

Faithfulness Is...
Hebrews 3:14
11-30-2025

this series on Christian character is based on three basic premises.

1. While it is not a comprehensive list, the traits Paul lists in his description of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, above all else, apply to God and describe various aspects of His nature. Each of the nine traits listed, is used in scripture to describe God's character and what He is like. God is love; it guides all his actions towards us. He is a God of peace or wholeness. He takes joy and delight in his creation. He is patient in all his dealings with us. It was his kindness which led Jesus to the cross and put our needs above his own. God doesn't just do good things, he embodies goodness which leads to our salvation. Because He is faithful in all his ways, you can trust him. With nothing to prove, He is gentle and meek. And he never acts or lashes out rashly but is always in full control of himself and creation.
2. Fruit is determined by the tree on which it grows and from which it draws its nourishment. And because he is the vine and we are the branches, as we abide and draw our nourishment from him, the Holy spirit works in our lives to make us more like him. Therefore, these traits which describe our Lord, are to describe our lives as well.
3. Fruit grows naturally as it draws its nourishment from the tree. It shows health and therefore it is the presence and growth of these traits in your life which is the primary evidence that God is alive and well and living in you. Likewise, their absence reveals that something is wrong.

While he includes different traits, Peter makes a similar point about Christian character when he wrote in 2 Peter 1:5-9.

"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins."

as we continue on to the seventh trait, Paul said the fruit of the Spirit is FAITHFULNESS.

Of all the traits mentioned which are to characterize our lives, this one in particular the scriptures have a concern about.

"Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find?" (Proverbs 20:6)

"Help, LORD, for the godly are no more; the faithful have vanished from among men." (Psalm 12:1)

To understand why the concern, we need to understand what is meant by faithfulness

- I. Faithfulness is:

It is the ability to hang in there and see things through
someone defined it as stick-to-it-ness, the refusal to give up just because things get difficult or may not go your way.
to use Paul's analogy in 2 Timothy, it is someone who will fight the good fight, finish the race and keep the faith

after all, isn't that what we see in God?

- He doesn't give up on us and walk away when we sin and fall. Jesus said he will never leave you nor forsake you
- He sticks with us even when we fail him, scripture says there is absolutely nothing in all of creation that can ever separate you from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ.
- He never turns away even when we do and our commitment wavers, God assures us that he still loves us with an everlasting love

if Jesus Christ is in you, God will never, ever give up on you. It's a promise sealed by Christ's blood.

Deuteronomy 7:9 says, "Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands."

in 2 Timothy 2:13 Paul reminds us that,

"even if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself."

**He cannot be anything but what he is. And what he is, is faithful.
therefore, the fruit of the Spirit in our lives is faithfulness**

Faithfulness is the boy in a story told by James Carter in Following Jesus: The Nature of Christian Discipleship. The story begins,

The command came, "On your mark, get set, and then the pistol cracked and the race was on. A fine athlete sprang into the lead, and when the race was over he had broken the state record. Only a few other runners even finished the race. Many dropped out when they saw they could not win. As the field crew was bringing out the hurdles for the next race, one of the judges yelled, Get those hurdles out of the way. The race is not over. Look! And far back around the last turn came a runner panting and staggering towards the finish line. The crowd stood in silent disbelief as he made his way over the last 100 yards, and literally fell across the finish line, grinding his face into the cinder track.

One of the judges ran to the boy, turned him over onto his back, took a handkerchief and wiped the blood from his face. Son why didn't you stop and drop out like so many others. What are you doing in the long-distance race anyway?

Between gasps, the boy explained that his school had a good runner who had gotten sick just a few days before. The coach had promised to have a person in every event, and so he had asked the boy to run in his place. Well son, why didn't you just drop out when you saw you

had lost? The boy answered, Judge, they didn't send me here to quit. They didn't even send me here to win. They sent me here to run this race and I ran it!

The point of faithfulness isn't winning or getting what we want in life.
Its remaining true, running and completing the task that we have been given.
Seeing it through to the end.

It's what Paul spoke of when he told Timothy, "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:6–8)

The crown he speaks of here is not for winning, but for finishing.
For being faithful and completing the work God had given him to do.

Hebrews 3:14 assures us that, "if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ."

Yet it can be so easy to give up instead.
In spite of the old adage that when things get tough the tough get going, today a more accurate one would seem to be the grass is always greener.

the world gives us so many excuses to give up and move on or compromise

- If you can't win, drop out
- If you can't have things your own way, just quite
- You'll never be good enough, so don't even try
- If it's too hard, give up.
- The problems are too big and too many, so why bother
- You're in over your head, walk away while you still can

Is it any wonder in Luke 18:8 Jesus asked, "when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

The one place where faithfulness must be found in this world is among the people of God bearing His fruit because Jesus has already defeated sin and death. He has been raised. His Spirit lives within us, and we therefore share in His glory

It is the work and presence of the Spirit in our lives which brings faithfulness, staying true and holding firm to the end.

When the eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroyed the city of Pompeii in AD 79, many people were buried in the ruins. Some took cover underground which then became their burial chamber. Other tried to climb to higher ground, trying to get above the danger yet were still unable to escape the destruction. Archeologists have also found the remains of a Roman sentinel at the city gate itself. From his remains they could tell he wasn't trying to escape at all, but was found standing with his hand still grasping his weapon. It appears that he had

stayed on duty right where his captain had stationed him. While the earth shook beneath him, as people were panicking all around him, and while the flood of ashes and cinders overwhelmed him, he remained at his post. And his body was still there 2000 years later when they found him.

That's faithfulness

Someone has pointed out that belief is not the ultimate test of the Christian faith. Rather the real test is whether or not we continue to follow, continue the process, continue the faith.

Faithfulness says stay true, hold on, finish the work.

The fruit of the Spirit, the natural outgrowth of God in our lives, is faithfulness

Because faithfulness is hanging in there even when it's difficult, not giving up when things get hard but seeing them through to the end,

II. Faithfulness is

Faithfulness is also being trustworthy, dependable, reliable, and loyal
It's being someone that can be counted on

Again, God is our prime example

he can always be trusted to do exactly what he says

***"For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does."* (Psalm 33:4)**

His promises are true and he will never break them

Psalm 145:13 says the Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made

when Paul tells us that if we confess our sins we don't have to wonder

Because he has assured us that because He is faithful and true, he will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness

When we are struggling and feel weak, God remains on our side to strengthen and uphold us

2 Thess. 3:3 says he is faithful and will strengthen and protect you from the evil one

In all things, you can trust him because,

Psalm 25:10 says all his ways are loving and faithful

There is no question or doubt, for **the one who calls you IS FAITHFUL and he will do it, 1 Thess. 5:24 says.**

For those who are in Christ, who have accepted him as Lord and savior, you are secure in him always not because of who you are or what you do, but who He is and what Jesus has already done for you at the cross

It's never because you are good enough but because Jesus is.

You can trust him because he is always faithful just as the Psalmist said, **the Lord will remain faithful forever**

In his book, God Came near, Max Lucado tells the story of Norman Geisler who went to Vacation Bible School because one the other children in his neighborhood invited him. and for the next 400 Sundays, he went back to the same church for Sunday School. Each week the same bus driver faithfully picked him up. Week after week he attended church, but never made a commitment to Christ. Finally, during his senior year of high school, after being picked up for church over 400 times, he did commit his life to Christ. Lucado asks, what if that bus driver had given up on Geisler at 395? What if the bus driver had said, This kid is going nowhere spiritually, why waste any more time on him?

But he didn't. He was reliable and dependable. He proved himself worthy of the trust placed in him by the church. He was faithful. And as a result of his faithfulness, Norman Geisler went on to become a Christian apologist, cofounder, and dean of Southern Evangelical Seminary outside of Charlotte North Carolina, and became the author, coauthor or editor of over 90 books and hundreds of articles.

Again, the Psalmist tells us, His faithfulness continues through all generations (Psalm 119:90).

And because he is faithful, the fruit of the spirit is faithfulness.

In Matthew 25 Jesus told a story about the importance of faithfulness. He said a master was going on a trip and called in three of his servants. To each he entrusted a sum of money to invest while he was away. Two of the servants took the money and doubled it and when he returned, he proclaimed to each, well done good and faithful servant come and share in my happiness.

The third however dug a hole and buried it. When the master called him to give an account, he called him a wicked and lazy servant not because he didn't double it as the other two had but because he didn't even try.

The focus of the story is not on how much each had been given nor even how much they had earned and successful they were.

The focus is on how faithful they were, how trustworthy and reliable with what had been given.

As Leonard Ravenhill put it, there are no great and small people in the kingdom of God, only faithful and unfaithful.

John Ortberg said, for many of us the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith, but will settle for a mediocre version of it.

The fruit of the Spirit its faithfulness.

It's who God is and therefore meant to be who we are as well.

And that faithfulness will be most clearly seen not in the big and spectacular things we do, great successes and victories, things which draw the attention and accolades of others. But is in the small and simple ways we remain true

“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities.” (Luke 16:10)

In an address to ministers, Dr Fred Craddock gave this example of serving and being faithful in the little things.

He said, many think to give my life for Christ appears glorious. To pour myself out for others...to pay the ultimate price of martyrdom—I'll do it. I'm ready, Lord, to go out in a blaze of glory.

We think giving our all to the Lord is like taking a stack of \$100 bills and laying it on a table—Here's my life, Lord. I'm giving it all. But the reality for most of us is that he sends us to the bank and has us cash in the \$100 bills for quarters. We go through life putting out 25 cents here and 50 cents there. We listen to the neighbor's kid's troubles instead of saying, get Lost. We go to a committee meeting. We give a cup of water to a shaky old man in a nursing home. Usually, giving our life to Christ isn't glorious. It's done in all those little acts of love, 25 cents at a time.

It would be easy to go out in a flash of glory; it's harder to live the Christian life little by little over the long haul.

Yet that is what faithfulness is all about.

Are you reliable and trustworthy, do what you say and remain steadfast and true, not just when its easy but over the long haul

God is faithful therefore the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, must be faithfulness as well.