

Faithfulness of God - Part 1

by Derek Melton

Derek Melton's sermon explores the unwavering faithfulness of God and its implications for His covenant people during times of adversity.

Duration: 55:46

Scripture: Psalm 46:1-3, Isaiah 25:1, Jeremiah 1:12, Hosea 14:4, Matthew 11:28, Romans 8:16-18, 1 Corinthians 1:8-9, 2 Timothy 3:10-11, 1 John 1:7, Revelation 19:11

Topics: "Character Of God", "God's Faithfulness", "Covenant Relationship"

Description

Derek Melton emphasizes the unwavering faithfulness of God, reminding believers that despite the uncertainties and challenges of life, God remains immutable and true to His covenant promises. He reassures the congregation that God's faithfulness is evident in His oversight of His Word, His ability to cleanse and forgive sins, and His commitment to complete the work He has begun in each believer. Melton encourages the faithful to trust in God's promises, especially during times of adversity, and to recognize that God's grace is available to all who seek Him. He concludes by urging those outside of the covenant to turn to Christ for salvation, highlighting the importance of repentance and faith in experiencing God's faithfulness.

Transcript

This message is entitled, Great is Thy Faithfulness. This may be a, I don't know that we'll be able to get through all of this today that I want to share. In fact, I know I will not be able to.

But we're going to go forth in this. It's 11 o'clock. Isaiah chapter 25, verse 1. O Lord, Thou art my God.

I will exalt Thee. I will praise Thy name, for Thou hast done wonderful things. Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.

Let's pray. Father, we need, Lord, assurance. Lord, many times in the day-to-day happenings of our life and strugglings that we face.

And Lord, we need oftentimes to be reminded, Father, that you're an immutable God. That you never change. And Lord, that you're a faithful God to your covenant people.

And Father, I pray that today, Lord, that in a season and time in many of our lives, Father, to where we face challenges and obstacles. Father, even oftentimes besetting sins. Lord, to know and to hear from the

immutable word of God.

Lord, that you will be faithful, Lord, to your people. Lord, that you'll be faithful to your household. Lord, you'll be faithful to those that belong to you, whom are called by your name.

Lord, I pray that the Holy Spirit of the living God would reveal, Lord, the very truth of the character of your faithfulness toward your beloved elect. Lord, help us today. Give us a spirit of understanding.

Holy Ghost, help us in this hour to receive these truths from the word of God. In Jesus' name, amen. One of the attributes of God that is leaned upon most often in times of adversity, in times of peril, is the faithfulness of God.

I know it personally and historically speaking in my life that in crisis hours, it's the precursor in my prayer. Oh, faithful God, be faithful unto me in this, my midnight hour, in this crisis time that I am enduring or going through. And God will prove himself and always has in times past and will in times future, prove himself to be faithful.

We're living in a time and in a world that's full of turbulence, aren't we? We're living also in a time of very much uncertainty. There's threats on every surface, on every corner, on every channel, on every news station. There's danger.

And it's imperative, friends, that we as God's covenant children glean from the past generations and the faithfulness of God towards them in their own seasons of adversity and of uncertainty. The world that we live in, friends, has become a very melting pot of trouble and panic because of threats of things such as terrorism. What about economic fragility? It's very fragile in our economic situation.

Even though the media is seemingly trying to change the perspective, there's been such damage done in the minds of the American people as to the pitfalls of the economic status of our country that there is almost a panic in the hearts of the average American. We have the very real evidences of a recession that we're seeing. We're seeing the ever-increasing percentages of unemployment advancing and advancing, and we see incomes that are decreasing, and it's really a quiet sense of panic regarding the unknown future of our nation and the stability of our nation.

It's not really spoken. It's kind of a silent panic. But when people are getting together, they're talking about the fears that they have regarding the uncertainty of the times that we're living in.

I believe, friends, that we're living in a time that is unparalleled by any times that have been in the past. Economically, I believe that our nation is facing instability as we've never faced instability before. The lack of confidence in the leaders of our nation has plummeted to a point to where the people of America are in despair and even in outrage concerning leadership within our nation because of corruptions and self-centeredness in high levels, in high cabinet positions.

But, beloved, it's during these uncertain times, it's during these seasons that are very uncertain, that are plagued with tragic happenings on the global scale, that God's covenant people, and I'm using that word purposely, that God's covenant people can find comfort and rest in their God, and a God that's faithful and true. And a God that is faithful and true. I was reading over in Revelation, I believe it was chapter 19 yesterday, that the name of Jesus Christ that is inscribed across Him, that He is faithful and true.

He is faithful and true. And so it's my prayer and it's my intention to draw from the word of God this morning to illuminate the faithfulness of God towards His beloved covenant people. First thing I want to draw out, and I want to draw a few points this morning, and then we'll conclude after we have talked about and lent some of these points, is that God is always faithful to oversee His word.

Turn with me in your Bible to Jeremiah chapter 1, please. It's just over a little bit from Isaiah. I'm going to read this out of the Amplified Bible, so don't be dismayed by the difference of translation.

The reason I'm doing this is because of clarity's sake. In Jeremiah chapter 1 and verse 12, Then said the Lord to me, You have seen well, for I am alert and active. Listen to me, friends, look at me.

There's nothing happening on this planet or within this nation that has caught God off guard. He's aware of every situation that our nation is facing, economically, morally. God is aware.

And God is at work. But this has not caught God off guard. This is not new to God.

The very foreknowledge of God tells and reveals that our God has known about the happenings of the modern American nation from since the beginnings of time. This has not caught God off guard. Nothing that transpires within the workings of this life and this earth ever catches God off guard.

God is all-knowing. He's also all-powerful. And that God also holds the heart of the king in His hand.

And our God is faithful. I am alert and active, watching over my word to perform it. Isn't that glorious? God says, I am active, and not only active, but I am alert.

And I am watching over my word to perform it. Beloved, the performance and the manifestation of the word of God is based upon the merit of Christ and not the merit of man. God does what He does solely for His glory.

Are you with me? And being so, those that are in covenant with our God experience the benefits of being one with the beneficiary, which is our God, El Shaddai, the one that is all-sufficient and more than enough, the one that is more than able to provide in times of dearth and times of lack and hardship, that our God is more than able and also more than willing to provide for His covenant children. You'll find that in times of hardship and darkness for the nation of Israel, that God always would lead them through the valley of the shadow of death, and God would always bring them to a place of devotion to Himself. Some of the situations that God would draw or bring Israel through would be pruning times, and there would be times of adversity and times of hardship, but God was with them in the midst of these workings, these divine workings of providence.

God never forsook His people. See, there are characteristics about the attributes of God that work together. God's immutability and God's faithfulness complement one another.

The immutability of God simply infers that God never changes, that God is an unchanging God. Nothing changes God, and that God is faithful to those that are in covenant with Him, and God is always faithful to Himself. Amen? And those are good things for us to know.

But just as God Himself is immutable, so is the word of God immutable. Jesus Christ, the very Son of God said, heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. Beloved, every promise that has been made by God towards His covenant people is yea and amen in Jesus Christ.

This means that these promises are unbreakable promises. God cannot lie. He is not a man that He should lie.

I'm intentionally using and drawing upon the words covenant people, covenant in this message, because covenant is the basis for the operation of the faithfulness of God towards us for our good. I'm going to make a few statements, and I don't want you to be dismantled by them concerning the faithfulness of God. I want you to gain a larger concept of the scope of the magnificence of the faithfulness of God and the operations of His faithfulness.

You'll have to forgive me because I'm dry today and I'm having to sip on this water. And so the promises of God are unbreakable promises. God cannot lie.

God's faithfulness towards His people is based on His character, but also based on the very fact that God is in covenant with a people. And covenant is the basis for the operation of God and being faithful towards us for our good. The lack of covenant, I want you to listen to this, the lack of covenant is the basis for the operation of the faithfulness of God towards sinners in exacting justice and recompense.

God is faithful to do good to those that are in covenant with Him, and God is also faithful to bring recompense and justice upon those that are outside of the covenant of hope. So just as God is faithful and just to forgive those that are in covenant with Him, He is faithful and just to damn those that are outside of covenant with Him. That helps us broaden our scope to see that God is faithful and consistent in His faithfulness.

And that the blessedness of the faithfulness of God is based upon the covenant that has been cut with His dear and precious children. What God does for our good is based upon covenant. That God has become one and we have become one with Him.

He's become one with us and we've become one with Him. He is our beloved and we are His beloved and we must understand this, that the goodness of God and the good things of God that are faithfully imparted into the everyday workings of our life is based upon covenant. And if you understand anything about covenant, covenant does not at all have a basis of merit.

It does not have a basis of merit. And so we are God's blessed and beloved covenant people. And God's pleasant word belongs to us.

And the promises of the word of God, they are towards us. And it's impossible for our God to disregard the promises that He has decreed upon the elect of God, those that are in covenant with God. The word of God says in Isaiah 40, verse eight, that the grass withereth and the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever.

Shall stand forever. So beloved, when the word of God promises to keep us, when the word of God promises to protect us, it is an immutable and an unchanging promise. God will be faithful to perform what God has promised to His elect.

Beloved, I want you to listen to this. The most remote, the remotest possibility for God to fail in what God has promised cannot exist. Let me say that again.

The most remote possibility for God to fail in what God has promised His covenant people, it cannot exist. There has never been a time since time has begun when God has been unfaithful to what He has

sovereignly decreed. There has never been a time since time has been time to when God has been unfaithful to what He has sovereignly purposed and sovereignly decreed.

There are no books of record that give any accurate citation regarding the failings of God in regard to His faithfulness towards His people, towards His covenant people. But yet there are volumes of records that testify to the faithfulness of God to undeserving people that are His covenant possession. Regardless of the economic woes that we hear and that we face, regardless of the personal tragedies that we must muddle through, the irreversible situational difficulties that we seem to have to go through and to entertain, or the hopeless personal failures that we experience, the faithfulness of our God is an unwavering ensign.

The faithfulness of our God is an unwavering ensign. Our God is a surety watching over His Word to perform it and He is faithful to that which He has promised. Our God has never lied in regard.

There has never been a time when our God has been unfaithful even one whit to that which He has sovereignly decreed or purposed. It's not possible. It's not possible.

And beloved, we can hope in our God. It's not possible for God to fail in regard to those that are in covenant with Him and the blessings ascribed to His covenant people. Glory to God.

Psalms 108, verse 12 and 13 says, Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly, for it is He that shall tread down our enemies. This is our God asserting dominion, asserting strength, asserting victory to those that are weak and fragile but yet that are in covenant.

God will help us from trouble. It's vain that we have the help of man but yet through our God we shall do valiantly. What is the basis? The basis is the faithfulness of God towards those that are in covenant with Him.

Glory to God. It is He that shall tread down our enemies. The next thing I want to decree is that God is faithful to cleanse and to forgive His covenant people of their sins.

We always amen real loud on that one because we have sinned. And I'll amen it real loud. Amen.

1 John. We know where we're going. We're going to hear about the faithful and justice of God in decreeing His children innocent although they're still guilty.

In 1 John 1, verse 7. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you but an old commandment which ye have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write to you which thing is true in Him and in you.

Because the darkness is past, the true light is now shineth. He that saith that he is in light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now. Oh, I'm reading the wrong passage.

Let's start this way. But if we walk in the light, verse 7, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. Beloved, listen.

What is this? This walking in the light as He is in the light. This is covenant. It's covenant.

We have fellowship one with another. What is it speaking of? It is speaking of covenant. And the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from sin on the basis of covenant.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, do you see this? If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just. He is what? He's faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all of our unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. Beloved, God's elect are oftentimes discomfited by fleshly weakness which soon leads to sinful practices. Oh me.

Many times we wander, not W-O-N but W-A-N, we wander into treacherous parcels without girding ourselves with the very armor of God. And consequently, we find ourselves in the very pit of despair, surrounded by every devilish fiend. We find ourselves covered with a mire.

There are also times when we are apprehended by the very pleasant things of this life and they lull us into a sleep in which we cannot wake ourselves from. And the dulling of our spiritual senses that they cause and the weakening of our spiritual strength that they emit leave us beyond the grasp of self-rescue and self-deliverance. And it's in these times, my friend, that our Deliverer comes to rescue His covenant possession, His covenant people from the very snares and the entrapments of the adversary.

He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and our wanderings and to cleanse us from the mire to which we have succumbed. In Hosea 14, verse 4, God's Word decrees, I will heal their backslidings. I will love them freely and my anger is turned away from them.

I will heal their backslidings. I will love them freely and my anger is turned away from him. It's talking to His purchased prize.

It's talking to those covenant possession, those that God has called by name, the very elect of God. And it's important, my friends, that you understand the audience to which I am addressing this morning. I'm not speaking to the unconverted who are still under the dominion of sin that are yet awaiting the stored-up wrath of God.

Beloved, the anger of God cannot be turned away from those that are outside of the hope of covenant. It's upon them, and not only upon them, it's upon them only continually. The audience to which this applies is to the born-again believer or the converted soul who is a recipient of God's mercy on the basis of a covenant that has been cut between the Lord Jesus Christ and the repentant sinner.

Beloved, has the guilt of your past or has the guilt of your present sins plagued you to the point of despair or plagued you to the point of hopelessness? Has the adversary of your soul convinced you that the unpardonable sin has been committed and that you're beyond the scope of the mercy of God and Jesus Christ? It's important, my friends, that you listen. Has your frail frame become the very object of devilish and demonic harassment insomuch that you feel that you are beyond the very grace of Almighty God? Oh, beloved covenant child, confess your sin. Covenant child of God, confess your weakness.

Covenant child of God, confess your frailty. And our God is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you from every unrighteous sin, every unrighteous weakness, and every unrighteous frailty. Glory to God.

Our God is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse those who He has purchased with His own blood and called by His own name. Now, beloved, if you perceive these bounties of mercy to be only opportunities for you to continue in your sinful ways, then you are greatly deceived today. Those who belong to Jesus Christ have crucified the lust that they formerly entertained and yearned for with a zealous passion.

If you are exploring new or convenient ways to continue in your sins, expecting to be covered by the mercy of which we are speaking this morning, then you, my listener, are unconverted and you are in the very womb of iniquity even until now. The true convert finds his sins obnoxious, distasteful, not pleasant, and not worthy of pursuit. The true convert, my friend, may sin.

He may even sin grievously, but his sin cannot find a permanent home in his life. It's a vexation to his righteous soul. These acts of sin are wholly dissimilar to the Christlike nature indwelling him.

He cannot live a lifestyle of sin. He will not, nor can he, explore new avenues to fulfill and to gratify the lust of his sinful nature. Oh, beloved, he brings them to the cross and there Jesus Christ, by his spirit, mortifies them one by one.

In 2 Peter 2, verse 5-8, God spared not the old world, but he saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes and condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those after should live ungodly. And he delivered just Lot who was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, for that righteous man dwelling among them and seeing and hearing, it vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds. Beloved, this is a type of the converted man who has Jesus Christ indwelling him, the man that has passed from death to life, that the wicked things of this life, the pleasant things of this world, they vex the inwardmost being of a righteous man.

The righteous man cannot explore the delicacies of this life and the pleasantries of sin because they vex his righteous soul, that he comes weeping and shameful to the very foot of the cross of Jesus Christ and there he lies crying out for the mercy of God in Jesus Christ that he might be crucified with Christ and that the power of God might rule and reign in his inwardmost being and that he might be set free from the exertion and the temptations of sin and evil. Glory to God. Covenant child of God, are you vexed in your heart in regard to the sins that are hiding there? Are you vexed in the inwardmost being of your heart concerning the sins that are hiding there? Is grief and anxiety welling up inside of you even now to the point of despair? Oh beloved, our God is faithful and just to forgive you and to cleanse you of these sins.

God is faithful to his covenant people even when they're bound in the very dregs of sin. I will heal their backsliding and I will love them freely. I will heal their backsliding and I will love them freely.

Point three, God is faithful to complete us in Christ. God is faithful to complete us in Christ. 1 Corinthians 1 please.

Let's see if I can't read the right chapter. In 1 Corinthians 1.6, the testimony of the word is even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you so that you come behind in no gift waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ who shall also confirm you unto the end that you may be blameless. Say blameless.

That you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. He will confirm you unto the end that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and that our God is faithful by whom you have been called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

It's a good spot for an amen, beloved. Beloved, the process of sanctification is often slow and frustrating to the true convert. We want to be like Christ and we want to be totally like Christ now.

You know, in the new birth, friend, God awakens our consciences and with these awakened consciences we as covenant people, the people of God, are wholly aware of existing inconsistencies toward the new nature of Christ that's indwelling us. And because of these maladies in us, we still grieve. We groan.

Romans 8 talks about that. We groan because awakened consciences that our Lord has exacted in us as we have trusted him are much aware of indwelling abnormalities or inconsistencies with the pure nature of Christ that indwells us. And this is a source of grief to the true child of God.

There are still trace elements of sin in us. They're attached to us. And these trace elements of sin, beloved, are inconsistent with the Christlike nature that indwells us.

And they are a dilemma to be reckoned with by the grace and the work of grace in our lives as we learn more and more about Jesus Christ. Oh, man, I wanna kiss you for that. Cold water.

Hallelujah. Listen. There are many times, friend, I want you to listen because this is important stuff.

There are many times when we become frustrated because we have these indwelling sins and they slow the pace of the transformation into the likeness of Jesus Christ. Sins that beset us and that slow us down in the race that's been set before us. And we oftentimes begin to labor.

Listen, beloved. We begin to labor in the power of our natural strength to perfect in the flesh what only God can perfect in the spirit. The Bible says in Galatians 3, verse 3, Are you so foolish having begun in the spirit that you are now made perfect by the flesh? Beloved, listen.

We are all in the school of Jesus Christ. We are all in the school of Christ. We're all being changed into the very image of His nature, the very image of Christ.

But, beloved, it's not we that strive into this end. It's the work of sanctification that is a work of the Spirit of God as we keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus Christ and His finished work. The Apostle Paul said in Hebrews 2, chapter 12, verse 2 and 3, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

We try to perfect or to finish in the flesh what God begins in the spirit. We see the slow process of sanctification whereby the old dregs of the sinful ways are being mortified in the new righteous life in Jesus Christ. The old life is being overthrown and the transformation is taking place.

But, beloved, we want that to be done now. But, beloved, it transpires throughout our whole lifetime that in that day, God, by His sovereign decree, will finish what He began because salvation and sanctification are both a work of the Spirit of God. Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, for consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Who was it that began the work of the cross in you? Who was it that began the work of grace in you? And who is it that will complete the work that has begun? Who is it that will complete the work that has begun? It is Jesus. He who began a good work in me will be faithful to complete it unto the appearing of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Glory to God.

Glory to God. And it's imperative, my friend, that you keep your sights set upon the realities of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and His finished work. And the moment that you begin to strive after more

Christlikeness, you'll find that you're falling behind in His grace.

I'm talking about a striving after the flesh. I can do more so that I can be more. Beloved, it's not what we do that determines what we will be.

It's what He has already determined is what we will be. And God has called us to keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus Christ and to not deviate away from the hope that is in Him and that His resurrection is the very basis for our transformation. Glory to God.

Not by works lest ye boast. It's the grace of God. It's the grace of God.

But, beloved, whenever you keep your eyes upon the realities of Jesus Christ and His finished work, wholly trusting Him, the word trust is important, wholly trusting Him to complete you in Him, you will be continually changed into His image. But, beloved, it is a slow and it is a purposed and it is a methodical work of grace in your life, not of yourselves. God's called you to fix your eyes.

He does the work. So many, especially in churches like this, we try to strive to be holy and we begin to do in the flesh what only God can perfect in the spirit. Not a license for sin.

We know that if you still have desires to pursue a lifestyle of sin, you are not converted and you're still in need of saving grace. We're not condemning you. Can't condemn the condemned.

The work of transformation into the very image of Christ is by the very decree of Christ. It's by the very faithfulness of Christ. And the basis of it is not your merit nor is it your strivings.

It's not the basis. First or second Corinthians 3:18. But we all with an open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord.

Transformation, the change, the work of grace in our lives, the sanctification process. How does it take place? It doesn't take place by what you do. It takes place by what you see.

Listen. Beholding the glory of the Lord. Keeping your eyes fixed upon Christ.

You're keeping your eyes and your heart and your affections in the right place. Has everything to do with the work of grace exacting itself and manifesting itself in your life that you will be as he is in that great day. And you can have confidence.

He's made an assurance and a promise and he's faithful to oversee his word that when he appears, you will be like him. You will be like him. You'll see him as he is and you will be like him.

It all has to do with his work of grace and your heart has been as you fix yourself upon him. Fix yourself upon him. Your eyes fix your heart, your affections.

That Jesus Christ, I live and move and have my very being in you. And it's your work to complete what you began in me and not mine, and not mine. Amen.

Point four, you ready? I'll close with this one. Our God is faithful and there's more to come, but this is the end for the day. Our God is faithful to deliver us from the tattering effects of adversity and trouble.

I want you to hone in on two words, tattering effects. God is faithful to deliver us from the tattering effects of the storm, but not from the storm. Listen to me.

And not the effects of the storm, the tattering effects, the worrisome, the devastating effects. Because, beloved, in the storm are effects of grace that work in you things that cannot be worked by any other means. But it's talking about the effects of the storm that would be detrimental to the child of God, like despair, hopelessness, confusion.

Are you with me? 2 Timothy 3, please. Are we still connected with each other? Engaged? In 2 Timothy 3, verse 10, we're going to read, But thou hast faithfully known my doctrine and my manner of life, my purpose and faith, my longsuffering and charity, my patience and persecutions and afflictions, which came to me at Antioch and Iconium at Lystra. Listen, beloved, this is an emulation of the Christian's life.

We do have the manner of life, which is the Christ-like life. We do have purpose. We do have faith.

We do have longsuffering. We do have charity. We do have patience, but we also have persecutions.

We also have afflictions. There are hardships, there are troubles to the Christian that will come upon us at certain places and at certain seasons in our lives. There's no escaping that.

There's no escaping that. He says, what persecutions? He said, I endured. I endured.

But out of them, all the Lord delivered me. But out of them, all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that I will, all that will live in godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Let me talk about this. Beloved, the pilgrim's way. Have any of you read the book, The Pilgrim's Progress? I wrote out from my son-in-law ten of my choicest of books for a friend of his at work.

The top, the pinnacle, of all books that have been written by man. I'm not making inference to the Bible. Of course, we know the Bible is not comparable to any work of man.

It's in a whole different category. It's not a book. It's a living writ.

It's different. It's up here. But the words that have been penned by the hands of man, the number one that I have on my list of books that all Christians must read and should read yearly is The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan.

But beloved, the pilgrim's way is a maze winding through real tight corridors, having to face obstacles, and having to endure situations that are dangerous. And if you've, listen, if you've come to the Lord Jesus Christ unwilling to accept the challenges of this pilgrimage, you've come to Jesus Christ in vain. If you believe that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, carried the only cross, and that you are in some manner, in some manner, better than He, then beloved, you are deceived and you're unfit for the kingdom of God.

You're unfit for the kingdom of God. Beloved, if you are a true follower of Jesus Christ, this revelation is nothing new to you. All those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will face persecution.

Also, beloved, it rains on the just and the unjust. Also, in this world, you will have trouble. The way of the pilgrim is intricately woven through terrain that is peril ridden.

It's filled with treachery. It's strewn with mountainous obstacles. And there's also dangerous and evil entities all along the way.

And our Lord has exhorted us to strive to enter in at the straight gate and striving insinuates exertion and strenuous effort. Some would like to paint the pilgrim's way as a stroll through flowery paths of ease. But listen, what armor would, or what warrior would ever don armor for a flowery way of life? Soldiers equip themselves with vital armor because they are engaged in battle.

Beloved, the biblical terms in regarding the saints' pilgrimage is militaristic. It's talking about war or warfare, fight or fight of faith. The Christian must be covered in an array of armor with weaponry, the sword of the spirit of God.

And it's not a flowery bed of ease. It's a brutal war to which our Lord leads us in the charge, the captain of the Lord's host. Arrayed in glory and majesty and victory, He leads us.

But beloved, there are effects of the war upon those who follow Him and call His name. The beloved true soldiers in the Lord's army also oftentimes find themselves in weariness, plagued with battle exertion and in need of strength. And the effects of this long journey upon the good man, they're wearisome and they're strenuous.

Contending with the adversary in his efforts against the saints, beloved, is taxing and costly. Yet our Lord promises us that He will be faithful to fight for us and even carry us through the battle if need be. And to carry us through the battle, Jude 3, beloved, I gave all diligence to write to you of the common salvation.

It was need for me, for me to write to you and to exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Earnestly contend. We're not alone in this quest.

We're not alone in this quest. Our Lord goes before us as a valiant conqueror, a valiant captain, leading His army right into the very strife. The promise is not to keep us from the battle, but to keep us through the battle.

Not to keep us from, but to keep us in the strife. And beloved, it's not that we're exempt from the conflict, but our Lord will be with us fighting alongside of us, slaying all of our enemies, enemies as we labor alongside of Him as joint heirs of Jesus Christ. Isn't it amazing how we use that analogy only for beneficial things and monetary things.

Oh, I'm an heir of God. I'm a joint heir with Jesus Christ. But Jesus Christ is the captain of an army that's fighting a battle.

He summons us to His side. He equips us with armor, equipping us for battle, giving us weaponry, covering us with a shield of faith, a belt of truth, a breastplate of righteousness, feet that are prepared and shod with the preparation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, a helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit. And He summons us to go forward into the strife and to war a good warfare and to fight a good fight of faith.

And our God is faithful to go before us and to fight and to carry us in times of weakness, if need be. Are there giants in the land that's before you? Are you contending with combative assailants that are standing in the way, harassing and opposing you? Oh, beloved, your deliverer draweth nigh. Luke 21, 28, when these things began to come to pass, then look up, lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh.

Our God is faithful to deliver His children out of trouble. Psalm 46, 1 to 3, God is a refuge and strength, the very present help in trouble. Therefore, we need not fear that the earth be removed and that the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea and then the waters, therefore, thereof roar and be troubled,

though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.

Our God is a refuge. Our God is a refuge, a faithful, faithful father, a very present help to His children in the pilgrim's way that are facing times of adversity and times of trouble. We will not fear.

The promise of our God is not to divert us away from trouble, but to deliver us from the midst of it, to deliver us from the midst of it. And what are you facing today, beloved, that is troubling you? What crises are staring you in the face? What dilemma is it that stands in your way? Oh, that our God is faithful to deliver us from trouble as we contend for the faith. Our God is faithful to deliver us from trouble as we contend for the faith.

Someone say amen. Romans chapter 8, turn there and then we'll close. Romans 8, 16.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and join heirs with Christ. If so be that we suffer with Him.

Do you see how we have an analogy being drawn between being an heir of Christ and becoming an heir of suffering? That we may also be glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us. With the glory that will be revealed in us.

Beloved, there are seasons in the lives of all when it's not easy. Not even for Christians to believe that God is faithful. Our faith is sorely tried.

Our eyes are bedimmed with tears and we can no longer trace the outworkings of God's love. There are times when our ears are distracted with the noises of this world. Harassed by the atheistic or whisperings of Satan.

And when we can no longer hear the sweet accents of His still small voice. There are times when cherished plans have been thwarted. Friends on who we have relied have failed us.

Our professed brother or sister in Christ has betrayed us. And we stagger. We stagger.

We sought to be faithful to God and now it seemingly a dark cloud hides us or hides Him from us. We find it difficult, impossible for carnal reason to harmonize His frowning providence together with His gracious promises. The beloved God is faithful.

God is faithful. An unknown author cited, we fail Him but blessed be His name. He has never failed us.

He will never do so. We doubt Him. We mistrust His love and His providence and His guidance.

We faint because of the way. We murmur because of the way. Yet all the time He is there blessing us and waiting to pour out upon us a blessing so great there shall not be room to receive it.

The faithfulness of God. The faithfulness of God. John Wesley penned, Thy faithfulness Lord each moment we find.

So true to Thy word so loving and kind. Thy tender mercy so tender to all the lost race. The vilest offender may turn and find grace.

The mercy I feel to others I show. I set to my seal that Jesus is true. He all may find favor who come at His call.

O come to my Savior His grace is for all. To save what was lost from heaven He came. Come sinners and trust in Jesus name.

He offers you pardon. He bids you be free. If sin be your burden O come unto me.

O let me commend my Savior to you. The publicans friend and advocate too. For you He is pleading His merits and death with God interceding for sinners beneath.

Then let us submit His grace to receive. Fall down at His feet and gladly believe. We all are forgiven for Jesus sake.

Our title to heaven His merits we take. Let's stand. O Lord Thou art my God I will exalt Thee.

I will praise Thy name for Thou has done wonderful things. Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and true. Thy counsels of old are faithfulness.

Beloved if you're in covenant with our God He is faithful to bring to pass that which He has promised to you as His covenant child. Beloved if you're outside of the covenant of hope God is faithful and just to hold you accountable for your sins but it need not be. The grace of Jesus Christ is available to those who will humble themselves and seek the face of God and cry out and repent and turn away from their sins and in faith turn to Jesus Christ that His grace may be an impact in your life and transform you from a hell deserving sinner into a child of God in covenant with the creator of the heavens and the earth.

Listen beloved if you're outside of the hope of the covenant of Christ I cannot biblically give you any cause to expect that God's faithfulness will work anything good on your behalf. In fact the faithfulness of God is faithful in setting His fury and wrath against you as a sinful person. But beloved if you're a child of God in covenant with Him, living by faith not by sight serving the Lord and placing Him first, loving God with all of your heart, your neighbor as yourself then God's faithfulness is for the good of those who trust Him.

There are benefits from the benefactor to the beneficiary, we of which are beneficiaries and God will be faithful to complete what He began. He'll be faithful to protect and to keep us, to procure us even unto that day and to present us unto Himself a blameless, spotless people a bride. And it's a promise of God.

God is faithful to His word. Listen if you're outside of covenant with God it needs not be that way because Jesus said in the word in the 11th chapter of Matthew come unto me all of you who are weary and heavy laden that is a weariness and a heaviness because of sin and the attachments thereof that drag you down and destroy you inwardly He says come to me and I'll not cast you out. But you must come acknowledging you are sinful acknowledging that you're deserving of God's wrath and you must come and repent of your sins which means there's a change of heart that's worked by God's grace in you as you cry out and you see yourself as a sinner Oh God be merciful to me a sinner and God will work as you trust Jesus Christ in His word to save you to complete what He began to rescue you from a life that's entrapped and entangled with sin that He will be faithful and just to deliver you and to save you His grace as you trust Him will work in your life unto salvation, unto the glory of God People that are damned are damned by choice.

They're damned by choice because free grace has been provided for all who will call out and trust in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen? Amen. Let's pray.

Father we just come to You Lord and we thank You for Your Word. We thank You that You're a faithful a faithful Father We're thankful that we can be heirs of God and join heirs with Jesus Christ and the Lord God We're thankful that we can even partake of the sufferings of Christ. It needs be But Lord we know that You'll see us through to the end You'll see us through to the end Oh God we throw ourselves upon Your faithfulness and Your immutability.

We throw ourselves upon Your mercy Lord we know we deserve nothing other than wrath but oh God we plead for mercy And Lord we know and we trust and have a confidence that we can stand before You Lord God in the righteous array of Jesus Christ. Because of the promise of God and Your faithful character in regarding Your Word I pray this Word helps Your people this day That it helps the hearts of Your people. I pray that this Word that's spoken, if there are those here who are outside of the covenant of hope that are not converted to Jesus Christ by grace, free grace Father I pray that they would see and feel the weight of their sin and see Lord the open arms of Jesus Christ and nailed pierced hands They'll see You seated at the right hand of the Father in all power and authority and majesty Lord they'll humbly come to You crying out in confession of their sinfulness and of their trust in You Oh God be the very catalyst of free grace to work in their hearts unto a salvation to which no man can boast Lord let the realities of these truths pierce and penetrate the very corridors of the very paths of our existence Lord that we can have a confidence in Your faithfulness towards us and we thank You for this in Jesus name Have a seat

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