

**Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 129**  
**The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit**

**Faith #38**

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Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. This is the continuation of the series on the fruits of God's Holy Spirit, and this specific one is the fruit of "faith." Faith, as I have said so many times, is indubitably the most significant of all the considerations, because it is on the basis of faith that we are going to inherit everlasting life. "The just shall live by faith," we are told.

So this, now, is the continuation of that last Greek word that relates to "faith," or in this particular case, it isn't "faith" as a noun, but it is "faithfulness" as an adjective—or a characteristic of God, and of the people whom He has chosen.

Last time, we were dealing with this matter of human beings who remained faithful to God despite the trials and the difficulties which they had encountered. So I entitled point number four: "Despite human weaknesses, God recognizes some people as faithful." So we saw, even in the time of the apostles, and especially immediately following the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, the faithfulness of the apostles, and the faithfulness of certain ones who had come to understand the Truth of God. They had remained loyal to that which God had given to them.

But now I want to get back to an even more significant point, because human beings can be dogged and determined in certain things that they undertake, which could be a trait or a characteristic of the flesh. We sometimes can be adamant in error. We hang on like a bulldog and we just won't give in, regardless of wrong. Now, it is this trait and this characteristic that is sometimes used to ridicule those who are faithful. They call them "pigheaded," they call them "adamant" and "stubborn"—"they won't listen to this, or they won't listen to some argument," or whatever it is. But in the case of God, it is a matter of faithfulness, and whatever

God has given to us as a revelation from Him, we are required to remain faithful to it, despite how this world may ridicule and erroneously interpret that faithfulness, or continuity of purpose.

Now also, there is another factor involved in that. It would be utterly ridiculous for us to be consistent in something, or in some endeavor, where the very foundation of it is not consistent. So now we are talking about something that is absolutely, fundamentally sound—it doesn't change, it doesn't alter, there is no compromising within it. It is a point of faith. You can have confidence—you can have trust—in it.

So now we are going to talk about the faithfulness of God's Word. You see, our hope of everlasting life is in His Word. The very reason for "faith" is the confidence we have in that very Word, because Jesus Christ was the Word personified. So therefore, if He is the express image of the Father, then the Father Himself manifested that same trait of solidarity, or continuity, and that Word stands absolutely, authoritatively, in our lives. So, therefore, the Word of God, then, has to be an absolute. It isn't subject to interpretation—any private interpretation, or any interpretations at all, so far as that is concerned—for God Himself is the one who knew what He had in mind when He had it revealed, or given, or written. And when He reveals it, He reveals His intent and His purpose—a purpose that you and I, by our own natural capabilities, cannot understand. We do not have it, because we are mortal—we are carnal. We understand physical things—things upon which we can put our hands, that we can define, that we can evaluate in one way or another, that we can subject to tests, or that we can subject to various forms of evaluation.

Now, in those things, we have a certain element of comprehension—that is, so far as we have educated our minds, we have stretched them, and we have come to understand certain cardinal principles in this world. Therefore, we can evaluate. But human minds cannot evaluate spiritual things, I don't care how bright they are, because spiritual things are at a different level, and it requires a spiritual mind to comprehend them. So, the natural man is never going to understand those things. He cannot, until God calls him and gives him the power whereby he can begin to see and to understand, and then as experience mounts, or increases, his understanding increases.

So, at this point, then, we need to realize what is foundational and what is pivotal, and that is the absolute, uncompromising, unalterable nature of the Word of God. It is the faithfulness of God's Word. It is a surety, and you can stand on it in absolute confidence. And so we need to see how many times, and in what ways, that has been made clear here in the New Testament. And the word that I am using today is the Greek word *pistos*, meaning "faithfulness." But it is an adjective of the very word which means "the faith"—*pistis*.

Here in Acts 13, now, and verse 34, but I'm going to go back and begin in verse 31:

And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children.

Now, I want you to notice what he is leading up to here—what God gave clear back to even a physical nation whom He called, and that is still valid and is still absolute. I don't care what the people did. You see, there are many people who have been taught that because of the failure of ancient Israel, God changed His Way of Life. No, God didn't. God's Way cannot change, because spiritual things are not subject to change. Any change of spiritual things would be a weakness and failure on the part of God, and there is no weakness, nor frailty, on the part of God. None. It is the weakness of human rationale. They have justified themselves, because they have been led deceptively by another power who does not identify himself.

Now, the Bible tells us concerning these factors, or ways, which were delivered unto our fathers: "God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." There were untold prophecies indicating the coming of Jesus Christ—of his first appearance, of his mission, of the purpose for which he lived, what he was to achieve, and how we would relate to that very purpose. So:

. . . in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to

return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

The word "sure" here is the word *pistos*. Well, what were the sure mercies of David—meaning the promises that were given to David? All of the promises which were given to David, now, have literally been given to us through Jesus Christ. Isn't that what it said? Notice it again: "And we declare unto you [verse 32] glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers . . ." We are talking about the promises, now, that were made unto the fathers. Does anybody have any doubt of what those promises were, and who those fathers were? We are talking about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and on down to David, because David was the literal fulfillment of those same promises that were given to Abraham or, so far as that's concerned, let's go all the way back to Adam.

"And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead . . ." So, pivotal in all the promises given to Adam, to Abel, to Seth, to Enoch, to Noah, to Terah, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and on down to the time of David, is the fact that those sure promises have never varied, for the central figure in those promises is Jesus Christ.

"And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." Now, why give it to us? Who is he talking to? To us. Notice what he said: "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give *you* the sure mercies of David." So they were, then, given to Christ, and through Christ they came unto us: the sure mercies of David—the promises which were made to our fathers. What were the promises? Go back and read them, and if you do, you will find that we are obligated to do all of those things, because they were literally fulfilled in Christ, and your only hope is Christ in you—when you crucify the self.

"Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." What he is saying here is not that the great interest is in the fact that somebody did not see corruption. What he is saying is that this Being lives eternally, and what that Being is was the fulfillment of those promises. He didn't jump the track here, whatsoever. Christ is, today, the living fulfillment of those promises, and if Christ is living within you today, He is doing exactly the

same thing, because He doesn't change—He doesn't alter. "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." So, therefore, it didn't die with the physical body of Christ. It doesn't die, now, with the physical death of anyone, because it is now spiritual.

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep . . ." You see, what he is saying is that human beings die, but in the fact that there was a physical relationship between the initial giving of those promises from Adam, clear on down to David, and on down to Christ—they were reiterated, time and time again, clear on down to the time of Christ—there is now, in Christ, no need for repetition, because Christ is not going to die like David. His body did not remain in the grave. It is eternal.

"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep [he is dead], and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption." So the sequence, then, was from father to son, or to the next one whom God chose. Now there is no such sequence. It is in the perpetual life of Christ—that unalterable life.

"But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." So what he is talking about is not that we have seen some miracle here—a very great miracle with regard to the death, burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ—what we are talking about now is the fact that His very Body continues to exist, and in Him is seen the fulfillment of every one of those promises.

So, if it is fulfilled in Christ, and the only hope you have is in Christ—or Christ in you—what are you going to be doing? That is, if you are obeying the Truth, or if Christ is literally living in you? He has never changed. He is doing exactly the same thing. He saw no corruption. He is alive, He lives forevermore, and He is the Word of God, given in those promises from the time of Adam down to the time of the physical body of Jesus Christ. So today, then, those promises are being lived in you.

In 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 13. 1 Corinthians 10, and let's note verse 13, but let's go back and pick it up in verse 12. I want you to get the setting: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Now we are talking about the fallibility of man. You know, he has a great, arrogant, conceited

opinion of himself—of his prowess and his mind capacity, of his intellect and his ability to sort things out, and to be able to come to knowledge and to interpret it. He uses all kinds of terms to gloss over the real issue, but he certainly heaps upon himself great credit. That is man.

"[L]et him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." What are our temptations? One of the most critical and the most serious ones is the temptation to begin to rationalize the Truth of God. *That* is when we have to hop onto those minds and bring them back into subjection to Christ. Now, how do you do that? Is it man's interpretation of what Christ is? Well, if so, then we are back to square one—the same old consideration. So, we are going to hop on ourselves to protect ourselves from doing the same thing for which we were supposed to be protecting ourselves (now, isn't that a round-robin kind of situation)? Not at all. What God is saying is that you, in your own mind, must protect yourself against that natural mind which would turn against the mind of Christ—the revealed mind of Christ.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man"—the temptation to begin to interpret, the temptation to rationalize, the temptation to turn away from that which was given to us, and to reinterpret it, to think that we can do a better job, to set up some kind of an organization on the basis of our own insight, our own mental capabilities.

"[B]ut God is faithful." Now, isn't that a peculiar expression in this regard? We are talking about men who move laterally, as opposed to a God who is faithful. The word "faithful" here is this word *pistos*, which means that it stands firm—it doesn't move all over the place. But what about men? Men are moved by their temptations—temptations of mind, temptations of the flesh and the lust thereof.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man," and we are tempted by our own minds to run all over the place, to conceive all kinds of things—diabolical things: doctrines, concepts, that are not of God, whatsoever. Because God reveals His Truth once, and when He reveals it, it is an absolute. If it never were revealed, then we have never understood God's Truth. And if we think, now, that we are setting out to come to understand God's Truth, in opposition to some organization through whom God revealed it, or some body, or entity, through whom God revealed it, we are never going to find it, either. You cannot find it by the powers of your own minds.

Now, that doesn't mean that God does not call an individual through whom he reveals it—He did through Adam; He did through Moses; He did through Christ; He did through the Apostle Paul—but what I am saying is that when God called certain ones and revealed His Truth to them, He laid a responsibility upon them to go out and to proclaim it, and God backed it up with power. And there were certain people called.

Now, we have two situations: The one was called. He probably was out doing his own thing. He wasn't interested in religion, period, and God called him and said, "You are going to be my servant." Remember the Apostle Paul? He wasn't looking for religion. He was looking for more saints to persecute, and then God was looking for him. So He struck him down and then gave him the Truth—He taught him the Truth directly—and commissioned him.

Now, *there* is one of the facets. But under the tutelage, then, of the one whom God sent—the Apostle Paul—certain people heard. They became saints. Now it was not their responsibility to check out the Apostle Paul—it was not their duty to verify—it was their duty to hear and to respond. And by acting upon it, they could know the Truth, because that Truth produces results—the "fruits thereof." That is what God expects of us. So, God gave it to some human individual, or some single party—because God has always used single parties, in every case that I know of—and commissioned that man to go out and proclaim it. Then the rest of us heard it, and we find that it is our duty, then, to remain faithful to that which we heard—the faith once delivered.

Now, God tells me clearly that somebody *did* receive that Truth in the last days. Let's forget about names. You know, we all want to jump on names. We want to remember what this man did, or that man did. You know, God chose Solomon, and Solomon didn't remain faithful. But did God give the Truth to him? Was the Truth still the Truth? Well, Solomon was just a pretty bad character, but he still had the Truth, as long as he *had* that Truth. Now, when he turned away from it, that was another situation.

So, there is a temptation that occurs to us, and the temptations are usually based upon our own mental gyrations. We begin to think about it, and say, "Well, God would never use that kind of a man, now, would he?" Where does it say that? All human beings are bad. "There is none good. No, not one." Then what kind of

man was God going to choose? You see, what people refuse to say—but the implications are strong in their behavior—is that "well, if you had only chosen me, I would have done a much better job. I am a whole lot more righteous than somebody else." Well, that very self-righteous attitude is a whole lot worse than what most people do, because did you know that what God said—if you can classify sin at all—is that self-righteousness is a whole lot worse than prostitution? That's right. Or adultery. Because God said that "you are going to see those coming in, but you yourselves thrust out." Man's greatest problem is his own personal esteem. He esteems himself awesomely, and he doesn't realize that he has got to come to grips with that horrible, wretched mind and bring it under control.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." Now, all men have gone through it, but few have ever seen the devious traits of that mind. That is what confession is all about. And when we finally come to recognize how sordid our minds are—how wretched, and filthy, and vile, and abominable and self-aggrandizing our minds are—then, and then only, can we begin to make progress in truth. We just simply cannot do it otherwise.

"[B]ut God is faithful." God said of man that he was such and such, but men don't want to admit that. God has said that He is what He is—"I am that I am." God is faithful. God can back up His promise because He has the power. He is spiritual in nature—a nature that you and I are ultimately to possess, and when we possess it, we will be as faithful as God is. But God is not even going to give us that chance until we recognize what we are physically, mentally. That's what it is all about. That's what human beings have got to recognize, confess and admit, and then they must repent of it. And then, by so doing, God will place, by the Spirit of God, Christ within us, so that we can overcome and master, and that is a long, arduous, hard struggle because our natures just recoil constantly. They rise up in defiance and rebellion.

It isn't that we do not know; it isn't that we do not understand, it is just that we find it extremely difficult to fight that internal battle of the self, and it is going to rise up in defiance against spiritual knowledge—against spiritual concepts, against the spiritual Way of Life. Why, I see it constantly, and yet people write to one another, and how they justify themselves. The implications are always there. Oh how righteous they are. I wonder how God looks at them, however? God is

faithful. That is in opposition to man. Man is not faithful. He is not to be trusted. There is no solidarity—no continuity—there. He protects the self—his own image. Every time he gets a little hurt, or whatever it is, he comes out flailing—he fights and defends the self, rather than to recognize, you know, "I got my just deserts. I deserved that," and then to set the right kind of example, because Christ Himself opened not His mouth. Why did He not open His mouth? Because, having created man, He knew what he was—He knew their hearts. He had a deep empathy for them.

If you, brethren, want to grow spiritually, why don't you just do what Christ did and keep the mouth closed, and understand why people behave like they do? Oh, that's hard, isn't it? At that time, we are not so sure that we really want to be Christian. We would rather be just a little bit human because, for the moment, there is a pleasure in it. Even the Bible says that there are momentary pleasures of sin. So, when I can get mad, you know, and I can say the things that I want to, so that I can leave a little hurt, then I momentarily feel satisfied. I got my pound of flesh. But, you know, three hours later, two days later, a week later, or whatnot, remorse sets in because we left a scar. I don't know that they will ever be healed, in some cases. Then, if we could just retract what we said, but we can't. The words have already gone out. Oh yes, the wound will heal, but the scar will be there. So, you and I are going to weather many scars because of the defiant, rebellious nature with which we were born, but that doesn't mean that we cannot ameliorate those things—soften them, lessen them—because even scars, when mollified, do tend to grow less and less visible, and we need to mollify, to soften, to lessen them.

"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able," if you can only recognize it and put yourselves in the hands of God, and say, "I see what I am. I cannot master it. I am fighting a battle that is ten times bigger than I am. I confess to you, O God, that I cannot whip it. I see it—I grasp and understand what is going on in my mind, what is going on in my flesh—but I can't whip it. I need your help." God *will* help you. *There* is the promise, right there. Then, if you are not getting what you feel you ought, there is no responsibility to anyone else. It is you. God has never laid a punishment upon another individual because of what some other person did. That would be incredibly unfair.

Now, sometimes, God will, in a body—as an entire church, or whatever—force us to pay a price for the benefit of the church. Look what the ancient apostles had to do. They didn't do it because of their own personal sins, but for the work of God itself. But that is not characteristic of most people. Not at all. Most of us are paying for our own problems, and if we can come to recognize those, and lay them out before God, and cry out to God, fast and pray about it, and implore God—not looking at somebody else, not justifying the self in any way, but looking at the self—we are going to get the answer. I know, because God is there, and because I have had answers. And I didn't find those answers because I sought them in the lives of other people. I found them in my own life. They are always there, and God will intervene.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is [absolute, He is] faithful [He is *pistos*], who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able . . .

If you are the called and chosen children of His, He is working with you, training you, qualifying you, for entrance into the Kingdom of God. As long as you will, and as long as you are pliable and flexible—moldable, in other words—in the hands of God, then God will work with you. He called you—you are His child. He is not going to give up on you, unless you give up. If you are encountering difficulties, don't give up. Fall on those knees, cry out to God, fast about it, and you will find your answers.

"[B]ut will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

1 Timothy 1 and verse 15. 1 Timothy 1, and let's note verse 15, now, under this same concept: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Well now, what do you mean "a faithful saying"? We are talking about the words of God. That is, the words of God are absolute. They are worthy of all acceptance. That is, they are foundationally sure, like the sure mercies of David—the absolute solidarity of the foundational concept of Christ and of God. They are absolute—you can rely on them. So, why do we not just read God's words and take them at face value—believing in them, trusting them?

And then, as the Bible tells us, don't go and make the same mistakes again, "lest a worse thing come upon you." So what he is saying is that when we recognize the causation of our problems, and we repent before God, and God removes these things, stay in constant remembrance of that great blessing of God so that you do not return to the fallibility of your own way of life. Don't ever do it. Hang on, and know that what brings about results is essential for continuity of blessings and the inheritance of everlasting life.

So, as he said here in verse 15: "This is a faithful saying . . ." In other words, the saying that you can trust is foundational—it is *pistos*—and worthy of all acceptance. He says, don't doubt it, don't have any misgivings about it. It is worthy of all acceptance—worthy of your complete commitment.

"[T]hat Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He came for that purpose. Now, there are obvious implications. First, you have to recognize yourself as a sinner. It didn't say that He came into the world to save the righteous, did it? What it is saying is that you must recognize yourself as a sinner. Now, can you continue in the practice of sin? No, when we recognize it, we turn away from it. "Wherefore, I abhor myself," said Job.

What is, then, our net responsibility? To recognize the will of God, the value of His promise, and the foundational certainty of that which He has given to us, the fact that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, and then, secondly, to recognize that we are those sinners, and that we must repent of that, turn away from it and cease practicing it, recognizing our own fallibility, our own shortsightedness, our own weaknesses, or dereliction, and then as we do so, we call out mightily to God for the awesome power of His Spirit—the continuity of that Spirit, that unchanging character of God—and that will, then, see us through.

Then next, I want us to notice 1 Timothy 3 and verse 1. 1 Timothy 3 and verse 1: "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Anybody who wants it? I don't know, you have to wait for God, obviously. You don't desire it, and then take things into your own hands. Anybody who desires the office of a bishop—the presbytery—desires a good work. It doesn't even necessarily say here that whatever that desire is, is going to be fulfilled. What it says is that it is a good work. But if God even wills to use somebody because that man really wants to give his life for that—and I mean it is

a sacrifice, and he wants to give his life for that purpose—it just may be that God will allow him to do so. So, what Paul is saying is that the saying is true—it is a true saying. That is, it is a foundational statement. If a man desire the office, then, of the presbytery, or of a bishop, he desires a very good work, because that is the desire of self-sacrifice. It is the desire of service.

Remember, there were a couple of the original disciples, before they became apostles, who desired recognition. That's what the Gentiles desire—"Gentiles" meaning one of this world, one of the flesh, who is literally living up to the expectations of the mind, heart and flesh. That is a Gentile. And when you do that, you may desire something that may not be good for you. So, they desired office and recognition. Remember the two who induced the mother to go to Christ and say that she wanted her two sons to sit, the one on the right hand, and the other on the left hand of Christ in the Kingdom? And Christ said, "You don't even know what you are asking. Are you able to bear the trials and the difficulties—the martyrdom—that I am going to bear?" And they said, "Oh, yes"—you know, arrogant man says, "Sure, we are able to do that." Well, He let them know, in no uncertain terms, they couldn't, but then He turned it right around and said, "If you really want to serve, there is nothing to impede you, but don't be worrying about position, just serve."

But, you know, most people won't do that. One comes along who wants to be a deacon, but he doesn't want to be a deacon unless he can be recognized, and somebody puts a big sign on him, you know, that says, "I am so-and-so," or great recognition is given. But what about the one who seeks no recognition, whatsoever, behind the scenes? He simply does it. It is always done. He is as faithful as the day—you can count on him implicitly. Unless that man is ill, or whatever, he is going to be there. He is going to do it, but you never hear anything. There is never any fanfare. There is no hype that goes on, he just does it. That is all that is required, because if you want recognition today, that's human—that is the trait of the fleshly mind—but there won't be any recognition tomorrow. I'd rather get mine tomorrow. Just serve at the present time.

Now, we all have problems, at times, because we want this, and we want that, and you know, sure, we all need a little encouragement. I guess that is the thing we really need, and hopefully I can always be of some encouragement to all of you, but let's get away from this self-aggrandizement where we want great

image, and great recognition, because if we are going to get it now, Christ said, you are not going to get it tomorrow, and I would rather wait and get mine tomorrow, in that day that will be comparable with the time when Christ was elevated to sit in positions of great stature and power. And God's promise to me is that there is a day coming when I can be there, too—when I learn what it is to serve. So it is with you. Why don't you just serve? And let's get away from this terrible, berating, terribly agitating concept of mind that we have to have recognition, and we have to have the adoration of self. If we do, we are going to fail miserably.

But what did he say here in verse 1, once again? "[I]f a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a [very] good work." Why don't you just desire to serve? It doesn't say anything about recognition. It doesn't say anything about glory, but remember, the statement is true, but your desire must be predicated also upon foundational, faithful principles. Most people think that to get into the office of a minister gives them the right to make decisions. Oh, let me assure you, brethren, there is nothing farther from the truth. I get the rare privilege of insisting that I, first and foremost, and you secondly, remain faithful to what we were all given. Now, there is a beauty that goes with that, and the beauty is in the consistency, because it is impressive. It will impress even outsiders if you live up to it. Anybody can reinterpret, reevaluate, or as we were told, re-prove. He can set about looking to his own mind, his own emotions, and his own set of circumstances, and he can alter and change in a thousand and one ways. All human beings can do that, but I'll tell you, it takes one of dedication to remain faithful. Very few will do it—very few will do it. Will you be one of them? God's Word is faithful. God is faithful. Will you be?

Alright, let's notice 1 Timothy 4 and verse 9. 1 Timothy 4 and noting verse 9. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance." This is the same Greek word, *pistos*. "Faithful" is the word *pistos*. "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe." Now, what was the statement? Let's go back to verse 8: "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Godliness is profitable unto all things. Now, what he was showing here is that physical things do have value, but by comparison, they have extremely limited value. If we are going to look at physical things as the great responsibility of life,

and we relegate spiritual things, then, to a secondary premise, we are making a very erroneous choice. We are deluding ourselves, for God said the thing that really counts is the recognition of what life is all about. Why are we here? If we can't recognize that this life was put here for a reason, and that we must fulfill that purpose, rather than to serve all these physical things—you know, like making a living, putting clothing on our bodies, and all of these physical things—we are not going to be there.

Now, is there anything wrong with putting clothing on your body? Is there anything wrong with providing the necessary food for your family? For to do less than that makes you an infidel, so says the Bible. And yet, Jesus Christ asked the question, and thereby told us, "Is not the life more than all these things?" Why do we so cautiously feed it and protect it, unless it has some intrinsic value? So, the life itself ought to be more significant, by far, than what we put on it and put in it. So, bodily exercise is necessary because it makes us more fit candidates—it makes us better servants. So, there is some value to diet—the right kind of diet—and dietary control, at least in this life, and there is profit to exercise, because it makes us better spiritually, if we can understand the reason for it. To sit down, or sit back, on our lairs, and not in any way exercise, and not in any way fulfill the expectation of God involved in the statement that "we are the temple of the Holy Spirit," is to become derelict. We must, therefore, take care of these physical bodies because they are the temple of God's Holy Spirit, and the best way to take care of them is in moderate exercise—walking, good deep breathing (those lungs need it), dietary control in our lives, and avoiding excess. All of these things are valuable because they serve a spiritual function, as long as we keep the perspective right.

2 Timothy 2 and verse 11. 2 Timothy 2, and noticing verse 11: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." In other words, what he is saying is that if there is any value to the statement that we are dead with Him, then we are also going to live with Him, because He lives—He was resurrected—and we found earlier that this was the very premise of the promises that were given to the fathers all the way from the time of Abraham—or, all the way from the time of Adam, actually. So, what we find, then, is that if Christ died—and that statement is valid, it is an absolute statement—then we are also going to live with Him, providing we really believe it, and have faith and confidence in that which God has promised.

In Titus 1 and verse 9, now. Titus 1 and verse 9. I want to complete this section, so we are going to hasten along here: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught . . ." You know, I hear so many arguments about these things. "Well, yes, but that was the Apostle Paul. Those were literally the words of God." But everybody who says that, implies that the Word was not given in that manner today, and to imply that is to manifest a total misunderstanding of the Bible. The Bible tells us clearly that the same Word was going to be revealed in the last days, and that they would not be faithful to it—they were going to turn away from that doctrine. "For man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," and here is a part of it: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught . . ." What were you taught, brethren, right back from the beginning?

"[T]hat he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Well, all I can say, brethren, is that I was there almost from the beginning. I go way back, and yet sometimes I am judged by those who came in almost 40 years after my time. That is a tragedy. And what I say, brethren, I know, and I know that I know. But I, all the way from the beginning, have said—even as the Apostle Paul said—that for the sake of conscience, if it is a matter of faith on your part, live up to it, and I will have respect for you, and so will God, until you can grow in that knowledge. But why do you force somebody else, who had much earlier knowledge, to live up to your limited knowledge? That is a tragedy, and I know what I am talking about. I can't convince some. That, itself, is a tragedy. But at least live up to it, and then live the spiritual principles that you *do* know, and cease being critical—judging—and attempting to reevaluate others. Don't do it.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught . . ." Brethren, I want you to have that right. Won't you give me the right? That is all I am asking. In all good conscience, I have to live some of the things that I know and understand. If you don't have that knowledge, don't blame me, and maybe it will come someday, with a right spirit and a right attitude.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." And you notice that even the Apostle Paul—inspired by God's Holy Spirit—manifested doubt. "That he *may* be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." We work hard at it. Hopefully, we will be successful, sometime.

Titus 3 and verse 8. Titus 3 and verse 8: "*This* is a faithful saying . . ." And you know, there must have been something going on back at that time, that the Apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, should so frequently have made this statement. It is just like the statement I have made—and I am not putting my statements in the category of the Bible at all, please don't misunderstand—that I know what I was taught. And that is a faithful statement, too.

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." Now, if you go back to verses 6 and 7, you will find out what that statement is:

Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour [talking about the love of God, and so on]; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

And that, itself, is a true statement, because that is the purpose—that is why you and I are here. It is indeed a faithful statement.

A couple more texts, very quickly. Revelation 21 and verse 5. Revelation 21 and verse 5: "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." Here, now, is Jesus Christ verifying and backing up, by that same statement, the very words He is going to utter. They are true; they are absolute; they are foundational; they are unalterable; they cannot change—there is no compromising concept there; they are faithful; they are absolute, and that word means that they never change—they do not vary; they are not subject to situation ethics; they are not subject to revision, or re-proof. They are absolutes. Do I make that point clear? That is what it means. It is not a matter of subjecting them, from time to time, to reevaluation. They are absolute.

Now in Revelation 22, and let's note verse 6:

And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true [the word "faithful" here, once again, is the word *pistos*]: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

So, the same One who dealt with the prophets of old, will again deal with them, and He is going to show us certain things that are to come to pass. Let's not assume them. You had better wait until they are shown. Otherwise, you are going to be found to be a liar, or a false prophet, and you know the fate of those. Let's wait until God *does* show us. Let's be ready, brethren. Let's just change our attitudes, and our minds, and our hearts, and let's get on our knees and let's pray to God, and let's stay in that configuration before God, and God will use us. And then we will also, by the sure mercies of God, inherit that salvation promised. That is the faithfulness of God. That is the faithfulness of his Word to us. Can we become equally faithful, by the help of His Holy Spirit? Next time, brethren, we are going to find out how human beings can become faithful.