

Faithfulness

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[0 : 00] Faithfulness, faithfulness.

Proverbs 20 verse 6 says, 'Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find.' Faithfulness, it's uncommon, a faithful man who can find.

It's saying here there's a lot of people who brag on about themselves and yet lack that quality of faithfulness. They brag on about this or brag on about that.

It's all about me, me, me and what I've done. But a faithful man who can find. It's a rare quality. Where are the faithful men and the faithful women? They are scarce. They're few and far between. And they always have been. Yet God's word urges us to this quality.

[1 : 08] This precious quality for our lives. Faithfulness. Faithfulness is one of the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit.

Paul addresses his letters to the faithful. He says in Ephesians 1 verse 1. Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. To the saints which are at Ephesus.

And to the faithful in Christ Jesus. To the faithful in Christ Jesus. It was a common theme. It marked God's people. Right through the pages of Scripture we see this precious quality.

And Paul writes to the faithful in Christ Jesus. That in Colossians as well. To the saints and the faithful brethren in Christ.

Which are at Colossae. Christians are or they should be faithful in Christ. That's who this is addressed to. The faithful in Christ.

[2 : 05] The faithful brethren in Christ. Let's look at faithfulness. A definition now. Faithfulness. It means being steadfast. It means being true.

Loyal. Affection. In allegiance. To a cause or to a person. Faithfulness. It means being constant. Loyal. Persistent.

These are the qualities of life. That we should have as believers. As the faithful in Christ Jesus. Stephen was such a one.

Stephen was faithful. He was full of faith it says. In Acts 6 verse 5. As they were looking for those that could serve. Stephen stood out.

As one such as that. And they chose Stephen. A man full of faith. And of the Holy Ghost. He was full of faith. He was faithful.

[3 : 03] Filled with faith. Faithfulness. It means being trusting. Trustworthy. There's a trustworthiness. That quality of being steadfast. And trustworthy. Of being worthy of trust.

Now if you're looking for someone. To do a job for you. You want to find such a person. Don't you? If you're looking for an employee.

If you're looking for someone. Who's going to help you do something. Even if you're calling on a plumber. Or something. To fix something at home. Or whatever it be. You want someone you can count on. To deliver the goods.

And to do a good job. Quality job. The right job. First time. A quality job. Can you be trusted?

Can you be relied on? Believer. It's a value that's lacking in our world. Isn't it? You call on people.

[4 : 03] You've had experiences like that. Where people. Just don't deliver. What you need them to. People don't seem to care too much.

About being faithful. Or loyal. These days. In churches particularly. See people come and go. Hop, skip and jump. Butterflies. Breeze in and breeze out.

It was kind of funny. Not that long ago. Where I was talking to someone. They were talking about someone else. And they said. Oh. They come to church for you.

I said. Oh. Do they? When was the last time I saw them? Or. You know. When. People. Phone me up and say. They want a reference. Who are you?

People who. Come to this church. Maybe once. Every six weeks. Or worse. And they phone me.

Asking for a reference. What do I say? What do I say? When the employer phones me. What is this

person like?

[5 : 01] I don't know. You know. Faithfulness. Being trustworthy. Being someone you can be reliable. You know.

I'm not meant to bag people here. Who might. For excuses. Or reasons beyond their control. They cannot be faithful. Because. Work. Whatever it be.

We've all got pressures. I've got pressures. More pressures lately. Trustworthy. We need to be trustworthy. Don't we? We need to be such a one who's reliable. Who can be trusted.

And relied upon. It's lacking in this world. It's lacking in the world. You can't trust the politicians. Let's face it. People don't seem to put much value in being faithful.

To a company. Or to an individual. You see. People. They just breeze along. And flit here and there. Unfaithfulness is a big problem today. Isn't it? Unfaithfulness in our society.

[5 : 59] Look at the damage. Look at the damage. That unfaithfulness causes. In our citizenship. In our nation. We see rising crime. And law breaking.

The breakdown of law and order. I mean. We've got some experts here today. Who can probably look back and think. Is it getting worse? Is it getting worse?

Yes it is. We've got that from an authority here this morning. The breakdown of law and order. That we love our country. Our nation. Our national freedoms. And yet.

Is there a faithfulness? It's lacking isn't it? Marriages. There's no stickability. No commitment there anymore. And you might be an injured party.

Look. We know it happens. It's sad. Very sad. But don't be one of the injurers. Alright. Don't be one of those. That cause a marriage to fail.

[6 : 58] A lack of commitment. In churches. There's this unfaithfulness today. Where many false cults are cropping up. And people are getting away from the word of God.

You know. I've got to constantly keep an eye on that library there. Yeah. Because there's stuff that comes and sits in our bookshelf. And then people think. Oh is that what you believe? No. Thank God some people actually give me the material.

And I kind of can have a look at it first. You know. Just as a courtesy. But some people meaning well. They get these things. Whether it be Worldwide Church of God. Or whatever it be. Some nice glossy magazine.

Beyond Tomorrow. Whatever they call it. It's nice readable stuff. It's fancy. It's glossy. It's colourful. It's colourful. And it's 99% good. But it's 1% lies and error.

So you've got to be careful about such things. About what you take in. About what you read. What you watch. And what you circulate. Let's be discerning people. That's right. We need to be faithful.

[7 : 57] Faithful to what's right. And so let's ask some questions today. About faithfulness. About faithfulness. Firstly. Why? Why should we bother? Why bother being faithful?

Why not just be like the next guy? Why should we be faithful? Is it worth it? Why should we be faithful? We should be faithful. Why? Because faithfulness is commended.

It's commended in the word of God. As our Lord recognised such. In Matthew 25.21. He tells an account of faithful servants and of unfaithful.

And it says of this one. His Lord said unto him. Well done. Thou good and faithful servant. He'd done the right thing. He'd been tried and proven. And found faithful. Thou hast been faithful over a few things.

I will make thee riddle over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. The context there is a faithful servant getting rewarded for his work.

[8 : 59] He was recognised. He was commended. And the context here is that call to accountability. I need to be accountable to you. You to me. To each other.

There's an accountability. That's why there's a church. It's God's plan. God's plan is a church. Not some parachurch. But church. A church. A local church. That is God's plan.

And we're accountable to one another. And unto God. As a local church. And some servants are given charge of different responsibilities in this context here. And they're all called to give an account of their stewardship.

Of what they have done. Think of what God has entrusted to you. We've all entrusted with different things. Different gifts. Different callings. Different responsibilities.

Different charges that were given by God. And we're all to give account of those things before him one day. About what we have done. So we should be faithful.

[9 : 56] Why? Because faithfulness is commended. Our Lord recognized this one. He said good faithful. Secondly. It's something recognized by our Lord.

As it is something also rewarded. It's recognized. And it's rewarded. In Proverbs 28.20. It says. A faithful man shall abound with many blessings.

With blessings. A faithful man shall abound with blessings. So it's to be rewarded. Faithfulness is rewarded by God. Look at some of the blessings of faithfulness.

A faithful father will be blessed. A faithful mother will be blessed. A faithful child will be blessed. There are many blessings. Many rewards for the faithful. Just to know that we are pleasing our God. That's a blessing isn't it? To know one day. Yeah one day we'll hear that.

[10 : 55] Well done. Wow. Those sweet words. Those precious words will fall from our Lord's lips. Just to know that. We may not feel like it just now.

But just to know. He will recognize it. He will reward. To know we have pleased our Lord and Master. That is a blessing enough of its own. To just have the privilege of serving Him.

You know. Our brother Ralph was attacked yesterday. When he was just giving out some leaflets. Which naturally was for a gospel cause of sorts.

And he was spat on by someone. But friends there's a reward. It says leap for joy. Hallelujah. When someone does that to you. There's a reward there. There's a blessing.

There's a satisfaction. That we're doing something of eternal value. And the expectation that we have. Of those eternal rewards. They just offset all of that. You might be such that really.

[11 : 56] Does it tough as a Christian. Your whole family might turn against you. You might. You might face death. Be faithful. Be faithful. There's many rewards.

Many blessings. Eternal rewards we face. So God highly values faithfulness. He commends it. And he rewards it. He recognises it.

God highly values it. He counts it as important. Sometimes faithfulness has to be proven through tests. You know. It's like it's been said. Faith is really only proven.

When it's proven. When it goes through the fire. And perhaps that testing. That trial that you're going through. Is all part of that. Strengthening of your faith.

And of that refining of your faith. Men and women of God. Have shown faithfulness through the scriptures. Despite hardship and difficulties. Men and women. Men like Moses.

[12 : 54] And Daniel. They were both commended for their faithfulness. God's people write through the Bible. Faithfulness. Faithfulness. Faithfulness. They were prepared to stand up.

And to be counted against all the odds. No matter what the cost. And to persevere. To be counted. To be strong. A faithful man shall abound. With blessings.

Faithful man. Faithful woman here today. God says you shall abound with blessings. God promises to bless. As we seek.

To live our lives for him. Consider faithful Daniel. As one example of faithfulness. Daniel's enemies. They were. They were really. Pushing hard.

All the time. Weren't they? Through the book of Daniel. You see. His enemies. Trying to find some fault with him. But he was faithful. Faithful. In everything.

[13 : 51] That he did. He was faithful to his work. As the third ruler. In the kingdom. Of Babylon. Serving the king. Faithfully. Daniel was faithful in prayer.

He didn't let up. He prayed three times a day. Day. After day. After day. Daniel was faithful. To the Lord.

He did not defile himself. With the king's meat. And drink. He was faithful. Even in the lion's den. Daniel was faithful. And because Daniel was faithful.

God was faithful to him. And delivered him. Perhaps there's times you feeling like. Feels like I'm in the den of lions right now. Be faithful.

Be faithful brother. Don't quit. Don't stop praying. Don't give up. Be faithful to the Lord. And he will be faithful to you.

[14 : 47] Amen. Even when you're not faithful. He's faithful to you. Amen. Even when we don't deserve his faith. His faithfulness. He is faithful. But let's not let him down.

Let's be faithful. Let's be like Daniel. Even his enemies. They couldn't find any fault with him. Other than he prayed. Which was against the law. There's some things that might be against the law one day in Australia.

Who cares about that? If that is what happens. Ultimately. Well the Lord would have to face that. Maybe. Maybe we will. So faithfulness is commended.

Isn't it? By our Lord. And it's recognised. It's rewarded. Faithfulness is commended. Well done thou good and faithful servant. And also faithfulness is commanded.

By our Lord. In John 20, 27. The context here is of Thomas. Who had missed the first occasion. Where our Lord came to the disciples. And he'd been doubting about it all.

[15 : 50] And then our Lord appears again with Thomas present. And he says to Thomas. Reach here thy finger. And behold my hands. And reach here thy hand. And thrust it into my side.

And be not faithless. But believing. Be not faithless. But believing. And this word believing. Is elsewhere translated faithful. So in other words. Don't be faithless. Be faithful. Thomas lacked faith. And Christ challenged him.

He says don't be faithless. Be faithful. Be believing. Believe me. Faithless. And so. Faith. It's. You know. The common.

Term. The phrase. That people use. To. F-A-I-T-H. Is. Forsaking. All. I. Trust. Him. F-A-I-T-H.

[16 : 47] Forsaking. All. I. Trust. Him. That's faith. Trust him. No matter what. Forsaking all. Else. Faithfulness. And.

Believer. In God. Today. Believer. God calls you to faithfulness. To Christ. To character. To integrity. To be trusted. To be trustworthy. Called to be trustworthy.

To be reliable. Can we. Be. Counted on. There's no place for carelessness people. You know. We heard earlier. Time is short. The devil's time is short. Our time is short. Work while it is day. The night cometh.

When no man can work. No man can. That's right. Come here. You know. Think of how much time we have got. We don't know.

[17 : 48] We honestly don't know. No. We don't know. And chances are. Week after week. You're going to be less able. Than you are even now. Young people.

Being encouraged especially. But you that are older people. Such as me. Keep on keeping on. Amen. Faithfully. Time is short.

Make the most of it. Be counted. Be one that can be counted on. Not careless. But one that can be counted on. Such that. When the. You want the pastor. To give a reference for you.

He's going to say. Wow. Yeah. You should know about this one. She. He. Is so good. Yeah. Amen. She. He.

Can be counted on. Amen. She. He. Is rock solid. She. He. Will lay down. His or her life for you. Trustworthy.

[18 : 43] Such a one. A Christian citizen. Can be counted on. To be faithful. Such that their whole lifestyle. Is saturated. With faithfulness. Now. We all have those slack days.

Believe me. I can get slack. But. God wants us to. Dig in. Doesn't he? Dig deep. And. Do more. Try harder.

Faithfulness. It takes courage. It means to go against the flow. It means to go against the flesh. That's faithfulness. Isn't it? Go against the flow. Even when you don't feel like it.

Who cares whether you feel like it or not. To not follow the crowd. To swim against the tide. That's faithfulness. Faithfulness. Faithfulness. Maybe we will fail.

But at least we'll have done our level best. And we'll have enjoyed every minute of it. Because we know. It will be recognised. And it will be rewarded.

[19 : 39] Like someone famous said this. It is better to be faithful than famous. This was the famous Theodore Roosevelt said this. Better to be faithful than famous.

So there's blessings in that. Brother, sister. The faithful man shall abound with blessings. So what we have seen firstly is why?

Why should we be faithful? Who cares? Let's just be like the rest of them. Why should we? Because it is recognised. He's going to say well done.

That's going to be worth it all isn't it? Well done. Thou good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of thy Lord. Because it is recognised and it is rewarded.

Enter in. Not that we work for our salvation. But our salvation works for us. And then our salvation works. Because it's real. And so it is commended.

[20 : 35] It's commended. And secondly, where? Where should we be faithful? Send why? It's going to be recognised, rewarded. Where should we be faithful? We should be faithful in worship.

In worship. Right here, right now. Acts 2.42. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread and of prayers.

They continued steadfastly. They were diligent. They were devoted. They continued. It wasn't hit and miss. It wasn't when it suits me.

When I can fit it in. Kind of Christianity. They continued steadfastly. Let's be encouraged to them. Amen. Be encouraged to them.

And there was a preacher one time. He was kind of covering for the regular pastor. He was away for a time. And he was covering week after week for a season. And coming early for Sunday morning.

[21 : 31] Leaving after the night service. And he came one day early and was sat in a local cafe. And opened his Bible. And someone noticed him there. As he was reading his Bible diligently.

And he came over to him and he said, Are you a preacher or something? And the man replied, Yes, I preach at the local Baptist church here in town. And the other man got excited and said, Hey, I'm a member of that church.

And now this church was a small church. And this visiting preacher, he knew everybody virtually. He knew all the regulars. He knew who was there. He got familiar with their faces.

And he said, I've been preaching there for about three months. And I've never seen you there. And the man looked at the preacher and said, I said I was a member of that church. I never said that I was fanatical about it.

You know, people of God. We need some men and women. Faithful, don't we? Amen. That's what we need. Where should we be faithful? In worship.

[22 : 33] In worship. And also in work. Paul says, 1 Corinthians 15, 58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

For as much as you know that, your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Faithful in worship. Faithful in work. Now work is a dirty word for some people.

Work. But, you know, there's a saying that it's better to wear out than rust out. Now, of course, you can take that to extremes and go to an early grave prematurely. But it is better to wear out than to rust out, isn't it?

Yeah. Better to be about the work of the Lord than not about it. What a wonderful privilege you have. As a saint. As a child of God.

To be a son, a daughter of the living God. To be privileged to serve Him. To know Him. To be His servant. That's a privilege. You know, imagine if someone knocked on your door and said, the Prime Minister or the President of whatever country is inviting you to come and serve on his or her staff.

[23 : 44] Wow. Wouldn't you say, yes, sir! I'd love to go and serve Him in a place such as that with someone so important as that. But you have a much higher calling. Amen.

A much higher, higher calling. Amen. Than to even be the President or the Prime Minister or you name it, or the King or Queen, that you are a servant of this one, the living God.

What a wonderful privilege. And so working for God is not something irksome or tiresome or out of obligation or duty per se, but we serve Him out of love from our hearts.

So we have seen why. Why should we be faithful? Because it is recognised and it is rewarded by our Lord and Master. And it is commended and it is commanded of us.

Secondly, we have seen where. Where should we be faithful? In worship and in work. Thirdly, how. How should we be faithful? How should we be faithful?

[24 : 42] In the workplace, we can show our faithfulness in being a model employee. So that when it comes to that kind of performance review time, you should stand head and shoulders above the rest of the pack.

Because you're a Christian. Amen. Because you serve and work as unto Christ, your Lord and Master. That's right. Not to the boss. But to Christ.

Ephesians 6, it has the context here of servants and masters. And Paul says, servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling and singleness of your heart as unto Christ.

Not with eye service. In other words, not just when they're watching you. Oh, the boss isn't around. Now I'm going to put my feet up and have a bit of a slack time.

Or the boss isn't watching. Now I'm going to go and waste some of his time. Or her time. Not with eye service, as men please us, as if it's just about pleasing people or trying to avoid displeasing them.

[25 : 53] But as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will, doing service as to the Lord and not to men.

So serve the Lord with faithfulness in your workplace. Be that model employee so that you set the example for everybody else. It should be a feature of your life in the workplace and in the home place.

In the home. Our faithfulness to God should be 24-7. It should be in the family where we meet all those day-by-day reality challenges of life.

We live in an age of sexual promiscuity. It's loose. It's immoral. There's no consideration for purity before marriage in this world.

The very heart of the family is under attack. And that mutually exclusive one flesh relationship, one man, one woman for life. It's being redefined now.

[26 : 57] Just redefine it to see yourself. You know, that's what the politicians want. That's what the world, that's what the nation wants.

That's why the politicians are saying such things. Very sad. Very sad. They're redefining what is a family. Right. To please the radicals. And so rampant divorce now is that children have no confidence that their home will hold together.

Yeah. Long enough for them to grow up. It strikes personally deep. That's right. I grieve for you that are affected because I'm affected. The tragedy of divorce.

Yeah. So sad. The children's rights movement, the social parenting movement are advocating that children should be raised by the state.

The government knows better than you, mum. The government knows better than you, dad. We're going to put them in the childcare centres and they're going to get indoctrinated.

[28 : 01] Amen. Yes. From age zero to 12 to whatever university finishes at. Yeah. And they're going to be teaching your children Yeah.

That's right. what to believe. It's a big problem. That's right. Big problem. It's like a friend of mine has said you know we're sending our children to the Amorites to train them aren't we?

Yeah. That's what's going on. You know God help help you parents young parents with children today God help you and make wise choices we've got to counteract these things.

Now I know homeschooling is not for everyone you can't always achieve that but we should be homeschooling if they go to a school still homeschool them when they get home. To undo all the damage that's done in the school.

Friends be faithful people of God be faithful we see our nation is in big trouble abortion suicide euthanasia the media the education system everything's against us the welfare state it's all against the judicial family and there's this frightening array of all these contrary forces attacking us and our families today and so Christians men and women of God faithfulness is so needful now in our home life in the workplace and in the home place and I think of a man I once knew people may know him or not Lloyd Hopkins he was a man he was married to a woman that had some kind of accident or injury and she became profoundly disabled he stuck by her he stuck by her he took his vow seriously wasn't convenient he was faithful he was faithful until she passed away he showed commitment that's faithfulness it takes effort doesn't it it takes effort you know you might marry someone and then something happens you know stick with your wife your husband your spouse faithfulness it's called for in the home place it takes effort it takes work faithfulness is called for in the workplace in the home place and in the ministry faithfulness in serving God what are your gifts and callings some of you have got abilities don't let them sit on the shelf gathering dust please don't do that we're all called to serve to be servants of the living God to serve our King in 1 Corinthians 4 2 it says moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful we've all got a stewardship we've all got a responsibility we've all got charge of things you've got gifts that God has given you you are gifted every Christian is gifted

[30 : 59] Paul says it's required it's required of us to be faithful and I know there's some serving more than people realise I get some emails from certain people in this church saying all the things they've been doing for the Lord the last week I think how did she fit that in you know how on earth did she fit that in all of these people she'd been following up making phone calls making visits helping in practical ways showing the love of Christ using her gifts gifts you can do that we all can

we all can do something and it is required that we be found faithful with our stewardship we're all saved to serve we're not saved to sit and do nothing we're saved to serve every Christian and so maybe you've got gifts that you can say yeah I could dust that off and use that

I could dust that off and say preacher I'm willing to volunteer I'm ready and willing I'm willing and able to volunteer to use what God has given me and entrusted with me for his glory and all to his glory and praise a servant is required to show that stewardship that faithfulness and so the master will come one day and he'll ask us to give an account of what we've had what we've done with what we had whether it be our time our talent our treasure the truth faithfulness it's a commitment and it's called for it's a lifestyle are we reliable can we be counted on when the chips are down when when it's tough through thick and thin can we be counted on you know I've said it before that familiar saying only one life it will soon be passed only what's done for Christ will last and so it would be shown to waste a life wouldn't it and Hebrews 11 tells us such that lived their life for God's glory

Hebrews 11 you can read there the many accounts of some they were imprisoned afflicted tormented tortured yet faithful yet faithful and it says of them the world was not worthy of them you know they didn't live the high life tortured tormented afflicted but they were faithful you know there's worldly examples we could give of faithfulness there's you know you hear these stories there's one story about a particular dog that was faithful to his master the master became sick and died and the dog refused to leave the gravesite of the owner and it only left the gravesite for food or drink and then returned to lay beside the master's grave it's amazing isn't it that a dog kind of puts us to shame sometimes and after 12 years the dog died 12 years the dog died that's faithfulness isn't it that's faithfulness what about us will we be faithful this is not to condemn but to exhort to encourage to to stir you to spur you to provoke you unto love and to good works

God wants faithful men and women with that faithfulness to serve him in 2 Timothy 2 verse 2 it says Paul writes such that things that you've heard from me the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also you know learn from others there's some good mentors here well we've got Pastor Adam pick his brains he's got lots of them we need more for people to be like Adam we need a few more Adams we've got to clone him before he goes amen learn from Adam learn from those that are senior in the faith learn from those that are more mature in their faith learn from them and follow them follow their example ask them some questions be stirred and those that are such commit to faithful men find some others to teach others also serve where you are where you can as best as you can to be faithful in the small things now there's a saying someone said this don't expect God to use you as a lighthouse tomorrow when he can't even use you as a candle today amen be faithful in what you've got you know you might aspire to some things you might aspire to ministries later on when you've been trained when you're maybe 10 years older you might have this idea you're suddenly going to be something more don't look to that look to now be now be now what you can be be now what you can be for God so let me issue a challenge here now a call to faithfulness to every child of God to be about this decision it's a conscious choice to be faithful it's not when you suddenly get some light beam from heaven and you suddenly get some Damascus Road experience and everything's going to and you suddenly get warm and fuzzy and tingly and buzzy and get some goose bump experience to make you faithful it's a conscious choice it's a decision of your will it's a decision it's a conscious choice what is stopping you that's the question to ask for yourself if you're not faithful and believer if you are faithful you think well sometimes I feel like being unfaithful well faithfulness and commitment is hard to find it takes a decision of your will it takes a decision a commitment before you before God it's easy to quit throw in the towel the easy thing to do isn't it when the going gets tough you know do we quit or do we get going keep going it's all too easy to quit what's it going to take to make you weakened what about those people in Hebrews 11 tortured tormented afflicted what's it going to take to stop you from serving God from loving God should be nothing should there nothing can tear us away from his love every day we're making choices about whether we give in to temptation or whether we resolve to serve God to follow him more strongly every day we're making decisions are we going to be faithless or faithful the choices we make shape us and show us for who we are and tell us about tell others about what matters for us how are we going to finish how are we going to finish how are we going to live our lives

[37 : 52] I'd urge you to finish well finish strong aim to finish well Paul was in prison in 2 Timothy when he wrote these words in verse 6 chapter 4 Paul says for I am now ready I'm ready I'm ready

to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand it's like the picture of a sacrifice he was on the altar I'm ready I'm ready for them to kill me and interestingly he says the time of my departure is at hand apparently this word departure it speaks of loosing anchor loosing anchor like a ship losing its moorings I'm ready to just untie that rope and go and sail away I'm ready for my departure he says and when it's all said and done may it be said of us that we are faithful he says he goes on verse 7

I fought a good fight I fought a good fight I finished my course I've done the marathon I have kept the faith henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day and not to me only but unto all them that love his appearing he says I'm ready ready for my departure I've fought the good fight I've run my course I'm ready for my crown we're called to strive meantime brother sister to be faithful be encouraged today take heart today make that conscious decision that conscious choice that conscious act of your will that in every aspect of your life you'll be faithful you'll strive to be and God will help you when you have those one step backwards he'll give you two steps forward again at the very heart of the Christian gospel someone said this is a cross the symbol of suffering and sacrifice of hurt and pain and humiliation and rejection and this quote goes on

I want no part of the Christian message which does not call me to involvement requires of me no sacrifice takes from me no comfort requires of me less than the best I have to give the duty of the Christian is to be faithful not popular or successful you know there was a story of some open air preaching team that was out on a cold night and they were singing some gospel songs down at the street corner and there was a miserable day miserable weather rotten and this man said God didn't need people to be out listening he only needed us to be faithful there's no one there it's like they were singing into the air just empty streets cold dark who would be out at such a time they were singing some gospel songs and a few weeks later there was a lady came up to this man who had been doing this faithfully and said that my father had been in a coma for six months lying there in his bed dreading the holidays they were since dad was not really with us it was a dreadful time for the family and then they heard the singing through the window they heard the singing and to our amazement the woman said my father sat up and said that's God's music and with that he died what an encouraging proof it was to that woman to that family that even six months sent a kind he said that's God's music and that was an encouragement to the family as much as he passed away that he was in tune with God and what a proof or what a witness of God's faithfulness amongst those ones faithfully laboring those people who faithfully give out tracts in this church they give out leaflets down at the train station down at the shopping center it's a hard slog you don't see much result but God knows doesn't he

God knows and so let's be encouraged today why why should we be faithful it's going to be rewarded and it will be recognised it's commended it's commanded where where should we be faithful in worship fellowship in work how should we be faithful in the workplace in the home place in the ministry faithfulness now there's a lot of talk about commitments you know when someone becomes a Christian they call it a commitment now a commitment can come easy sometimes a raised hand some words but commitments such as that sometimes they can be cheap let's make a real commitment that conscious choice that conscious decision to be faithful and to honour that commitment in every aspect in the practicalities of life sometimes people make commitments to do this or that to stop doing this to start doing that whatever it be you know new year's resolutions tend to peter out by

January the 2nd but the Lord says to us be not faithless but believing be faithful and so let's be true no matter what the cost friends today are we truly faithful the end days are coming the time is short the devil knows his time is short work while in his day the night cometh when no man can work one day you're not going to be able to work one day you're going to be less able than you are now let's face it we all are so let's use the ability the capacity we've got now are we truly faithful one day it will be the end of the age and in those end days revelation 17 it talks about how the lord jesus the lamb of god will have that last day's victory over planet earth victory over all god's enemies and in revelation 17 14 it says the lamb shall overcome them for he is lord of lords and king of kings and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful we are called to faithfulness and the faithfulness shouldn't stop we ought to be unmovable always abounding unstoppable listen to the words of our lord sir the church at smyrna revelation 2 to close verse 10 now this is not the prosperity gospel for you here today this is

[44 : 50] I'm not going to leave you warm and fuzzy and this is your best life now yeah you know revelation 2 verse 10 fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer some of you are going to suffer amen god says that right there behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison that you may be tried and ye shall have tribulation 10 days be thou faithful unto death amen and I will give thee a crown of life you know how long are we to be faithful until death if you are being faithful expect opposition christian man christian woman some of your family members who are not christians are going to be mocking you and laughing at you and cursing you the devil wants to stop you the devil wants to deter you to discourage you to make you throw in the towel to make you quit to stop you be faithful even unto death unto death that's the kind of faithfulness we need and so be encouraged encouraged brother sister you know you might say preacher look

I know I'm not faithful join the club we all are lacking in some aspects I'm sure I'm speaking for myself you might be more so than me but brother sister let's be exhorted and encouraged to press in to press on to find more faithfulness to our God and King he deserves it he rewards it he recognises it he commands it he commands it in the workplace in the home place in the ministry in every aspect in every dimension of our lives let's be such that such a faithful people that one day he will say well done to you now I've been preaching to Christians you might say I don't even know God I don't know that I'm a Christian I don't know for a certainty that when I cross this invisible barrier between life and death where my soul will end up you need to get that right you need to get that settled don't wait don't waste another day please speak to someone about your soul today say preacher

I want to know for sure that I'm saved I want to know for sure that I'm going to heaven you can know that by faith it says if you believe the record you have his promise everlasting life let us pray our Lord and God and Master we are your humble servants Lord unprofitable servants unworthy of your calling of your grace yet you've called you've chosen and help us Lord to be faithful help us to be such who are in that number when the saints come marching in that will be amongst those that are tortured tormented and afflicted and we'll be faithful still we'll be faithful unto death we'll be faithful if we have to be tried we'll be faithful if we have to go to prison we'll be faithful even unto death Lord help us to make that steadfast that rock solid determined commitment a real commitment a faithful commitment help us to be faithful men in our marriages as husbands faithful women as wives as mothers help us to be faithful in our service

Lord of you to be faithful to our church to be faithful to your word to be faithful to one another to be such as faithful as serve in whatever capacities we can help us to look for places to serve to look for opportunities to serve help us not to miss those chances that we have those privileges we have to do something help us Lord in our home place in our workplace to shine the light and to be such that are a witness that we do and help us Lord when we fail not to quit but to press deeper and harder and stronger and more faithful than we were before Lord give us grace we pray if there's any yet to trust you here this morning that they'll find that word from God that says Christ died for the ungodly and he that believer on him hath everlasting life we praise you in Jesus name amen