

FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

II Timothy 2:10

Paul had this incredible ability to keep his focus. Enduring great opposition and adversity, his purpose remained clear. It was about pleasing His Lord and reaching others with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. The great missionary suffered much trouble and was treated by many as an evildoer. How was it that he kept going forward, continuing to reach out, making himself vulnerable to every form of attack?

He said that he endured “all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” This was the motivation he needed to take whatever came his way without succumbing to the discouragement or bitterness that often tempts God’s servants. He was not in the ministry for personal reasons. It was FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS. It would be naive to think that the ministry of serving Jesus Christ is easy. Paul told Timothy that we are to “endure hardness” (II Timothy 2:3) as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Difficulties abound in the labor for the souls of men. Satan hates us and all that we stand for. Our flesh does not always embrace the rigors of the ministry. The world’s system does not welcome our message. We have to deal with criticism and malice from those who claim to know of our Lord. How do we respond when attacks come or when discouragement knocks at our door?

We must ask ourselves why we do what we do. It has never been, nor should it ever be, about us. We are commanded by our great God to take His message to a perishing world. We are to tell the truth with love, yet without apology. Whatever discomforts, inconveniences, persecutions, betrayals, or despairs we encounter, we shall endure for the sake of those we are called to reach. People need our message. There are those that will listen and obey the Gospel. It is worth it because of them. People are worth the problems of Christian service. Their souls are worth it. Our labor is not in vain if even one person is eternally saved. To see a marriage salvaged, to see children reared in a Christian home, to see the difference Christ can make in a life is worth it. To stand in Heaven one day beside someone that we had a part in helping will make it all worth while.