

Diligently Faithful

by Lloyd Brubacker

This sermon emphasizes the importance of faithfulness and diligence in our Christian walk, highlighting the need to press on despite challenges and to be faithful stewards of what we have been entrusted with. It explores the concept of faithfulness in contrast to mere belief, urging believers to continue in obedience and faithfulness even when inspiration wanes. The parable of the talents is used to illustrate the importance of being faithful and productive with what we have been given, rather than being deceived or complacent.

Scripture: Philippians 3:14, Colossians 3:1, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 3:3, Colossians 3:5, Matthew 25:14, 1 Corinthians 15:58

Topics: "Faithfulness", "Stewardship"

Description

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Transcript

My heart was distressed in your holy ground, And low in the pit where my sins dragged me down. I cried to the Lord from the deep, fiery glen, To deliver me from the outage, old and vain. He brought me out of my regret, He set my feet on the path to save.

He put a song in my soul today, A song of praise, alleluia. He placed me upon the strong rock by his side, My sins were established, and here I abide. No danger of falling, while here I remain, For I stand by his grace until the brown I dim.

He brought me out of my regret, He set my feet on the path to save. He put a song in my soul today, A song of praise, alleluia. He gave me a song, was the new song of praise, I hear my life in sweet nocturnal grace.

My heart's overflowing, I'm happy and free, How great is my Redeemer who has rescued me. He brought me out of the fiery crusade, He put a song in my soul today, A song of praise, alleluia. I'll tell of his wonderful mercy to me, I'll praise him till all men his goodness shall see.

I'll sing of salvation and hope and the growth, Till many shall hear the truth and trust in God. He brought me out of my regret, He set my feet on the path to save. He put a song in my soul today, A song of praise, alleluia.

I'll tell of the pit with its woe and despair, I'll praise the dear Father who answered my prayer. I'll sing my new song of the glory of God, And join in the chorus with the saints above. He brought me out of my regret, He set my feet on the path to save.

He put a song in my soul today, A song of praise, alleluia. I really like that song. It shows the enthusiasm, Kind of echoes what Robert had, A little bit of enthusiasm.

Could we stand and pray? Father, we thank you for this day, time together. Thank you for the things we heard this morning. Help us to consider in our lives the things that could be a hindrance to you.

Just help us be faithful in all that we do. Pray for all the brothers and sisters here, and the ones that are not here, and the ones scattered abroad, that we could endure to the end. Pray that the rest of the day could be edifying.

In Jesus' name, amen. Yeah, I appreciate the opening, Daniel. Thought-provoking.

I have these thoughts that pop in my mind as people share things, and if I do not write them down, I'll forget them, and then by the time I'm up here, or ready to speak or something, I'm not sure what they were. But I'll try to, so Daniel talked about things, maybe that could be possibly in the way, or just the question of why things seem more dull, or can seem more dull in life. The thing I was planning on talking about, the subject this morning, is faithfulness and diligence.

And I figured that it seems like it could tie in pretty well with what Daniel shared. Beyond this point, as we go on, are we faithful in our prayer life? Are we faithful with our thoughts? Are we faithful in the things that we do? So, diligence and faithfulness. They're fairly similar, but there's a difference.

Diligence would be characterized as a steady, earnest, or energetic effort, and faithfulness is more loyal, constant, and steadfast. So, I was thinking that we want to be diligently faithful. Because you can be faithful, say, in an earthly sense.

You can show up to the job every day, but you may not have the, you might be kind of grumpy, but you still show up. You're faithful in coming. But you're not earnest or energetic about the job.

It could also pull over in the spiritual side of things. I wasn't exactly sure what to talk about this week. I really didn't have any topic that I had consolidated enough to talk about in my mind, but there's this one person that said, usually the best thing to talk about are the things that you're working on in life.

So, one thing I'm trying to work on in life is faithfulness and diligence. So, I just thought I'd talk about that. I guess the first, I will look at some verses of faithfulness and diligence, and then the inverse of that, of unfaithfulness and negligence, I guess, slack, slacker.

That would be the opposite of that. But first, let's look at, let's look at diligence and faithfulness. I'll kind of mix them together.

Deuteronomy 6, 6 through 8. This is a verse that has been challenging and kind of ties into a few verses. It's what Daniel is saying a little bit on what do you think about the first thing in the morning or before you

go to bed or during the day. 6, 6 through 8. These words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk to them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as you sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. Is there another word for frontals? Any version that puts a different word there? Phylacteries.

Phylacteries. Okay. The next one, I'll just have several verses I'll go through here.

The next one would be in Deuteronomy 7 verse 9. Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps His covenant and His loving kindness to a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments. I'd like to note there what's said there to the children of Israel is also repeated in almost the same words as Jesus says in John 14 verse 21. He says, He who keeps My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father and I will love him and I will disclose Myself to him.

Joshua's farewell speech before he passed away. He was giving a speech. He said, So take diligent heed to yourself to love the Lord your God.

Then he goes on to tell them what would happen if they would not. Diligent. So think about it.

Give earnest heed. Give energetic effort to love the Lord your God. Psalms 37 verse 3. Trust in the Lord and do good.

Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. I just thought that's interesting. Cultivate faithfulness.

Psalms 89 verse 1. I will sing of thy loving kindness of the Lord forever. I will sing of the loving kindness of the Lord forever to all generations. I will make known your faithfulness with My mouth.

Psalms 119 verse 3 through 5. They also do no unrighteousness. They walk in His ways. You have ordained your precepts that we should keep them diligently.

Oh that My ways may be established to keep your statutes. I find a lot of the spirit that David had just applies so well to following Jesus in the way that we're supposed to earnestly and faithfully seek Him, obey Him. Proverbs 10 verse 4. Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

Proverbs 12 verse 22. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal faithfully are His delight. Proverbs 13 verse 4. The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the soul of the diligent is made fat.

Proverbs 13 verse 24. He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently. Proverbs 21 verse 5. The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty.

Proverbs 25 verse 13. Like the cold of a snow in the time of harvest is a faithful messenger to those who send him, for he refreshes the soul of his master. I was trying to think what cold snow in the harvest time.

I'm assuming it means it was hot and dry and there's just a little bit of cold snow. I'm not sure if anybody else has a better idea of why cold snow in the harvest because usually you don't really want your corn and stuff to get moisture before you harvest it, but maybe it's just a refreshing thing. That's what he's talking about.

Proverbs 27 verse 6. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy. Wounds, I guess, could also be corrections. What would be another word for that? I guess I'm paraphrasing, but faithful are the rebukes of a friend.

I don't think he's literally meaning that a friend comes and hits you with something. Isaiah 26 verse 9. At night my soul longs for you. There you go, Daniel.

At night my soul longs for you. Indeed, my spirit within me seeks you diligently. For when the earth experiences your judgments, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

Now, we know Daniel and his three friends were faithful. Daniel, I'll read a part about Daniel though. Daniel 6, 3 through 5. Then this Daniel began distinguishing himself among the commissioners and the satraps.

Because he possessed an extraordinary spirit and the king planned to appoint him over the entire kingdom. Then the commissioners and the satraps began trying to find a ground of accusation against Daniel in regard to government affairs. I think they were jealous.

Maybe it doesn't mention it here in the quote I got, but they didn't want Daniel to be promoted. But they could find no ground of accusation or evidence of corruption inasmuch as he was faithful and no negligence or corruption was to be found on him. Then these men said, we will not find any ground of accusation against Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God.

In other words, we won't find anything against him unless it is the faith he has, the faithfulness he has to that. Can anyone else think of anybody that was diligent in the Old Testament? I'm sure there's a bunch. Nehemiah? Noah? Yeah.

I had written down a few people. Noah was one of them. Joseph, Joshua, Job, Deborah, Esther, Prophet Samuel, King David.

A lot of those we know and I was wondering if there's any that we do not know. At least ones I didn't know. I didn't remember this even though I think I heard of this person before.

But does anybody know who Jehoshua was? She would have been the person that saved King Joash when Athaliah, the mother, after Jehu had come in and killed off most of the people of the sons of Ahab. She got mad. She would have been the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel.

Anyways, her brother, Ahaziah, how do you say it, saw, when she saw that, when Athaliah saw that Ahaziah, her son was dead, she rose and destroyed, sorry this is 2 Kings 11, one through three. She destroyed all the offspring, all the royal offspring. But Jehoshua, the daughter of King Jerom, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash, the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons who were being put to death and placed him and his nurse in a bedroom.

So they hid him from Athaliah and he was not put to death. Anyways, so he was hidden until he was seven years old. I guess he was one when she took him, so six years.

This was not just something small if that queen would have found out what she had done. I'm sure she would have been put to death. So I just thought it was interesting.

Do you know who her husband was? I didn't know this either, but Jeholiada, the priest that then brought Joash into the throne and told the people how to go about it, the soldiers and stuff, he was her husband. I didn't know that. Let's go to the New Testament now about faithfulness.

I don't know if any of you remember, but in 2019, I had an opening on faithfulness. I was just looking at it. Some of this might be a little bit of a repeat, but I might just go on here.

First Corinthians 1, 4 through 9. I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful through whom you were called into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. One thing I wanted to point out in the New Testament, I guess even in the Old Testament, a lot of the references to faithfulness is often to God and his faithfulness to us.

So when Paul's talking about here in Corinthians, to the Corinthians, it says, God is faithful in 1 Corinthians 10, 13. It says, No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man, and God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation he will provide a way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

Ephesians 4, 2 to 4, With all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another, in love, be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling. Be diligent, there's that word again, to preserve the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

I don't think people were any different back then than they are now. There's just so many things that can come in between and opinions and whatever else, they just tend to divide. So Paul's just making a point here, be diligent to preserve this unity.

1 Thessalonians 5, 12, But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction. I think here he's talking about the elders of the church, but this goes for anyone that we appreciate the people that are diligent. 2 Timothy 2, 15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

Hebrews 4, 11 Therefore, let us be diligent to enter that rest so that no one will fall through following the same example of disobedience. Hebrews 10, 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. I found that encouraging.

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope. And then he ends it with that God is faithful. Like this hope is not going to go turn into something that we regret.

2 Peter 3, 13-15 But according to his promise, we are looking for a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you. Maybe someone has a thought on and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

I thought maybe he's talking about the fact that God waits on coming back, but I'm not sure. So maybe someone has a thought on that. And then in Revelations, Jesus is talking to the church of Smyrna.

Revelations 2-10 Do not fear what you're about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison so that you will be tested and you will have tribulation for ten days. But be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.

Now, the opposite of faithfulness is obviously unfaithfulness and the opposite of diligence would be negligence or slacker or slack. So I'll try to look at some of those verses. Copy down as many maybe.

The first people in the Bible to be unfaithful to God were Adam and Eve, which brought mortality to the human race. So the first unfaithfulness brought death to our human race. Unfaithfulness to God has always cost people more than they could pay.

Unfaithfulness was so great that God had to wipe out everyone with a flood except Noah and his family. Since then, kingdoms have been demolished. People have met their demise in many different forms and ultimately on the final judgment day, unfaithfulness will meet its eternal end.

Now, there was a lot through the kings, maybe chronicles, I'm not sure, just where people were unfaithful, the children of Israel. But I found this Psalm 78, 8 through 38, kind of covers a lot of that as far as the children of Israel and their unfaithfulness, even before, I guess, the kings. This would be back in the time of Egypt even or just after Egypt.

So I'll read that. Psalm 78, 8 through 38. Let's be very diligent not to repeat their mistake.

It also shows, hold on, sorry, I messed up there. Let's be very diligent not to repeat the mistake that they made. And at the end of this, it also shows the mercy of God.

I thought that was worth pointing out. A stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that did not prepare its heart and whose spirit was not faithful to God. The sons of Ephraim were archers equipped with bows, yet they turned back in the day of battle.

They did not keep the covenant of God and refused to walk in His law. They forgot His deeds and His mercies, His miracles that He had shown them. He wrought wonders before their fathers in the land of Egypt and the field of Zon.

He divided the sea and caused them to pass through. And He made the water stand up like a heap. Then He led them with a cloud by day and all the night with a light of fire.

He split the rocks in the wilderness. He gave them abundant drink like the ocean's depths. He brought forth streams also from the rock and caused waters to run down like rivers.

Yet they still continued to sin against Him, to rebel against the Most High in the desert. And in their heart, they put God to the test by asking food according to their desire. Then they spoke against God.

They said, Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Behold, He struck the rock so that water gushed out and streams were overflowing. Can He give bread also? Will He provide meat for His people? Therefore the Lord heard and was full of wrath. And a fire kindled against Jacob.

And anger was mounted against Israel because they did not believe in God and did not trust in His salvation. Yet He commanded the cloud above and opened the doors of heaven. He rained down manna upon them to eat and gave them food from heaven.

Man did eat the bread of angels. He sent them food in abundance. He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens and by His power He directed the south wind.

He rained meat upon them like the dust, even winged fowl, like the sand of the seas. Then He let them fall in the midst of the camp, round about their dwellings. So they ate and were filled and their desire He gave to them.

Before they had satisfied their desire while the food was still in their mouth, the anger of God rose against them and He killed some of their stoutest ones and subdued the choicemen of Israel. In spite of all this they still sinned and did not believe in His wonderful works. So He brought their days to an end in futility and their years in sudden terror.

When He killed them then they sought Him and returned and searched diligently for God. And they remembered that God was their rock and the Most High God their Redeemer. But they deceived Him with their mouth and lied to Him with their tongue.

For their heart was not steadfast toward Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant. But He, being passionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them. And often He restrained His anger and did not arouse all His wrath.

I'm sure some of us, God had to do that. For sure me, where He had to restrain His anger. King Ahaz, 2 Chronicles 28, 16-23.

He was unfaithful. At the time of King Ahaz, sent to the king of Assyria for help. For again the Edomites, now this would be the descendants of Esau, so from what I understand, so Jacob's brother, had come and attacked Judah and carried away captives.

The Philistines also had invaded the cities of the lowland and of the Negev of Judah and had taken Beth Shemesh. Al-Jalen, Gederath, and Soko with its villages. Timnath with its villages and Gimzo with its villages and settled there.

For the Lord had humbled Judah because of Ahaz, king of Israel. For he had brought about a lack of restraint in Judah and was very unfaithful to the Lord. So Tiglath-Pileser, I looked up, he would be Tiglath-Pileser III.

So there was like three kings before him in Assyria. Anyways, king of Assyria came against him and afflicted him instead of strengthening him. I don't remember who mentioned about the Indian with the two dogs inside of him.

I think it was two dogs. Was that you, buddy? Indian. Was it Dwayne? Anyways, I was thinking unfaithfulness and faithfulness kind of rolls the same way.

If we feed unfaithfulness, it will just get stronger. If we are faithful, it will get stronger. In Jeremiah 42, 1 through 6, there's these people and children of Israel that came to Jeremiah and said, please let our petition come before you and pray for us to the Lord your God that is for all this remnant because we are left but a few out of many.

As your own eyes now see that the Lord our God may tell us the way in which we should walk and the thing that we should do. Then Jeremiah the prophet said to them, I have heard you. Behold, I am going to pray to the Lord your God in accordance with your words and I will tell you the whole message which the Lord will answer you.

I will not keep back a word from you. Then they said to Jeremiah, may the Lord be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act in accordance with the whole message which the Lord your God will send you to us. Whether it be pleasant or unpleasant, we will listen to the voice of the Lord our God to whom we are sending you so that it may go well with us when we listen to the voice of the Lord our God.

The reason I put that in, I just found it very interesting whether it is pleasant or unpleasant. Sometimes the things that are right to do are unpleasant to the flesh. Anyways, let us be like those people. Proverbs, that is not quite going with the flow of everything about negligence or unfaithfulness, but I thought I would throw that in.

Proverbs 15.32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, but he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. Matthew 23.23 Do you know what it is, Robert? It is woe to you is how it starts. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law, justice and mercy and faithfulness.

But these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. Mark 7.6-8 Or part of 6. This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrines and precepts of men, neglecting the commandment of God.

You hold to the traditions of men. Hebrews 2.2-42 Sorry, I typed that wrong. 2-4 For the word spoken through the angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty.

How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed by those who heard, God also testifying with them, both in signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will. I thought I'd like to touch on a few things that are a little more closer home to us. A lot of these things are written down.

Some of them may be inspirational. Others may not be as much. But I just wanted to ask questions, some questions.

And these questions first apply to me. It's something that I'm trying to work on in my life. I'd just like to ask these questions with faithfulness in mind.

Have you been faithful to Christ this week? Are you earnest about obeying him or diligent? What about the opportunities that are put into our path? Do we take them? Are you faithful with your words? When you tell your children that you would do something, do you do it? That's something that I think it's just a challenge if someone, a child comes up and asks if you can do something and then you're busy at the moment and then it's easy just to forget and you say, yes, I'll do it, but it doesn't happen. That was what I had in mind. What about your brothers and sisters? Do we keep our word or do we let it blow away on the wind? Is your

yes, yes, and your no, no? Are you on time when you tell someone that you will be there? When you recount a story or something that took place, are you faithful to accurately relay it? Or do you add a little, maybe just a little? What about in our personal life? Maybe we need, this is one for me, schedule.

It's a hard thing to keep. To stick to a plan that I put out. Are we faithful to stick to our plans? What about eating too much? Are we faithful in controlling our appetite? Are you faithful with your eyes and thoughts? What about the things that you search online? Are they worthy? In closing, I would like to read Matthew 25, 14 through 46.

And this is about the servants. Two of them, I guess, were faithful and the other one was not. And then about the judgment day.

For it is just like a man about to go... I think you had asked what the kingdom of heaven is like. For it is just like a man about to go on a journey who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one, each according to his own ability.

And he went on his journey. Immediately, one who had received five talents went and traded with him and gained five more talents. In the same manner, the one who had received two talents gained two more.

But the one who received one talent went away and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time, the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. The one who had received five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, Master, you entrusted five talents to me.

Look, I have gained five more talents. His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You have been faithful with a few things.

I will put you in charge over many things. Enter into the joy of your master. Also, the one who had received two talents came up and said, Master, you entrusted two talents to me.

See, I have gained two more talents. His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things.

I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master. And the one also who had received one talent came up and said, Master, I knew that you had to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, gathering where you did not scatter seed.

I was afraid and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, I have what is yours. But his master answered and said to him, You wicked and lazy slave.

You knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. Therefore take away the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents.

For to everyone who has more shall be given and he will have in abundance. But from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the worthless slave into outer darkness.

In that place where weeping, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And then he gives him an account of how the judgment day is going to be. And I wanted to point out, he gives us some things in

there that we can be faithful with.

So the righteous people were faithful with these things and the unrighteous people were not. Then the king, But when the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him and He will separate them one from another.

As a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will put the sheep on the right and the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on the right, Come, you who are blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in.

Naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me.

The righteous will answer Him, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? And when did we see you a stranger and invite you in? Or naked and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and come to you? The king will answer and say to them, Surely, or truly, I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me. Then he will say to those on the left, Depart from me, accursed ones, into eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat.

I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you did not invite me in. Naked and you did not clothe me.

Sick and in prison and you did not visit me. Then they themselves also will answer, Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of you? Then he will answer them, Truly, I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

It's a pretty weighty thing he says there. I guess that was part of the closing, but I just want us to remember that the things that we may overlook as trivial in our life, small things that may not seem that big, are the very things that make us who we are. Just like small particles of sand is what makes a beach.

And I'll just leave with the words of Jesus in Luke 16.10. He who is faithful in very little, a very little thing is faithful also in much. And he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is also unrighteous in much. That's all I have.

Corrections or comments? I thought of, as far as you had asked about faithful men, there was the man in the Old Testament who said, he said he would sacrifice the first thing he saw when he got home. And even though it was his own child, he still sacrificed his daughter. Then I thought of David, his dealings with Saul.

Just how very difficult it was, and yet I'm pretty sure he has a perfect testimony of being perfectly faithful to Saul in all those situations. Really he was being faithful to Jehovah, but he knew God's will about respecting the person in Saul's position, and he would not let go. I was thinking how that... Oh, it just seems like human existence goes in cycles.

It's not just like this big... It's not... Most of our experiences are not something that just start out a certain way and remain that way or start out a certain way and just continually grow or continually diminish, but rather continually go through cycles or maybe waves where there's like... Something is... Maybe there's like a saving up and then a spending or a building up and then a release, and then you save up again for the next thing. I think there's a... Dwayne, I want to look at you. It seems like you know a little bit about Pilgrim's Progress.

Is there this principle where sometimes he can't see the destination and then he'll see it and be like, OK, I'm on the right course and reset his course and maintain it even though he can't see the destination. Does that principle get... Yeah. Well, maybe what I was thinking of is something a little different where the destination can't be seen, but last time I saw it, I know it was over there.

So even though I can't see it, I'm going to keep going this direction. I feel like that's something that happens in life. You can see something really clearly and then later on you can't see it as clearly, but you just continue with what you... Lloyd was talking about following through with your plans.

The messages went really well together. I kind of have a hard time distinguishing the difference or how they weren't like part one and two of a lot of the same principles, but I think like the whole thing about enduring to the end or like how the sower sowed seeds and some made it all the way to bearing fruit. I'm kind of addressing some of the questions you asked, Daniel.

Like one of the tests of faith is do we just continue with those things that we know are right even when they don't feel like they felt once. If it was always as easy and exciting as it was in the beginning, well, who wouldn't be faithful, but it's just not... I think it's kind of implied like it's just not always like that. I think there's multiple facets.

There's some parts that aren't like that, but then I also consider like... Okay. Hang on. Sorry.

And then I think like I can relate to looking back and seeing a zeal in the beginning of my... at the beginning of my repentance, but then like balance that out with like somebody in my... somebody that was in that... currently would be in that state might look at us, look at one of us and be like, Oh, you are just... you're perfect. All you do is think about God. Everything you do is all devoted to God.

Everywhere you go, all your words like, Wow, you're just like you've arrived. And we know we haven't. And yet to that person that we were, in a lot of ways we'd look at where we are now and be just like, Oh, you are just the most radical, devoted, sold out person I've ever seen or heard of.

They'd marvel at us and we'd... So like just to balance that out like... And then also say like, I think people can... I think people can focus on that too much. They can recognize like, I don't go the places I used to go. I don't do the things I used to do.

I... not only am I... not only have I... not only have I given my life to God, but I've given my life to God in lots of really radical ways that most Christians don't. And then... and just be like, Yeah, I'm a radical Christian and here I am. And lose... lose that precious thing that I think you were expressing of just like... recognizing like your need, our need.

We have not arrived. He has not returned yet. There is much to do.

We have to remain diligent to be found faithful when he comes. Though... though there's lots of big changes that we've made and obvious directions that we've gone that... I think like Max was talking about that create... create this really... this thing that's easy to see from the outside. We know the things that... there's things that God knows about us and that we know about us that are very important, that are not as easy to see.

We can't be content with thinking like, Oh, most... most of the people around here think I'm pretty... pretty radical or I have this kind of reputation, but rather recognizing the things that we need to grow in and be perfected in and not... not give up that fight and not... not let down our guard or... or think that we can be a little bit unfaithful here and there. I thought... I was thinking something like of the parable with... with the sower. Some... apparently some call it the parable of the soils, which I like.

But like how maybe... if you could imagine like... you know, they say the grass is greener, but like if... if one soil was looking over at another soil and... and, you know, it's just germinating and another soil is... you know, bring... the state... the state of the things that... the plants that were once seeds are in a different state and think, Oh, how come I'm not... I'm not doing that or... maybe... or vice versa, like a soil that's got plants in a more mature state isn't... isn't making as radical of changes as like the soil next to it that's still bringing forth little seedlings. Like it's that thing. Look at the radical changes those little seedlings are making and... but... but they're both... they're both being faithful with where they are.

And then... I kept thinking of these things. It's that... it's that same principle. I think I often speak of.

Like... I... as I was thinking of these principles, I thought to myself, somebody with the wrong heart could easily take these... these things that I'm saying and be like, Oh, yeah, yeah, I don't need that stuff Daniel was talking about. I'm good. Yeah, okay, I'm still being faithful.

Like, I'm good and... it's just... I just feel like it pops up all the time when I think of these things like... somebody with the wrong heart can take the truth and... spin it... what is it? What is it? Somebody says about Paul's writings. Twist it and... What's that? Yeah, that's right as well. That was just a specific thing about Paul, what they do with his writings.

It's just somebody with... somebody with the wrong heart can take things that are true. And so I don't want to come across as... as saying, Oh, don't worry about it Daniel. You're fine.

You know, like... I think there's some way in which we have to... or for me to say to myself, Oh, I'm good just because I don't have that zeal I once had. Or things aren't as... you know, as exciting or fresh as they once were. I'm still fine.

Like, I don't... I think somehow I both... we both need... we... both need to recognize that... things just aren't always like that. And yet... that doesn't mean that... that the struggle is over or... that we've arrived. Or that... we shouldn't be concerned about... about our level of zeal.

Or about our affections... affections for God. I think it's just a principle that things are easier... easier in the beginning or something. And that's why many start.

But... the question is who... who will continue... even with... even when that initial... those initial emotions or whatever are passed. Yeah, I appreciate what was... what was shared. And I don't have much to add, I don't think.

But... we... learn to do these things. I... but I noticed this one... this one little thing... I had never noticed before. This... the one that was given two talents.

Two talents. That man was deceived. He was a deceived man.

That's why he made that decision. I never... somehow did not recognize that. It wasn't one talent.

Whatever the cause, he... he went and buried it. And then he made this excuse, like... I knew you were a heart master and you reap where you didn't sow. And then the Lord said, if you really... if that was really so, you would have put it in the bank and collected all the money that you could for me.

He had it really... he was deceived, he didn't realize. And... that's another subject in itself about deception, but I just noticed that. And then I was looking for... that account of the people that were deceived, that judgment day.

Did you read all the way to the end of 25? Well, I was looking for it, he was reading it, and I didn't... wasn't listening. I just find this again, this twist that Jesus has on... on our minds. He said... he tells the ones on the right that they should come in because they did this and this and this and... and they say, when did we see you like this? Then he tells the ones on the left, you didn't do this and this and this, and they said, when did we see you like this? It just puts a fear and trembling in our... should put a fear and trembling in our hearts that we'd be diligent like we've been warned today over and over and over, and I just appreciate it.

Yeah, I don't... I don't have a lot to add besides I... I appreciate it. I think, too, the two messages went together well, and... A couple thoughts I had is... Okay, faithfulness. Lloyd talked about faithfulness.

Does anybody have an idea why... why we might have a different idea in our mind if somebody asks us for a definition of the word faith? And definition of the word faithfulness? It seems to me like I would often think something different, maybe right away. But why? Is it... Is it... I kind of... This is what I think, is that I think, whether we're conscious of it or not, the evangelical... the evangelicals have... have hijacked the word... words, including the word faith, to mean something that we... we almost have a hard time unraveling completely in our mind. And... even though we... some... I think those of us here have often, like, come to it and realized it, and we know it, at least... we think we know it.

Like... the evangelicals will say you're... we're saved by faith, and faith alone. And... and we figured out that those words come from Martin Luther, and... and they're not in Scripture. And... and yet, like, if... I think maybe it has... and I don't like to use that term at all, for that reason, because of where it comes from, and because of what it means by the people who use it a lot, and really, like, the only place in Scripture that faith, and only, or alone, are used together is where James says we are not saved by faith alone, or faith only.

But... but what I'm thinking is that if... if we can see the word faith as meaning the same thing as faithfulness, and what we heard today about faithfulness, there's nothing wrong with saying we are saved by faithfulness alone. And... and yet, if you say... if you would say it exactly like that to an evangelical, they would probably protest a little bit about that. And I just... kind of... kind of incomplete, or just premature thoughts that I have, but that, like, why is that? And, like, faithfulness... faithfulness is so important, and it is... it is upon our faithfulness that we will be judged, and... and I also thought about, like, those... the talents and those servants that were given the talents, they were judged upon their faithfulness with these

talents, not on whether they just had a belief about them, but their faithfulness.

And... and whether they could turn a profit, like, Buddy talks about this thing about the unprofitable servant was judged because he did not... he returned the coin as he got it, but it was not with a profit. He was an unprofitable servant. What's that? Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah, he... he passed the knowledge test, but... but he showed no profit for what he received. And... it kind of made me think of... this is... this is totally earthly, and I'm not... I don't... I don't think those of us that purchase a piece of property that this will be part of what will be judged by, but still, like, I've had this goal in every place that I've moved to that I... that... that I would leave that place a better place than when I got there, that the soils would be better, the condition of the buildings would be better, that I would leave something there better than... than when I came.

And... I think most of the farms I've had, I've... I've succeeded in that, but there's this... there's this one rancher who... who gives a lot of talks, and he calls his farm a regenerative... he calls his... his farm... his ranching methods a regenerative ranching. His name's Greg Judy, but... somebody... I... I watched a little interview he had with somebody, and somebody asked him, how would you define regenerative ranching? And he said... he said, well, people want to talk a lot about sustainable agriculture. He said, what... what good is it if... if we receive a depleted farm from some... from our... from our grandparents and we sustain it? And... 50... 50 years later, we have this same farm sustained as it was, and it's depleted.

That's not his goal. He wants a regenerative type of ranching that keeps increasing and increasing and increasing and... in... in production and profitability and... completely earthly, and yet I think something like that is what... true faithfulness is. Anyway, thanks for the messages.

Yeah, this... might be more of a confession or an indictment or... but also, hopefully, a prodding or an encouragement. But there's... there's this thing people do like every New Year's, they make resolutions about this or that or the other. Not very many people keep these resolutions that they make at New Year.

And maybe I'm the only person in here, but, like, I find inspiration like on a Sunday and encouragement and... there's all these things that were brought up today that you think of improvements here and there and... if it be in schedule or in patience with your family or... scripture reading, all these things, it's easy to be inspired and have a Sunday resolution, but inspiration alone will not... does not mean anything. So... hopefully, I am the only person, maybe, that has this struggle, but I kind of have a feeling maybe I'm not. We're all human, but nevertheless, it is a lot easier or I've often been inspired, but that just inspiration alone doesn't make change, I find, when I go back to my life at home and with my family.

So, that's all I wanted to share. Thank you, Brother Lloyd. You had so many in there.

He's going to cry. He's my... Anyway... Yeah, and one of the things, Brother Leroy, is that I think Jesus, correct me if I'm wrong, in his wisdom, he sent them out two by twos. So, if it just comes in Sunday morning, I think, and then we forget about it during the week, two by twos.

Marilyn will encourage you, you'll encourage her, you know, that's community. The more we're closer together, it won't... Hey, remember what they said? Yeah, so, do you want to pray this morning before we go to work? You know, that's one of the blessings. Michael now has a companion, Michael Oosteringer.

He can pray with Molly every morning before they go. I don't know if that addresses the thing, but there is strength in twos. Paul and Silas and the two men on the road to Emmaus.

I appreciate that, Lord. As far as the talent, I don't know, but maybe the man who buried his talent, he didn't trust in the banks. You know, he says, I just keep mine and I don't trust in the banks.

No, he was deceived. He was deceived. One buddy's comment, I appreciate you.

Where is buddy? Oh, there. Thank you, buddy, on that one. How Paul says in Philippians, you know, first of all, he's the chief of all sinners, not worthy.

He's a blasphemer and a murderer and not worthy to be called a Christian. And he says, but I press on, in Philippians 3, I press on to the goal. I think he's also counting as dung.

Well, I labored more than all the other apostles. You know, I was stoned three times, beaten with rods. I think he's counting that as dung, too.

You know, he said, I press on, not only his sins, but he's counting his trophies as dung. He says, I press on. And so, let's not, you know, people can flatter us, you know, Lord, you're the greatest Christian I ever met, you know, and people say that to us, you know, like that.

But let's rub it off and press on. Let's forget, not only our victories, you know, if we have any victories, but let's forget, press on with the sinful things. Let's always remember, we were purged from our sins.

And the last thing, I guess, where did I put that? It was on, I'm not a farmer. I don't know if I've ever planted anything in my life. I married a farmer's daughter, and Walter, and me, Roy, everyone knows how to grow things.

But in that proverb that you questioned, Lloyd, about, it was a positive one, as snow in the day of harvest. Okay? Snow in the day of harvest. I read a commentary once, or something like this, correct me if I'm wrong, the commentary could be wrong.

That means, that snow at the end of a harvest, the completion day, you know, you're getting all the bales of hay, a lot of things out of the thing, it's, you know, getting cold, and then the snowflakes. You made it. You got 100% crop.

You succeeded. And yet, as snow in the end of harvest, that's the positive thing, right? Because it is a positive verse. Snow in the first day of harvest is something that's like morning, and doing a dancing dirge.

The Lord be magnified. Yeah, thank you guys for your comments. I remember, I was at work, and I was thinking about this guy, and this guy had a tongue, and he had a thought with it, and he said, this guy wanted to change tongue with a sword, and then change thought with wisdom, and he was like, well, I can, he wanted to go and teach with this sword, this wisdom.

I said, well, but he's not really sure if he's right, or if he's, what he's doing is right. But there was this guy that had this thought about this sword. Yeah, Dwayne, I had just a few thoughts on that question, what you asked.

We were in this discussion not too long ago. What's the difference between belief and obedience? And I think the same difference would be between faith and faithfulness. It starts in the mind that is faith, and faithfulness is the carrying out of it.

Belief would be the same as something that you believe, and then obedience is the carrying out of it. That was my thought. I am a brilliant man of faith Shattering the weight of every word Yet it's oftenly said Not to the strong is the battle Not to the strength is the praise Yet to the true and the faithful We give our true praise Come through the hour when Still to conquer God is this wonderful King Comes down the armies Raging leader While on His glory they sing He is our Lord, Savior, And one of a kind This kingdom shall shine Not to the strong is the battle Not to the strength is the praise Yet to the true and the faithful We give our true praise Come through the hour when Still to conquer Jesus our ruler Grounds and their scepters All shall perish Crowns and their splendors Shall fall Yet shall the armies Loving us Fighting and wrestling Not to the strong is the battle Not to the strength is the praise Yet to the true and His promise to praise I am crucified with Christ Nevertheless I live Yet not I like Christ Live up in me As the life eternal The flesh I live by the faith Of the Son of God Who loved me And He gave Himself for me And He gave Himself for me And He gave Himself for me If ye can be risen with Christ Seek those things which are above Where Christ sits on the right hand of God Set your affections on things above Not on things on the earth For we are dead in your life In sin with Christ in God We are dead We are dead We are dead in your life In sin with Christ in God We are dead We are dead We are dead in your life In sin with Christ in God

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