

February 27, 2022

## Character 3-Faithful

We have been looking at the character of God in this series. He has many character attributes, but for this series we are focusing on four of them.

**REVIEW:** Kind, Loving, Gracious, and, and today we focus on God as FAITHFUL.

### **PURPOSE:**

- The purpose for this series is **NOT merely** to be more **INFORMED** about God, but **BUT** to be **TRANSFORMED** by knowing God personally.
- As we learned in week one, God has many attributes. The theologians tell us he has **Incommunicable attributes**, as well as **communicable attributes**. What does that mean? The incommunicable attributes are unique to God. These are characteristics that are **ONLY** his. Our study in this series is about the Communicable attributes. The ones we can catch from him. The use of the word “communicable” is just like how we use it in the phrase “Communicable diseases”. These can be spread. And just like that, we can catch and spread the communicable attributes, which are God’s character qualities.
- The way we catch these characteristics and pass them along is just like with a disease. It is by being in close proximity to the source. So we must draw near to God and know him closely. When we do, we become positively contagious, and can infect others with these good characteristics, passing them along as we help others want to draw near to God.
- All of this **RESULTING in a good and beautiful life:**

**TODAY:** God’s positively infectious FAITHFULNESS.

### **I. God’s faithfulness is ABSOLUTE**

BECAUSE it works together with all his other attributes (including...

- **OMNIPOTENCE (all-powerful),**
- **OMNISCIENCE (all-knowing), &**
- **and his unchanging goodness!– (IMMUTABILITY)**
  - When God speaks, He speaks TRUTH, absolutely trustworthy!
  - When God promises, it’s just a matter of time.
  - Nothing can stop him.

**Our faithfulness is not absolute.**

### **II. Your faithfulness DEPENDS**

God is self-existent and self-sufficient. We are not. We have been designed to be dependent. We derive life from God. We derive our character from God. Like a flower to the sun. When out of that dependent relationship we wither and die. Joyful before God, we open up to a thriving and beautiful life.

**ALTHOUGH, Lifelong faithfulness is a BEAUTIFUL thing, we cannot pull it off by ourselves, even though we might want to.**

- **Many people desire to be faithful.**
  - People don't say, "*Hey babe, do you want to get married for a while*".
  - NO. Everyone wants it.
  - Just over 40 years ago Gina and I began to talk about getting married. We talked about growing old together, but don't put us on a pedestal.

**Even a turkey can teach us about faithfulness!**

**But faithfulness isn't only about marriage.**

**Faithfulness comes in all shapes and sizes.**

- One great picture of faithfulness for a number of us was 4 foot 11.
- She never married, but she was a beautiful picture of lifelong faithfulness to God.
- She served VVCC for 51 years, since its beginning in 1967. Ruth Ann Haenny.

Whether you can pull off faithfulness of this kind depends!

**A. *If you depend on WORLDLY IDEAS, you will fail***

- If you think faithfulness is in your reach because you can pull it off, WATCH OUT!
- No self-help book gives you what you need for lifelong faithfulness. Why not?
- I've said this so many times, I think you can finish my sentence: "*Self help doesn't work when self is the problem.*" *When self is the problem, we need God's help.*

Unfaithfulness is another word for sin of any kind, and everyone of us had (or has) a sin problem of some kind to contend with.

**THE GOOD NEWS IS THIS:**

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST came not only to forgive our sins, but to remove sin's power from our unfaithful lives.

[A. Depending on WORLDLY IDEAS, you will fail]

**B. *If you depend on GOD'S PROMISES, you will grow***

***Hebrews 10:23 (CSB). Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since he who promised is faithful.***

- **Our faithfulness is made strong by God's faithfulness!**
- It will go a long way if you link the Bible word "faith" to the word "trust".

- Faith is not just a belief in your head.
- It is a trust that determines your outlook, attitudes, and actions.
- Do you trust Jesus enough to believe what he says and then do what he says?
- Do you trust Jesus to know what is best for your life and happiness, in all your choices?

Faithfulness is being true to Covenant Promises.

- Trusting in God's word, and God's promises is very helpful.
- The whole **Old Covenant** was based on this.
- But God's plan was to take our experience far beyond the Old Covenant experience when he introduced the New Covenant through his Son, Jesus.

So let's jump into the GOOD NEWS Jesus brought to us.

**C. If you depend on GOD'S SPIRIT, you'll experience God**

*John 14:15-17 (CSB) If you love me, you will keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. He is the Spirit of truth. The world is unable to receive him because it doesn't see him or know him. But you do know him, because he remains with you and will be in you."*

In the New Covenant we not only depend on God's promises, we depend on God's Spirit indwelling us!

- If you enter into the New Covenant God offers:
- God makes promises to you and you respond with promises to him. That is implied in every Covenant relationship.
- In BAPTISM: Promises are pictured and entered into. It is a covenant union.

Jesus says I love. I gave my life for you. I give you my life now. **Will you be mine?**

**When We said yes, we said yes to the guy who said, "I am THE Way, THE Truth, and THE Life" (John 14:6).**

**When we said Yes, we also said No to our old way, our old way of life.**

We died with Christ and we were given a new life.

- We said yes to Jesus' WAY of life.
- We said yes to Jesus as TRUTH, following his teaching and commandments.
- We said yes to Jesus as LIFE, by becoming his disciples and saying yes to His Lifestyle!

- We said yes to his MISSION. As disciples who make disciples.
- That is what we signed up for, when we joined our lives with Jesus. We said YES to a dependent life.
- We said yes to always seeking God’s help.
- We rely on the HOLY SPIRIT’s internal and personal help to do this everyday!

***Ephesians 3:16-19 (CSB)** “I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God’s love, and to know Christ’s love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”*

**What does that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” mean?**

- It means we can be filled with the fullness of God’s character!
  - When we rely on God himself, **He reconstructs our character to look more like his character.** “so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”
  - **How?** by being filled with and depending on the Holy Spirit.

***Galatians 5:22–23 (CSB)** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control...*

**“PRACTICE!”**

Write a letter to God that begins “Dear God, the life I want most for myself is...” and attempt to describe the good and beautiful life you want to live. Save this letter and set a reminder to review it next year.

If you feel like you are in a dark patch right now, you don’t need to stay there! If you feel like you have been unfaithful, you don’t need to stay in your dark place. Here is why.

***1 John 1:9 (CSB)** If we confess our sins, **he is faithful** and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

*PRAYER TEAM*

*Next Week we start a series: **I’m THAT Fool!***

### SMALL TALK

1. When you think of the concept of “faithfulness” what examples of “faithfulness” come to mind for you?
  - A geyser “Old faithful”?
  - A faithful dog?
  - An elderly married couple who made it past their golden anniversary?

### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Deuteronomy 7:7-9.** What was the motive of God to choose Israel as his own possession? How did he show her his faithfulness? On what basis was she called to be faithful?
3. **READ Hebrews 10:23.** What does human faithfulness depend on? And what else? [Hint: this is not a Do-It-Yourself project] (see John 14:15-17; Galatians 5:22-23)
4. **READ James 4:4; 1 John 2:15; Galatians 5:19-21.** What does it look like to be unfaithful to God?
5. **READ 2 Timothy 2:11–13.** Line by line, what does this trustworthy saying mean, in your own words?

### GETTING PERSONAL

6. What tends to cause you to drift off course?

7. Since people do not drift toward godliness, what grace filled efforts will help you pursue faithfulness?

### **PRACTICE!**

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