

# Fruit of the Spirit - Faithfulness

In this microwave, disposable society we live in, it's difficult to find people that are committed....people that are dependable, that you can count on.

The further society gets from God the less faithfulness we will see. I know people are busy, but what are we busy WITH? See people are committed to themselves. They make sure to do what THEY want.

But as we look around and see the trends, we see people that are not committed to marriage. We see people that are not committed to friendships. We see people that are not committed to the church.

It doesn't mean they don't care about these things. They just don't care about them as much as something else...usually themselves. This is human nature....selfishness.

Even when people do commit to something, it is temporary (shows they were not committed), the first sign of difficulty, they are out. People don't tend to stick with it and battle through adversity.

## **Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Today's focus is on faithfulness. What does it mean to be faithful? It means to be reliable, constant, true to your promises, loyal. But this Greek word "pistis" includes an element of conviction of the truth that God exists and that Jesus is the Messiah through whom we obtain eternal salvation.

In Genesis 6, we see the account of Noah. Noah was faithful. God tasked him with doing something that did not make sense to man. He told Noah to build an ark.

What you have to understand is that Noah was not a random name that God drew out of a hat.

## **Genesis 6:9 (NKJV)**

This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

Noah was "just" meaning he lives by God's righteous standards. He was "perfect" or "blameless" this sets him apart by comparison to the rest of mankind in that day. And he walked with God, he was faithful.....to God.

Noah was also a preacher of righteousness according to 2 Peter 2:5. This is the man who God chose to build the ark because he was faithful.

We don't see Noah give up part way through. It took over 100 years to complete...but he stuck with it. Why do you think that is? 100 years.....that's a long time! Most people have trouble staying committed for a year or a season. How is it that Noah had this kind of faithfulness to what God called him to do?

He already had a conviction of the truth. He knew that God was real. He knew that God was who He said He was. And Noah knew that God was faithful.

Faithfulness is a continuous, unrelenting devotion to a faithful God. This is where it begins. Faithfulness is rooted in our understanding that our God is faithful. That He is trustworthy and dependable.

If we don't start there we won't get very far....we'll stop building the ark.

It's hard to be faithful to someone who is disloyal or is not who they say they are.

When the Holy Spirit produces the fruit of faithfulness in the Christian, the very first thing He does is convict you that God is fully trustworthy, dependable, faithful.

**Deuteronomy 7:9 (NKJV)**

“Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the **faithful** God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

God keeps His Word. It is the most sure thing that exists. If God says it, it's sure to happen.

**Psalm 33:4 (NKJV)**

For the word of the Lord is right,  
And all His work is done in truth.

Not only is what He says a certainty, but it's also right.

**Psalm 119:90 (NKJV)**

Your faithfulness endures to all generations;  
You established the earth, and it abides.

His faithfulness continues on generation after generation. Have we seen a faithful generation yet? Not likely....yet God is faithful. He keeps this earth spinning. The sun keeps rising. The rain keeps falling. He created this earth for us to inhabit and it's still here, still functioning....

**2 Timothy 2:13 (NKJV)**

If we are faithless,  
He remains faithful;  
He cannot deny Himself.

OK, I'm about to bust open a "comfort verse". We use this verse to say that when believers mess up, God is still there for us. And I do think that is true, but it's not what this verse is saying.

If you read it in context, it's easy to see that the faithless is referring to an unbeliever, someone who never had actual saving faith. They are faith-less, they don't have it. It's not that it's weak or struggling.

This is important. God is faithful to His promises. He is faithful in His covenant that through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, all who place their faith in Him will be reconciled to God. That's an assurance.

But He is equally faithful to His promise to judge those who do not accept this new covenant. If we are faithless, He remains faithful.

Hebrews 6:18 says that it is impossible for God to lie. When we read the scriptures we see a common theme....this is a redemption story. Jesus came to redeem sinful man. He came to pay the price for sin so that whoever believes in Him (not of Him) will be saved. But for those who don't will not be saved.

**Acts 4:11-12 (NKJV)**

This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

God is faithful. He's faithful to His Word and to His promises.

**Hebrews 10:23 (NKJV)**

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

This has to be the foundation of your faithfulness. It's a lot easier to stick with someone who you can count on you hold up their end of the deal.

When God spoke to Noah about building the ark. He gave him very detailed instructions for building this ark on dry land where it is believed that rain was an unfamiliar thing. Prior to the flood we only see evidence of God "misting" the ground but no "rain".

This is faithfulness, doing what God asks you to do even when it doesn't make sense. Noah didn't have the weather channel or an app with a radar. As far as we know he didn't even see

dark clouds off in the distance to warn him and if he did he might have been worried he wouldn't get the ark done in time.

People mocked Noah, the preacher of righteousness, but there was a day when the rain did come.

And there is going to be a day when Jesus comes back. Just like the flood, we have the warning and there will be signs. Do you believe the Faithful One? Or will you be on the outside looking in as the door shuts and judgement is poured out?

God is faithful. Do you have the fruit of faithfulness?

So many believers begin like Noah, only as the ridicule comes their way, they buckle under the pressure and give up. Others begin on the journey only to find that it's taking too long and they give up. Yet others believe God at first but when they don't see evidence of His promise coming, they back out just before it comes. Are you faithful?

#### THE WEED - Disobedience

To be unfaithful to God is to be disobedient. And when we are disobedient we break loose from the only solid support we have in this life and our direction instead of being led by the Spirit of God becomes controlled by the shifting winds of our circumstances and desires.

We've got to get this weed of unfaithfulness ripped out at the roots. You can't be faithful to God and be walking in disobedience to His will.

#### THE ARTIFICIAL FRUIT - Half Heartedness

If you read the first couple chapters of Malachi, you see a dialogue between God and His people.

The people were descendents of those who had spent a lifetime in exile because of their disobedience to God's commands. This generation is now released from captivity, and are truly worshipping God and rebuilding their nation again.

Next thing you know we see their houses, their businesses take precedence over their obligations to God. They began to look for ways of worship which didn't entail much expense for them.

They brought sick animals for the sacrifice, they left moldy bread in the holy place instead of baking new.

It's the half-heartedness. It's not that they didn't want to follow God. They recognized that it was better than the alternative. But they had this artificial fruit that they thought was faithfulness. But God saw it, and called them out on it.

This fruit, in their mind, was good. They showed up for service, they brought a sacrifice. There was bread on the table. All the "things" got done....but they were done half heartedly. Half of their heart was for God, half was for themselves. They kept stuff back for the sake of their household or business by not giving to God what was His.

God doesn't want part of us, He wants your entire being.

Do you only want half of you to be saved? NO!

**Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV)**

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

That's giving it all....your body and your mind. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice. AND do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Noah stuck with God because God stuck with him. Today you have to make that decision. Will you stick with God? Because He will stick with you.

He is faithful.

- Faithful to love
- Faithful to redeem
- Faithful to heal
- Faithful to restore
- Faithful to judge

One of my favorite promises in the bible is of the return of Jesus

**Revelation 19:11-16 (NKJV)**

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND  
LORD OF LORDS.

He is faithful and true.

He is coming back. He's faithful to His bride, the church. Don't be deceived by the ways of this world, questioning His return. "They've been saying that for years" .....yes, but it doesn't make it any less true.

Matthew 24:37-39 - But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

If you are a born again believer, the Holy Spirit is producing the fruit of faithfulness in you. It's up to you to decide to walk in it.

What is God calling you to do today?

If you have never made that choice to follow Jesus, today is your day.

Will you follow Him?