

The Challenge That Lays before Us

Romans 8:37-39 **Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Another year has almost come to a close and we are looking at the face of a brand-new year. Our slogan for 2004 has been "*we want more in 2004*". I am glad to say that God has given us exactly what we have asked for. We have more people active in church today than we did last time this year. We've had numerous people receive the Holy Ghost and get baptized in Jesus name this past year. No, they are not all with us today but that is not God's fault.

Some love this present world more than they love God they live in sin.

2 Timothy 4:10 **For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed .**

The Bible tells us that if we love this world in sin we do not love God.

1 John 2:15 **Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

Some of those that left us would not let go of false teachings. Such as the Trinity and other false doctrines because of tradition..

Revelation 2:15 **So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.**

2 Timothy 4:4 **And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.**

Some of those that left has allowed the evil of compromise and licentiousness(a Freedom and license to sin) No Holiness

Revelation 2:14 **But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.**

2 Timothy 3:5 **Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.**

What it all boils down to is a lack of true love for God. They were faithful for all while but not loyal.

When people start to miss church activities such as prayer meeting, get-togethers, and church services, giving their tithe and offering, and time, you know they're a walking out the door.

What is faithful? The Webster's 1828 dictionary says the faithful is this:

1. Firm in adherence to the truth and to the duties of religion. 2. constant in the performance of duties or services; exact in attending to commands; as a faithful servant.

What is being loyal? The Webster's 1828 dictionary says loyal is this:

1. Faithful to a prince or superior; true to plighted faith, duty or love; not treacherous; used of subjects to their prince, and of husband, wife and lovers; as a loyal subject; a loyal wife.

The difference involves love, and love will carry us a long way. Only 2 churches escaped the censure of God in Revelation it was because of love.

Revelation 2:8-11 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; (9) I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. (10) Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. (11) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

Revelation 3:7-13 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; (8) I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. (9) Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. (10) Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. (11) Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. (12) Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out

of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. (13) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The challenge that lays before us this year is: are we going to be faithful, but more than faithful are we have to be loyal? Loyalty we will carry us the extra mile.

Matthew 5:41 **And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.**

Loyalty will carry us through trials and tests, through the good and bad because we love Jesus and the church.

Proverbs 10:12 **Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.**

Hatred stirreth up strifes - It seeks for occasions to provoke enmity. It delights in broils. On the contrary, **love** conciliates; removes aggravations; puts the best construction on every thing; and pours water, not oil, upon the flame. **covereth**--by forgiveness and forbearance.

We will be more supportive of the church, the ministry, our relationship with God, our walk and Holiness, and reaching the lost like never before because we love Jesus. Our slogan for 2005 needs to be "***I will be more alive in 2005***"

Will we take the challenge? Will we change the direction in our lives and the direction of our church for 2005? Or will this be the year that it will be said; we were faithful for a while?