

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

"But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil." II Thess. 3:3.

The Thracian converts were looked upon by Paul as both devoted and reliable. Among the many good things Paul wrote to them was what he told them in text. What a source of everlasting consolation for believers of all time to know that Paul knew what he was writing about when he said, "The Lord is faithful."

Some men are not faithful. But Paul was a faithful man. Silas was faithful. So was Timothy. But all men are not of the same type or brand of men as these three. As a contrast between faithless men and the faithful God let us specially take note of Paul's words to Timothy: "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself." Here, then, is the fearful possibility; and side by side with it runs this most blessedly consoling assurance -- "He abideth faithful." Jesus Christ abideth: there are no shifts and changes in Him. He is a rock and not a quicksand. He is the Saviour whether the rulers and the philosophers believe in Him or refuse Him, whether His professed followers are true to Him or desert Him. Christ cannot deny Himself; that is, He cannot change as to His nature and character towards us, His Word will not change, and He will not withdraw the salvation which He has presented to men.

"The Lord is faithful." By the works of nature we have the evidence that these words are true. Take for instance the repeated renewals of Nature each spring-time. Does not Nature's repeated resurrection whisper to us that "the Lord is faithful?" Alas! we can count on that faithfulness and not recognize its source. One who, perhaps, has never bent his knee to God, turns up the ground, confides the grain to its furrows, and awaits the future with confidence. Seemingly the very repeated evidences of the Lord's faithfulness, which ought to fill man's heart with Joy and gratitude, very often serve merely as an excuse of man's unthankfulness. Whenever the faithfulness of the Lord is most heartily preached and believed in, there we always find the production of the most faithful and the most obedient lives. The most lax and indifferent lives are never to be found in the ranks of those who yield joyful obedience to a faithful Lord. The danger always comes in acknowledging the faithfulness of the Lord too little.

The faithfulness of Christ was faithfulness to duty. At twelve years of age it was clearly conceived. "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" For eighteen years, He brooded over His duty, and at thirty it was accepted, and He never let it go. But what duty can God be said to have to which He is faithful? There can be no duty imposed on Him from without, else there would be another greater than Himself. But there can be an imperative within His own nature which is to Him that which duty was to Christ and to us. With regard to us, that duty is the duty of a Father to His children. By that imperative of Fatherhood He can never cease to care for us, watch over us, and finally perfect us. His faithfulness results from, or stands connected with, all His other perfections: ----

1. His power.

This enables Him, without the possibility of failure, to accomplish all His promises and threatenings. Honest men may be precluded keeping their word by unexpected difficulties; but the designs of the Almighty cannot be frustrated.

2. His holiness.

The Holiness of God is a pledge of His faithfulness.

3. His unchangeableness.

Angels have changed; men have changed; but God changes not.

4. His wisdom.

Among men, the non-performance of promises is frequently occasioned by circumstances which human prudence could not foresee. Therefore, good men should not make rash and hasty promises. But no provisions are necessary when God makes a promise. No difficulties or disappointments can occur to Him.

5. His love.

It inclines Him to make the promise, and His veracity induces Him to fulfill it.

He is faithful in: ---

- (1) Revealing to you your condition.
- (2) Commending to you His Son.
- (3) Presenting Christ to you, in free gift, as yours.
- (4) Not repenting of His call.

Still again, He is faithful in:--

- (1) His covenant engagements.
- (2) To His Son Jesus Christ.
- (3) To His redeemed people.

Faithfulness is the glory of deity:-----

- (1) It is the effect of God's veracity.
He has pledged His Word and will faithfully execute it, because He is a true God.
- (2) It stands connected with His omniscience, for if God knows all things, what inducement can there be to deny His word?
- (3) It stands intimately bound up with His holiness.
To break His Word would be a breach of His holiness.
- (4) It stands involved in His immutability.
It would show that He is of various minds.
- (5) It would be a breach upon His perfect love which promises good and fails to perform.

What part does the Lord's faithfulness play in your personal life? Have you ever taken time to think upon His faithfulness to you? Do you understand it fully? Does the thought of His faithfulness rouse an overwhelming sense of love and devotion in your heart and life toward the One who is so tender, so gracious, so merciful, and so compassionate toward you? If it does not, it certainly should by all means.

The Lord is faithful. If there is any unfaithfulness, if there is any failure, if there is any defeat, bear in mind, the unfaithfulness, the failure, the defeat, is always on our part. There is never any unfaithfulness, any failure, nor defeat, on the part of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. "If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself."