

Christian Living Series 2, sermon # 127
The Fruits of God's Holy Spirit

Faith #36

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Edited Sermon Transcript

Greetings, brethren. This, now, is the last word in that long series on the fruit of God's Holy Spirit, faith. As you will recall, I mentioned to you in the conclusion of the last word that we would cover this last one. Although it is not the word "faith" itself, it is a cognate thereof. It is the word *pistos*, meaning "faithful." And I think it is essential to cover that one so that we can encompass the totality of those Greek words that apply to this subject of faith. The word *pistos* comes from the Greek word *peitho*—p-e-i-t-h-o. So many words, you know, if you understand the makeup of words, come from other words. This one comes from the Greek word *peitho*. The word *pistos* itself—before we define the word *peitho*, or however it may be pronounced—means, objectively, "trustworthy," or subjectively, it means "trustful." That is, objectively (meaning outside of the self), it means "trustworthy," but subjectively (that is, within the self), it means "one who is trustful." It is translated as "believe," "believing," "believer," "faithful," "faithfully," "sure" and "true." We will see all those usages later.

Now for the word *peitho*: It is a primitive verb meaning to "convince by argument," or by analogy, "to pacify or conciliate (by other fair means)." Reflexively, or passively, it means "to assent, (to evidence or authority)," and finally, "to rely"—that is, a form of reliance by inward certainty. So it involves, then, the manifestation of certainty, confidence, and assurance in an individual in a subjective manner.

Let's see, now, how it is used. By seeing it in its broad usage, we can get a better understanding of how the Holy Spirit inspired that word to be used. It is a mistake to try to understand a single word within a single usage. See it in its total, broad perspective and then you can see it as it is basically used and inspired by the Holy Spirit itself. This word is used frequently with regard to the ministry of the last

days. I want us to notice, now, its initial usage. That is, when I say initial usage, I mean not only its initial usage within the New Testament, but also its initial usage so far as my outline is concerned.

Here in Matthew 24 and verse 45, it says: "Who then is a [*pistos*] and wise servant . . ." "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?" So here is a question, then, generated by Christ Himself. Who is then a faithful and a wise servant of God who is going to do that bidding for which he was called? Let's go back, now, and pick it up in context beginning in verse 42:

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

It seems to me that the setting for the return of Christ is rather precise. There will be a great deal of consternation, and problems, and difficulties, and it will even be a time in which many people, apparently, will lay down their concern and will begin to sleep, or grow apathetic and indifferent.

So it says, "Therefore be ye also ready." The implication here is to be alert—to be cognizant, to be aware—of the times and the circumstances, and do not let any physical circumstances of this world take your objectivity away from you. Be cognizant—be aware—of the times and the conditions, and make the necessary preparation.

So Christ said, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not . . ." It would appear to be the most unlikely moment. Why? I'm not absolutely sure, except that the overt implication here is that circumstances are going to appear to be pretty well ironed out. It would appear that things are settled, and that this would be an unusually illogical time for the return of Christ. Why would it appear to be illogical? Because human beings themselves seem to want to tailor the conditions and the circumstances in which Christ should come, rather than to look at facts and be objective. They would rather try to interpret things themselves. Human beings want to do their own interpreting. They like to

determine, rather than to try to ascertain what is right, acceptable and in accord with the plan and the purpose of God. So, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." So He is going to come at a time that is not ideal, according to the thinking of human beings, nor the time that would appear to be the logical time according to man's thinking.

Now it says, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant?" In this particular configuration of time, faithfulness is going to become pretty prominent—it is going to be absolutely evidenced, because the faithful one ("Who then is a faithful and wise servant?") is in opposition to somebody else who is not faithful, and is not exercising wisdom. So, since we have a contrast here, the "faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household" will be giving "meat in due season"—he is going to be pouring out acceptable spiritual food. He is going to be giving his very level best to help people to get their feet down and to stay firm in their resolve, even in this period of time that appears to be most unlikely for the return of Christ. Now that's who a "wise and a faithful servant" of God will be.

Continuing, He said in verse 46: "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." That also is an expression implying that there is someone who is *not* going to be so doing, yet he had that commission and that responsibility. "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods."

Alright, let's move now very quickly to Luke. Luke the 12th chapter, and let's note verse 42. However, I'm going to begin in verse 41. Luke 12 and beginning in verse 41. It says: "Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?" Peter wanted to know whether it was specifically addressed to them—to those who were hearing it right at that moment—or to all people.

You know, I encounter this quite frequently when people ask, "Is he talking about me?" Well, let me set the record straight. Obviously, I'm influenced by the things that I hear, read, see, and so on. Is any human being different from that? But I want us to all understand that I do not, have never, and will not, God helping me, ever isolate a single individual and use him—or her, whichever the case may

be—as an example. I just simply do not do that. But why do we ask the question, "Is he talking about me?" Why do we not ask, "Does that apply to me?" *Then* we could get someplace. Because it is only the individual who can confess what he is who is going to have a chance. That's what confession is all about. If we confess our frailties, our weaknesses, our wrongs, our mistakes, or whatever, *then* can we make progress. But if we are going to look at it and say, "Is he talking about me, or somebody else," then we are going to make gigantic mistakes.

I don't care if it is the voice of Satan, if he pronounces Truth, listen to it. If he doesn't, don't hear it. But how are you going to know whether it is Truth or not? Take a good look at it and see if it applies. If for any reason any one of us has become sensitized in any area of problem, or whatever it is, we need to take looks at ourselves. Each one must take a good look at himself. So let's not do what Peter did here, where he said, "Are you saying this to us or are you saying it to everyone?" Let's just take a good look at it and see if it applies to ourselves, and then we will make real progress.

"And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward . . .?" That simply means anybody that is given a responsibility. "Who then is that faithful and wise steward?" Well, I'm not going to cover this because that is a long subject in its own right, but it perhaps needs to be covered. You know, a faithful servant is one who upholds the teaching—the direction, the desire, the purpose, the objective—of his superior. He does not look at it and say, "Well, I'm going to do my own thing." Never. It is a person who tries with all that is within him to create harmony, because any person that is given a responsibility has a fundamental obligation incumbent upon him, and that is to create peace—to keep harmony, to keep accord, and happiness and excitement. So a wise and faithful steward is one who is subjugating the self, totally, and who, for the purpose of the total operation, is trying to keep peace, harmony and accord on the basis of a divinely-revealed Way of Life.

But not one of us has the right to determine that for himself, and the Truth of God affects every phase of our lives. That's the one thing we so frequently miss, because we feel that there are domains, or areas, of our lives that are our business, but we forget that religion is a way of life. It affects the way you think, it affects the way you speak, it affects your social relationships, it is fundamental in your tastes of life, and in everything that makes up your life and that is a part of

you. That's what religion is all about. A lot of people think religion is somehow going to church on Sunday—or on the Sabbath and Holy Days in our case—and that, to them, is religion. No. Religion is a way of life. It affects everything you do, seven days a week. It *is* you—it is a way, it is how you respond, it is the totality of that which is you. That's religion.

"Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?" Now, obviously here, it is a matter of delivering something, and it is the delivering of a due portion of meat, in season. The meat that the individual conceives for himself? No, but that which has been delivered to him.

Brethren, if I have had any motto since I became independent, in that sense, it has been, "let's be faithful to that which was given to us." I have struggled with everything that is within me to honor that commitment, and to be a faithful servant of God. That's all I ask, and it is going to affect everything in my life. I have had many things to change, but I want to be a faithful servant of God. That's all I'm asking for, and a faithful servant of God produces joy, happiness and peace. Sure, he has to uphold his responsibility, there isn't any question about it. My responsibility is to proclaim that Way of Life, but as the Bible simply says, it won't be because I misused someone or I manifested any hate or contempt for someone. I wouldn't want to do that for any reason. But what is it that causes offense? The Word of God. We stumble over the Word of God—over Jesus Christ. He is called the stumbling block. Why is He called the stumbling block? Because He is the Way, and that Way is unalterable—it cannot change. It is the Way we have been proclaiming for twelve years, brethren, and we will continue to proclaim it.

Who, then, is a wise and faithful servant? The one who upholds the charge that has been given to him. What is that charge? To be free and independent? No. It is to do what he has been assigned to carry out, in accord with the fundamental principles that Jesus Christ has given—a Way of Life that has been committed to us.

"Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." We are going to come back to that a little later in answering a different question.

Now, let's turn to 1 Corinthians 4 and verse 2. 1 Corinthians 4, and let's note verse 2, but I'm going to begin in verse 1. 1 Corinthians 4, beginning in verse 1: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." Now, the problem was that the vast majority of people were taking exception, even with the Apostle Paul, and I know how easy it is for us today to assume that if it were Paul here, we would have no problems at all. We have little patience with the people that existed back in his day—who caused him all kinds of consternation and problems—just like we cannot believe that people could stand there and defy Christ to His face. The problem is, brethren, when we put ourselves back in that situation, we create Christs or Pauls that subscribe to *our* images. In other words, we create a Christ out here who is going to agree with us, implicitly. So we don't understand why in the world there should have ever been a problem back then, because we know that Christ would have agreed with us perfectly. That's the Christ we usually create in our minds, rather than seeing ourselves as walking in the footsteps of some of those people. We are likewise defiant, rebellious, troubled and perplexed, and have a great necessity of coming to grips with ourselves—grabbing our own necks by our hands and saying, "Listen, bud, get in the saddle and stay there." But we always put ourselves in favorable light. We just do not understand why people took exception with Christ, with the prophets, with Moses, or with anybody. And when we do that, all we are doing is manifesting a *total* inability to see ourselves for what we are. And yet, we are no better than they. As a matter of fact, we are the dregs of society. The Bible clearly tells us that we have gone down in character, in moral stability, in moral fortitude. We are not better people, we are people of less character and capability than they were in times past. Why don't we see ourselves for what we really are, and then we won't have any trouble understanding these things?

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ." You know, there is somebody who is carrying that out today. There is somebody to whom God gave that responsibility also in the last days, and God absolutely warns us against taking any exception with that individual—abusing him, using that name in a critical fashion, spitting it out as an epithet. We must not do it, because we are going to pay a price if we do.

Now, that doesn't mean that party did not make mistakes. That's right. We ought to see the mistakes for what they are and then kindly and affectionately say, "I will not walk in the path of error." But we do not denigrate; we do not spit out

dire epithets; we do not accuse falsely; we do not ridicule. That is not acceptable in the sight of God, and yet, all too frequently, as with our own Savior—that is, Christ Jesus—we are accused of being self-righteous. Remember the Jews of that day? The Pharisees accused him of self-righteousness because they were legalistic, and yet their hearts and their minds were wrong. Why is it that those who have the highest, most exalted opinion of the self, are always the most critical? Because they do not see themselves for what they really are. Now, notice it:

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God [That's all Paul was asking. "Will you recognize that we are the ministers of Christ?" That's what he was asking]. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful [So it is absolutely essential that a minister be faithful. Now, that doesn't mean that they are always faithful, but it certainly is a basic requirement]. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you . . .

So here was a situation in which the Apostle Paul was being censured—he was being ridiculed; they were second-guessing him; they were subjecting him to a whole passel of questions; they had no regard for his integrity; they had no regard for his stewardship; they had no regard for the fact that he had to adhere to the principles of God. But they were second-guessing him, and as such, found themselves liable in a situation that they should not have allowed in their own lives.

"But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self." He wasn't even going to judge himself, and yet, we as a people want to judge everyone, and we want to render decisions concerning them. We can't do it because we cannot read hearts. The Bible tells us very clearly that the day is going to come when Jesus Christ will come back, and *all* things will surface. And then appropriate judgment can be made.

What is essential for a minister is that he proclaim and that he maintain that Way of Life delivered to him. It didn't say to correct somebody else; it didn't say to intervene in their lives. The faithful minister is the one who avoids personal

application of those principles in the lives of other people because he cannot read their hearts and their minds. But he must proclaim it. And, brethren, I have been trying to proclaim that with all that resides within me. So a faithful minister is not going to be judging, he is going to be preaching it, and he is going to be teaching it with everything that is within him, and then it is the responsibility of those people who hear, to respond and to judge themselves—but never anybody else—to whatever extent they feel capable of it, and to set themselves aright, and to respond in accord with the faith that has been delivered to them. That is a faithful minister—that is a faithful steward of God. A faithful steward is not one who is out judging and exercising control over somebody else. You alone bear that responsibility.

Now, that doesn't mean the freedom to violate any law of God, let me tell you that emphatically, because there is a Day of Judgment appointed, and what are you going to do at that time if you say, "Well, I wasn't subject to any human judgment earlier. I didn't have to judge myself"? And Christ is going to look at them and say, "But why did you not recognize your own needs? Why did you not recognize your own frailties? Why did you not master those frailties and those weaknesses by the help of God's Holy Spirit? Why did you not correctly look at things? Because your hearts were wrong, and your minds were not in tune with the real purpose that I gave." It is our responsibility, brethren.

I do rule my life to the best of my ability, but I'm not satisfied with it and never have been. Any time we become satisfied and self-sufficient, let me assure you, we are headed out. I want to do so much better every day. I want to master the self; I want to overcome; I want to always be able to evidence love; and above all, I want to always be able to keep my mind focused on the self when it comes to censure—which I'm required to do—and always in a very convivial, respectful manner toward other people. I want to do things for them, whomever they are—in the world, as well as within the church. I want to always be kind and affectionately concerned for other human beings, but yet very, very demanding in my own life. I have no other right. I want to demand of the self—I want to demand perfection of this self—in accord with the Faith that God has delivered to me, and then that makes me a faithful steward. And you then, must demand the same thing in your lives.

Now, the demands are abundant, and one of those demands is that you must never look critically at someone else. When we do, we are going to be subject to the same penalty on down the road. I can read you several texts that say that by that same standard, then, you are going to be judged. I need the mercy of God. And so does everyone else.

Now, does that mean that I teach liberality? Please, brethren, let's quit kidding ourselves. I believe in the absolute, vital force of God's Law, and the absolute demands of that Law, as well as of His statutes and His judgments, but I believe it is your responsibility, not mine. That makes me, then, a faithful steward—a steward of the mysteries of God—but not one who has dominion and control over you, as individuals.

Now, what are, then, the faithful manifestations of a faithful minister? Here in 1 Timothy 4, and noting verse 12. This one shows some of the manifestations of one who is faithful—a faithful servant of God. 1 Timothy 4, and let's notice verse 12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers . . ." Here Paul is writing to the young evangelist Timothy, and the word "believers" here is this word *pistos*.

Or, it could be translated, "be thou an example of the [faithful], in word, in conversation, in [love], in spirit, in faith, [and] in purity." All things are pure in mind—pure minds, pure purposes and objectives.

"In spirit"—that is, our minds are not cluttered with hostility, revenge, hatefulness, and contempt. No, but in spirit we demonstrate a mind of humility, of kindness, of affection, and of love.

"In faith"—in absolute perseverance with respect to that Way of Life. Faith is manifested in purposeful obedience—obedience to that which is revealed.

"In conversation." What proceeds from our lips? Is it always love? Is it always compassion? Or, do we behind the scenes, and in divers ways, ridicule?

You know, the Bible tells us very clearly that sweet water and acrid water cannot proceed from the same well—it just can't. Wouldn't you be absolutely fit to be tied, and frustrated, if one time you went to the tap—or maybe some of you to a

well, if that should happen to be your circumstance—right there in your own home, and you got very sweet water out of it? "Oh, isn't that marvelous to drink." But the next time you go, it is bitter—acid. You'd be disappointed, wouldn't you? Then you go back the next day and you get sweet water again, so you know that the well—or the tap there in your kitchen, or wherever—hasn't just changed, but it shifts back and forth. When you get a nice drink out of it, you enjoy it, but then the next time you go to it, it is absolutely obnoxious. You would say, "Well, wait a minute. Something is wrong." And indeed it would be.

But what about us? What proceeds out of our wells—our cisterns—of life? Is it always pure—kindness, warmth, love and affection? Or, do we, when we have an opportunity, tend to manifest contempt, using ridicule? We are abrasive; we are caustic; we tend to denigrate someone else; we imply things by the things that we say. Or, do we always build? Are we always kind? Are we always affectionate? Will we ever learn, or do we justify the things that we do by believing that we are right? You know, God is also right, but God does not enter into such ridicule and contempt. Not at all.

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers." That is absolutely incumbent upon us. "Be thou an example of the believers, in word"—in the things that we say. Are we always true to our word? Can you count on that word? Is it trustworthy?

"In conversation." And that is also our relationship, by voice, with others. We have many ways by which we have a relationship. You know, there is a certain image generated by our demeanor—by our approach to things. We imply certain things though they are never spoken, and yet, in other ways, we speak them—they are audible. The aura that we carry and the audible relationship that we have with others—these are both components of our relationships with other human beings.

And so we must be an example of the believers—the faithful—"in word, in conversation, in [love], in spirit [that is, in the mind], in faith." That is, in continuity of that Way of Life which has been given to us. And that is the one thing that I can say has not changed from the day I came in. It has remained absolutely the same.

But there is one thing I do want to explain: I think it is necessary, because there are people, if we are not careful, in order to properly explain it, who believe that administration is a change. I told you from the beginning that the Bible clearly shows us that the administration of that former affiliation was not acceptable in the sight of God. That is the one thing that troubled me when I first began to realize certain things were happening within the body, and I knew that God had said that they took advantage—that they did all kinds of things—and that they lived by a letter application of the Law. I've written on all of these things—you can get them. And God frowns upon that. God does not want that kind of thing. So, I looked at this and I thought well, you know, God is bitterly denouncing somebody for having taken advantage of others, for having attempted to rule their lives, for exercising control over their faith, and so on. God denounces that, and we have written articles on that, and they are absolutely Biblical. Something was wrong, administratively.

And then I found that the very one also to whom the Truth was given had assumed a prophetic capability. And God said, "I didn't send him in this prophetic area." He had assumed it.

So I found, then, basically what we called a tripartite division: There is prophetic responsibility, there is the duty of proclaiming the Way of Life—the message delivered—and there is the administration of that Way of Life, which is either spiritual, in love, affection and regard, or it is calloused on the basis of letter application, "which neither we nor our fathers could bear," said the apostles. They couldn't bear this type of thing because a letter application leaves no room for grace, tolerance and forbearance. If you committed a sin, your life was taken. And that is not acceptable in the sight of God. Where is the real essence of heart? That is, kindness—the very Spirit of God in love, affection and regard? Now, a faithful servant of God must evidence that kind of compassion, mercy and understanding.

So, we must be, then, examples of the believers—dedicated, loyal, faithful and kind. And I still have a deep feeling for everyone I have ever known. I'm not separated because I had no use for them. We are separated because *they* did it, without exception. I have no ill-feeling toward anyone, only deepest respect. Let the judgment fall where it will in Christ's Day.

In Titus 1 and noting verse 6: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly." This basically is with regard to elders, but it can be applied, in a secondary sense, to anyone who bears responsibility. He must be blameless. That is, the image must be a right image. "Blameless" does not mean that they do not have faults.

You know, you have to take the totality of God's Word. What are we going to do with 1 John 1, where it says that, "if any of us say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar"? That didn't say at the moment of conversion, only. It means that at any given time, if we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and the Truth is not in us. Now, how in the world can you equate that with the fact that we must be blameless to be the ministers of God? Being blameless does not mean that we do not have natural frailties. It means that we abhor the self—we have no respect for our own weaknesses—we candidly admit them and we face them for what they are. We take no superlative image for the self. We just do not do it.

"If any be blameless, the husband of one wife"—meaning, in this case, obviously, that it cannot be anyone who is involved in a questionable marriage. So this tells you very clearly—very clearly—that there were people who were involved in marriages that would be subject to review on down the road. But when there is a question, they cannot be in responsibility. Now, *that* we have tried to carry out. There can be no questionable marriage—no one who has been involved in any second marriage can be in a key responsibility. You just can't, because then that would imply that we justify it. The other merely says that we cannot read hearts and minds, and that the judgment must be exercised on down the road. But in the case of any leader, and any responsible individual in God's church, it can never be one who has been married before, unless you are going to say that he is talking about monogamy versus polygamy here. Do any of you believe that? Well, I'll tell you, very candidly, that I don't. I think—and in fact, I know it because of what was revealed beforehand. We are talking about those who had prior mates.

[H]aving faithful children [that means children who are taught in that Way of Life and children who respond acceptably] not accused of riot or unruly.

Alright then, next: "What is the reward of the faithful?" Here we have taken a good look at the ministry, but it has its overtones for all of us. It doesn't make any difference, because a minister is not going to live by a different standard than somebody else, it is only that he carries a unique responsibility at the present time. But the same standard of judgment is going to be used, regardless of whom, in that Day of Judgment. Now, what is going to be the reward of the faithful?

Let's turn back, now, to Matthew 25. Matthew 25 and let's note verse 21: "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant." So here we are talking about somebody who had been given certain responsibilities. In this case, it was the one who had been delivered five talents.

Going back to verse 20 it says, "And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents . . ." In other words, he had invested, and here was the increase. And increase is not wrong. Usury is wrong, and increase is acceptable in the sight of God, and every principle in the Bible shows it. But I want to cover that as a separate subject on down the road. I'm working on it, but I just can't get everything done overnight. There are only so many weeks in the year, and there are only so many hours in the day. So we have to be patient.

And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

Obviously that is an increase. So, he took the five and he grew by 100 percent. That is a one-hundred percent increase—a pretty good increase.

"His lord said unto him, Well done . . ." He wasn't displeased with him for having put it out to gain—for using it acceptably and profitably. No, not at all, because he didn't put it out to take advantage of somebody. Taking advantage in the form of usury is not acceptable. But increase is right—and it is absolutely right.

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things." Here shows you very clearly that if the man had said, "No, I'm just going to nurture and take care of what I have, and I'm not going to use it wisely, whatsoever," he would have been rejected. Because we

have an example of that in the one who received the one talent, and he said, "I knew that you were a hard taskmaster," and so on, and he said, "I hid this talent. You know, I put it in the bank, or I did whatever, but I didn't put it out for any increase. I didn't use it wisely and acceptably at all. I sat on it." And he is going to be condemned. It is going to be taken away from him. God has made us responsible for using wisely what has been given to us.

"[T]hou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." How we use what God has given to us definitely is the standard by which we are going to be judged. I would say that if it is the standard by which we are going to be judged, and He bitterly condemns the one who sits on it, then we had better be very careful in how we use it. We must wisely and judiciously use that which is committed to our trust. Now, that doesn't mean that it is an investment in every case. Sometimes the investment is in our families—our lives. There is nothing wrong with that. But it is a matter of evaluating the total, and seeing if we have been economically wise. "[T]hou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Let's note verse 23, now. Here is the one who received two talents, and he came and delivered yet other two talents. Now, what did his Lord say to him? Verse 23: "His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant." He didn't have nearly as much with which to begin—less than half of what the other one had—but he did just as well with it, showing that some people don't have five talents in the beginning. They have only two, and there may be some that have only one. But what did we do with it? Did we sit on it—did we abuse it—or have we wisely used it?

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Whatever our mental abilities are, whatever our talents are, whatever our economic reserves, whatever we have, is going to be judged by God—by Christ who has been appointed to judge these things at an appointed time. God knows the talents that we have been given. Did we use them? Why did we sit on them? I'll tell you, it is a dangerous thing to allow a talent to be buried because we dislike

this, or we dislike something else, or we can't do this, or we don't want to do it, or whatever it might be. Do we have talents to serve and yet we are burying them? That's a serious thing.

You know, it troubles me very deeply when I think about it. I wonder if I'm burying something. I'm not obligated, now, to investigate your life. How could I? I can't get inside of your minds and your hearts. I don't know your talents and your abilities, except as I see them manifested. I would never see them manifested if they were latent, would I? My obligation is to preach that anybody who buries a talent has got a problem, because he is going to have to give an account to God. God gave to us, natively, naturally, certain talents and abilities. He has given to this whole world—many people—absolutely amazing talents. Are some of them using them acceptably? I wonder. But I am not as much concerned with them as I am with those who have been called. Are we using our talents acceptably? That does concern me.

Who, then, is a wise and faithful servant? The one who uses his abilities—his natural abilities—correctly, and he serves God with them. Now, how do we serve God? Of course, we can't go up there and be a member of His court, so how do we do it? Christ said, "If you serve one another, you have served me." That's how we do it. Are we serving one another? I don't care what the office is; I don't care what the capacity is. Are we really putting our lives, our minds, and our hearts, into those responsibilities?

And then, of course, coupled with that is the question, can we sacrifice and not grow weary in well-doing? Or, do we give up and say, "Well, you know, others aren't doing this or that, so I don't know why in the world I should do it all"? Do we forget that God is going to do the judging?

Why don't I just back up and say, "I don't understand why I have to go through all these things consistently." You know, it's a sacrifice for me, too. You know, those trips out to see all of you out there in those far-flung places throughout the United States and around the world is not an easy thing. That's one of the most trying of all the duties I have. I would just love to sit down in my own home and not have to leave again, ever. But I won't let my mind think that. I won't even permit it for one moment. I merely make up the schedule and, when the time comes, I get on the plane and go. If you think I enjoy flying, you have

another guess coming. If I never saw another plane, it would be too early. I just don't like it anymore. I don't know, I suppose that in the years I have been flying, I have somewhere around three million miles. I'm just sick and tired of it. It's terribly hard on the body. Yet, there is a responsibility, and it is an absolute responsibility. And for the sake of this physical life, which God gave to me to use for your benefit, I will not give it up. I will be out there to see you, and I do appreciate the many, many fine moments that I have with you. It's a thrill to me, and it gives me what I need to come back here and undergo the chores that need to be done here. And I thank you very much for it.

So what did He say here, then, is the reward of the faithful? The faithful are not looking at it and saying, "Well, I'm tired." A faithful individual is one who carries it all the way to the end and never gives up. The faithful individual is one who knows what his responsibility is and he stays with it, regardless of the cost.

"Thou hast been faithful over a few things." Now I hope that I can look forward to that day when He is going to say, "Enter in to the joy of your Lord."

Next, I want us to notice John 19. John the nineteenth chapter, and let's begin in verse 15. I have quite a lengthy text that I want to read here and let me get through it rather quickly so that I can complete this point here. John 19 and let's begin in verse 15. He said:

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him.
Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

You know, that is impudence. I wish I had time to analyze that one for you. Here they were playing into the hands of those people because they didn't care about their spiritual relationship. Think of it in terms of the fact that they were bowing before a human being because they wanted physical advantage.

Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. And Pilate wrote a title, and

put it on the cross. And the writing was Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

Now, they wanted to get away from the absolutes. So what did they do? They turned to the idea that it was what Christ said. And you know, there are those who do not recognize that so much of what is written in the Bible is merely the conveyance of what people were saying that He said. We have to understand that part of it. It is what the people were saying. They did not want the absolute dogmatic statement that He was King of the Jews, but that He *said* He was King of the Jews. Now, is that our approach, brethren? That what we are doing at the present time is saying that this is what He says, or have we come to believe it in absolute faithfulness? We need to check our own lives. We need to check our own beliefs, because those who are the called of God know who they are, and who their servants are. They know, and they know that they know. There is no need of vacillation.

Now, brethren, I wanted to complete this particular point but I cannot at this time. So I am going to have to come back to this the next time in tape number 2, then, on this last word—the word *pistos*.