

Thank God I Am Saved

Ephesians 2:1-10

In this chapter you have two extremes: the **pitiful condition** of the unbeliever and the **heavenly position** of the believer. Nothing could be lower than the condition of the man without Christ, and nothing could be higher than the position of the man in Christ.

1) The People Whom God Saves! (1-3)

2) The Power By Which God Saves! (4)

3) The Position Of Those Whom God Saves! (5-6)

4) The Purpose For Which God Saves! (7)

5) The Plan By Which God Saves! (8-9)

6) The Performance To Which God Saves! (10)

Our works manifest our salvation, and it is by our works that we glorify God. What glory would God receive if salvation left us to continue in the works of the flesh? But when grace can take someone who walks according to the course of this world and so radically change his life that he now walks in newness of life, God is glorified.

Thank God He is Faithful

2 Timothy 2:11-13

"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful." What a word for worried hearts! Even when we are feeble and frail and our faith fails in the face of trials and testing, you can know that God is faithful. Paul is writing to believers, but he says it is possible to be an "unbelieving" believer. That is, someone who has believed in Christ for the saving of his soul, but that is where his believing stopped. They haven't believed Him for life. They believe God will accept them into heaven when they die, but they don't believe that God will take care of them on the earth. I will admit that there are times when it is difficult to believe God. Sometimes our circumstances make it so hard to hold on to such outlandish promises that God has given us. But when we doubt, here is a faithful saying - *"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful."*

1) God is Faithful to His Creation!

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Pet. 4:19). Every few years mankind creates a new crisis to worry about. The crisis the world is wringing its hands over now is global warming. Dire predictions have been made that we are destroying the planet with our pollution and that we must make changes to protect the earth. We are being told that the ocean is going to rise, islands will disappear, and Antarctic is going to melt away. But I am not worried about protecting the earth because God is taking care of it. And for all these thousands of years, God has been doing just fine sustaining His creation - long before Al Gore got involved. God is faithful to His creation!

2) God is Faithful to His Covenant!

"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations;" (Deut. 7:9). A covenant is simply an agreement made between two or more persons. The covenants of God are the promises of God, and if God ever broke a covenant He would cease to be God. This is an essential attribute of God - if God is not faithful and trustworthy, then God would not be God. One of the covenants that God made with man is called the Noahic Covenant. You remember that after God destroyed the earth with a flood, God made a covenant with Noah and then painted a rainbow in the sky as a reminder to all the earth that He is a covenant

God (Gen. 9: 12-17). God doesn't want us to forget His promises, so He hangs the rainbow after the storm to remind us that He remembers His covenant.

3) God is Faithful to His Calling!

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). What is the call of God? I would say that the call of God is the sum total of the blessings of the gospel. It includes everything that is involved in calling a sinner out of the darkness of sin and into the glorious light of the gospel.

4) God is Faithful to His Commandments!

"All thy commandments are faithful:" (Ps. 119:86). All the sayings of God are true! *"Thy word is true from the beginning: and everyone of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever"* (Ps. 119: 160). We call this the inerrancy of the scriptures - there are no errors in the Word of God. It doesn't need to be corrected or changed because its words are true.

All the sayings of God are faithful. *"Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful"* (Ps. 119: 138). To say that God's words are true is inerrancy, and to say that they are faithful or that they will never fail is infallibility. God never forgets, never fails, never falters, and never forfeits His Word. He has always stayed true to every promise He has made.

5) God is Faithful in His Cleansing!

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). We use this verse sometimes in witnessing to lost people, but the verse was actually written to someone who was already saved. We know that God will forgive the sinner of his sins and save him, but this verse is talking about God forgiving those who already are saved. And He's faithful to do it! That does not grant you a license to go out and sin and then later make reparation. If you understand the grace of God, it will make you abhor sin, not indulge in it. But when you do sin, there is a loving Father who watches over you, who will forgive you when you confess.

God is faithful! You can trust Him for what your soul needs. You can rely on His Word. You can lean on His promises. You can claim His promises as an anchor for your soul.

Thank God For Faithful People

Text - Titus 3:12-15

This passage brings us to the end of the Epistle of Titus. Paul's "*yours truly*" of his letter to Titus contains a list of names of special friends, as well as parting instructions to Titus and the churches. These friends were men that were being used of God and were faithful servants with him in the Gospel ministry.

In my opinion, one of the greatest compliments that could be paid a person is that they are faithful Christians and servants of the Lord. The Bible says of Moses in Hebrews 3:5 that he "*verily was faithful in all his house.*" That is a great testimony for any Christian.

Paul spoke of himself as a faithful servant in 1 Timothy 1:12: "*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.*"

One of the expectations of Christians and servants of God is that they be faithful. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 4:2, "*Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*" One of the goals of our spiritual life ought to be that one day we will hear the Lord say, "*Well done, good and faithful servant*" (cp. Matt 25:23).

The title or testimony of faithfulness cannot be purchased. It is a testimony that is earned and achieved by the kind of life and service you give to the Lord. Again, it ought to be our goal to be found faithful. In chapter one Paul specifically spoke to ministers. In chapter 2 his focus was on members. As he closes his letter his words are addressed to each. Let's notice these closing words by first thinking about:

1. Faithful Ministers

In verses 12 & 13 Paul mentions four particular ministers, Artemas, Tychicus, Zenas and Apollos. These men were all faithful ministers of the gospel and co-laborers with Paul in the ministry. These men are:

A) Faithful Men Sent to Paul

B) Faithful Men Sent by Paul

2. Faithful Members

Paul says in verse 14, “*And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.*” The “ours” speaks of the members of the Church. Paul speaks of members as being:

A) Faithful Workers

Members are “**maintain good works.**” Maintaining has the idea of faithfulness. Christians are to be workers and they are to be faithful workers.

B) Fruitful Workers

In verse 14 he speaks of members “*that they be not unfruitful.*” Faithfulness leads to fruitfulness. Jesus said in John 15:8, “*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*” Fruitfulness is to characterize the life of the Christian.

Are you faithful? Are you faithful to God’s work? Are you fruitful? Is your Christian life bearing fruit? Paul closes his letter with verse 15, “*All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that loves us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.*” He is saying, everyone that is with me, we salute you that are faithful.

Can you be saluted for being faithful?

Thank God For Guys Like Hur

Text - Exodus 17:8-13

Introduction: This is a very important moment in the life of the nation of Israel. As they journey toward the Promised Land, they are faced with their first encounter with an enemy army. The Bible tells us that they came face to face with the armies of Amalek. These people were a nomadic tribe that was a constant thorn in the side of the people of Israel. In this first encounter, they prove their nature by conducting an unprovoked attack against the Israelites. This prompts the Lord to promise the total annihilation of the Amalekites. This promise was later fulfilled. In this scene from the travels of Israel, we find the great leader Moses mentioned, along with Aaron, as well as the first mention of the future leader Joshua. All of these men were great leaders in the history of Israel and all played a very important role in the early history of this great nation. However, there is another man mentioned in these verses that deserves our attention: his name is Hur. This is a man who steps out of nowhere, does a great work and then disappears into the same shadows from which he came.

People have long looked to Moses and Joshua as great leaders and as role models. Both men are classed, and rightfully so, as true heroes of the faith. However, I would like to say that the real heroes of this particular story are Aaron and Hur. Notice the context. When Moses hands were held up, as a sign of intercession, Israel prevailed in the battle. When Moses' hands were allowed to fall down, Amalek prevailed. After a while, Moses became weary to hold his own hands up and Aaron and Hur stepped up and held Moses' hands up until the battle was finished. In my mind, they are the true heroes here. Of these two, Hur seems to stand out in my mind. Here is a man about whom we know next to nothing, yet he enabled an entire nation to see a great victory.

Here are 4 characteristics of guys like Hur:

People Like Hur Are INVALUABLE

V. 12

In this story, Moses is unable to hold his hands up, and if they fall, then the Amalekites will certainly win the battle. However, Aaron and Hur step forth and hold the hands of Moses up until the battle is won. The task Hur accomplished that day doesn't sound like a lot to you and me, however, had it not been for the work of this man, Moses would not have had the strength to do his job, and Joshua would never have been able to lead Israel to victory in the battle. To me, Aaron and Hur are the heroes of this conflict. Had they not been there, the battle would have been lost and Israel would have been defeated! The job they performed was absolutely invaluable!

People Like Hur Are INVOLVED V. 10, 12

Hur wasn't a great leader like Moses. He wasn't a great General like Joshua. He wasn't a great High Priest like Aaron. He wasn't a warrior like those in the army. He was just Hur. The Bible does tell us later that Hur was a man of influence among the people, Ex. 24:14. Rumor even has it that he was Miriam's husband. However, on this day, there was one thing Hur could do and he did it willingly, actively and faithfully. He could hold up hands and he did the best job he could!

People Like Hur Are Often INVISIBLE V. 12

This man Hur is not mentioned before this incident and there are only a couple of others afterward. This is a man who lived in the shadows while others around him received the glory. He was invisible to the crowd, who could only see Moses, Aaron and Joshua. There are many in our churches today who are just like Hur. They are invisible to the crowds. The preachers, the teachers and the singers all get their pats on the back and hear the people say, "Well done!" People like Hur remain invisible.

People Like Hur Are INVESTORS Ex. 31:2

As Hur lived his life and performed his God-given ministry, others were watching. Sometime later, God needed someone to build the Tabernacle and provide a place where the Lord could meet with His people. When the Lord looked down at those millions of Israelites, His eyes settled on one man. It was a fellow by the name of Bezaleel. This man just happened to be the grandson of a man named Hur. While the rest of the camp was excited about the great victory that Joshua and Moses had worked, Bezaleel probably took note of the fact that it was his grandfather, a man who was willing to serve God in a quiet fashion, that helped bring the great victory to pass.

Conclusion: I am almost sure that there are some who can relate to Hur. You are dedicated to the Lord, but you are never recognized for your contributions. Let me tell you, you are appreciated. This preacher thinks you are the best! I love you and thank God for everyone who is involved in the Lord's work in whatever capacity. Maybe some here have thought about quitting. Please, let me say, "Don't!" You are too important to what is being done in this place. You are too vital to the Lord's work. If the devil has been trying to convince you that you are unimportant, let me tell you that you are very important! I would like to see you come before the Lord this morning and renew your commitment to serve Him in anyway that He may see fit to use you.