

## FAITHFULNESS

### “Thoughts about staying faithful to God...”

**TEXT: Rev 2:10-11** *“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”*

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. Faithfulness – spouse, employee, dog, child, Christian
2. Dependability, loyalty, and stability particularly as it describes **God** in His relationship to human believers.
3. The faithfulness of God and His Word is a constant theme in the Bible. It is particularly prominent in Ps 89 and 119.
4. It is not surprising that this aspect of God's nature should also belong to **Jesus**, who would be clothed with faithfulness (Isa 11:5) and who is described as the Faithful one (Rev 19:11), the "faithful witness" (Rev 1:5; 3:14), and the "faithful High Priest" (Heb 2:17; 3:2).
5. God's faithfulness is the source of the Christian's deliverance from temptation (1 Cor 10:13); assurance of salvation (Heb 10:23); and forgiveness of sins (1 John 1:9). He is faithful to His children because He is first of all faithful to Himself (2 Tim 2:13).
6. God's faithfulness should be so deeply reflected in the lives of His people (Gal 5:22) that they can be called simply "the faithful" (Ps 31:23). The Bible speaks of the faithfulness of Paul (1 Cor 7:25), Abraham (Neh 9:8), and Moses (Heb 3:5).
7. Faithfulness is also expected in Christian believers.
8. Daniel and other persons in the Bible exercised their faithfulness toward God (Dan 6:4; 2 Tim 2:2).

**I. FAITHFULNESS WHEN WE SUFFER:** Revelation 2:10a *“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.”*

- A. Suffering has been part of life in general since the fall in the garden (Genesis 3).
- B. Suffering has long been the lot in life of those who are faithful to God (Hebrews 11:35-38)
- C. 1 Pet. 2:19-24
- D. No higher praise can be given to any life than to say it has been faithful.
  - 1) No one could ask for a nobler epitaph than the simple words, *“He was faithful.”*
  - 2) This was the commendation given in the great account of the one who made the most of his talents: *“You have been faithful”* (Matt.25:20-23).
- G. Faithfulness should therefore be the aim in all our living.
  - 1) It is not so much, the great, spectacular things that God expects or requires of us:
  - 2) What He does require is faithfulness. He gives us certain talents, assigns to us certain duties, then, asks us to be faithful.

**II. FAITHFULNESS TO RESIST THE DEVIL:** *“Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison”*

- A. James 4:7-10
- B. Jesus resisted the devil by simply quoting God’s word (Matthew 4:4-11) “It is written” (again).

**III. FAITHFULNESS WHEN IN THE FACE OF TESTS AND TRUBULATIONS:** *“that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation”*

- A. *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the **testing of your faith produces patience**. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* (James 1:2-4)
1. Some people measure their lives by the time between crisis.
  2. We must depend upon faith and resilience to face the crisis which lies ahead.
  3. The loss of job, home, marriage all of these are difficult mountains to climb.
  4. Remembering that God is still in control helps.
  5. The Apostle tells us that God comforts us in all of our distress.
    - a) 2 Cor. 1:3-7 (Read)

b) 2 Corinthians 11:22-33 (Read)

6. Paul learned to rely on God when there were others and when there was no one else upon whom to rely.
7. Some of you have gone through these very things.
8. Remaining faithful to God and His will is the only sensible approach in overcoming trials in life.
9. Faith is essential in the face of spiritual and physical problems.
10. Hebrews chapter 11 is a person by person account of the very things we have talked about.
11. In addition to this we have our own stories right here in this congregation of those who have and who continue to prove that God will never leave us or forsake us.

#### **IV. FAITHFULNESS (EVEN IN THE FACE OF DEATH) RESULTS IN CROWN OF LIFE:**

- A. Not a king's crown but the crown of a victor!
- B. 2Timothy 4:6-8 *"Keeping the faith" results in receiving the "crown of righteousness"*
- C. Crown – *"stephanos" (from stepho, "to encircle"), denotes (a) "the victor's crown," the symbol of triumph in the games or some such contest; a reward or prize; (b) "a token of public honor" for distinguished service, military prowess, It was woven as a garland of oak, ivy, parsley, myrtle, or olive, or in imitation of these in gold. In some passages the reference to the games is clear,*
- D. 1 Corinthians 9:25 *"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown."*

#### **V. FAITHFULNESS ASSURES THAT WE WILL NOT BE HARMED BY THE "SECOND DEATH"**

*He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."*

- A. Rev 20:6 *Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him....*
- B. Rev 20:14-15 *Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*
- C. Rev 21:8 *"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

#### **CONCLUSION:**

1. There are times when our faith is weak and weakness leads us to question whether or not God is really concerned about us.
2. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble (Psalms 46:11)*
3. *Trust in Him at all times you people, pour out your heart before Him, God is a refuge for us. (Psalms 62:8).*
4. If we are simply faithful, we shall please God.