



“JESUS CHRIST: OUR STANDARD OF LIVING”

1 Timothy 6:13-16

Theme: *Believers have every reason to remain faithful to the will of God.*

Introduction:

- I. The Context of Our Faithfulness – 6:13
- II. The Catalyst for Our Faithfulness – 6:14-15a
- III. The Correctness of Our Faithfulness – 6:15b-16

I. THE CONTEXT OF OUR FAITHFULNESS – 6:13

A. The Exhibition of the Father’s Faithfulness – v. 13a

1. Timothy has received various instructions from Paul on how the church should be led in Ephesus.
2. Paul’s instructions are a general Operations and Procedure Manual for all churches everywhere – including GBC!
3. The instructions given to Timothy include:
 - a) *The obligation to combat false teaching by teaching the truth.*
 - b) *The recognition of apostolic authority in what is revealed in Scripture.*
 - c) *The commitment to pray.*
 - d) *The obligation for women to support the leadership of men in the church.*
 - e) *The obligation to limit leadership to qualified men who serve as elders & deacons.*
 - f) *The obligation to maintain the common confession concerning the work of Jesus Christ.*
 - g) *The obligation to exercise spiritual discipline as a Christian.*
 - h) *The obligation to diligently study God’s Word.*
 - i) *The obligation to honor widows by caring for their needs.*
 - j) *The obligation to honor elders – particularly those who teach and preach God’s Word.*
 - k) *The obligation to honor all authority, including the management of*

employers.

l) The obligation to guard against the temptation to greed.

m) The obligation to be intentional in the development of godliness.

4. As he begins to draw to a conclusion, Paul, now in summary, gathers all of these obligations into a generic appeal to be faithful to the commandment of God.
5. He provides two bases or contexts for our faithfulness to God.
6. First, he says, *“I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things ...”*
7. To *“charge”* Timothy [παραγγέλλω] – means to *“announce something that must be done – to give orders, to command, instruct, or direct.”*
8. It is an authoritative message given on behalf of God and of Christ Jesus Himself based on Paul’s calling as an apostle – cp. *1 Timothy 1:3.*
9. The first aspect of the context for our faithfulness is the example of God the Father, who is faithful.
10. The reference to God as the One *“who gives life”* [ζωογονέω] – is a reference to the work of God moment by moment by which we continue to live – it means *“to cause to be alive or to remain alive”* in the sense of preserving life.
11. Paul assures Timothy that his life remains in God’s hands; therefore, he does not have to fret about the threats that faithfulness to God will produce – *Job 12:10; Acts 17:28.*
12. Knowledge of God’s sovereign power to preserve life against all threats should give us the boldness to serve Him faithfully, even in the face of persecution and danger.
13. Additionally, God can restore life even after one has died – cp. *Hebrews 11:19; Acts 2:23-24.*

B. The Example of Jesus’ Faithfulness – v. 13b

1. Additionally, there is the example of Jesus’ faithfulness – *“... and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate.”*
2. When Jesus faced death, he went to the cross because of His confidence in the Father to preserve life - cp. *Hebrews 12:2.*
3. He was so confident in God’s power and in the integrity of His promise that when faced with death, he did not shrink back from “the good confession” – which, when asked by *“Pontius Pilate”* whether Jesus was the King of the Jews, *“testified the good confession”* – cp. *Matthew 27:11.*
4. Jesus boldly declared what He knew would bring about the hostility of the

enemies of God - because of His confidence in God to be faithful.

5. Hence, can you or I be excused from failing in our faithfulness? Can we claim that it was too hard, too costly, too uncomfortable, too sacrificial?
6. When we shrink back from faithfulness to the Lord, it is a denial of our confidence in God's faithfulness to take care of us and a disregard for the example of Christ in His faithfulness to God.

II. THE CATALYST FOR OUR FAITHFULNESS – 6:14-15A

A. The Expectation in Our Lord's Return – v. 14

1. Admittedly, we can become weary in our struggle to be faithful.
2. However, on each occasion when we are tempted to shrink back from faithfulness to God, we are to **“keep the commandment”** – [τηρέω] “to continue or persist in obedience, fulfill, or to pay close attention to” what God has commanded of us.
3. Paul reminds Timothy that the Lord is coming – **“... until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**
 - a) **“appearing” [ἐπιφάνεια]**- a broad and general reference to the consummation of God's redemptive purposes that embraces the entirety of end times events - both the Rapture of the Church as well as the 2nd Advent when Jesus returns to the earth to set up His Kingdom.
 - b) Given the imminent perspective of this verse, it has a primary application or focus for the New Testament Christians on the Rapture – cp. – cp. 1 John 2:28; 3:2-3; Titus 2:13.
4. When He comes for the church, we will be conformed to Christ Jesus and His perfection; meanwhile, we aspire to be **“without stain or reproach”** as we wait for Him – **“until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**
 - a) **“without stain” [ἄσπιλος]** - relating to that which is of the highest quality and without defect; untainted character - cp. Ephesians 5:27.
 - b) **“without reproach” [ἀνεπίλη(μ)πτος]** - irreproachable in one's conduct - **“without handles.”**

B. The Expectation of Our Lord's Return – v. 15a

1. Hence, our expectation of Jesus' return catalyzes our holy living and faithful fulfillment of God's command that we remain true to the Gospel.
2. Paul assures Timothy that the church's Rapture will occur when God's agenda decides it is right to initiate the “end times” schedule – **“... which**

He will bring about at the proper time.”

a) *“bring about” [δείκνυμι] (Fut. Act. Ind.) – a term that describes the manifestation of something so that it can be seen or to place something on display.*

b) *“proper time” [καιροῖς ἰδίοις] – literally, “its own period of time” – or that time that belongs to itself as a unique time of God’s action.*

(1) Many people have thought they could anticipate or predict when this will take place.

(2) God here, through Paul, declares that it is its own time – unique and must be manifested at God’s own predetermined but unrevealed time.

3. The emphasis here is that believers should remain expectant of the appearance of the Lord Jesus at all times and in all circumstances.

4. The more a believer *“loves His appearing,”* the more faithfulness will characterize his life; one of the more significant detriments the church knows today is the de-emphasis on prophecy and the failure to cultivate the doctrine of imminency – *2 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Peter 3:11, 14.*

5. Our faithfulness is refreshed, cultivated, and intensified as we allow the reality of Jesus’ return to settle into our hearts as a constant expectation, trusting the Lord for the timing – cp. *1 Thessalonians 2:19.*

a) *We are reminded that the patience to wait must be constantly cultivated as we can grow weary of waiting.*

b) *We are also reminded the reason for the “delay” is the desire of the Lord to see more brought to repentance – cp. 2 Peter 3:3-4, 9; 1 Timothy 2:4; Revelation 2:21.*

6. Therefore, we patiently and expectantly wait, seeking to *“keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Part 2

Introduction: Faithfulness – a characteristic that everyone everywhere appreciates. We expect faithfulness from our spouses, employees, students, friends, and church members. In our last study of this text, we noted aspects of faithfulness. We saw the importance of looking to the example of God’s faithfulness to us and to Jesus’ faithfulness to God, which both serve as a context for our faithfulness. We also noted one truth that stimulates and activates our faithfulness – the reality of Jesus’ imminent return. It stirs our devotion to Him. Usually, people who struggle to be faithful marginalize Jesus’ return as remote and unlikely. Today, we want to look at faithfulness to the Lord through the lens of the One we serve and see how appropriate or correct it is for us to remain steadfast and faithful to Him. Again, we see that ***“Believers have every reason to remain faithful to the will of God.”***

III. THE CORRECTNESS OF OUR FAITHFULNESS – 6:15B-16

A. The Sovereignty of God – v. 15b

1. We've already seen the context of our faithfulness is, first of all, the response to God's example of faithfulness to us – v. 13.
2. Paul now provides four essential justifications for our faithfulness to God the Father.
3. He states that God *"is the blessed and only Sovereign ..."*
4. In His *"sovereign"* reign over all things, God is *"blessed"* [μακάριος] – a term that describes Him as completely without disturbance, frustration, or anxiety but remains in a state of total satisfaction with how things are going.
5. The term *"only sovereign"* [δυνάστης] – relates to his unmitigated power – He is without peer and therefore possesses absolute right and ability to do whatever He pleases without consultation and without gaining permission – cp. *Daniel 4:35*.
6. As we reflect upon this truth, our service to Him can be without anxiety, distress, or fear – He controls all things, even in our afflictions, persecutions, and intimidations – *"He's got this!"*
7. Amid any circumstance – regardless of how threatening, intimidating, or even crippling, we can enter the same blessed frame of mind as God has – knowing the peace of God as we look to Him as the only Sovereign One.

B. The Superiority of God – v. 15c

1. As a further definition of His sovereignty, God reveals that He is *"... the King of kings and Lord of lords."*
2. This same divine title is ascribed to Jesus elsewhere, but here is a reference to the Father – likely as a contrast to the finite reign of earthly rulers such as Caesar – cp. *Revelation 17:14*.
3. Others may claim a "right to rule," but God alone possesses absolute authority – literally, He is *"the king of those kinging and the Lord of those lording"* – cp. *Proverbs 21:1*.
4. Thus, He is superior to any earthly power and must be obeyed before all – cp. *Acts 5:29*.
5. In a general sense, God is sovereign over the universe and all in it; in a specific sense, He is King of Kings – sovereign over all earthly rulers – He is essentially, functionally, and powerfully superior to anyone and anything, but He is our God!

C. The Stability of God – v. 16a

1. His superiority is also seen in the fact that He is constant – “... *who alone possesses immortality.*”
2. “*immortality*” [ἀθανασία] – describes “deathless.”
3. It describes endless existence – He is not susceptible to the corruptions that lead to death – *Psalm 90:2.*
4. It speaks of His stability, eternity, and immutability – that He is reliable and capable of providing life to all who turn to Him – *Romans 8:11*; cp. *v. 13.*

D. The Sanctity of God – v. 16b

1. **THE ABSOLUTE SANCTITY OF GOD** – “... *and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see.*”
 - a) God is completely “set apart” or sanctified – absolutely holy.
 - b) “*unapproachable*” [ἀπρόσιτος] – relates to the inability of the creature to initiate an approach – both concerning the limitation of innate quality and disqualification – no one is worthy.
 - c) “*light*” [φῶς] – describes the external, visible manifestation of the glory of God – the manifestation of the sum of His divine attributes – cp. *Psalm 104:1-2.*
 - d) In this sense, “*no man has seen or can see*” Him – God mercifully prohibits men from gaining even a glimpse of Him in His glory – cp. *Exodus 33:19-20.*
 - e) One day, because of His mercy and grace, we will look upon Him when we have been completely rid of sin and brought into conformity to the image of Christ Jesus – cp. *Matthew 5:8*; *Revelation 22:4.*
2. **THE ASCRIBED SANCTITY OF GOD** – “*To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.*”
 - a) Meanwhile, believers are called upon to ascribe value and worth to God through worship – cp. *1 Chronicles 29:11-13.*
 - b) Our immediate and practical pursuit in this aspiration is to magnify, serve, obey, worship, and promote the significance of Jesus Christ – cp. *1 Peter 4:11*; *Jude 24-25.*
 - c) In this way, we recognize both His worthiness or value – “*honor,*” [τιμή] and His sovereignty – “*eternal dominion*” [κράτος] to constantly remind ourselves of His ability to be trusted.
3. We then serve Him faithfully, remaining loyal to Him and His purposes for the Church – as delineated through 1 Timothy.

So What?

1. Which of God's attributes Paul identifies gives me the greatest confidence to be faithful to Him?
2. How should God's sovereignty and power influence my perspective when I find myself in situations that provoke anxiety or fear?
3. How does God's stability make His approach to problems inherently superior to mine, and what specific lesson can I take from His eternal constancy?
4. How can I better honor God through my responses to Jesus Christ and His Lordship? What is one thing I can do today to honor Him more faithfully?

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to the will of God.”*