



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

**Church of Christ** • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

## “He That Endureth to the End Shall Be Saved”

Chuck Northrop

When Jesus sent out the twelve apostles in the “Limited Commission,” He warned them of the persecution they would endure. He declared, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves” (Matthew 10:16). Because righteousness is often met with opposition, the twelve needed to have a mental fortitude of endurance. As it was then, so is it today. This should come as no surprise since it has always been this way. Noah, “a preacher of righteousness,” had to persevere in “the world of the ungodly” (2 Peter 2:5). Moses had to stand strong during the wicked days of the wilderness wanderings (1 Corinthians 10:5-12). Jeremiah had to resist the women of Judah who burned incense to other gods and attributed the preservation of Judah to “the queen of heaven” (Jeremiah 44:15-19). In the first century, the apostles and early Christians had to continue steadfastly while being persecuted by the Jews and by the Romans (Acts 3-8). For this reason Paul exhorted, “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12). Peter also noted, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you” (1 Peter 4:12). Christians must endure to the end in order to have the eternal rewards promised of God.

To become a Christian, a person must hear the word, believe Jesus is the Christ, repent of sins, confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and be immersed and raised to walk in newness of life. However, being a Christian is more than simply obeying God’s gracious and merciful plan of redemption. Being faithful is not another plan or a new plan, but is part of

the same plan. God wants Christians to “be thou faithful unto death” (Revelation 2:10) which not only means to be faithful until the time of death, but to be faithful even if the cost of faithfulness *is* death. The recipients of the letter to the Hebrews had “endured a great fight of afflictions” (Hebrews 10:32). Though the afflictions were severe (see verses 33-34), they had not “resisted unto blood” (Hebrews 12:4). Because of the trials of their faith, the writer exhorted, “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward” (Hebrews 10:35). Since Christians must continue to be faithful, then it is necessary to ask, “**What Does it Mean to Be Faithful?**”

**Faithfulness Means Living a Life for God.** Because in times past many Christians were of the world and served the pleasures of sins, it is far too easy to fall back into the sins of this world. Corinth was a morally depraved city, and many of the Christians there came out of this debauchery. After listing several sins, Paul exhorted them, “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11). Twice he reminded them they were “bought with a price” (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23). The purchase price paid for the church of God is Christ’s “own blood” (Acts 20:28). Christians were redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:19). To the Corinthians Paul continued, “Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Christians no longer belong to themselves, rather they belong to God. Thus, they are servants of God, and as His servants they must live for Him.

**Faithfulness Means Living a Life of Worship.** Worship should to be a vital part in the life of every Christian. It ought to be done individually as in daily prayers and devotionals, and it ought to be done collectively as in attending the worship services of the Lord’s church. In John 4, Jesus taught the Samaritan woman about worship. He declared, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23-24). All worship ought to be in compliance with Jesus’ instruction of “in spirit” (from the inner person) and “in truth” (according to God’s word). Personal worship can sometimes be spontaneous. When something bad or something good happens, spiritually minded people will bow their knees to seek help from and/or to praise God. However, assembly worship is to “be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14:40).

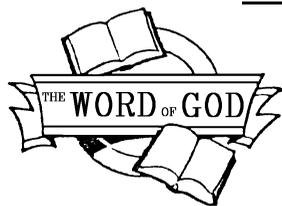
**Faithfulness Means Living a Life of Service.** Every person serves one of two masters: “sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness” (Romans 6:16). Since Christians have been “freed from sin,” they “should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:7,5). Service may include various forms of benevolence such as feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, and comforting the feeble. John, the apostle, made an interesting observation and compelling application. He wrote, “Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life

for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

**Faithfulness Means Living a Life of Purity.** Purity ought to be descriptive of various aspects of the faithful Christian. This begins with the mind. Jesus said, "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). The heart reflects itself in speech and in actions. If the heart is not pure, the speech and actions will not be pure. The converse is also true. Words and deeds reflect the condition of the heart. 1 John 3:2 gives an insight into what Christians shall be: "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Please give serious attention to John's exhortation in the following verse: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

**Faithfulness Means Living a Life of Influence for Good.** In application to the Beatitudes, Jesus said His disciples are "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-16). Both salt and light are symbols of influence. Salt influences flavor, and light influences actions. Because Christians ought to be salt and light, then they influence the world for good by their examples and by their teaching. One of the most basic responsibilities Christians have is to take the gospel message into this world of woes. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). Let us impact the world for good by being salt and light.

Remaining faithful is not always easy. There are times of feasting and times of famine. There are times of rejoicing and times of sorrow. There are times of refreshing and times of distressing. Not only is the gate strait and narrow, the way is strait and narrow (Matthew 7:13-14). However, God provides the faithful with the hope of the resurrection of life. Jesus declared, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). Jesus encouraged the lukewarm church of Laodicea to overcome. Then He exhorted, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21). Christians must always remember "the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:18) "if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Hebrews 3:6).



"For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." — Hebrews 4:12

## Observations and Concerns

January 18, 2023

**Welcome Visitors!** We are grateful you have decided to visit us today

"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise" (Isaiah 43:21).

**Thought of Thankfulness:** Let us remember to offer up unto God thanksgiving for those who took the time and taught us the gospel.

**Remember in Prayer:**

- ▶ **Alan Johnson**, grandson-in-law of the Hudsons, had quadruple bypass surgery on Monday.
- ▶ **Chris Nelson** had surgery last week to remove kidney stones. He is recovering at home.
- ▶ **Virginia Lively**, former mother-in-law of Kathy Orr, is on hospice care.
- ▶ **Margie Casebolt**, mother of Jody Northrop, is recovering from Covid.
- ▶ **Donnie Nero** is having health problems.
- ▶ **Nelda Hudson** is being diagnosed for her health concerns.
- ▶ **Bill Dilks** continues his recovery from cancer.
- ▶ **Ed Dindy**, father of Tia Swearingen, has aggressive cancer. He is scheduled to meet with his radiologist on January 19<sup>th</sup>.
- ▶ **Amanda Georgakus**, friend of Sherry Carmona, has breast cancer that has metastasized to her spine.

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, Jan. 18	Sunday, Jan. 22 AM	Sunday, Jan. 22 PM
Sundays			
Bible Classes . . . 9:30 AM	Announcements	Chuck Northrop	Chuck Northrop
Worship . . . . . 10:30 AM	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Doyle Jackson
Worship . . . . . 5:00 PM	Prayer	Paul Praschnik	Chris Nelson
Wednesdays	Lord's Supper (speaker)	Paul Praschnik	Doyle Jackson
Bible Classes . . 7:00 PM	Lord's Supper	Chuck Northrop	
Website: oologahcofc.org	Lesson	Ross Swearingen	Russ Earl
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Russ Earl	Ross Swearingen
			Russ Earl