

## Be Faithful

**Intro:** Last Sunday I spoke about God's simple five step plan of salvation. Lest I be misunderstood, let me say that those who accept this plan of God for forgiveness are saved from past sins and have the hope of heaven. But we must correctly say that there is one more step in the plan of God. It has often been put this way: "Be faithful".

Indeed, the eternal salvation of the baptized is contingent upon their continued faithfulness to God.

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. (Revelation 2:10)

For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end; (Hebrews 3:14)

But what does it mean to be faithful?

### One must grow in his understanding of the will and requirements of God.

*The choice to become a Christian implies that we have knowledge of God's will to some degree and that we acknowledge the fact that we have violated God's will to some degree. I never thought that every person who obeyed the gospel had to have a perfect knowledge of every truth before becoming a Christian. The ancient concept of catechizing the potential convert was based on this conception along with the belief that one could not receive forgiveness for any sin committed after baptism.*

*What is clear is that every person who obeys the gospel has committed to knowing the will of God as perfectly as possible. This spiritual growth is implicit in the step of repentance, it is implicit in what we have become (disciples). And this growth is clearly commanded of us as disciples:*

like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, (1 Peter 2:2)

but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)

Part of this spiritual discipline comes through obeying the command to assemble with the church. We rightly then hold the assemblies commanded by God as essential to faithfulness. The Hebrew writer made it part of our priestly obligations in God's spiritual temple. not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:25)

Part of this spiritual discipline comes through other study opportunities such as personal Bible reading, taking Bible courses, meeting in small groups, attending church-provided Bible classes. We are obligated by the command to grow to establish a spiritual discipline that will enable us to learn God's word and be able to teach

it to others!  
*Are you living a faithful life!?*

**One must be obedient to all known commandments of God.**

*The objective of spiritual growth is not “knowledge for knowledge’s sake” but for familiarity with the will of God so that we can live an obedient life to God. Just as saving faith leads to obedience to the first principles of the gospel that result in forgiveness, so saving faith leads to obedience to God in the requirements of Christian living.*

*The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. (1 John 2:4-5)*

*One tendency I see among Christians is to set a minimal standard of obedience to God (usually it’s what we’re doing) and hold everyone accountable to that. But I see no basis for making a list of some of God’s commands and saying, “These are essential to faithfulness”. Another tendency is “what is the minimum requirement of God for me. The answer to both is the same: God’s will is that we do all that He has commanded. None of God’s commands are optional!*

*teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)*

**Putting away works of the flesh**

**Putting on the fruit of the Spirit**

**Showing love to our neighbors and our brethren**

*A lot of the verses we’ve already considered make clear that our knowledge of the will of God is progressive. But what is equally clear is that God expects our obedience to Him to be increasing! The more you learn the greater your obligation!*

*And from everyone who has been given much shall much be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more. (Luke 12:48)*

*Someone says, “Well I think I’d rather then be an untaught Christian”. No, I took care of that in point one! You can’t be faithful and remain in spiritual ignorance. The whole point of conversion is to learn and obey the will of God. But someone says, “But I’m a new Christian and I don’t even know all that God wants me to do and I am still struggling with old habits I used to have when I wasn’t a Christian”. Don’t despair; but realize that there is one other thing you must do to be faithful to the Lord.*

**One must seek God’s forgiveness for all sin as he grows in knowledge and obedience.**

*The truth is, all our attempts to obey God, no matter how well taught we are, are imperfect. The seasoned apostle of the Lord included himself in this statement. The fact that we are growing in our knowledge presupposes that there are sins we may yet discover about ourselves. In the meantime, we can acknowledge the truth of God in 1 Jn. 1:8,10 and claim the blessing of 1 Jn. 1:7.*

*If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in*

*us. (1 John 1:8)*

*but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)*

*However, there are times when we will be confronted with the knowledge of sin in our lives through deliberate transgression or the correction of others. In Ac. 8 we read about a man named Simon who received correction from the apostles.*

**Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you. (Acts 8:22)**

**Repenting and asking forgiveness of the known sins in our life (Ac. 8:22). If we know we are wrong and wrong make it right, then indeed we too are in the “gall of bitterness and the bondage of iniquity”.**

**Conclusion: Here’s the bottom line. It is one thing to obey the gospel and all must do so to go to heaven; but that is just the beginning of God’s “plan of salvation”. We must be faithful to the commitment we’ve made. If you can’t say, “I’m doing the best I can to know and do the will of God, then there may be questions about our faithfulness to the Lord”.**