

## CAN YOU BE RELIED ON?

Nicolas Edwards

Being faithful is essential and often emphasized in the Bible. It is the “*good and faithful servant*” who will enter (Mt. 25:21). We must be faithful stewards (1 Cor. 4:2). Faithfulness to the point of death is required in order to receive the crown of life (Rev. 2:10). Those that are with the Lord are the faithful (Rev. 17:14). Within the definition of faithfulness is this phrase: “One that can be relied on.” In order to be faithful, one must be reliable! If you can not be relied on, you are not faithful! Can the Lord rely on you? Can the church? Can your family? Can you be relied on:

### TO BE AT EVERY

**SERVICE.** Not forsaking the assembling (Heb. 10:25). Seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt. 6:33).

**TO GROW.** Growth is a personal responsibility. The preacher, the elders, the brethren, your family can’t grow for you, as much as they may like to. Growth involves more than just listening to a few sermons each week. It requires searching the scriptures daily (Acts 17:11), reading (Eph. 3:4), and study (2 Tim. 2:15). In

order to grow, you must “*give attendance...meditate...give thyself wholly*” (1 Tim. 4:13-15). Can you be relied on to put in the work (2 Pet. 3:18)?

**TO PRAY.** Are you faithful in prayer (1 Th. 5:17; Eph. 6:18)? Can you be relied on to pray every day? Daniel could! In Daniel 6, a royal decree was made “*that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions*” (Dan. 6:7). “*Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime*” (Dan. 6:10). Are you a Daniel?

**TO TEACH.** We need faithful and able men to teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). Is that you?

**TO REFUSE AND REFUTE ERROR.** In order to be faithful, we must be transformed from this world (Rom. 12:2). Keeping self unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27). “*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*” (Eph. 5:11). We must be separate, holy, and pure (2 Cor. 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:15; 1 Tim. 5:22). This means we cannot participate in uncleanness and

evil! Can you be relied on to “*touch not the unclean thing?*” Can you be relied on to “*earnestly contend for the faith*” (Jude 3)? There are some I can have full trust and confidence that they will not go along with evil, foolishness, or error. They won’t be partaking in it and they will be teaching against it! There are others who I don’t have such confidence in. I wouldn’t be surprised to hear that they are taking part in things a Christian has no business taking part in. Are you reliable?

**TO SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE?** With some people, I could do all kinds of wrong and still be accepted without a single word said to me about it. Can I rely on you to come to me and speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15)?

**TO VISIT AND MINISTER.** We each have the responsibility to visit (Jas. 1:27) and minister to others (Mt. 25:32-46). Do you visit and provide for the needs of others, specially they of the household of faith?

Many other things could be listed. Being faithful means I am reliable. We learn from Daniel and Revelation 2:10 the extent to which we must be reliable! Even when facing death, we are to be faithful. Can I be relied on to do the Lord’s will, even if facing death?

## “AS IT IS WRITTEN”

John Edwards

One thing that stands out about the children out of captivity is their respect for the divine pattern of things. The phrase, “*as it is written*” appears six times in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Take a look:

Ezra 3:2, “Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, **as it is written** in the law of Moses the man of God.”

Ezra 3:4, “They kept also the feast of tabernacles, **as it is written**....”

Ezra 6:18, “And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; **as it is written** in the book of Moses.”

Nehemiah 8:15, “And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick

trees, to make booths, **as it is written.**”

Nehemiah 10:34, “And we cast the lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, after the houses of our fathers, at times appointed year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, **as it is written** in the law.”

Nehemiah 10:36, “Also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, **as it is written** in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God.”

We need this same spirit about us today to just say and do “*as it is written*”! We are taught, “Hold fast the form of sound words...” (2 Tim. 1:13). Paul penned, “...that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written...”

(1 Cor. 4:6, ASV). John said, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son” (2 Jn. 9).

**AREAS OF APPLICATION:**  
“And whatsoever ye do in

word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...” (Col. 3:17). This text points out two areas of application of the phrase, “*as it is written*”:

**Our teaching and preaching.** The appeal of the Lord was “*as it is written*” (Mt. 26:24; Mk. 7:6; 9:13). Stephen before the council answered, “*as it is written in the book of the prophets...*” (Acts 7:42). Answering the circumcision question, James said, “...*as it is written*” (Acts 15:15). Fourteen times in the epistle to the Romans, Paul declared, “*as it is written*” (Rom. 1:17; 2:24; 3:4, 10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13, 33; 10:15; 11:8, 26; 15:3, 9, 21). We need preachers and teachers today who do book, chapter and verse, “*as it is written*” preaching and teaching! “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...*” (1 Pet. 4:11).

**Our practice.** We will be like first disciples who, “...*continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine...*” (Acts 2:42), without addition or subtraction (Rev. 22:18-19). We will limit what we do to what is written, and do it exactly as it is written. If nothing is written, then we will just leave it off! Agree?

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