

Trustworthy Statements

INTRODUCTION:

1. We live in a world where trust is scarce.
 - A. We have been lied to, cheated, and mistreated so much that we begin to think we cannot take anyone at their word.
 - B. So, finding something or someone that one can rely on, that one can stake his/her life on, is quite rare and valuable in this life.
 - C. Though fewer and fewer know or acknowledge this, that something or someone can be found in God because Hebrews 6:18 says, "It is impossible for God to lie."
 - D. Therefore, when the Bible says something we can rest assured is true and can be relied on because it is God's word (2 Peter 1:20-21).
2. So, when we find in God's word that one of His prophets goes out of his way to say, "This is a trustworthy statement," it is something we can count on with our lives.
 - A. Five times within three short letters, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, the apostle and prophet Paul, speaking by the Spirit's revelation called attention to his words with this statement.
 - B. So, we can say with little doubt that we need to examine these statements and learn their message, knowing that we can rely on them, be benefitted by them, and glorify God in doing so.
3. What I want to do today is to look at **four** of these five statements, seeing that one of them has caught my attention and I want to devote a bit more time to it in the near future.

BODY:

- I. **Jesus came to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15** – "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.")
 - A. Jesus made His intent to save sinner clear while on earth (Lk. 19:10 – "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.")
 1. Jesus, the Great Physician, came to heal sinners. For, when rebuked for spending time with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick" (Mt. 9:12).
 2. I don't know about you, but this is a matter of real comfort to me.
 - a. Jesus didn't come into the world to collect all the perfect people, or to condemn sinners, or to show us how it ought to be done, or to seek vengeance and judgment.
 - b. He came into the world to save sinners like you and me.
 3. Paul found comfort in this (1 Timothy 1:12-14 – "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; ¹⁴ and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.".)
 - a. This is significant because Paul is a man who held the coats when Stephen was stoned, cast his vote against Christians, threw them in jail, and persecuted them even to death.
 - b. Yet Jesus came to save even Paul. So, he gladly wrote (Rom. 5:8 – "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us").
 - c. Jesus did not wait until Paul quit being a blasphemer, persecutor, and an insolent opponent to die for him. He came into the world to save Paul while he was still a sinner.
 - i. Jesus did not wait for us to quit our lusting, lying, stealing, cheating, immorality, greed, covetousness, etc., to die for us.
 - ii. He came into the world to die to save us while we were still sinners.
 - B. His salvation frees us from the slavery of living as sinners.
 1. For, when Jesus appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus he told him the purpose of His work in the gospel was "**to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God**, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:16-18)
 2. Therefore, as recipients of grace we are to put sin out of our lives.

- a. Acts 3:19 – “Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.”
 - b. Rom. 6:1-2 – “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”).
3. So, it is truly a faithful statement that Jesus came to save sinners...like you and me!

II. Aspiring to be an Elder is a fine work (1 Timothy 3:1 – “It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.”).

- A. I want to address this saying because there are men here that should be thinking about what this verse teaches and be working toward this end.
 - 1. There are two aspects of this statement we need to recognize as trustworthy.
 - 2. The first is the need to aspire to the role of elder and the second is that it is a noble task.
- B. It is a faithful saying that men here need to **aspire** to the office.
 - 1. Translations have made us think this means a man needs to desire the office.
 - a. That idea falls short of the meaning. For, **aspire** means “to stretch oneself out to grasp something.”
 - b. Thus, the eldership is something one reaches for.
 - 2. A man should not “accidentally” become an elder. For, God intends elders to be those who have pursued, planned for, and grown into it.
 - a. It is a trustworthy statement that if you want to serve the Lord as an elder, you must work for it.
 - b. So, ask yourself what you are doing now so you can serve the Lord and the congregation in this way? What steps are you taking to learn how to shepherd, oversee, and lead?
 - 3. This, of course, is not license to remain spiritually irresponsible if you just do not desire to be an elder.
 - a. We all have the responsibility to reach our potential in God’s kingdom.
 - b. We must learn to desire greater opportunities to serve...and pursue them.
 - c. You may not be qualified right now, and some may never be, but you must reach for it.
- C. It is a faithful saying that being an elder is a noble task.
 - 1. For, elders watch over souls.
 - a. To be an **overseer** (1 Tim. 3:1-2) is to be one **who watches over** someone or something.
 - b. And what elders watch over are the souls of the flock (Hebrews 13:17 – “Obey your leaders and submit to them, **for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.** Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”).
 - 2. This work of watching for souls takes commitment.
 - a. No one will do the job of an elder properly if they do not put time or effort into it.
 - b. So as watchmen elders cannot fall asleep on the job. They must always be watchful, assuring the flock is fed and cared for, which takes time and effort.
 - c. If you want to be an elder, you cannot be lazy or procrastinate because people are looking to you for food, direction, and protection.
 - 3. It is a trustworthy statement, if you aspire to the office of overseer, you desire a noble task.

III. Godliness is profitable for all things (I Timothy 4:7b-9 – “On the other hand, **discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; ⁸ for bodily discipline is only of little profit, **but godliness is profitable for all things,** since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. ⁹ It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance.”)**

- A. Devotion to living a healthy life can be a good thing. And it takes a lot of work and discipline.
 - 1. It is good to work on our physical health even in relation to spiritual things.
 - 2. For, better health can provide longer life, more stamina, and greater strength to be able to do the work you need to do as a Christian.
- B. But **godliness** requires “devotion, piety” **towards God.**
 - 1. It is more than simply “God-likeness,” or being like God.

2. It touches our convictions and actions. For, it means to **have a strong conviction of faith in God** which is **shown** by one's **faithful worship and actions of obedience**.
3. So, it is not surprising that Paul speaks of some who hold to "a form of godliness" while denying its power in their life (2 Tim. 3:5).
 - a. They deny its power because true godliness is more than outward actions, but requires being **devoted** to God in their thoughts and actions, which they are not willing to do.
 - b. We should, therefore, ask ourselves how reverent we are, if we acknowledge Him in all our ways, and if we are willing to sacrifice our will to show Him honor?

C. It is a faithful statement that **godliness is beneficial in all things**.

1. When we surrender our lives to God and His word we will generally be healthier, be better stewards of our money, and have better relationships.
2. However, the greatest reward if godliness comes in the next life.
 - a. Even if as a Christians you who has pursued godliness only to have your body fail you, or only to receive persecution, trials, and tribulation in this life, you will receive heaven.
 - b. For, as 2 Peter 1:5-11 says that as long as you practice **godliness** and other virtues "you will never stumble; ¹¹ for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you."
3. It is a trustworthy saying that godliness is beneficial in every way.

IV. God is Good (Titus 3:4-8 – "But when the **kindness** of God our Savior and His **love** for mankind appeared, ⁵ **He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness**, but according to His **mercy**, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom **He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ** our Savior, ⁷ so that **being justified** by His **grace** we would be **made heirs according to the hope of eternal life**. ⁸ This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be **careful to engage in good deeds**. These things are **good and profitable for men**.").

A. Though this was the longest of Paul's trustworthy statements, it can be boiled down to **God is good!**

1. His goodness is displayed in saving us apart from our works of righteousness.
 - a. He did not save us because we deserve it, having measured up to a standard that He set.
 - b. He saved us because He loves us as sinners enough to send His Son to die for us.
 - i. 1 John 4:9-10 – "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and **sent His Son** to be the **propitiation for our sins**."
 - ii. Rom. 5:8 – "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
2. Through God saving us by his grace we have become his heirs to receive an inheritance of eternal life (1 Peter 1:3-5 – "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His **great mercy** has caused us to be **born again to a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ **to obtain an inheritance** which is **imperishable and undefiled** and **will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you**, ⁵ who are protected by the power of God through faith **for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time**.").

B. Though God did not save us because we earned it through works of righteousness, He did save us so we could pursue good works.

1. Because God our Savior is good, we must seek to be good.
 - a. This follows the reasoning found in 1 Peter concerning how we are to be holy as God is holy (1 Pet. 1:14-15 – "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, ¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, **be holy yourselves also in all your behavior**; ¹⁶ because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.").

2. So, as the redeemed we must be zealous for good works. For, Paul told Titus earlier in that letter that God sent Jesus to “**redeem us from every lawless deed**, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, **zealous for good deeds**” (2:14).
 - a. Understand that we are not attempting to be good because that is what will save us.
 - b. We have already blown that possibility by sinning and earning for ourselves the wages of our sin which is death (Rom. 3:23; 6:23).
 - c. We seek to do good in response to the great good God has done in saving us from our sinful and lawless deeds.
3. But know this. If we do not allow God’s grace to work in our lives to produce good works, God’s grace will be removed from our lives (Col. 1:21-23 – “And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, **engaged in evil deeds**,²² yet He has now **reconciled you** in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him **holy and blameless and beyond reproach**—²³ **if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast**, and **not moved away from the hope of the gospel** that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”).
 - a. God has brought you near to him and taken you from your evil deeds to present you holy and blameless and beyond reproach...**which requires that you do good!**
 - b. Therefore, be joyful in your salvation and let that joy drive you to pursue the goodness He has outlined for us.
4. It is a trustworthy statement that God is good, and we ought to be good.

CONCLUSION:

1. I hope these trustworthy statements have helped you focus on God and His will.
2. As we conclude I would remind you that God and His word are faithful and can be trusted and relied upon in your life (Titus 1:9)!
3. Will you trust God and become someone God can rely on to live a faithful, righteous life?
 - A. Perhaps you think living up to that standard for the rest of your life is a hard task.
 - i. Do not try to live the rest of your life today.
 - ii. Instead, determine to be God’s trustworthy servant **today**. For today is all you have.
 - B. If you need to seek God’s grace so that you can be free to be a trustworthy servant, whether by:
 - i. Becoming His child through **trusting** Jesus as your Savior and Lord, **repenting** of your sins, **confessing** your faith in the risen Christ, and submitting to him in **water baptism**...
 - ii. Or by **returning** to him through **confessing** your sins and **repenting** of them and seeking God’s forgiveness...
 - iii. I encourage you not to wait until tomorrow to take care of that. Become trustworthy today, right now, by coming to Jesus.