

Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 92 **The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit**

Faith #1

Raymond C. Cole
Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. As you will recall from the last tape on the "Christian Living" series, the subject—that is, the fruit of the Spirit—"goodness" was completed. So now we are beginning the next long series—because the subject of "faith" is going to be a very, very long series. If you will remember also, I said on that tape that I wanted to cover a specific aspect of the subject of faith from the New Testament initially. However, because it has been some time since I made that tape, I've done some more thinking about the overall subject and have decided that I must begin the series with the Hebrew portion of the Bible. Any of us who will stop and think for just a moment are aware of the fact that the New Testament is an amplification of the Old. In other words, it is the spiritual dimension. But any spiritual dimension is of little significance if we do not consider its foundational aspects, and the foundation of anything which is spiritual, of course, is that which is physical. With respect to human beings, you cannot have a spiritual dimension if you do not have a physical dimension. So it is essential for us to grasp and to understand that physical dimension which God gave initially. Anybody who believes that you can pursue a spiritual orientation in life devoid of any physical orientation manifests total ignorance of any subject which is under consideration because if we are talking about a spiritual dimension, it is obvious that it is in amplification of a physical dimension.

There are those who would attempt to lead us to believe that a spiritual dimension is the exact opposite of a physical dimension. No, it could be so, if we were truly born into the spiritual domain, but since human beings are physical—that is, they are tangible beings—then it obviously has a physical dimension. That is, it is translated into physical behavior—into physical, emotional stimuli or responses—because any of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit are distinctly related to emotions. That is, they are manifestations of that stimuli within our physical

makeup. And that stimuli is either physical in nature or it is spiritual in nature, but its manifestations invariably are physical. So we emotionally react either physically or spiritually, whichever the case may be, but the end result itself stems from either the motivation of the flesh—the carnal mind and the natural lusts and appetites—or it stems from the spiritual intent and purpose. It has to be one or the other; there is no other way.

So when we are talking about a spiritual manifestation we are not talking about something that is devoid of any physical orientation whatsoever. *That* is another clever machination of Satan, the Devil to get us away from obedience to those things which God gave initially. Because what we attempt to do—and all human beings do it at one time or another until they are called by God—is to portray the past as a physical dimension and the present as a spiritual dimension with the one in opposition to the other and therefore, if we are spiritual in nature it has nothing to do with the physical. What a tragedy. And by doing that, we relate the laws, the statutes and the judgements of God to this classified past and we neutralize or nullify their effectiveness, import and intent in our lives, thinking they are no longer valid and binding because we are now under a spiritual dimension and no longer under a physical one. And that's how people cleverly—in their own minds—get around obedience to these laws, statutes and judgements of God.

Alright, now we have to ask ourselves what in the world was physical obedience in the past, then? It was merely a technical carrying out—that is, a physical carrying out—of the actual duties of the laws, statutes and judgements as God imposed them upon a physical people. Now, today, we are merely amplifying that same basic requirement. We still must manifest a physical element of obedience, but it must go way beyond that. It must go far beyond what human beings are capable of doing. Because even if we lived, physically, the entire dimension of God's Law, we are still culpable in His sight. That means we are guilty because we are only doing physically what God imposed upon a people heretofore—that is, our ancestors from the past. But our righteousness must exceed that technical, physical righteousness of the past.

So, these physical characteristics, or responsibilities, of the past are still obligatory and binding upon us today, but in a spiritual dimension—which is merely an amplification of the past. Now, we then must see the basics of that

past—the Old Testament—in order to really grasp and understand the spiritual dimension incumbent upon anyone who will be faithful and obedient to God today. So for that reason, we are going to go back and pick up this physical dimension of the past as God applied it—as God held a physical nation responsible for it—and we are going to see the behavioral pattern of those peoples, the net result of their weaknesses, and then we can understand what is obligatory upon us today and how much better we are going to have to do. Therefore, the past, then, is truly the record of the failures, the weaknesses, the problems of those people. And we must do, then, a much better job in effecting mastery within our lives.

So, we are going to study, then, from the Hebrew scriptures this matter of the subject of faith and we are going to see its application back at that time—its requirement imposed upon a physical people—we are going to see the wretched, miserable failure that occurred at every turn of the road, and we are going to see, therefore, the lessons that were written for you and me. Because we are the children of our forefathers. We have the same natures. We are, in a sense, weaker, because we have been degenerating from that day. We haven't been getting better, we have been going downhill. Therefore, we can see, in all of its broad significance and meaning, the physical dimension as it is applicable to our lives today and what we must do in order to effect that kind of change in our lives that God requires—that which He will accept for judgement of our responsibilities—overcoming or mastery in the future.

So, we see, then, in Galatians 5 and verse 22—and I want to use it merely as a beginning—that, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness [Remember, that was the last one we covered. And now], faith . . ." So we are going to see faith in its physical dimension as it was given to a physical people heretofore, who wrote lessons for us. And then we are going to see its spiritual amplification from what we commonly call the New Testament, but which, really, is nothing more than the spiritual magnification of God's Law—if we really see and understand the Truth.

The first Hebrew word used in what is commonly called the Old Testament is the word, *ehmoon*—e-h-m-o-o-n. It is a Hebrew word which basically comes from another Hebrew word, *aman*—a-m-a-n—and we are going to see that word a little later, so I am not going to define it. I merely want to define the meaning of

the word *ehmoon*—e-h-m-o-o-n. It means to be established. You know, we talk about a business being established, which means it is on a sure footing. It means that it gives the impression of solidarity—it gives the impression of being anchored, well-run. It leaves all the necessary visage, ingredients, or characteristics—of purpose, of solidarity, of orientation, of firmness, solidity. You know, it's the type of thing that gives confidence to people who frequent that kind of business. You go in and you see that it is well-managed—you see that it is run acceptably so that it fulfills the purpose of a business. You feel confident in doing business there. However, when someone is on shaky footing—or a shaky foundation—even the customer feels unsure. Because, after all, what he does there is predicated upon a certain element of business confidence. Alright, this word has to do with such establishment. It has to do with the rooting of confidence, that is, figuratively, it means to be trusty—or just the word "trusty." But also, abstractly, it means "trustworthiness"—something in which one can place confidence or trust. And it is translated in the Bible as "faith," "faithful," "truth," and is used in a variety of other ways.

Alright, let's notice a few of those usages. In Deuteronomy the thirty-second chapter. Deuteronomy the thirty-second chapter—and if there is any chapter that we ought to be aware of right now it is Deuteronomy 32 because we have all been hearing the Song of Moses a number of times, and I hope that as we hear that, we reflect upon its message, its meaning. Here in Deuteronomy 32 and let's note verse 20: "And he said, I will hide my face from them [this is God speaking], I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation . . ." That is, they were true human beings—arrogant, conceited, with an element of self-confidence. They just didn't need to trust anybody else. They could handle it for themselves—extremely arrogant. But they are going to find out that arrogance is predicated upon a false foundation because human nature—human minds—will not provide the real dimension that they are looking for, yet they are trusting them. They are trusting other people.

After all, what is the confidence of our own country? You know, even though we may not realize it, we trust certain institutions within our country almost as though they were God. We trust our educational system, don't we? We send our children over there. When we are young ourselves, we sit in those classes and we imbibe of all the garbage that is spewing out from those very institutions. How many kids, by the time they are ready to go to college, sit there

in awe of professors? We have been taught that. So they sit there as though a professor is a god and he can do no wrong—what spews out of his mouth is absolutely right. So they sit there and absorb it and they judiciously take notes and write it down, although ninety-nine percent of what is coming through the minds of most of those professors has come from previous human minds. And it may be predicated upon nothing more than theory—never substantiated, never proven, having no firm foundation whatsoever, having nothing but the emphasis placed upon it by human minds. But we have come to respect that.

Conversely, we also respect our judicial institutions within this country, don't we? A judge renders a decision within the courts of the land and we look at it and bow and scrape before it because here are the great know-it-alls. Yet, they are only human minds. Who said they were right? It's only because we have been led to believe in those institutions. And so, we bow before them, we humbly—for the most part—subscribe to everything that comes out of it because we believe it is a "thus saith the Supreme Court," or some other court within the land. That doesn't mean we should not obey them, but I'll tell you, we had better know that those men are not God and that many of their decisions are made on the flimsiest substantiation, or sometimes are made on the basis of prior emphasis from certain interests within the country. They are not made according to the interests of the people at all. They are not made upon hard fact—not at all—but they are made. Yet, we are taught to believe those things.

How many of us believe that once we establish a certain political system that we must bow and scrape before it? Yet, they are only men—fallible men, at that, who make many, many mistakes. So you can see that we have been led to bow and scrape before human beings because they have achieved something—that is, in quotes they have "achieved" something. You know, they have a title; they come to a classroom with a certain aura; they go down to an office because it's on State Street; or they go here or there. And so we bow before them because, presumably, they have achieved great things. But they are only human beings. Now, what they have achieved may be as foundationless as the hollow core of too many doors. It may be nothing but a lot of air—and dead air, at that.

Brethren, unless what we have absorbed is predicated upon absolute fact which has been proven, it is foundationless. And if it is foundationless, it is not worthy of the honor and the respect of human beings. It is for that reason that God

says His Word is predicated upon absolutes—tried and proven, as the Bible says, even seven times. Remember how many times I've given that to you? God's Word is predicated upon absolutes and, yet, human beings in all their rationalizations are sitting down here telling us that you can't trust it. The reason you can't trust it as a human being is that a human being has never been created subject to faith. You see, you have to accept these things because we don't see them. They are not subject to proof—we cannot subject them to tests, experimentation; we cannot subject them to what human beings call proof. But simply because they are in another dimension, does not mean that they don't exist. And faith is the evidence of those things which are not seen. So it may be called "foundationless" to the minds of carnal men, albeit, well-educated, but to those who know the Truth of God, they are predicated upon absolutes.

And so we find this word is dealing with that relationship between human minds that want to see tangible evidence versus that which is revealed from another domain—or realm—altogether. It is a spiritual realm—a spiritual domain—and our very faith and confidence are predicated upon that which cannot be tested and proven. It is predicated upon faith—an ingredient that no doctorate of philosophy, of science, or of whatever, possesses. He can't have it. What he has is predicated upon the machinations of human minds—theory. And they subject these to various tests and so on, and many of them have never been substantiated, yet they seem plausible. So to human minds they are accepted and then they are espoused in courts, in college classrooms, in government, or wherever, because men have no other foundation. But you and I do have another foundation if we will just come to believe it and trust it. This word has to do with that very relationship.

So he said here in Deuteronomy 32 and verse 20: "[T]hey are a very froward generation . . ." That is, they are arrogant in their own achievements; in their own capabilities; in their own theories. They bow before them. Remember the gods that we have talked about? ". . . children in whom is no faith." Here is that first usage of the word *ehmoon*. E-h-m-o-o-n is the word "faith." "[C]hildren in whom is *NO* faith"—better translated, of course, as "faithfulness." After all, what is faithfulness but the progressive behavior of an individual in whom resides that kind of confidence? If somebody is faithful to something, it means it is the operation—the action, the carrying out, the process—of something which is firm and solid in the mind of that individual. So "faithfulness" is merely the

manifestation of faith—that's all it is. So if these were children in whom is no faithfulness, it means that they didn't have any faith. And why did they not have faith? Because it is a spiritual ingredient, and the Spirit had never been given at that time.

So human beings, then, are devoid of that ingredient. They cannot manifest that kind of confidence, and if they can't manifest it, the next step they are going to take is to trust their own minds. And the end result of trusting one's own mind is arrogance—conceit. Why? Because human beings are natural competitors. So if somebody has stretched his mind academically, he is going to look down upon somebody who hasn't. But he is not going to be able to understand that party who has implicit faith in the absolutes of that spiritual world. And so far as the erudite man is concerned, he is not going to see any difference. He is going to look at the lowly man who has never stretched his mind—because he didn't have any volition, no will, no purpose, no determination—and he is going to put him in the same class as the one who understands all things—who has that faith and that confidence.

So they are not going to see the difference. That is why judges don't make any difference; that's why educators do not make a difference. Because they can't see it. But they are going to be dumbfounded one of these days, as the Bible says, when the children of God are revealed. That is going to terrorize this world. It is absolutely going to make them stand on their heads when they look at it and say, "Well, wait a minute, I remember seeing them walk up and down the street; I talked to him; he came into my store; he did this or he did that." And they are going to see them because they are going to be visible as manifestations in that day, and they are going to see them changed into that glorified body. And don't you think the people of this world are not going to be absolutely dumbfounded at that change when it occurs. They are going to remember you. They are going to see you as you were and they are going to say, "Why, yes, I remember that person." And they will hearken back to some of the conversations—the things that were said, that were done.

That's why it is so very, very important that we live exemplary lives. You see, there is a day coming when they are going to recall all of these things. What kind of an impression have we left? Are they going to say, "Well, I never thought that could ever happen"? Or are they going to say, "You know, I knew there was

something different because they had a different lifestyle—they were trustworthy, they were people of honesty and integrity"? And it is going to compel them to bow in respect before the principles of God—not for us as human beings, because what they are going to see and what they are going to remember is that exemplary life that was lived. Now, that is what we are talking about.

But these were children who had no such confidence. There was no faithfulness in them because they were carnal human beings. And, after all, we remember what natural human beings are, don't we? So Israel was a natural nation, made up of natural people in whom could be no faith. They just couldn't have it. Well, then, why in the world did God call them? Why did God give His Law to them? Well, a lot of these people who don't have that spiritual mind—even though they are called religionists, their minds aren't any different than the tangible, natural people out here in the field of education, or in politics, or whatever field they may be—are still trying to figure things out spiritually and they can't do it. So they come up with deductions from the natural mind which will always be wrong. They are trying to figure it out themselves and they are conveying certain concepts or ideologies. And these are going to be proven wrong as well—and talk about embarrassment. Here they purported to be ministers and they are going to be found to be hypocrites and liars. They assumed and arrogated to themselves a responsibility which God had never given to them.

So, ultimately it's going to be understood that those people back there wrote lessons—and they wrote them for specific reasons. They wrote those lessons for those of us called at this time upon whom the ends of the world are come. That's why they wrote lessons. That's why God gave His laws to them—to show that human beings couldn't do these things; to bring out the inherent weaknesses within man; to show, if we read it and comprehend, the things that we have to safeguard against, to watch for, and be careful of so that we do not fall prey to exactly the same problems or situations.

So here were children, then, in whom was no faithfulness or, that is, children that manifested no inherent ingredient of faith. Now, what do we manifest? Are we children that manifest the same clever human traits and characteristics of ancient Israel? Do we effect, at every turn of the road, to bring about change in our lives? Do we reject things that we do not like because they do not satisfy the whim of the mind or the flesh, or are we, by the power of God's

Holy Spirit, suppressing the self—the natural tendency toward discouragement; the natural tendency to abbreviate the laws, the statutes, and the judgements of God; to live up to only a minimal responsibility, because to go all the way, and to be wholehearted, demands too much endeavor?

How many people attempt to alter and change these things in order to satisfy the whimsical nature with which they were born? How many of us are justifying things in our own minds—things that we do, permit or allow in our lives—simply because it is much easier to justify them than to face ourselves for what we are and to confess our weaknesses—to go back to God and say, "I made a mistake; I'm weak"? The initial aspect of conversion is the simple ability to admit weakness—to manifest that spiritual trait and characteristic of honesty and integrity—just to admit that we are weak. We are going to make mistakes. That's not the problem. The problem is perhaps twofold: When we make mistakes, other people are quick to judge us, so there is one mistake; and the other is that we do not recognize that mistakes are natural and indigenous to human beings. Now, let's pick ourselves up and go on, forgetting those things that are past, and let's say, "We made a mistake." Now let's go on, willing with all that is within us to learn the necessary object lessons and to do a better job next time. But we certainly don't want to worry ourselves sick over the mistakes that we have made, because mistakes are just as natural as they can possibly be with us. But now, if we turn around and begin to justify mistakes, then we haven't learned anything. We are in miserable shape mentally. Why don't we just admit our mistakes? Because we don't have that faithfulness; we don't have that kind of confidence, but we are developing it with the help and the strength of the Spirit of God.

So that is what Israel wrote for us. But let's not look back upon Israel and say, "That bunch of so-and-sos." Let's not be like the man I heard one time who took an exception with Adam and Eve and he said, "I wish I could have been back in the shoes of Adam because I would not have done those things." And at the same time he was saying that, he was violating many more principles than Adam did, except he deluded himself by putting certain things into the past as no longer being relevant today and not meaningful for Christians—that is, so-called "New Testament Christians." We all have our clever ways of explaining things and getting around them.

So Israel of the flesh were faithless. They just didn't have what it takes to live up to the Truth of God. Now, let's just remember, brethren, that we are the

children of our forefathers. We are not only the children of our forefathers—which means that we naturally possess the same weaknesses—but we are also the dregs of society. That is, we have been going downhill for about four thousand years since their time—well, let's say three-and-one-half thousand years. So let's not poke any fingers at ancient Israel. Let's remember that when we read what happened in the case of ancient Israel, that but for the help of God—or but for the faith and the confidence that comes through the power of God's Holy Spirit—we would be doing exactly the same things. And let's also remember that for the most part, we all too frequently do them anyway because it is not easy to live the Truth of God. Spiritual things are in total opposition to physical things. It becomes extremely difficult for us to live those things.

So, therefore, as the Apostle Paul said, there is a war going on in our minds because we are no longer catering to the whimsical dictates of the flesh. We are struggling against them; we are fighting those circumstances, and because we are fighting them, we are struggling on a day-by-day basis. You know, people sometimes ask—and I've had them ask me this many times: "Why is it that things seem to go so much better when I give up everything and I am on the outside?" Have we even forgotten elementary principles? You know, when you don't fight your nature, it certainly goes very easy, doesn't it? You just do whatever it says. It's easy to sit down and do nothing; it's easy to carp and complain; it's easy to do nothing, as I said. But when you fight it, remember that nature—and all circumstances out there—are against you, including Satan, the Devil. And it means that you are going to be fighting the whole society, Satan, the Devil, and your own nature. What a battle you are up against. It isn't any wonder that we falter, slip, fail and encounter unique difficulties from time to time. But, as the Psalmist David said, if we just keep that mind properly oriented—even though we may have slipped badly—we can get right back up and go on. And that's what counts.

So, Israel, then, wrote lessons of faithlessness for us. They wrote them because it is indigenously a part of our everyday behavior.

Now, secondly, there is great value placed on one who can faithfully discharge a responsibility. I want to read a couple of texts and then I want to spend a little time analyzing it. Here in Proverbs the thirteenth chapter. Proverbs 13 and let's note verse 17 first: "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a

faithful ambassador is health." Now, the word "faithful" here is the word *ehmoon*—e-h-m-o-o-n. What does that mean? ". . . but a faithful ambassador is health." Well, before we analyze that, I would like to read Proverbs 14 and verse 5 also—in my Bible it's just right down below here. Proverbs 14 and verse 5: "A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies." A faithful witness will not lie. That means one who is a witness of any given situation—and remember, even the people of God are called to be witnesses. *All* the people of God today are called witnesses. Oh, I know that there is a specific category of two witnesses and other witnesses and so on, but the Bible shows us very clearly that every Christian today—as well as every Christian who has ever lived—is a witness. Therefore, if he is going to carry out the responsibility for which God called him—that is, the responsibility of witnessing—then he is going to have to be faithful. Now, how is he going to be faithful? That means he is going to be honest with facts. And what is the initial fact involved? The weakness of men. You cannot be a faithful witness—you cannot discharge an ambassadorial responsibility—unless you first recognize the natural, weak tendency, trait, or characteristic of a human being. You can't be one.

So, if we are going to leave the impression that whoever has committed a sin is culpable or guilty in his own basic right, we are already manifesting a clouded issue, or manifesting an element of hypocrisy. Now, why is that true? Oh, I know we are called on to be witnesses. Even people, physically, in olden times had to be witnesses and so on, but it was unique that a witness then had to cast the first stone as well. I mean he had to bear the ultimate responsibility for his decision—which ought to be the case today. We would find people changing a lot of their stories, I guarantee you. Now, the problem stems from the fact that when a judge judges, he does so with the presumption that he would never make the same mistake. Isn't that true? Why in the world should I condemn somebody else if I am already culpable myself? You see, this is the basis for all tongue wagging. Because when we make a comment, the logical presumption is that we wouldn't do that; that we are not guilty; that we have no such sin; that we are not responsible. Oh, I know we don't think that far about it. Now, if in that case we bear an ambassadorial or a physical witnessing responsibility, we must be extremely careful, understanding our own innate weaknesses.

So it says, "A faithful witness will not lie." That is, he is going to do his level best to present the facts as they are. He is not going to be entangled

emotionally; he is not going to be caught up in a charged atmosphere; and neither is he—if he is a messenger or an ambassador—going to espouse anything but the true facts which are given to him. He is going to make sure that he is extremely careful with the carrying out of that responsibility. He's not going to cloud the issue; he is going to try and present it in its true framework. What do I mean by that? How many times have you had somebody come to you and tell you a story about somebody else and because of the very framework in which they present the "facts"—quote, unquote "facts"—you are led to believe a certain thing, or, perhaps, led to believe that a situation is much more tenuous, more problematic, a greater difficulty, far worse in some respect, than it really is in essence of fact? Now, you know that as well as I do. Okay, now, if we understand that, let's remember, then, that an ambassador can put his responsibility in a way that is going to convey what he wants to get across, not what is necessarily fact, and the same is true with respect to a witness. He is going to convey what he wants, not what the facts dictate, providing he is not very, very careful with those facts.

Here, then, is that same word. It's used as "faith" back in Deuteronomy 32:20 where it says they are children in whom is not that very basic ingredient of faith—that confidence, that determination to live the broad, basic principle undergirding that spiritual characteristic which we call faith. Now, that's why I want you to get this in mind, because we are going to refer back to that, I hope, when we get to the New Testament aspect of it—and pardon my usage of the term "New Testament," but most people wouldn't understand it otherwise.

Now, great value, then, is placed on one who can faithfully discharge a responsibility—which means that if we are given such a charge, we had better be unusually careful with it. That is, we had better weigh how we tell it and we had better make sure that we convey to the recipient or the hearer of our witnessing of the message that we are conveying the fact that there is our own personal feeling about it. "I do not want to leave you with an erroneous impression. Therefore, let me tell you that I could be clouding it emotionally." I don't know that we want to go through all of these things; what we want to do is merely make sure that we understand it when we are conveying a message, and we had better be very, very sure of it.

If you have had three or four or five children in a family, how many times have you as parents found that because of what happened, maybe two days ago, a

week ago, three weeks ago, a year ago, a certain child intends to get even by bringing an accusation against one of the other children? And you know very well the intent is to see them get what this child would call just deserts. Now, we are only small children grown big and we presume that because we have grown up and we are no longer two, three, four, five, or six years of age that we would never do things like that. That's the first mistake. Because we only grow—we only become more solidified, let's say—in those natural traits and tendencies. The only difference is that we become past masters at camouflaging them. So we have left a certain impression of adulthood or maturity. We wouldn't want to be as open and candid as children are, so, therefore, what we do is develop a certain subtlety by which we manifest what is considered to be adulthood. And all it means is that we have become more subtle—more tricky—and we have allowed these things to become deeply entrenched in our makeup while leaving the impression that we are adults of great integrity, emotional control and tremendous capability, when in reality, we are only little, tiny children grown bigger and older but, at the same time, more subtle and more untrustworthy. That's why Jesus Christ said that we have to become as little children. Because, you see, they don't pull the wool down over the eyes of anybody; they just manifest what they are. We get tricky as we grow older and, therefore, you have to watch yourself very, very carefully. That's exactly what this is talking about. Faith is predicated on that because what is the manifestation of faith? It means faithfulness.

And do you know that the word also means "truth"? So when we talk about "truth" what are we talking about? We are talking about an element—or manifestation—whether it should be a word, a certain picture, a dimension of life itself, that is not clouded by subtlety, innuendo, hypocrisy, or error in some way. That's what we mean by truth. So truth is a very end result of faith. Faithfulness is an end result of faith. It means that we have confidence in some objective, or some purpose, and we have such confidence in it that we will be honest and open and candid. And children do possess that characteristic—they are honest about things. They still manifest the little traits that are wrong, yes, but we emotionally develop another one to cloud the results of that which is indigenous so we are twofold hypocrites when we grow up.

Now the next characteristic—the third point—here is that an honest man faces himself for what he is. That's what that very word means. Here in Proverbs twenty and let's note verse six. Proverbs 20 and noting verse 6: "Most men will

proclaim every one his own goodness." What have we been talking about? Every man wants to leave the impression of how good he is and, you know, one of the ways by which men leave that impression is ridiculing or criticizing someone else. When we come to recognize this—I don't care who we are, a minister, or whomever—when we hear somebody denigrating somebody else, we should know *immediately* that it is a camouflage. That is one of the traits of human beings. When we begin to tear at somebody else—when we begin to judge somebody else—all we are doing is attempting to leave the impression that we are not culpable, that we are not guilty, and what a tragedy. You know, I would rather hear somebody say, "Why should I condemn him? I've got my own problems." I love to hear that—not because the man has problems, but because he has taken the first gigantic step, which is recognition. Now, sure, we want to see people overcome and to respond. Error is still error; truth is still truth; wrong is still wrong, there is no question about it, but it is just as wrong for us to camouflage the emotional characteristic of error or of truth. Well, we wouldn't camouflage the emotional characteristic of truth, but it's just as wrong to hide—through an element of hypocrisy—the emotional characteristic of error, and that's why we manifest such emotions. Anger. Why? It usually occurs not because we are angry against truth, but we are angry because we have been found out, or somebody put his finger on the truth. That's why we get upset and it distresses us.

So, here, then, continuing in verse 6: "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness." And they do it by lifestyle; they do it by mannerisms; and, all too frequently, by words. "[B]ut a faithful man who can find?" Here is a simile. And what is Solomon—the Preacher—saying? He is showing that men who proclaim their own goodness—by whatever means; emotionally, verbally, or psychologically, in some way—are not faithful people. They are not honest. "[B]ut a faithful"—that is, an *ehmoon* (e-h-m-o-o-n)—"man who can find?" There are not many of them. It takes the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit to help us; to aid us; to give us that sense of orientation and direction. And, then, we can live faithfulness.

Now we begin to understand what it means to have the faith of God residing within us. It isn't some nebulous concept. "Well, I've got God's Holy Spirit, therefore, I have faith." What do you *mean* by faith? It is that undergirding principle of the Spirit which gives open, honest integrity to human life. It is going to be seen in this open candor. It is not going to be seen in hypocrisy, subtlety, or

innuendo. It isn't going to be seen in the manifestations of the natural traits and characteristics of human beings—the same traits and characteristics that were experienced by ancient Israel. "Children in whom is no [faithfulness]." But we are going to manifest now—if we are the called of God, if we have the power of God's Holy Spirit—the true traits and the true characteristics of faith, and that faith is manifested in honesty, candor, and openness. A faithful man—there are not many of them to be found, and you are not going to find them in human beings, you are going to find them in those who are possessors of God's Holy Spirit. That's the only way you can be such a human being. We need those traits and we need those characteristics. And, so, God has given us the privilege; we have been called to be the possessors of that undergirding concept: faith—manifesting itself in faithfulness, in truth, in honesty and integrity. That's why God gives us His Holy Spirit, and by receiving that Holy Spirit, then, we no longer live in the footsteps of our forefathers—ancient Israel. We now are children in whom *does* reside faith because it has been given to us, not because we merely lay claim to it, but because the manifestations are there. And what are the manifestations? Ancient Israel had the manifestations of faithlessness because they turned around; they were oblivious to the Truth of God; they were defiant and rebellious; they took advantage of others; they did all kinds of things which are a manifestation of the natural traits and characteristics of human beings. But we now—if we possess God's Holy Spirit—are manifesting the *spiritual* traits and characteristics.

And so, then, in that case, we are faithful servants because it has been given to us. It can't be found in a natural human being, but it surely can be found in those who yield themselves to God and allow that Spirit to come in and to become dominant, and allow it to give new orientation and direction to minds and hearts—or our beings. Therefore, we manifest these traits and these characteristics of the Spirit, not of the flesh. And when we do that, we no longer have to proclaim our own goodness, do we? When we proclaim our own goodness, it is only a manifestation of the natural trait and characteristic. The other man is a light. It is seen. He doesn't have to talk about it. He doesn't tell others. Other people see it. Lights are seen and so are spiritual manifestations. They are seen, they don't have to be heard.

Now, in conclusion, then, for this particular word, the last text this morning. The basis of faith is truth, or, conversely, we might say the basis of truth is faith. You know, you can turn it any way you want to just like if we say that one plus

three equals four, we can turn that around and say three plus one equals four. So if God is love, so love is also God. That's just the way it is. Now, truth, therefore, is predicated on faith because truth is, then, the manifestation, not of unfaithfulness—not based on the natural traits and characteristics of human beings—but it is based on the trait and characteristic of God, which is faith.

Isaiah twenty-six. Isaiah 26 and verse 2, but I am going to begin in verse 1: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Salvation is going to be appointed for walls and bulwarks. What does that mean? It simply means that when Truth is written into the minds and hearts of people, it is the strongest circumvallation there is. You don't have to have military fortifications; you don't have to have guns; you don't have to have great ammunition and so on, if you just have the Truth. Because that Truth is the strongest fortification there is.

But I'll tell you, if you don't have the Truth, you had better have the other. That's why this nation had better build up its defenses. They don't have the Truth, they are only laying claim to it. They need that physical dimension.

Now, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." This is a prophecy looking forward to the day when a nation is going to turn to that fundamental ingredient of Truth. Truth, in this case, is merely the manifestation of that faith and that confidence. And it is not going to come naturally. That's what we are going to have to learn. It is not going to come naturally, but God is going to give that Spirit, and when God gives that Spirit, that nation is going to manifest those traits and those characteristics. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the TRUTH [*ehmoon*] may enter in" [emphasis added]. God is going to give that to the nations, eventually, and, remember, it is going to be their bulwark against everything that is evil and wrong—which proceeds from natural human hearts and minds.

Verses 3 and 4: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace . . ." Now, if we are not in perfect peace, then it is an obvious manifestation that we don't have that perfect faith as yet—or the fulness of Truth. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH [or Yahweh] is everlasting strength." Think on that, brethren, it is a very, very significant statement in the light of the previous texts which I have given to you, because it reflects the faith that proceeds from the Spirit of God.