, you know, that kind of pressure over an extended period of time really begins to make you think, “You know, I mean, should we maybe change course? I mean, do we really want this kind of tension within our family?” And that is just one example, but it could be something else. It doesn't matter.

Sometimes when you are opposed for doing the right thing you are really tempted not to keep doing the right thing.

You say, “How do I know if I am doing the right thing or not?”

What is the answer? Scripture. What does the Bible say? It is not about people’s opinions. It is not about what people think or what they say. It is about what does the Word of God say? And if you are standing in an area that the Bible addresses clearly... I mean if you are trying to stand in some obscure place, you may be standing in the wrong place, but if you are standing where Scripture has spoken clearly, you can know you are doing what is good in the sight of God and you ought to be immovable when it comes to that.

There is another thing that can make us grow weary and that is when the doing of good doesn’t seem to be paying off. Why do you think in Galatians 6:9-10 the Holy Spirit says through Paul, “You will reap in due season, if you don’t give up”? What is he saying to them?

Right now it doesn’t look like there is a harvest coming in, right? But you stay at it. And if you don’t give up, there will be a day where you harvest the good fruit of that which has been sown in the Spirit.

Sow to the flesh, you are going to reap corruption. Sow to the Spirit. You are going to reap life. So don’t grow weary in doing good because in due season you will reap, if you don’t faint, if you don’t give up, if you don’t quit.

And so there you are. Maybe you are on the mission field and you are working and you are laboring and you are preaching and you are teaching and there is nobody being converted. Or maybe you study every week to prepare your Sunday school lesson and you seek the Lord’s face. You come prepared and you teach the lesson and for an extended period of time you just don’t see any fruit from it. Or you pray about a situation, doesn’t that...?

By the way, beloved, doesn’t the Bible teach the need for persistence in prayer? And so you pray about a situation and there doesn’t seem to be any change in the situation. You know you are praying according to the will of God, but it just... there is just nothing happening it seems. Sometimes we are tempted to stop doing good because it doesn’t seem to be paying off.

So, first of all, what kind of weariness is this? It is the kind of weariness where I am tempted to stop doing the right thing and the fact that you can become weary in this is proven by the exhortation itself. If we couldn’t be tempted toward this, God wouldn’t have to warn us about this. And there are many things that can make us be tempted, when it is hard, when it has been taken advantage of, when it takes a long time, when it is strongly opposed, when it doesn’t seem to be paying off.

That leads to the third thought from these verses and that is weariness in the doing of good is to be exhorted against. That is, we ought to be exhorting believers in our preaching, for example, just as we are doing tonight. Don't give up. Don't lose heart. Keep doing what is right in the sight of God no matter the challenges, no matter the discouragements, no matter the difficulties. You keep doing what is right.

But not only should we be doing that in our preaching, guess what? One of the reasons we gather together is that we might exhort one another, right, all the more as we see the day approaching. One of the reasons we gather together is to one another, "Brother, sister, don't stop. Don't give up. Don't lose heart. In due season you will reap if you don't quit." This is what we do.

Why not quit? Why not just give in to the weariness that you may feel even tonight? Well, we could state it negatively. If you grow weary in doing good then what will you be doing? Simple, isn't it. If you lose heart in doing the right thing, then what is the only other option left for us? The wrong thing. If you stop doing good, then what you are going to do is sin. You begin to give in to sin.

Do you think about it that way? I mean, when you know you have been doing what the Word of God teaches and you are discouraged and tempted to give in, it may be something as simple as a bad attitude or the wrong kind of thinking or the wrong kind of speech. Do you realize what you are actually doing? When you don't do what is right, what are you doing? You are sinning. You are sinning.

What do you reap if you sow to the flesh? Corruption, nothing good, nothing that is rewardable, nothing that is eternally valuable. Sow to the Spirit and you reap life.

But we can also state it positively by saying, as God says in Galatians 6:9. There will be a spiritual harvest on the other side of steadfastness. Stay at it. Be steadfast. Don't give up. And God promises that on the other side of your steadfastness, you will reap. There will be a spiritual harvest. There will be blessing.

Do you recognize, taking into account all of God's sovereignty and all of his decrees and all of the rest, do you recognize that there will be some things left undone that could have been done if we had been steadfast?

In due season you will reap if you don't quit.

I wonder one day when we stand before the Lord, I wonder if in a gracious way we might be made aware of how much more fruitful our lives could have been in the service of Christ had we not grown weary in doing good, had we stayed at those hard situations, had we obeyed the Lord when we were tempted to give in to sin, had we stayed at our post, I wonder. I wonder how many situations in our lives we could have been so much more fruitful if we had been more dependent, more submitted, more obedient.

The fourth thought tonight is this. Where can believers grow weary in doing good? Where can we grow weary and in what kind of situations do we grow weary in doing good? Well, we see a specific context here. Helping others in need. We can grow weary in that area. Viewing material things the way that we ought to. That is the context of Galatians six. In fact, it is very interesting. This principle in Galatians six has to do with taking care of those who teach us the Word of God. That has to do with material things.

And, not just that. You go further down in Galatians six, just helping one another. Taking care of brothers, meeting needs. You can grow weary in that. You can grow weary in the area of discipline. That is in this context. You can grow weary in terms of just working hard. That is in this context.

But the answer is this. You can grow weary in any area where good is possible. Anywhere where we are called to obey God, there we can be tempted not to obey him. Any area: our marriage, raising of our children, our work life, our attitudes, our thoughts, our speech, our reactions to situations and responses. Wherever we have an opportunity to do what pleases God and to keep doing what pleases God, there we can be tempted to quit.

I want to ask you tonight. Have you been tempted lately to quit in some area? I don't mean walk away from Jesus. I don't mean walk away from the gospel. I just mean that obedience has been difficult. And you sit here tonight, perhaps, discouraged, ready to faint, ready to lose heart.

Well, that leads to the fifth thought, the last thought tonight before I give some closing exhortations and that is here is a fifth thing we see in this principle: continuance in doing good can be chosen by brothers, by believers, by those how have access to the energy supplied by submission to Christ and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Why give an exhortation like this? Because you can receive it, because you can believe it, because you can obey it. You can, believer. You can say tonight, "I will be encouraged. I will be exhorted. I will believe you, God. I will listen to you on this. I will not give in to my discouragement. I will continue to do good."

This is an exhortation we can be obedient to. If we could not obey this exhortation there would be no point in giving it. And so no matter how weary you have felt, how discouraged you may be, you can receive this tonight if you are saved and God has given you everything you need in his Son. He has supplied you with everything you need to walk in his commandment. You can be steadfast in doing the right thing.

So let me finish with some exhortations to us. I have four, very quickly.

First of all, I exhort us to realize that this exhortation comes from God, doesn't it?

Who issued verse 13? You say, "Paul did." That is right. Who inspired it? The Holy Spirit.

I want you tonight to hear the Lord say to you, personally. I want to hear the Lord say to your own situation, to your own temptation, to your own test, to your own heart, to your own attitude, to your own way of thinking, to the choice you have to make tonight and to the choice you will have to make tomorrow. I want you to hear the Lord say to you, “Brother, don’t grow weary in doing good. Sister, don’t grow weary in doing good,” because that is what this is. This is a word from God. And I want you to realize it and I want you to recognize it. I want us to hear Scripture for what it is. It is not the word of men. It is the Word of God.

Second, realize that not only does the exhortation come from God, but the promises associated with the exhortation, that promise came from God, too.

When in Galatians 6:9-10 the Lord says through Paul, “Listen. In due season you will reap if you don’t faint,” who said that? Who says that to you tonight? The Lord does. That is not pastor Richard. That is not Founders Baptist Church. That is your God. This is the Word of God. The Scriptures are the Word of God. God says to you tonight, “Brother, sister, if you don’t give up, there is a harvest day coming. There is a harvest day coming.”

And, look. It may not come in this life. It may come before the Lord’s very presence.

How long are we called to serve Christ faithfully? If the test goes on a lifetime, how long are we called to serve faithfully? A lifetime.

Do you realize that the calling we received at the beginning applies for the rest of our lives? What did Jesus say to us?

If any man seeks to save his life here what happens? He loses it. But if he will lose his life for my sake, he will find it.

Do you know what life really is? It is living for Jesus. That is life. You lose your life for Christ’s sake, you find what living really is. And the reason why we have so many believer who are struggling and living substandard existences and don’t know the joy of the Lord and don’t know the peace of the Lord and don’t know that sense of blessing and favor that they once knew is because they are trying to save their lives here which is another way of saying we don’t really believe God. We don’t really trust him. We think we are going to find some kind of satisfaction in some other way than simple, humble obedience.

You weren’t called to lose your live just at one point. You are called to take up your cross. How often? Daily. And follow him every day.

So the promises, they have come from God, too.

Third, realize that future results hinge on your willingness to hear this. I want you to know. Something is really hinging on you continuing to do good. There is going to be a harvest one way or the other. We are all going to have a reaping. If we sow to our flesh, Galatians six, where the principle is found, the reaping is going to be wood, hay, stubble, loss, heart ache, regret, pain, but if we sow a life of obedience to Christ, if we sow to the Spirit, we reap a harvest of what is really life. And what sin always does is it lies to us and tells us there is something to be gained apart from obedience to the Lord. Isn't that the original temptation? And so it really comes down to this. Who are you going to believe? And as you think about this, just know this. There are really, really, really results attached to your choice. So don't grow weary when doing good.

Finally, realize that refreshment is found in the way of obedience. Let me tell you how you do not obey verse 13.

“Lord, I am really weary. I am discouraged and tired. And if you will refresh me, I will do what is right.”

No, listen. Here is the faith response.

“Lord, I am weary. I am tired. I am discouraged. But you promised me that if I don't grow weary in doing good there is a spiritual harvest on the other side of my steadfastness and you tell me that I have everything I need for life and godliness in your Son. Therefore, I will continue to do good.”

And guess what, beloved? When you make those faith choices, refreshment is found along that pathway. You are going to find.

You say, “Where am I going to find refreshment?”

Walk with Christ. That is where you are going to find refreshment. It doesn't come before you walk with him. It comes in the midst of walking with him.

I am not saying that God hasn't, at times, just been gracious in a special and unusual way and sort of breathed upon us when we had not strength to do anything. He has done that, hasn't he? But we dare not presume upon that and we dare not make that a condition for our obedience.

Now you listen to him and you believe him and you obey him. And along that pathway you will find times of refreshing from the Lord.

So, my brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.

Let's pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you that your Word is sufficient in its working that, Lord, you instruct your people and you encourage your people and you cleanse your people. You

strengthen you people. Your Spirit does this with your Word. I pray that tonight we would receive what we have seen for what it really is, a message from you. Let us, Lord, hear you say to our souls, "Don't grow weary in doing good." And may we hear from you tonight the promise that in due season we will reap if we don't give up, if we don't lose heart. We ask you for this tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.