

2 Timothy 2:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Analysis

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Despite Hymenaeus and Philetus's destructive error, Paul affirms: "the foundation of God standeth sure" (ho mentoi stereos themelios tou theou hestēken, ὁ μέντοι στερεὸς θεμέλιος τοῦ θεοῦ ἔστηκεν). Themelios (θεμέλιος) means foundation—the solid base on which a building rests. God's elect people are His firm foundation that cannot be shaken by heresy. Perfect tense hestēken (ἔστηκεν) indicates standing firm with continuing results.

This foundation has "this seal" (echōn tēn sphragida tautēn, ἔχων τὴν σφραγίδα ταύτην). Sphragis (σφραγίς) means seal—mark of ownership, authenticity, security. Ancient seals protected documents and goods from tampering, identified owners, authenticated contents. Two inscriptions identify God's people. First: **"The Lord knoweth them that are his"** (egnō kyrios tous ontas autou, ἔγνω κύριος τοὺς ὄντας αὐτοῦ)—alludes to Numbers 16:5. God knows His elect intimately; they cannot be lost despite false teaching.

Second: **"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity"** (apostētō apo adikias pas ho onomazōn to onoma kyriou, ἀποστήτω ἀπὸ ἀδικίας πᾶς ὁ ὀνομάζων τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου). Claiming Christ's name requires moral separation from sin. These two seals balance divine sovereignty (God knows His

own) with human responsibility (depart from evil). True believers persevere in holiness.

Historical Context

Seals were ubiquitous in ancient world—signet rings, wax seals, clay bullae marked ownership and authenticity. Royal seals authenticated documents; temple seals verified sacrifices; personal seals secured letters. Breaking another's seal was serious offense. Paul's metaphor assures believers: God has sealed His people; they cannot be stolen or lost. The first seal inscription echoes Korah's rebellion (Numbers 16), when God demonstrated He knew His chosen servants by destroying rebels. The second seal emphasizes that profession must accompany godly living—genuine faith produces obedience.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does knowing that God knows His own—that you cannot be lost if truly His—provide assurance when facing doubt or difficulty?
2. In what specific areas of life do you need to 'depart from iniquity' to authenticate your profession of Christ's name?
3. How can you balance confidence in God's sovereign preservation of His elect with urgent pursuit of personal holiness?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	μέντοι	στερεὸς	θεμέλιος	τοῦ	θεοῦ	ἔστηκεν	ἔχων
G3588	G3305	sure G4731	the foundation G2310	G3588	of God G2316	standeth G2476	having G2192
τὴν	σφραγίδα	ταύτην·	Ἔγνω	κύριος	τοὺς	ὄντας	
G3588	seal G4973	G3778	knoweth G1097	The Lord G2962	G3588	them that are G5607	
αὐτοῦ	καί	Ἀποστήτω	ἀπὸ	ἀδικίας	πᾶς	ὁ	ὀνομάζων
G846	And G2532	Let G868	from G575	iniquity G93	every one G3956	G3588	that nameth G3687
τὸ	ὄνομα	Χριστοῦ.					
G3588	the name G3686	of Christ G5547					

Additional Cross-References

John 10:14 (Parallel theme): I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

1 Corinthians 8:3 (References God): But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

Nahum 1:7 (References Lord): The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

Numbers 16:5 (References Lord): And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will shew who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him.

Luke 13:27 (Sin): But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

Galatians 4:9 (References God): But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Revelation 3:8 (Parallel theme): I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Revelation 22:4 (Parallel theme): And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

Ephesians 4:30 (References God): And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Isaiah 28:16 (References God): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

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