

Faithful Men

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I. Introduction. (II Timothy)

A. For the psalmist, it was difficult to find a faithful man in the time of trouble. (Psalm 12:1)

B. It is a delight to have a faithful man.

C. Text: 2 Timothy 2.

II. The faithful man's commission.

A. In the face of the unpopularity of the Christian message, we are to be strong.

B. In the face of defection from the ranks, we are to be strong.

1. Paul rarely names defectors like this.

2. Running into trouble with people is the fine print of Christian service.

3. People sometimes attack someone simply because he is an authority figure.

4. Some criticism is deserved.

5. Jesus was criticized - we should not expect any less as His servants, and it hurts. (Psalm 55)

6. One of the great perils of Christian service is becoming bitter. Bitterness is a form of self-cannibalism. (Hebrews 12:15)

7. We are to keep in mind that our ministry is because of God's mercy alone not because we merit it. We should quit trying to be somebody. (2 Corinthians 4:1)

III. The faithful man described.

A. The faithful man is one who braces another up.

B. The faithful man was one who could be entrusted with the Word.

1. We ought to be sure about the important things and flexible about the nonessentials.

2. The great truths of the Scripture should grip our souls.

3. Paul knew Whom he believed and what he believed. This is what Timothy is instructed to pass on.

C. A faithful man is one who is proved by trial - the one you can count on.

1. He may often be the most neglected man.

2. He is apt to teach.

3. We ought to put our energy into people who can retransmit what we teach to them.

IV. The faithful man illustrated.

A. The soldier.

1. Take your share of ill treatment - this is part of the course.

2. No soldier gets himself entangled with civilian pursuits. He has his priorities clear with the things of the Lord first.

3. Many major in the minors and try to get the details out of the way so that they can focus on the main things. This is poor prioritization.

4. We must have a priority list so we can act instead of merely reacting to things that come up.

5. It is helpful to classify priorities between family and business life and to reorganize them once a month.

6. The aim is to please the Commander in Chief.

B. The athlete.

1. This calls to mind discipline. We are to be in training.

2. We learn "how" from the athlete. We find that we must compete by the rules.

3. Christian work is corporate. We must sail the ship of our own lives in relation to other "ships." We are part of a larger body of people. (Philippians 2)

4. We need to recognize that it is okay that people might do things differently than we do.

C. The farmer.

1. The key to this illustration is that he is hard working.
2. We are growing things, not collecting them in Christian work.
3. Look at your schedule to see how you can effectively accomplish more.
4. The most basic business principle: hard work.

V. Conclusion.

Application questions

1. Why is it that being a faithful man is so difficult? Why are they so difficult to find?

2. What is a faithful man like? What kind of men should we look to invest in for the kingdom?

3. Would you consider yourself a faithful man? Would others? What illustration would be most helpful this week to help you become more faithful in your walk with God?
