

Faithfulness

March 23, 2025

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled Faithfulness. Thank you to Earl, Jan, Ed, Mike, Dianne, and Don for being part of the service. The scripture reading is Matthew 25, 14 to 21.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 25, 14 to 21.

"Again it will be like a man going on a journey who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. Master, he said, "You entrusted me with five bags of gold. See I have gained five more." His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness."

Sermon

Faithfulness

I want to spend a little bit of time today talking about faithfulness. John Drescher wrote that faithfulness means love's loyalty. And faithfulness speaks of endurance, of firmness of purpose. It is the love which endures all things. Even though difficulties and dangers are around, and differences. But faithfulness is not the shrugging of the shoulder or a passive posture, nor is it a grin and bear it. It results from a love which keeps moving forward. A love that's victorious. And when evil is present, faithfulness can overcome.

Moffat translates faithfulness as fidelity, a careful regard for the discharge of obligations. The faithful person is dependable. We can put our faith in his or her hands. Wonderful lady, Evelyn Underhill said these words, "Faithfulness is the steady acceptance "of the common duty. "Stay strong in our faith." And then centuries ago, St. Augustine wrote, "Faith is to believe what we do not see "and the reward of this faith is to see what we believe. "We believe that one day we will stand in front of Jesus, "see him face to face."

So in Romans, in chapter three, it says, "No one can ever be made right in God's sight "by doing what the law commands. "For the more we know about God's laws, "the clearer it becomes that we're not obeying them. "We try, but we fail. "But now God has shown us a different way. "Not by being good enough, "and by trying to keep his laws, but a new way. "For God sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins "and to end all anger from our sins. "Then what can we boast about? "Salvation? "What can we do?" The answer really is nothing. Our salvation shows us that Jew and Gentile are treated equally in faith. It is not what we do, rather it's what he, Jesus, continually does for us and in us. He promises us that he will never leave us or never forsake us. And if Jesus promises it, that promise is true.

James Miller said this, "Too many people are not faithful in the little things. "They're not to be absolutely depended upon. "They do not always keep their promises. "Some break engagements, some fail to pay their debts, "some are neglectful and careless. "One who can be positively depended upon, "who is faithful even in the least things, "as well as the greatest, whose life and character are true. "Through and through, they shine a light in this world "which honors Jesus and blesses them."

Way, way back in 1861, John Oxenham wrote, "Is your place a small place? "Tend it with care. "God set you there. "Is your place a large place? "Guard it with care. "He set you there. "Whatever your place, it is not yours alone, "but his because he is a good person. "He set you there."

And Frank wrote, "Faith to survive." She said, "In the evening when I lie in bed "and end my prayers with the words, "I thank you God for all that is good "and dear and beautiful. "I'm filled with joy. "Then I think about all that is good "and dear and beautiful, and again, filled with joy. "I think about good, about hiding "and coming forth even after the flu. "And when peace comes, my advice is to go outside "into the fields. "Yes, the fields, enjoy nature. "Look up and see what you haven't seen "because of busyness of life. "Think of all the beauty that is still left "in and around you. "Look up, rejoice, be happy. "I have found there is always some beauty left, "even in dark days. "And whoever is happy will make others happy too. "The one who has courage, faith remains. "It never goes away."

So back in 1870, a gentleman by the name of Andrew Giles wrote these words. "Last night, my little boy confessed to me "some childish wrong, "and kneeling at my knee, he prayed with tears. "Dear God, make me a man like daddy, wise and strong. "I know you can. "Then while he slept, I knelt beside his bed. "Confessed my sins and prayed with low bowed head. "Oh God, make me a child like my child. "Like my child here, pure, guileless, "trusting thee with sincere faith.

"Do you remember the wonderful hymn, "my faith looks up to thee. "Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine. "Now hear me while I pray. "Take all my guilt away. "Oh let me from this day be holy thy. "May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, "my zeal inspire. "As thou hast died for me, "oh may my love to thee, pure, warm, "and changeless be a living fire." Faithfulness is just not easy, but God has faith in us. And so we share faith to him and others. While life's dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide. Bid darkness turn today, wipe sorrows tears away, nor let me ever stray from thee aside. When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold sullen stream shall o'er me roll, bless Savior then in love, fear and trust remove, oh bear me safe above a ransomed soul.

So John Eglin had never preached a sermon in his life. It wasn't that he didn't want to, but he just never needed to. But one morning the snow left his town of Colchester, England buried in white snow. And when he awoke on that January Sunday in 1850, he thought, "I'll stay home." But then he thought, "Who would go to church "in such weather I should just stay home?" However, it gnawed at him. He considered, after all he was a deacon in the church, and if the deacons didn't go, then who's gonna go? But 13 people did show up. But who's gonna preach? We don't know anyone else to preach. But Eglin was the only one, and his sermon lasted 10 minutes. Great preacher. It drifted, it wandered all over the place. It didn't make any point. But at the end, an uncharacteristic courage settled upon him. He looked at the boy and challenged the young man with these words, "Young man, look to Jesus always." And then he paused. And then again he said, "Look, look, look to him." The darkness rolled away, and the young man became one of the greatest preachers of all time, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, England's Prince of Preachers.

In the book of Lamentations, which is not an easy book to read, it says this, "Yet this I call to mind, and therefore, I have hope. Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassion's never fail. They are new every morning." You can hear yourself singing the song, can't you? "Great is thy faithfulness. I say to myself, the Lord is my portion. Therefore, I will wait for him. The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, and the one who seeks him his good, quietly waiting for the salvation of the Lord."

So lastly, some of you remember the wonderful Norman Vincent Peale. He spoke of faith with these words. "We have the God-given ability to believe. We have the God-given ability to have faith in God, in ourselves, and in our fellow man. Jesus has told us, according to your faith, be it unto you. We have only to put our problems before the Lord. To believe with the simple faith of a little child, we are promised the Lord's guidance in help." I don't know about you, but I was touched today when the little children came up and shared, probably with some fright, but shared the words of Jesus. How precious it is for us to hear them and sing them songs that they sing, and the

promise, "I'll never leave you, and I'll never forsake you." The childish faith is beautiful. And the minute we believe the prayers are being answered, we're so grateful. And in time, that faith will grow and easily be seen.

Lastly, the wonderful Mother Teresa said, "God has not called me to be successful." He's called me and all of us to be faithful. And that is the call for all of us. Thank you so much for being with us today and sharing these thoughts. It's precious when we can come together and just remind ourselves of the peace that God gives us. Not just that, but love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and gentleness and self-control. That all of these things, these are gifts given us. And then with those gifts, we share those gifts with others. Thank you.

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