

Faithful is He that Calleth You, Who also will do it
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Preached on: Sunday, December 14, 2014

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I like this morning to play that song in preparation for today's message. Our text will come from 1 Thessalonians 5:24,

Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, I pray this morning that you would prepare our hearts. Prepare our hearts, O Lord, to reveal to us today how faithful thou art. O Lord, I pray that you would reveal how great thy faithfulness is, how much higher thy faithfulness is than what we would call faithfulness in ourselves. O Lord, may you be pleased at this hour to pour thy Spirit out upon thy word, upon these dear people as it pleases you and upon me also, Lord, that you would loose my tongue to bring forth thy Gospel for the praise and glory of thee. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." I think the power in this verse is the fact that you can't separate it. It's got two bookends: one at the beginning, one at the end. Not only does the Lord give the power to know how faithful he is, but he gives the power to perform all that. Everything for his children.

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." I know that for many in this room, it's a verse that has life meaning to them and they have seen that the Lord's faithfulness, he has proved himself over and over. As we sang that song this morning, I asked the Lord to prepare us to truly understand what faithfulness is and not in light of our concepts of things we're faithful to here on earth because even that is flawed. The faithfulness that the Lord has for his church, to his church, and in all things for his church, is what I want to talk about today. As I said at the beginning, the beauty of this passage is that it doesn't really divide even though I'm going to attempt to divide it today into two parts, "faithful is he that calleth you," first I'll speak about and then the last portion being "who also will do it."

The way that we do things here, I take this pulpit every third week so in the progression of things, this will be the last time I address you this year so I thought about that and prayed about that as the Lord quickened to me what to speak about and that is: as we come to another end of a year, how faithful the Lord has been. But not just at the end of

the year because this, of course, is that time where we celebrate the birth of Christ because once again, how faithful he was to the plan of salvation. How faithful he was in every minute detail in everything that he performed. That's what I want to speak about today.

I want to begin by saying something that I've been accustomed to saying my whole life and it wasn't until the pastor spoke last week from 2 Timothy 3 and as he went over one of the verses in there that I realized that that was the scriptural reference for something that the Lord has taught me in my life and that is that the Lord is faithful even when I'm not and I'm not faithful a lot. If you turn with me now to 2 Timothy 2:13, you will see that in the Scriptures, if the Holy Ghost is pleased. We're going to be going eight different places today, all speaking about the faithfulness of the Lord: what he is faithful to; what call is it that he calls his children to; what does he call the church into.

Well, today we start with this thought: he is faithful when we are not and that is in 2 Timothy 2:13, "If we believe not." If we believe not, that's a deep, deep thought because we like to walk around thinking that we are believing people, that the faith of the Son of God resonates in us and that's a true statement because at the day of regeneration, the Lord impressed all of these gifts upon his children. He infused us with the faith and the love and the joy and the peace but that's the fruit of the Spirit and we find in this life as we live that there are some dead times in this life. Even though the Lord has quickened us unto new life, we have this struggle and we struggle with this fallen nature in us. And it is true, it is true that there are times we believe not. We are totally dependent upon the Lord today and every day of our life as we were at that day of regeneration. We depend upon him to give us the power to believe. In a season now where everyone tells you to believe and great things will happen if you just believe. The TVs are flooded with children's stories telling them just to believe and if you just believe, you'll get everything you ask for.

But the Bible says something here, Paul writes something very familiar to the child of God, "If we believe not." But does our unbelief change the faithfulness of our dear Lord? No. That's what this verse says. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful." The Lord always abideth faithful. Grace is grace. Peace and love is peace and love. We can't sin the Lord's grace away. Even in the depth of our unbelief at times, the Lord's faithfulness is not wavering. The Lord's faithfulness. That's why when I heard that read last week I said, "That's it. That is the portion of Scripture right there that supports that thought, the Lord is always faithful even when I'm not. Even when I'm in unbelief." He doesn't depend on my faithfulness and that's my desire today and I pray it's the Holy Spirit's desire because that's all that matters, is that we see things revealed to us today from God's perspective, not the creature perspective, not man's perspective, not what notions in our minds we've got of what faithfulness is because his is so much higher. There are so many times of these valleys in our life where we are not faithful. We are not faithful to the one who has called us. Who has called us. We are not faithful to the life of Christ. It must be him. It must be the power of the seed of Christ in us. It must be the power of the Holy Ghost to reveal the light of Christ in our souls.

"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful," and then this last clause, "he cannot deny himself." What about you and I? How many times have we denied ourselves or questioned ourselves or thought about how fickle we are? Let me take a moment now to define "faithful." Faithful defined is "firm in adherence to the truth; loyal; constant; not fickle." Not fickle and you think about how much our faith is fickle, how we can believe one day and then be so deadened the next day. Or grope in the dark saying, "Lord, where is thy presence? Lord, I can't feel your presence." But he is faithful. He cannot deny himself. He is faithful to himself. If you think about that, as I said at this time of year, when we think about the Lord being made flesh, the Lord in that perfect plan of salvation, that the Triune God contrived before the foundation of the world and how this season marks the time where he came in the flesh to save his people from their sins. He was faithful to do that and when everyone else scattered on that day, when everyone else left him and even some denied him and even some cursed him, he was faithful. He was faithful to the Triune Lord's purpose. He was faithful to the will of the Father. He was faithful to the power of the Holy Ghost. He was faithful to himself and he lay down his life for his friends. This is the Lord I pray that the Holy Spirit takes today and exalts in your soul in this hour to show you the faithfulness of the Lord Jesus Christ, the faithfulness of the Father, the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost.

So now, let us look at what he is faithful to call us to. "Faithful is he that calleth you." Let's go now to 1 Corinthians 1 and we'll find, Lord willing, something very precious. 1 Corinthians 1:9, "God is faithful." Yes dear ones, our Triune Lord is faithful in saying those words to me. When the Lord applies that word to me that God is faithful, it shows me something, that the things we preach about, what Christ does, that he is faithful to perform those things. He will do it. He also will do it. That little word "also" shows us the connecting part, that he's faithful to call but he's also faithful to do. You and I might be faithful to the call at times but not faithful to do. You and I may be faithful to do but not faithful to the call. Oh, but the Lord, this Triune Lord that we have here, that God is faithful. And I don't know how to put this any other way: it's not a potentiality of what this Lord has done, will do. It's not can he do it, it's what he has done and I can't make you believe that and I can't make you live in that and I can't make you rest in that but he can because he can't deny himself. He is faithful to the work that he has done. He is faithful to the Father and how many times did our Lord say that while here on earth? "Father, what you have called me to do. All that you have called me to do, I have done. I have done." This Triune Lord cannot, cannot deny himself. God is faithful.

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called," there is that "called" word again. But what are we called unto? "We are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." "Faithful is he that calleth you." What is it that we're called to? We're called to fellowship. Fellowship defined is "companionship; mutual association on friendly terms." Fellowship. We like to fellowship one with another. I was reading a sermon last night by Philpot and he was speaking about prayer and he said, "You know, I watched the people in my fellowship here," he said, "but I'm the same way. We're afflicted with things in this life." We are. We suffer so many things in this life and how faithful we are to go and tell our mate or go and tell the people in the fellowship but how unfaithful we are to go and tell it to the Lord, to go and commune with him in prayer. Think about that. And that

gives you a little bit of mindset into what our faithfulness is and how that goes around to mankind.

But we can't take ourselves heavenward. We can't. That's what he is faithful to do. And not only is he faithful to call it but he does it and that's what I'm saying, that's what the word of God here is saying, "by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." And what is fellowship to you with Jesus? That's walking hand-in-hand. That's a mutual agreement. Do you agree with Christ's finished work? Do you agree that he has done all things? We're going to get to that part. We're going to get to what he's done and that's my hope and prayer today that as we speak to the faithfulness of what the Lord is, it's not for what he's done, it's not when you walk out of here and you say, "Oh, I hope the Lord is faithful to do those things I heard today." He's done them. He's done them and they're safe and secure in him and he will bring them about. That's a hard thing. Rest is not something that we can do. We can't and I'm talking about true rest. I'm talking about laying down your efforts and everything in the creature. I mean putting all of that to heaven, all of that put down, put down to where you're not striving. Where you're not getting up in the morning and thinking about what you're going to do, what you have to do, what you must do. That's what the finished work of Christ testifies to the child of God by the power of the Holy Ghost. That's what his faithfulness is.

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." This relationship, this fellowship that were called into is that covenant relationship that we have in our Lord. It's union. I love to speak of the union that we have in Christ and if you want to know more about that union, open up the word, go to John 14 through 17 and read everything in there that Christ has said to his disciples before he left. He explained everything that's in that union. All of these Scriptures testify of him. It is a hard thing to pull out some of these Scriptures this morning because it's hard to just...listen, this whole book talks about the faithfulness of the Lord. It talks about how he is faithful in the lives of his saints. It talks about how he was faithful to carry them through places. He was faithful to provide even though they didn't see it. Why is that? Because faith is the substance of things hoped for, it's the evidence of things not seen. That's what faith is and that's the thing, we can't sit here today and in the finished work of Christ, we can't sit here and say, "I know what the Lord's finished work is for me in this life." The life of the child of God that's hidden in Christ Jesus is a path and a journey. It's a journey through the will of the Lord for them. It's a journey of the unraveling of his finished work for each one of his children. That's what rest is. Rest is in what he's done.

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." So we see that he is faithful to call us to himself. He is faithful to provide the fellowship. He is faithful to provide the power to come to him to fellowship with him. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

Now let us turn to Hebrews 10. You may think this is an odd place but look at Hebrews 10:23. We have that little word "let" at the beginning of it again. "Let" to me always resonates of the Lord's power, "Let there be light. Let there be this." Out of nothing, the

Lord creates. You and I, the same way. "Let there be faith," there will be faith. "Let there be love," there will be love. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." How in the world can we hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering? We just talked about how unfaithful we are, how much in dire need we stand in need of the faithful one. Then we're exhorted here but notice again, the power, "let." The power must come, "Let us hold fast." That's the power in the soul of the child of God. It's the energizing.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering," and then we get how in the parentheses. Just in case we were starting to entertain some of that creature stuff we like to do, "Oh look, I've got to hold fast. I've got to perform this. That is what the Bible is telling me. I'd better do this so that I can hold onto my faith." No. "(For he is faithful that promised.)" Promised what? He promised that he is the author and finisher of our faith. He promised that he is the faithful one. He promised that he will do it. He promised that he doesn't need the creature for the perfect plan of salvation.

I always think and I shared that with the children this week, how boastful man gets and how boastful we get of just trying to get a little bit of ourselves into what Christ did and we always try to put something in there about, "Well, if I do that part. If I just believe. If I just do this." And I think about that night and I think about that night when Jesus was betrayed and all of these 11 that were around him, the closest ones to him, the ones that saw him do all these miracles, the ones that saw him do everything, the ones that sat at his feet, the ones that just hours, I mean, in those last hours said, "Lord, we will follow you wherever you go. Wherever you go, even to the cross. We will not deny you." That's our will. That's our faith. It's just as plain as anything. That's how we can conjure up, "Lord, we'll do it. We're faithful. We will be faithful to you." But not one of them did. Not one of them could because they were faced with death. They were faced with the specter of death. They were faced with being arrested. It was easy when they were in that room. It was easy when there was nothing out there in the world getting them at that time, as they were all around Jesus listening to him speak to them in those final hours. That was an easy time to say, "Yes Lord, I'll be faithful to you," but then it was tried. And if your faith is tried, your faith will fail but his won't because he's faithful that calleth you. He will do it.

He "also will do it." I love that little word "also" in there. I don't ever want to quote that without that. He also will do it. You say, "Well, why did they fail then?" You see, sometimes in this life, the depths of where we are allowed to fall reveals something about us. That boastfulness that they had in that room where no threat was around, "We'll do this, Lord. We'll follow you anywhere." But then just hours, short little hours, it was shown them how truly far we fell, how truly needful we are of him, how truly we can do nothing without him.

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith." You see, he's the power of faith. It is the faith of the Son of God. He is the author of it and we always think, "Well, he's just the author of it." Think about that author and finisher in today's verse. Think about, "Faithful

is he that calleth you, he also will do it." The author and finisher and it's all of him in between. "For he is faithful that promised."

Now let's go to 2 Thessalonians 3, let's look at verse 3, "But the Lord is faithful." Yeah, I hope that means something a little more to you today. I hope in this hour right now, the Holy Spirit is exploring your soul and revealing to you the depth of how faithful he is. "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil." Two things here that he's faithful to: strength and preservation. He is faithful to provide that which we need every day, strength. And we need it. We need to be established every day. We need to be established in Christ every day. I think about the Lord's teaching. I think about the house that was on the rock and I think about all the winds and all the rains that came and I know the Lord said those things to tell me about my life. I know he told those things to say, "This is the life of the child of God. You will have tribulation but be of good cheer. That house cannot fall because it's built upon a foundation and that foundation is a faithful foundation." He is faithful to himself and he is faithful to his church.

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you." He is our rock. He is our strength. He shall establish you. That faithfulness that the Lord gives his children is his stability. Now you think about that. You think about the times in your life where you've had to be strong and you think about the times how weak you were. The Lord said it to the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Why? Because his strength is made perfect in what? In our weakness. Our weakness. Not his weakness. And we have many weaknesses: the frailty of our bodies; the frailty of our minds; the frailty of life; the goings on around us in life; the threatenings of life.

I think about this last year and I get glimpses sometimes or I just sit back sometimes and the Lord takes me over the year of what the Lord has preserved his people from, what he has made them strong in. You know, I have to say this, I have to say it: I don't believe some of the ways are the ways we would have picked. The ways that the Lord has for us are so much higher than our ways and he's faithful to that plan and he is faithful to the plan before the foundation of the world. And you and I, as we experience Christ and that is what all of this is about, it's about experiencing Christ's faithfulness and his strength and what he has done and what he's doing, he is faithful to carry out this plan that he has for each one of us in here. And it's a different plan. It's the same salvation but it may have different ways of getting there, all through the same way which is the way of Christ. He has diverse ways of instructing each one of his children: diverse afflictions; different temptations. The temptation your brother has may not be your temptation.

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you," who shall strengthen you, who shall fix you, who shall be your shield, your glory and your protection, "and he will keep us from evil." I've seen a lot of evil in my day. I've seen a lot of evil in myself. Sometimes I am brought to the end of myself just to cry out, "Lord, save me from the evil of myself. Save me from the wicked hardness that I have. Save me from my unbelief." And do you know what? He's faithful to do it. He's faithful to do it.

So I hope today so far as we have covered the first portion of this Scripture, "Faithful is he that calleth you," you see just a glimpse of what his faithfulness is, what the Scriptures say about it. Oh, there are thousands more. There are thousands. As I said, they testify of him. But now where do we begin today to speak of, "who also will do it"? I prayed about this, "Lord, where would I go to begin to see what you have done?" Well, the Lord took me to John 19:30. I think you'll understand when we get there if you don't already know what it is. What an unspeakable gift. We like to quote that this time of year, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." And I tell you, to the child of God, it is unspeakable to know that my Lord has called me to a life that he will do, that he has done, that he will perform. I would say it all begins right here but it doesn't, it began in eternity but in this verse right here, verse 30 of John 19, "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." You know, I need the Lord to say this to me every day. I need the Lord to remind me every day that he has finished everything, everything that pertains to my salvation. I need him to remind me that no matter what I'm hearing down here, no matter what have-tos, what you need to do, what you should do, what you ought to do, I need to hear my Lord say to me in that still small voice, "It is finished. I have finished it for you." "Lord, what is 'it'? What have you finished for me? What have you finished for thy church?" And basically the Lord says, "You name it." What is it he hasn't done? We had better start there. What is it that the Lord hasn't done for you? What is it that you could possibly think of that's outside the realm of his finished work on the cross? What could it be? Is there something left for us? Should we believe more? Should we do more? Should we hope more? Should we pray more? What does "it is finished" mean to you? Is there not perfection in what Christ has done? Is there not perfection in what Christ said, these words, "It is finished"? Keep in mind the power in these words. No man around. No man, no creature to help. Nobody sitting there saying, "Yeah, let me help you off that cross." Nobody standing up and saying, "Yup, that's my Lord. That's my Lord up there." Nobody even wanted to be associated with, "It is finished. All Father that you have given me for thy church is finished. Their sanctification is finished. Their justification is finished." This is something he said in time for what he did before the foundation of the world. It's eternal.

Then, as I said, at this time of year, we look at, "Well, he was made flesh." Yes, and think about the culminating event of that time being made flesh, "It is finished." The little baby that was born in the manger came to save his people from their sin and say to them on the cross, "It is finished." Those are some powerful words. Those are words of rest. Those are words of tranquility. Those are words of peace because if my life is hidden with his, it is finished. All faith that I ever need is stored in him, it's the faith of the Son of God. All love that I ever need is in him, it is finished. We've not finished many things in our lives. It's a bad feeling, at least it is for me. It's not fun putting together a 500 piece puzzle and getting to the end and notice that you don't have 3 or 4 pieces of it. You want to finish it but you can't. There are so many things we want to finish but we can't, but for the child of God in his soul, the "he will do it," that "who also will do it," it points to this: it points to what he has finished.

Now, let's turn a couple pages back to John 15. Of course, I quoted this once before but we'll start in verse 4. Remember, this is "who also will do it." "Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself." Understand that. May the Holy Spirit speak that to you today. You cannot bear fruit of yourself. "Except it abide in the vine," in the vine and then those words, has the Lord ever spoken these words to you? "No more can ye." Nor more can ye. No more can ye strive. No more can ye add. No more can you add a cubit to your stature. No more can ye perform these things. No more can ye which does lend to an idea that at one time we thought we could. Have you been delivered from that? Can you point to that time where you believed that in your life?

"No more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." That's the fruit of Christ. That's the fruit of gentleness. That's the fruit of peace. That's the fruit of faith. That's the fruit of love. That's the fruit of joy. That's the fruit of long-suffering. That's the fruit of the Spirit. It resides in Christ and no more can ye, it's not possible for you to conjure any of these things. As much counterfeit as we have done in our life, the Lord says, "No more. No more." What the child of God lives by is the faith of the Son of God, the love of the Son of God, the long-suffering of the Son of God. Oh, how we need the patience of the Son of God.

"For without me ye can do nothing." I can't say I love it, sometimes it makes me very frustrated to read people write about this verse and they try to quantify it. They try to qualify it. They try to say, "Well, Jesus didn't mean that you can do nothing. There are other things you can do." It's that mixture again. We've got to entertain the creature's part in all of this. It's nothing different than just rank Arminianism to sit and tell the Lord what you do to say, "Lord, I don't need you to do all things. I just need you to do some." No. And the child of God in the strength of the Holy Ghost does not rebel against this thought. In our flesh we do but in Christ Jesus, in the power of Christ and the Son of God, the faith of the Son of God, we believe that we can do nothing without him.

Two more places and we'll draw this to a close. Go with me now to Psalm 57. I was going to read verse 2 but I'll read the first 3. This was a Psalm of David when he fled from Saul in a cave. Think about that. He's in the cave, Saul is closing in on him. Now think about that, there is nowhere for him to go. Nowhere. It's the end of the cave and Saul and his men are at the beginning of the cave, David can't get out of the cave. This is a very, very fearful time, right? It should be. Listen to these words. "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." Unto God that performeth all things for me. Think about that. Let the gravity of the moment sink in for a moment. Where he's at, facing death, this is the power of the faith of the Son of God. This is the faithfulness of the Lord who will do it, "who also will do it."

"I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." Don't you know there were probably some soldiers in there with David sitting there saying, "You need to find a way out of here. You need to get us out of here. We're all going to die. If he comes back here, he's going to kill every one of us." And David is over there in a

restful spirit because the Lord has brought him to a different place and set him in a place where he just sees his Lord and his Lord's finished work.

"I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth." Oh, he is faithful to send forth his mercy and his truth, two things that we stand in dire need of.

The last place we'll go today is Philippians 1, of course, that would be verse 6. The Apostle Paul writes where his confidence is. We know, we've read enough of the Apostle Paul today and hopefully the Holy Spirit has revealed to us the mindset that Paul had was Christ was his all in all. Christ was his life. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform." Do you know what the Greek is for that? "Will do." We just heard David say the same thing. Performeth all things for me, will do, will finish. That's what that is, will finish it.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." That leads us right to our question today: is this the day of Jesus Christ for you? Has he revealed to you his finished work? Has he revealed to you that, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"? Do you see that he has begun the good work and do you have his faith to see that he will finish it? That's really the question. You know, we go from year to year to year to year and sometimes we it just seems like we get swallowed up in time. The days go by so fast and the next weekend is upon us and we come back to our text one more time.

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

May the Lord reveal today the power that he has to call and the power he has to perform and the power he has had to finish in the lives of his children for the glory of him and him alone.

Dear heavenly Father, may you be pleased to add thy power and thy clarity to the souls of thy children for the glory of thee. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.