

Works of the Flesh / Fruit of the Spirit

Part 42 (faithfulness 3)

Scripture: Galatians 5:16-26

Scripture Reading: Lamentations 3:21-26

INTRO:

{G. FAITHFULNESS}

3. The Faithfulness in the New Man

Well today we have come to the third message on faithfulness, point number 3, the faithfulness in the new man, the faithfulness of the born-again believer. In the last message we looked at the faithfulness of the world, and in that message I said that the one thing that the world is truly faithful in, is its continuance in being unfaithful to God, to a belief or faith of error that keeps that lost man steadfast and faithful to anything else except that of God.

And in the message before that we looked at the faithfulness of God, how God is faithful in everything He does, of things in the past and of things He will do in the future. That He is forever faithful to His own character of being a good God, a just God, a faithful God.

But before we looked at the faithfulness of God and the faithfulness of the world, we looked at the actual word we have here in Galatians chapter 5 verse 22.

And I showed you, in the beginning of that first message, that the word faithfulness, the word that is used here in Galatians chapter 5 verse 22, is the Greek word *pistis* *pis'-tis*, Strong's 4102. It is a word that is translated as 'faith' 226 of the 228 times it is used in the New Testament of the New King James Version. And only twice as faithfulness, once in Galatians 5:22 and the other in Romans 3:3.

When we looked at Romans 3:3, we saw how it must mean faithfulness, the 'faithfulness' of God, that as the verse says in the New King James Version, that the unbelief in man, does not change the faithfulness of God. Because if it is left as faith, then the statement implies that God has faith. And I said that an all-seeing, all-knowing God does not have or need faith. But I also told you that we would come back to this thought here in the third message. However, this time for a different reason than the one expressed in Romans chapter 3 verse 3. Because today we are going to look at why this word is translated as faithfulness in the passage of Galatians 5:22 in some versions, before we begin looking at what is to be in the Christian.

You see, if the word is left as faith, here in verse 22 of Galatians chapter 5, then that means that it is ‘faith’ that comes as a fruit of God by the Holy Spirit, that ‘your faith’ comes to you from God and not something of yourself. And as I said in the first message, this is what Calvinism teaches and what John Calvin himself taught in his book Institutes of the Christian Religion, and quoting John Calvin from his own book he writes this;

I admit, indeed, that faith is the proper and entire work of the Holy Spirit, enlightened by whom we recognize God and the treasures of his grace, and without whose illumination, our mind is so blind that it can see nothing, so stupid that it has no relish for spiritual things.

EOQ

John Calvin teaches that faith comes entirely from God, and not just the faith as to believe in something, but that saving faith is what comes from the Holy Spirit and is of no power or faith of your own doing.

John Calvin says that it is the ‘proper and entire work of the Holy Spirit’, in that you can never have faith, if God does not give it to you. In Calvinism, God has to give you faith to believe.

In Calvinism you first have to be of the elect, then you have to be regenerated, then He makes you to be born again, and then, you are given faith to believe in Jesus Christ. A Calvinistic flow chart of salvation then look something like this;

Foreknown, election, predestined, called, regeneration, converted (and it is when you are converted you are given this believing faith and repentance) then justified, adopted, sanctified, preserved and finally glorified. And how they come to such thinking regarding faith, is from verses such as Galatians 5:22 where Paul says it is the fruit of the Spirit, coming from God alone. And from verses as Ephesians 2 verses 4 and 5 which says;

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

And they really stress the part of you being dead according to the verse, in not being able to do anything on your own.

Now the question that comes to mind is... does this apply to your believing faith, your saving faith? Well, Calvinism says yes.

But then again it's Jesus, who used the phrase 'your faith' in some form or another 11 times in the gospels, saying things like 'your faith has made you well', 'great is your faith', 'your faith has saved you', and if faith is something that comes 'only from God' then how do you explain these words of Jesus I just read... or when he said to the disciples 'oh you of little faith', or 'where is your faith?

You see, Paul also used the term 'your faith' in many of his letters. And I want to show you just one of these from 1 Thessalonians chapter 3. Here in this part of the letter Paul talks about the concern he had about 'their faith'. 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, and I'll begin reading from verse 1;

Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone,

2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.

Tell me, whose faith was Paul concerned about... their faith, the faith of the people, Paul says ‘concerning your faith’ not about God’s giving of faith in the people as Calvinism teaches. Because if Calvinism would be correct, then Paul doubts the power of God regarding the giving of His faith. Think about verse 2 in that Calvinistic context, if faith comes from God, then Paul believed that Timothy had more power or is more reliable than God, in order to establish them in their faith, or that the faith from God they received was in some way inefficient or ineffective, not quite enough to keep them saved. And this would be evident by Paul's concerns and in sending Timothy.

Because now listen to verse 4 and 5; Paul still writing here says;

For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.

Again, who's faith is Paul concerned about, their faith, why... lest by some means the tempter has tempted them and all their labor of spreading the gospel would be in vain. And if Calvinism is right then it means that Paul believed the devil has the power to thwart God's faith in the believer, which would be completely contrary to the rest of their teaching. Or perhaps, this is the part of Calvinism that would say that God didn't want them to have faith and Paul just didn't get the memo yet... But listen to how Paul continues the chapter, if we stay with what Paul is talking about here, that it is 'their faith' in 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, listen to verse 6 through 8;

But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you—

7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.

8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.

Timothy brought Paul good news of 'their faith', Paul says 'in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by 'your faith' and then verse 8 'For now we live, if 'you' stand fast in the Lord.'

I believe that when the bible talks about ‘your faith’, or ‘our faith’, or ‘their faith’ it talks about the believer’s faith, the trust, the belief, that sinners have chosen to put their faith in the saving power of God and believe His words, His works and His promises. Just as when Jesus said to the woman who anointed His feet in Luke chapter 7, in verse 50;

...He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Faith, your faith, what you have put your faith in... not just something given to you as some pre-eternal decree of God from before the foundation of the world, prepared for the elect and given to them by God.

But their faith, their faith in God, those who put their trust, their faith in the God who has shown them this promise of eternal life given by Jesus Christ and His blood.

So if we then go back to Galatians chapter 5 and look at verse 22, is it ‘your saving faith’ that comes to you from the Holy Spirit... faith that comes from God? Or is it faithfulness that the Holy Spirit brings and produces in us? Remember there is no word faithfulness in the Greek as far as I can tell, it’s just the plain word of faith.

Well before I can answer that question, we also need to look at another aspect which the bible calls the ‘gift of faith’, as spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12 verse 9, now the Calvinist again would say that this is still saving faith, the faith that saves you and comes from God as in the flow chart of the list that I showed you earlier.

But if you are not a Calvinist or reject John Calvin’s teaching of how we receive saving faith, and rather look at scripture objectively, how do you then explain the verses of 1 Corinthians chapter 12, of the context of there being such a thing as the gift of faith? Well turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and I’ll begin reading from verse 1;

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:

2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.

3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Look at verse 3, Paul says that no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit, only true believers can truly say this of Jesus, implying that only true believers will receive these spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit as noted in verse 1.

And Paul talks about these gifts as being gifts to the believers in verses 1 through 3 but then he elaborates on this in verses 4 through 6 by saying there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, differences of ministries, but the same Lord, diversities of activities but it is the same God who works all in all.

Different gifts, different ministries, different activities, but all coming from one place which is from the Lord, from God and the Holy Spirit. But now note verse 7, Paul says, ‘but the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one... for what... what does it say in the verse... the profit of all. Note that phrase ‘for the profit of all’, underline it or highlight it in your bible if you are into highlighting things, because this is a very crucial phrase for the entire context.

Because it means that the different gifts, ministries and activities done in these verses are not given as to be the possession of the receiver, but they are to be something that is given to the believer and is to be used for the... profit of all, for everyone else in the group or church. Because look at the list of gifts Paul lists in this list;

Number 1, word of wisdom.

Number 2, word of knowledge.

Number 3, faith, and we’ll come back to this one in a moment.

Number 4, healing.

Number 5, miracles.

Number 6, prophecy.

Number 7 discerning of spirits.

Number 8, different kinds of tongues or languages.

Number 9, the interpretation of tongues or languages.

And then in verse 11 Paul concludes by saying

*But one and the same Spirit works all these things,
distributing to each one individually as He wills.*

Now, if you look at this list, and look at them as Paul says that they are to be for the profit of all, as most of them are self-explanatory in such a description, as the gift of words of wisdom or healing, but what about faith in the list? Is this gift the gift of ‘saving faith’ as claimed by the Calvinist? The problem with that is... what would a personal gift, of saving faith, be doing in a list that Paul says is to be profitable to all?

Tell me, what does your personal saving faith do to profit or benefit others... can you give them some of 'your faith' so that they have some too? If I talk about the Calvinist view of 'saving faith' as the gift from God, the actual faith that saves you, does it work the same as giving someone wisdom, or knowledge? Does it work the same as in healing, or prophecy... or showing others how to discern spirits, or languages or interpretations? Well it can't if this faith only comes from God.

You see if this faith that is in the list is 'your saving faith', it's out of place in the context. 'Your faith' is exactly that, it is 'your faith', you can't give it to others, you can't apply it to other people so that they have some too. You can't give your faith out to others like words of wisdom or knowledge, so what then is this faith in this list if it is not saving faith?

Well here is what I propose, this 'faith' is not your personal 'saving faith', personal saving faith is your own thing, you cannot give it away or pass it on like some library book, it is yours and yours alone. Just read Hebrews chapter 11 and look at how faith is described in each individual of the chapter.

The apostle John also says in 1 John 5:4;

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

My faith, your faith, is what has overcome the world, see my faith doesn't give you or anyone else the victory to overcome the world, no more than your faith gives me victory.

The book of Jude says in verse 20;

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

I propose that this 'faith' in the verse of 1 Corinthians 12 is not 'your saving faith' but if anything, the teaching of the faith. The teachings of the faith that is profitable to all, see if you look at the context, every single one of these gifts is there to benefit or profit someone else including this one Paul calls faith, the teaching of this faith in sharing the gospel.

See I can share my faith in telling someone about it, tell them about Jesus and God and the gospel, but I can't share my faith in taking what is in me and mine and give that to someone else... we can share the faith which is our faith, but we can't share our faith, I hope that makes sense.

It's like when Oswald Chambers spoke of your faith and said;

You can never give other people what you have found,
but you can make them homesick for the same thing.

Oswald Chambers. The Complete Works of Oswald Chambers (p. 285). Kindle Edition.

You cannot give someone else your faith, you can't give someone a faith 'transfusion' and give them of what you have. But you can share this faith, meaning telling them about it, share the gospel, telling them about what Christ has done in your life and lead others to it. But you can't 'give' your faith to them. Because even if you look at the aspect of the giving of faith as a gift in scripture, it is only given to believers, those who are already saved by faith. When faith is given by God, it is only given to those who are already of the faith. Just like the first verses of 1 Corinthians 12 we just looked at. Paul calls them brethren, they were Gentiles carried away to these dumb idols, but now they are those who say that Jesus is Lord by the Holy Spirit, and they receive this gift of teaching the faith. And if we go back to this teaching aspect, listen to what Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:24;

*That a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be
gentle to all, able to... teach...*

Paul say in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 26;

How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

In Colossians 1:28 speaking about Jesus he says;

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Also in chapter 3 verse 16;

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And Jude tells us in verse 3 saying;

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

building yourselves up on your most holy faith, as he says in verse 20.

So, if I do not believe with the Calvinist view of this faith in Galatians chapter 5 of it being saving faith, then we come to the decision of either it being faithfulness or, the teaching of faith as in 1 Corinthians 12. If it is the former, faithfulness, then it is something we exercise or do to others, that we are faithful people in all that we do. If it is the latter, then it is the teachings of faith, it is something you show others, show them of what is on the inside of you, of what you have come to believe, sharing the faith as in sharing the gospel we believe?

You see as an example; on one hand you have the encounter Barnabas and Paul had with Elymas on the island of Paphos in Acts 13:6-8 where it says;

Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus,

7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

Paul and Barnabas wanted to share the faith with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, they were in the process of giving and teaching of the faith as this man sought to hear the word of God and was seeking the gospel by Barnabas and Paul. This would support the fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 5:22 as being the teachings of faith to others as it come from the Holy Spirit.

But then you also have verses supporting the other side, of it being faithfulness, the faithfulness of the Christian in all the things he does in his Christian life, verses like Matthew 25:23 when Jesus says;

'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Or Paul in 1 Corinthians 4 verse 2 saying:

Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

Or even the words of Jesus in Revelation chapter 2 in verse 10;

Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

So now if we go back to our verse and word in Galatians chapter 5 verse 22, we come to the question is this the teachings of faith or faithfulness, as it is corrected in some versions?

Is it the teachings of faith or the sharing of faith, of something we are to impart to others about salvation in Christ that comes as fruit of the Spirit, that which is produced in us by the Holy Spirit? Because remember it is just the plain regular word faith in the Greek text.

Or is it faithfulness, as Vine's dictionary says, that it is corrected from the King James Version, that it is the attribute of the Christian being faithful to God and to Jesus Christ, and that this faithfulness is what others should see in us in the things we do and the jobs we have in the world or in the church or to God Himself.

Now, personally, I believe that we can rule out it being 'saving faith' as John Calvin teaches by the scriptures we have already looked at. And we must now decide is it the teachings of the faith we are to display as fruit onto others; share with others as 2 Corinthians 12 and Acts 13 shows us? Or is it the fruit of faithfulness as fruit of the Spirit we are to display to others, in being faithful in what we say and do in our life, as Jesus says in Matthew 25:23?

In one argument you have the actual Greek word of faith in the text, as it is translated in the other 226 times in the New Testament. On the other, you have it changed to faithfulness just as in Romans chapter 3 verse 3 where it doesn't work if kept as the original word.

Well this is one of those times were a couple hours of Sunday school would come in handy in looking at a topic such as this. But, we don't have a couple of hours, and even if I would take the next hour of time someone may stand up at the back of the church and start tapping their wristwatch at me with their finger.

Because after studying it at length, the conclusion I came to, is that the word that is used in the verse. refers to the Christian being faithful and not the teaching or sharing of faith, and definitely not the saving faith as Calvinism teaches.

Because when I did check various commentaries, there were only a couple that truly interpreted this verse to mean the faith of the Christian. One is the Pulpit commentary which said this;

It is disputed in what precise shade of meaning the apostle here uses this term. The sense of "fidelity,"...
...seems out of place, when we consider the particular evils which are now in his eye as existing or in danger of arising in the Galatian Churches.

Belief in the gospel suits this requirement perfectly, and presents us with the apparently needed contrast to the "heresies" of ver. 20.

EOQ

In short what he is saying is that if you look at all the bad things Paul is talking about in verses 19, 20 and 21, it is our faith that is to be expressed in verse 22, our faith that is to counteract or overcome the 'heresies' and evils of Paul's list of the previous verses. This would be supported by what John said 'your faith has overcome the world'.

Another commentary was the Alford commentary, and it says it is faith, and simply says;

in the widest sense: faith, towards God and man

However, almost all the rest of the ones I check, (including some Calvinist commentaries) leaned towards this word faith in Galatians chapter 5 verse 22 as meaning faithfulness, the faithfulness of the Christian in his or her life.

And I found that MacLaren's Expositions explains this passage very well and he says this regarding these fruits of the Spirit;

I. The threefold elements of character here.

It is perhaps not too artificial to point out that we have here three triads of which the first describes the life of the Spirit in its deepest secret; the second, the same life in its manifestations to men; and the third, that life in relation to the difficulties of the world, and of ourselves.

The first of these three triads includes love, joy, and peace, and it is not putting too great a strain on the words to point out that the source of all three lies in the Christian relation to God.

Love, of course, heads the list, as the foundation and moving principle of all the rest. It is the instinctive act of the higher life and is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit.

The remaining two members of this triad are plainly consequences of the first.

Jesus Christ pledged Himself to impart His joy to remain in us, with the issue that our joy should be full.

Peace will be built upon love and joy, if our hearts are ever turning to God and ever blessed with the inter-communion of love between Him and us.

The second triad is long-suffering, kindness, goodness. All these three obviously refer to the spiritual life in its manifestations to men. The first of them--long-suffering--describes the attitude of patient endurance towards inflictors of injury or enemies,

The third triad--faithfulness, meekness, temperance--seems to point to the world in which the Christian life is to be lived as a scene of difficulties and oppositions.

Now take note of this next part

The rendering of the Revised Version is to be preferred to that of the Authorized in the first of the three,

Remember in that first message on faithfulness I talked about the Vine's dictionary saying that the Revised Version corrects the Authorized Version in faith to faithfulness this is what he is referring to.

But again, he says;

The rendering of the Revised Version is to be preferred to that of the Authorized in the first of the three, for it is not faith in its theological sense to which the Apostle is here referring.

Possibly, however, the meaning may be trustfulness just as in 1 Corinthians 13. It is given as a characteristic of love that it 'believeth all things.'

More probably, however, the meaning is faithfulness, and Paul's thought is that the Christian life is to manifest itself in the faithful discharge of all duties and the honest handling of all things committed to it.

EOQ

If you remember I said something similar in the very beginning of these first three fruits, that the peace of God comes from the joy of God, which comes from the love of God. And these first three are all because of God producing them in me, something I am to show to others.

MacLaren says the same thing about these first 3, then he says the next 3 can be grouped together in displaying the actions towards other individuals, and the last three beginning with faithfulness can be classed as the fruit of my interactions with the rest of the world.

Faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, are all things and actions that go beyond just the interactions of the one on one individual interaction but apply to all people.

Albert Barns commentary on Galatians chapter 5 verse 22, says that it means faithfulness and says;

It is probable that the word is used in this sense because the object of the apostle is not to speak of the feelings which we have towards God, so much as to illustrate the influences of the Spirit in directing and controlling our feelings towards men.

True religion makes a man *faithful*. The Christian is faithful as a man; faithful as a neighbor, friend, father, husband, son.

He is faithful to his contracts; faithful to his promises.

No man can be a Christian who is not thus faithful; and all pretensions to being under the influences of the Spirit when such fidelity does not exist, are deceitful and vain.

EOQ

Not only does he give his opinion, but the warning that any pretense of saying you are guided by the Holy Spirit and yet you are unfaithful in the things of life, is being deceitful and vain. This coincides with Jesus' concluding remarks of faithfulness in the account of the shrewd servant in Luke 16 verse 13;

13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

J Vernon McGee says this about Galatians 5:22;

Faith, in this list, means faithfulness. If you are a child of God, you will be faithful. Of you are married; you will be faithful to your husband or wife. Of you are an employee, you are going to be faithful to your job and your boss. If you are a church member, you are going to be faithful to you church. You are going to be faithful wherever you are and in whatever you do.

These are just a couple of examples of commentaries who view this word faith as faithfulness in the list we are looking at.

You see the whole idea then revolves around the condition of your own heart... are you faithful, faithful to the Holy Spirit, to the one who dwells inside of you? Are you faithful to Jesus Christ and His commands? Are you faithful to God? See, God is ever faithful, and it is His desire that by the Holy Spirit that we are to be faithful, faithful to Him as well as to the things of our life.

Because as Jesus said, you cannot serve two masters, you cannot serve the flesh and live for the Spirit at the same time, you cannot be faithful to God and to His commandments and continue to do those sinful wants and desires of the flesh. You cannot serve two masters; for either you will hate the one and love the other, or else you will be loyal to the one and despise the other.

So now the question is, are you going to be faithful to Christ and all the things of this list... or are you still faithful to some of the things in the former list, things of which Paul says those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God!

Tell me, when Jesus comes, do you want to hear the words;

'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Or are you going to hear the words;

'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

Faithfulness, it's not just being faithful in your actions with other people, or your work ethic, or even to your spouse, for all those things the world can do as well, and sometimes with more faithfulness than that of Christians.

But it's that faithfulness to God, to the things He commands us, tells us from His word and follow them as faithful Christians, we are to be those who believe the words of this book!

Are you faithful to what this book all says?

You see, as a side note and illustration, years ago, when I began highlighting verses in my bible, I didn't just want to use one color, otherwise one might as well just get the whole book in yellow, and I didn't want it to just be random colors all over the place making it look like some lucky charms cereal box on the inside, but have some order and structure to the colors.

And so I began with some order to the colors I would use.

I used orange as being the color for interesting general note worthy verses, green for the return of Christ, yellow for the warnings of physical and sexual immoralities, blue for the evils of alcohol, and pink... was for the commandments for the Christian walk, in the things we are to do in order to be faithful Christians... and so far I think I have just as many or more pink highlights than any other color.

And by the time I get to the end of my life, if the Lord tarries, the inside of my bible may look like the lucky charms cereal box, but one thing you will notice is that... there is really a lot of pink commands in the pages of scripture.

And just share a couple with you for the context we are looking at here this morning. Romans chapter 8 in verse 5 to 9, Paul says;

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4 verse 2;

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

Are you faithful to God, are you faithful to the words of the bible... and I don't just mean the highlighted verses you like and choose to follow while ignoring the rest... no, I mean are you faithful to what the entire bible says and of what it tells us? Even with the hard and difficult things it says. Because if you are one who picks and chooses the verses you want to hear and adhere to, you are not very faithful to the word, or to GOD.

It's not a book that is to be treated like some buffet, where you pick the good and easy parts and leave the undesired and difficult parts.

It's not just some vending machine where you put in your two bits and pull out what you want for whatever may make you feel good in the moment.

No, if we want to be faithful to God and His word, this book has to be taken as the full meal deal for the Christian life, cover to cover, every word, from the, 'in the beginning' to the final 'amen', if you want to be faithful to God you have to include all of it!

And so, in conclusion, are you a faithful Christian, faithful in your words, in your actions, in your commitments, are you filled with faithfulness, and none more important than asking the question, are you faithful to God? Are you faithful to God? When Jesus comes at the rapture or you come to the end of your life before He returns, what words will you hear?

'Well done, good and faithful servant;

Well then you must ask yourself first... are you that faithful servant? Are you doing all of what the bible says, obeying all of its words? Adhering to all the 'pink' highlights, of scripture? And following through in what they say? Or are you going to hear the words;

'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

You know where to look for the answer, I've been talking about it now for 42 messages already, it's right here (tap my heart) right here on the inside, that little dark chamber we do not always like to look into. But it is the only place we can go to find the real answer to this question.

Faithfulness, your faithfulness, that's what you need to look at, not others, not your friends, not your spouse, your faithfulness.

It is as A. W. Tozer said,

An honest man with an open Bible and a pad and pencil is sure to find out what is wrong with him very quickly.

Well may the Lord bless us with His words and that we would be faithful in obeying them every day of our Christian life.