

2 Timothy 2:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Analysis

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us. The hymn's second couplet presents contrasting realities. First, the promise: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (ei hypomenomen, kai symbasileusomen, εἰ ὑπομένομεν, καὶ συμβασιλεύσομεν). The verb hypomenō (ὑπομένω) means persevere under trials, endure suffering faithfully. Present tense indicates ongoing reality—those currently enduring suffering for Christ. The promise is future reigning: symbasileusomen (συμβασιλεύσομεν, "we will reign together with") combines syn (together) with basileuō (reign as king). Believers will share Christ's royal rule (Romans 8:17, Revelation 3:21, 20:6).

Second, the warning: "if we deny him, he also will deny us" (ei arnēsometha, kakeinos arnēsetai hēmas, εἰ ἀρνησόμεθα, κακεῖνος ἀρνήσεται ἡμᾶς). Future tense suggests hypothetical possibility—"if we should deny." The verb arneomai (ἀρνέομαι) means disown, repudiate, reject publicly. This echoes Jesus's warning in Matthew 10:33. Christ will deny before the Father those who deny Him before men. This isn't about momentary weakness (like Peter's denial) but persistent, final apostasy—refusing to acknowledge Christ under persecution.

Together these statements present serious motivation: perseverance in suffering leads to reigning; apostasy leads to divine rejection. True believers endure; apostates abandon faith when tested.

Historical Context

Roman persecution forced Christians to choose: confess Christ and face execution, or deny Him and live. During Decian persecution (AD 250), many offered incense to emperor statues, receiving certificates (*libelli*) proving compliance. Some genuinely apostatized; others compromised under torture. The question of whether apostates could be restored divided churches. This verse addresses that crisis: those who finally deny Christ face His denial at judgment.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. In what subtle ways might cultural pressure tempt you toward practical denial of Christ through silence, compromise, or conformity?
2. How does the promise of future reigning with Christ motivate present endurance of suffering, opposition, or persecution?
3. Can you distinguish between temporary weakness (like Peter's denial) and final apostasy (complete abandonment of Christ)?

Interlinear Text

εἰ ὑπομένομεν καὶ συμβασιλεύσομεν· εἰ ἀρνήσεται

If we suffer also reign with If we deny

G1487

G5278

G2532

G4821

G1487

G720

κάκεῖνος ἀρνήσεται ἡμᾶς·

him he also we deny

G2548

G720

us

G2248

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:17 (Parallel theme): And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Matthew 10:33 (Parallel theme): But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Revelation 20:4 (Kingdom): And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6 (Kingdom): Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 5:10 (Kingdom): And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Luke 12:9 (Parallel theme): But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

Luke 9:26 (Parallel theme): For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

Revelation 1:9 (Kingdom): I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 2:13 (Parallel theme): I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Mark 8:38 (Parallel theme): Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

