

God is faithful - Sunday July 31st 2011

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (NASB)

Beloved in Christ Jesus our Lord.

From time to time all of us have or will experience disappointments, - someone or something will let us down. Promises are not kept and we are disappointed, because our expectations have not been met.

With God we have an absolute guarantee that this will never be the case. Our text today contains three very important words, that we should underline: GOD IS FAITHFUL.

Paul is writing these words from experience. He is relying upon his own as well as the testimony of God's people as recorded in the Scriptures. In Psalm 37 verse 25 we read:

"I have been young and now I am old, Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken Or his descendants begging bread."

God is faithful. He always keeps His promises. Last Sunday we reflected upon the petition in the Lord's prayer :Give us this day our daily bread." We saw that we must and can rely on God on a daily basis to provide for our needs. We can do so because God is faithful.

Before we place our trust in somebody, if possible, we seek to find out about the person. What is their track record. Do they and are they able to deliver on a promise? Is the work they do for example of an acceptable or even high standard? These are the sort of questions a prudent person asks. If possible they also seek to hear the testimony of others.

God does not ask us to follow Him blindly. He invites us to read His Word. You can (and should) read the Bible from cover to cover, and you will not find a single instance where God has proven to be unfaithful, or where He has broken or not fulfilled a promise.

God's Word comes with a 100% guarantee. God is able to do all He has promised. He has the ways and the means. He is all powerful, all knowing and everywhere. Nothing escapes His attention and absolutely nothing happens outside His knowledge. He is never surprised or taken aback, nothing is too difficult for Him. He is completely sovereign. He is faithful.

That means that we should learn to trust Him fully and completely. Trust Him in all things, not just the major things but also the small things. In His Word, He reveals Himself as our Father. Jesus taught us to pray: - "Our Father, who art in heaven...." When we have

accepted Jesus into our heart as our Lord and Saviour, then our relationship to God is that of son or daughter. He is our loving Father. In John 1:12 we read: ***“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,”***

Through Jesus sacrificial death on the cross, through His shed blood, by faith in Him, we can become children of God. This is only possible because God is love.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”(Jn.3:16)

God has so loved us that He has not only provided for our eternal salvation, He provides for our lives here and now, if we trust in Him. When we entrust our lives to Him and live in daily faith, we find that He truly is faithful. Everything that He has promised in His Word, is in effect. The truth of the matter is that God promises us a lot. For example we read in Deuteronomy 31:8: ***“The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”*** These words were originally spoken by Moses to Joshua, but we can apply them to our own lives because they agree fully with Jesus promise at the end of Matthew: ***“I, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (28:20b)***. Jesus does not say I am with you from time to time, now and then; no, he says I am with you always. Can you comprehend the magnitude of that promise? I certainly cannot! There is not a single moment, there is no situation in your life in which He is absent. He is with you and me always and ever! This is spelled out in Psalm 139:

¹ O LORD, You have searched me and known *me*.

² You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
You understand my thought from afar.

³ You scrutinize my path and my lying down,
And are intimately acquainted with all my ways.

⁴ Even before there is a word on my tongue,
Behold, O LORD, You know it all.

⁵ You have enclosed me behind and before,
And laid Your hand upon me.

⁶ *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it.

⁷ Where can I go from Your Spirit?
Or where can I flee from Your presence?

⁸ If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

⁹ If I take the wings of the dawn,
If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

¹⁰ Even there Your hand will lead me,
And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will overwhelm me,
And the light around me will be night,"

¹² Even the darkness is not dark to You,
And the night is as bright as the day.
Darkness and light are alike *to You*.

¹³ For You formed my inward parts;
You wove me in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are Your works,
And my soul knows it very well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;

¹⁶ Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;
And in Your book were all written
The days that were ordained *for me*,
When as yet there was not one of them.

¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand.
When I awake, I am still with You.

¹⁹ O that You would slay the wicked, O God;
Depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed.

²⁰ For they speak against You wickedly,
And Your enemies take *Your name* in vain.

²¹ Do I not hate those who hate You, O LORD?
And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?

²² I hate them with the utmost hatred;
They have become my enemies.

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;

²⁴ And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the everlasting way.

I have not shortened this text as it is too beautiful and important to cut any of it out.
We cannot remind ourselves enough of God's Word. We can never have too much. God's

Word is our source of strength, it is our hope and faith builder. When we read His Word, we learn about the ways in which He operates. There is a beautiful hymn that states:

“It is no secret, what God can do. What He’s done for others, He’ll do for you. With arms wide open, He’ll pardon you. It is no secret what God can do.”

God is faithful. In Hebrews 13:8 we read: **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”** It is important that we regularly remind ourselves of this fact. He does not waver, He does not change, His Word is secure, it does not change. There is not one Bible today, another tomorrow, - this Word is eternal!

Therein lies our security. The road that God has set is secure and stable. Whatever happens, whatever winds of change may blow, He remains ever faithful, ever the same! A few verses earlier in Hebrews 13 we read: ⁵ *Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,”* ⁶ so that we confidently say,

“THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID.

Fear is unbelief and mistrust. When we fret about and fear the future, the unknown, then we are living in unbelief. Faith simply says: “Lord, here I am. I place my whole life in Your hands. I trust that You will lead me in love, and everything that may befall me will happen with Your knowledge. I entrust myself to You, sure in the promise that all things work together for good, for them that love you, that are called according to Your eternal purpose.”

This entrusting of, this offering of ourselves to God, is not a once off action, but should be a daily thing. Sometimes even more than once a day. There will be trials, there will be temptations, there will be attacks from the devil. Let us always remain assured that God is in control and we can and must lean on Him. I close today with God’s promise to Joshua. Let us take this as a lesson for ourselves.

“Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸ This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Praise God, He is faithful, now and forever. To Him be all glory and praise! Amen.

Pastor Colvin S. MacPherson Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sydney.

All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.