

“Faithfulness”

Proverbs 3:3-4

June 15th, 2025

The book of Proverbs is a collection of wisdom. The section from which the Biblical text for today comes is a set of instructions from a father to his son. It is in that way an appropriate text for Father’s Day. It is certainly also an appropriate text for our look at faithfulness, a spiritual fruit which we are to bear.

Faithfulness is a wonderful spiritual fruit. We are to exhibit faithfulness to God, faithfulness to our spouse, and faithfulness to one another. We can do this if we are full of faith, trusting in God and having the Spirit of God within us. We yield to the Spirit’s power.

We exhibit this faithfulness to mirror God’s faithfulness to us. God is described in the Bible as being full of *hesed*, loving kindness. He is always faithful, always.

When we marry, we promise this faithfulness, with God’s help, to one another. We promise two things at marriage; to love our spouse, even when we don’t feel like it, and to be faithful to them, forever.

There is a popular trend out there that, in an odd sort of way, has to do with this idea of faithfulness to spouse. Go back with me in time. It is 1987, almost 40 years ago. Where were you, and what were you doing? That year, a song came out having to do with faithfulness. It has come back in vogue again through a practice called “rick rolling.” The song was “Never Gonna Give You Up,” sung by Rick Astley. “Rick rolling” is emailing someone the song in a way that will make them open up a link which plays the song; in this way, you give someone an earworm

and it's had over a billion hits as a kind of prank. I'm not going to play the song because we don't have the license to play it---you will have to go home and google it. (Oh, by the way, you've been "Rick rolled!")

Some of the song's words are:

Never gonna give you up, never gonna let you down,

Never gonna run around and desert you

Never gonna make you cry, never gonna say goodbye

Never gonna tell a lie and hurt you.

Does anybody remember the song yet? Now I had heard of this practice of "Rick rolling" and sent the link to a few family members and friends, and my husband and I laughed about it. But then this week, I took my husband for his ten year colonoscopy, and the nurse in the recovery part of the surgery center started talking about it. I mean, when you say this song about faithfulness has gone viral, it has really gone viral!

We may joke about this, but this kind of faithfulness of husband and wife is important. And one Christian leader has said that the most important thing a father can do for his children is model love and faithfulness to their mother.¹ That is how they will learn it.

When it comes to being faithful to others, we simply have to do it. We have to be mindful of what today's scripture says: we have to write faithfulness on the tablets of our hearts. Our hearts can be like stone cold rocks, even like the tablets of the law, but Isaiah and Jeremiah both speak to writing the law on our hearts. \

¹ Theodore Hesburgh.

The Bible is replete with verses and stories about faithfulness. Listen to this parable:

Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ 3Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me?’ I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ 7Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ 8And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

[HERE IS THE KEY VERSE] “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Listen also to this which Jesus said:

For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

Note here that Jesus says “faithful” not “successful.” Faithfulness is the higher value.

We see examples of faithfulness as a goal in our world, too. I found² this:

Semper Fidelis, the official motto of the United States Marine Corps, was adopted in 1883. The phrase is adopted from the Latin, and it means, "Always Faithful."

² From Precept Austin.

The Marines use an abbreviated verbal version, "Semper Fi," to voice loyalty and commitment to their comrades-in-arms. Semper Fi holds the promise to be faithful to the end. They will serve, and even die, with honor: to the corps, to one another, and to themselves.

I know the Marines also say, "leave no man behind."

Further, preacher Douglas Scalise³ notes:

To be faithful is "having or showing true and constant support or loyalty; deserving trust: keeping your promises or doing what you are supposed to do."
"Old Faithful" is a famous geyser in Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park. It was so named in 1870 because it reliably erupts at ... consistent and predictable intervals. It does what it's supposed to do—so people know when to expect the geyser to erupt.

Preacher Ray Fowler⁴ writes that faithfulness consists of integrity, right priorities, and following through.

I think of the faithfulness of Christians who are persecuted for their faith. I am so grateful for their example. My husband and I pray for them every day, even though we do not know who they are. He will go to a conference this fall to hear their stories and to pray. What we always have to remember is this: Revelation promises to us and to them: *Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

³ Douglas Scalise, "The Importance of Faithfulness."

⁴ Ray Fowler, "the Fruit of Faithfulness."

The question we must ask ourselves today is whether we have let loyalty and faithfulness forsake us or whether we have bound them around our necks and written them on the tablets of our hearts?

Amen.