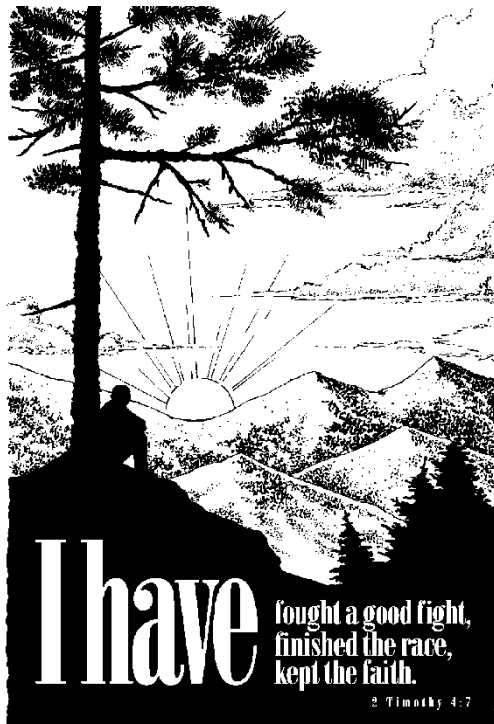


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 12



FINAL VICTORY GAINED

*Scripture Texts: Hebrews 3:12-14; Hebrews 10:26-38;
2 Timothy 4:6-8*

The saddest plight in the world is that of a person who has had the blessings we have been studying, but has lost them before gaining that final victory. This is not necessary. Only by holding confidence in God to the end can we go to Heaven. If a saved person draws back from God, he is lost. We can hold confidence by faithfully enduring trials, and God will turn them to good for us. We can hold confidence by standing on God's Word, praying in the Spirit, and keeping in the love of God. God has never lost a soul committed to Him.

MEMORY VERSE: *For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.*

– *Hebrews 3:14*

Danger of Falling

Hebrews 3:12-14 **Take heed, brethren**—give most earnest attention. The devil is always watching for a break in a saint's armor.

A little neglect of prayer, a little giving in to some temptation, and he will insert some unbelief to break one's trust in God.

Exhort one another—we owe duties to each other. We are members one of another (**1 Corinthians 12:25-26**). A word of encouragement or prayer may be just what a brother or sister needs to hold true. Contrary to modern religious teachings, man can fall from the grace of God. The Scriptures in our lesson today prove this teaching to be false doctrine. One can fall away. To fall away after being saved is worse than to never have been saved (**2 Peter 2:20-21**). **While it is called Today**—before it is too late, before Satan deceives and blinds one to the danger until he has him trapped and bound. He will harden the tender heart until repentance is difficult or impossible.

As long as we are **partakers of Christ** and as long as we hold **the beginning of our confidence**, this trust will remain **steadfast unto the end**. Remember how you trusted Him in the first days of your Christian life? This trust must remain. God puts it in, but we must keep it there. To stop trusting and serving Christ at any time is to drop out of the battle.

Confidence, the Secret of Enduring

Hebrews 10:26-38 **If we sin willfully**—if we will to sin, choose to sin, to do what we know is wrong **after that we have received the knowledge of the truth**—after being saved and Spirit-filled, known the truth by experiencing it, to choose sin is to reject Christ, the only **sacrifice for sins**. There is no other. All that remains for such a one is fear of the judgment and eternal punishment. But we need not follow this road. There is no other promise for those who stop trusting Jesus.

The Hebrews had, by their fellowship with Paul, shared in his persecutions, **Joyfully**, because in their hearts was assurance that **in heaven** they had **a better and an enduring substance**. **Mark 10:30; Matthew 5:12**—Here the promise, there the fulfillment. Here the temporary, there the enduring. Here the shadow, there the substance. **Cast not away . . . confidence**. No one can TAKE from us the favor of God or our place in Heaven. Jesus said, **No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand** (**John 10:28-29**). But we ourselves can THROW it away, or give it over to the devil. If kept, **confidence** will bring us a **great recompense of reward**.

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We need patience to serve without weariness, persevere without complaint, and hope without losing faith, to meet sin, frustration, opposition, difficulty, failure, disaster, and delay. But Christ **will come**. It may seem like a long time, but He says, **behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me (Revelation 22:12)**. With patience hold onto confidence.

The just shall live by faith. The justified life is sustained by faith. One who draws back falls into a lost state (Perdition) again. Yes, a saved person can be lost. But he need not be if he keeps faith fixed in God.

God's Keeping Power is Sure

2 Timothy 4:6-8 Paul, chained in a Roman prison, knew that he was to be killed. The time grew near for him to be beheaded. He was not discouraged or fearful, because he looked back on a life of trust in God. He had present, close communion with God.

I have fought a good fight—against sin—**finished my course**. God had given him a work (**Acts 9:15-16**). He had finished it and obtained a passing grade. **Kept the faith**—kept faithful, kept his consecration true, held the beginning of his confidence **steadfast unto the end**. His treasures were laid up in Heaven. Now he was going to them and to his Savior.

Henceforth—from now on the Lord would give him **a crown of righteousness**, the reward of a righteous, Christ-filled life. All who know Christ look forward with joy to His coming. We each can be one of them. The same crown is for us. This is final salvation, future bliss in Heaven. We must not miss it. If we **endure unto the end**, it will be ours.

No Light Matter

We treat backsliding too lightly. We must endure—continue throughout life—to reach Heaven. We underestimate salvation if we think it to be chosen or rejected as the clothing we wear. We underestimate Satan if we think we are free to stray and return to God at will. Many have found to their great sorrow that straying may be easy, but that Satan has binding chains. He catches unawares, and the power of God is the only release. Oh friend, heed Jesus' warning: **I say unto all, Watch**. We are saved by trusting Christ. We are kept in the same way. All dependence is on Him, not on ourselves.

JUST A THOUGHT

**When it comes time to die, make sure that all
you have to do is die.**

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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