

“God’s Faithfulness”

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. The text for our meditation this morning comes from the epistle reading from 1 Corinthians 10, particularly verses 12-13, “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” Amen. So God’s Word. Amen.

God continually shows us His faithfulness. God’s people, throughout the years, have, time and time again, proceeded to show their faithlessness. God’s people have been given many opportunities to show otherwise, but, unfortunately, were not able to overcome the temptations and lures of the devil and the surrounding culture. Not only do we fail in our efforts to be faithful to God, but we also fail in efforts to be faith to one another. We cannot be faithful to our employers, employees, to friends, to family, or even to our spouses. There is a line in the marriage rite when the couple in turn say to one another, “and I pledge to you my faithfulness”. But, how often have we heard that this pledge is not kept?

An employee owes their employer faithfulness in their work; an honest day’s work for an honest day’s pay. The employer owes their employee faithfulness in honest wages, safe working conditions, and a working environment that is free from hostility. In testifying before a court of law we make a pledge that our testimony is faithful and true.

When a man is ordained into the office of the Holy Ministry in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, he is called upon to “faithfully preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments”. Upon the installation of a pastor to serve a congregation the pastor and the members of the congregation are called to faithfully fulfill the duties of their positions. You and I, brothers and sisters in Christ, we are called to be faithful. At our confirmations, whether we were confirmed as children or as adults, we confess our faith before God and we pledge to, “Continue steadfast in this confession and the Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it”. We are called to be faithful.

But guess what? Even though this sounds a lot like a one-sided proposition, it is. Wow, I guess that sounds pretty strange doesn't it? Well, it's true. This is a completely one-sided proposition, but contrary to what you may think you are not the ones who are doing the one-sided giving and acting in complete faithfulness. In verse thirteen of our text Paul writes that, “God is faithful”. What comfort those three short and simple words should give to us sinful and unfaithful human beings. God is faithful and He never breaks His promise and is continually showing us His faithfulness. In Deuteronomy 7:9 we read, “Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations.”

But does that verse also serve to put fear within our hearts? Does it cause us to question? After-all who among us loves God with all of our hearts and at all times. Who among us keeps His commandments always and completely in both letter and in spirit? Let's look at those few areas of many in which we are called to be faithful in our lives here on earth. In marriage who has never looked lustfully at someone else. Who has

never deceived their spouse or has always treated them with the love and respect that we have pledged to them?

As an employee who has not failed at one time or another to give our employer that full day's work that they have hired and have paid us to perform. Or how many have not taken a pen or paper for personal use from an employer or have used company computer resources to surf in internet? Then how many employers have not taken advantage of your employees in an improper and faithless way? Yes, we all fall prey to the devil's temptations and we fail to take the way out that God says will be there for us.

Remember that pastors are also sinful human beings and that try as we might we too are not completely faithful in all of the promises that we have made. Maybe we are tired or have let time get away from us and we fail. How many of you if you are baptismal sponsors remember to pray for the child you have pledged to be a sponsor for? How often do you ask them how confirmation is going or if they are reading their Bible or praying? How many parents come before the font with their child and promise to faithfully continue to bring their child for instruction in the Lord and to services in God's House and then proceeds to forget all of the promises of faithfulness to God and to their child that they have made as soon as they have left the church.

Or how many times do we see confirmands confessing their faith before God and the congregation and pledging to be faithful even unto to death but the very next Sunday they are not in God's House and of course some are never seen again.

We are called to be faithful but no you and I are not faithful. As hard as we try to be we fail in our efforts over and over again. Because we know and have heard that yes, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak and to our shame sometimes the spirit is also

unwilling and weak. But take heart because even though you and I are show faithlessness, GOD always shows His faithfulness! What a wonderful statement that is for us. That is a statement that we can grasp a hold of with confidence and with joy. Paul writes these words of comfort and assurance in 2 Timothy 2:11-13, “The saying is trustworthy, for: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.” You see the God we serve is a God of love and He loves us and His desire if that we be saved and be brought into the faith in His Son Jesus Christ as Savior. Because of our faithlessness, our sinfulness, God the Father sent His Son, the Messiah, who was promised so long ago. Jesus the Christ was faithful in the mission He was sent to accomplish by the Father on our behalf.

Philippians 2:8 tells us that Jesus, “Being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” God shows us His faithfulness, and His faithfulness brings us benefits that are beyond measure. His faithfulness has brought us redemption, forgiveness of our sins and eternal life. Scripture tells us that we are saved by grace through faith and this is a gift of God that no one may boast. We are saved and forgiven through the unmerited grace of a faithful loving God. For all of our sins and unfaithfulness against God and against others we are given grace through Christ, that faithful, suffering Lamb of God.

God is faithful. He is faithful to everyone who calls upon the name of Jesus for forgiveness and salvation because we are promised that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved and that He desires all to be saved. And even in the midst of our unfaithfulness John in 1 John reminds us that when we confess our sins He is

faithful and just to forgive us. He shows His faithfulness as He forgives us for Jesus' sake and He clothes us all in His robe of righteousness and pours out His Holy Spirit upon us to create, strengthen, and preserve us in the faith and this is true for you and for me, and for all people. Peter in Acts 2:39 reminds us that, "The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself." Yes, brothers and sisters in Christ, praise and thanks be to God for though we are faithless, God always shows us His faithfulness and that for us means forgiveness and life everlasting. Amen.

The peace of God that passes all understanding forever keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.