

June 15, 2021

Dear Brethren and Friends,

How do we measure up when it comes to living a faithful life before God? Can it be said of us that we have "walked with God"—as did Enoch (Genesis 5:22), or that we are "the friend of God"—as was Abraham (James 2:23)? Can we, like the Apostle Paul, say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7)?

Also, consider David, who has been chosen to be ruler over Israel "forever" (Ezekiel 37:25), and he is memorialized with these words from God: ""I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will"" (Acts 13:22).

Of these people—and others—it is revealed that they, "having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise" (Hebrews 11:39). [That promise is God's immutable assurance of eternal life in His Kingdom (Titus 1:2).] Consider, also, what applies to Christians, to us, in verse 40 of Hebrews 11: "God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us."

One Person has attained perfection after completely overcoming sin, Jesus Christ. And "though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Hebrews 5:8-9).

The righteous men and women who have preceded us serve as our examples, but Jesus Christ serves as our great High Priest:

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Jesus Christ became human so that we could become God beings:

"Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted" (Hebrews 2:17-18).

In chapter 6 of Hebrews, Paul reminds us that we must build upon the foundation of our calling from God. He also warns us of our grave responsibility and our accountability in having received the Holy Spirit of God, but he adds this encouraging assurance for us:

"But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:9-12).

We are told, "But without faith *it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Let me ask again, "How do we measure up when it comes to living a faithful life before God?"

Our criteria is godliness—to live as Jesus Christ lived, for He is our example to imitate:

"For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 'Who committed no sin, Nor was guile found in His mouth'" (1 Peter 2:21-22).

It may seem daunting and even something which we can't do in the way Jesus did, but remember, God has promised to help us! Let's make sure we ask for His help and really work harder than ever before to overcome sin! We are the servants of the Father and Jesus Christ—we can have absolute faith in their help!

If we do this, then we have God's promise that we will be made perfect—like Enoch, Abraham, Paul and David will be, and, yes, even like Jesus Christ has been (1 John 3:1-3).

Finally, let us all fervently love one another (John 13:34-35) and diligently pray for and, as much as we have opportunity, be involved in the Work of God given to us to accomplish (James 1:25).

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Harris".

Dave Harris