

In What do You Trust – Part 11: God Is Trustworthy!

1. Background
 - a. This is our final week about Trust – but I hope you will learn to trust more even after this series is over.
 - b. We have talked quite a bit about what trust is – putting the entire weight of your cares and needs upon another.
 - c. We have talked about what we cannot trust in, as well as some helpful tools to learn to build a life of trusting dependence upon God.
 - i. But there is a final incredibly important point that we must get our hands around if we are to do this.
 - ii. We need to get our hearts and minds wrapped around the Faithfulness of God.
 - iii. If we neglect this understanding, all of our attempts to “trust God” will be shallow or weak.
2. When we think about being faithful what comes to your mind?
 - a. **FAITHFUL –Steadfast, dedicated, dependable, and worthy of trust.**
 - b. The word is derived from the Hebrew root having the basic meaning “to trust (a person),” or “to believe (a statement).”
 - i. If you went to cash your paycheck at the bank and the teller gave you the right amount of money 90% of the time, would you consider that teller to be faithful?
 - ii. Probably not.
 - iii. Max DePree, in an article in Leadership magazine stated, “A friend of mine described a colleague as great at running the “ninety-five-yard dash.” That is a distinction I can do without. Lacking the last five yards makes the first ninety-five pointless.” A faithful person is one who you can count on to keep their word. They will keep the promises that they make even if it costs them something to do it.
3. While we will look at a number of scriptures today, there is one in particular that should get our attention:
 - a. Psalm 89:6-8: *For who in all of heaven can compare with the Lord? What mightiest angel is anything like the Lord? The highest angelic powers stand in awe of God. He is far more awesome than those who surround His throne. O Lord God Almighty! Where is there anyone as mighty as you Lord? Faithfulness is your very character.*
 - i. This passage starts off with the observation that God is more awesome than anything else that exists. And then as the psalmist closes in on how mighty the Lord is, he concludes with the statement that “*Faithfulness is your very character.*”
 1. **Faithfulness is at the very core of God’s character.**
 2. Character is what we truly are, not just what we appear to be.
 3. And faithfulness is being true to what you say you are and will do.
 4. So faithfulness is one of the most fundamental attributes of God beyond the obvious all knowing, all powerful and all present.
 - ii. Faithfulness ranks up there with God’s love and God’s wrath.
 - iii. **The Marine Corps has an interesting motto, Semper Fidelis, the short is Semper Fi.**
 1. Perhaps you have seen that on windows or bumpers of cars.
 2. Semper Fidelis are two Latin words that mean, “Always Faithful”.
 3. It is really the code of conduct and character of the gallant soldiers of the Corps.
 4. It is a description of their loyalty, and a definition of their lives as Marines.
 5. I believe that the bible says the same thing about God.
 6. Faithfulness describes the very nature of God.
 - a. **God is faithful, totally, 100% consistent, able to be counted upon, relied on, trusted in, depended on, looked to, leaned on, hoped for,**

believed in, relied upon, confident in, unswerving, unfailing, unvarying, unchanging. He is who He says He is and He will always stand behind His word and what He says He will do.

- b. Without the faithfulness of God, there would be no basis for trusting Him.
 - i. In the recent movie “the Good Shepherd” a story about the CIA, the main character learns over and over again that he can trust no one. He finds no one faithful, even himself, because a Russian spymaster has something on him as well. He is a shell of a man by the end of the story because he can place his faith in nothing, not even himself.
 - ii. Don’t be like that. Learn to know and experience God’s faithfulness.
- 4. Illus: One of my favorite hymns is “How Great is Thy Faithfulness”. The chorus reads:

*Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided -
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!*

 - a. This great Hymn of the church was written by Thomas Chisholm. He did not write this hymn because of something great, or even miraculous that had happened in his life. He wrote it because as he looked back over his life, he learned to see the great faithfulness of God. At the age 75, he wrote these words; "My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in the earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness."
 - b. What a contrast – one man who had nothing left to believe in, the other had found God always faithful, always trustworthy, to whom he owed everything.
- 5. I would like to share several ways that **God demonstrates His faithfulness to us.**
 - a. **In our Pain.** (In temptations and trials)
 - i. We spoke of this aspect of trust several weeks ago in the context of trusting God even when it doesn’t make sense to trust Him because our circumstances are overwhelming us.
 - 1. 1Co 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.*
 - 2. Psalm 119:75-76 *I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous, and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me. O may Your lovingkindness comfort me, according to Your word to Your servant.*
 - a. Even in our affliction, we believe that God is still Lord of our circumstances, and that He ultimately stands in control. He knows our struggle and knows our pain.
 - b. The Psalm tells us that God’s faithfulness has permitted our suffering. Most of us don’t like to hear that.
 - i. We want to hear about the good, the easy, the painless and the joy, not the suffering, the pain, and the hard places we ultimately must walk.
 - ii. But God is faithful!
 - 3. In fact, in Psalm 50:15 “{God says,} *"Call for me when you have troubles! I will help you. And then you can honor me."*”
 - a. Whether we are in pain or in joy, we call upon Him so we can honor God with our lives.
 - ii. God’s desire is that when troubles come, which they will, that we exhibit trust in Him so that we can EXPERIENCE His love and care and faithfulness.
 - iii. He wants us to experience that so we can know Him and worship Him.

- b. **In His Pardon** (In His forgiveness & love)
 - i. Christians ought to be the most joyful of people in the whole world.
 - ii. But too often we are the most dour, self-condemning, guilt filled, shame beaten, people around.
 - iii. Why? Because we focus upon us instead of God! God's faithfulness is a reason to be filled with joy.
 - iv. We have the promise that our sins are forgiven, forgotten and never to be brought up again. We stand clean and holy before the Judge of the Universe, forgiven and made whole. He has promised this. He is faithful.
 - v. 1 Jn 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
 - vi. Lam 3:21-23 *This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.*
 - 1. You CAN trust God and it should show in your life if you are trusting Him!

- a. **In His Promises** (and words)
 - i. When someone tells you something you almost always and instantaneously evaluate, is this person reliable or believable, and is what he is saying believable?
 - 1. We listen to people and we evaluate all of their words to look for things that might invalidate believability...like the college student who walked into a photography studio with a framed picture of his girlfriend. He wanted the picture duplicated. This involved removing it from the frame. In doing this, the studio owner noticed the inscription on the back of the photograph: "My dearest Tom, I love you with all my heart. I love you more and more each day. I will love you forever and ever. I am yours for all eternity." It was signed "Diane," and it contained a P.S.: "If we ever break up, I want this picture back."
 - 2. That doesn't sound like a promise to be faithful.
 - 2. I am so glad that God doesn't write a p.s. on his word!
 - vii. Joshua 23:14 *"Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.*
 - viii. Rev 22:6 And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place
 - ix. Rev. 21:5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."
 - x. Heb 11:11 By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.
 - xi. Romans 3:3 What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?
 - xii. Dt 32:3-4 "For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God! "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

- c. **In His Persistence** (despite us)
 - i. 2 Timothy 2:11-13 *It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.*

1. 2 Timothy 2:13 says that "*Even when we are faithless, he remains faithful.*" Even when we show no signs of loving God. He shows signs of his love for us.
 2. God is perfectly consistent (faithful) in His love for us!
 - ii. Do you guys know who Condoleeza Rice is? She is President Bush's National Security Advisor. But she's also a preacher's girl. And she grew up going to church every Sunday. But she fell away from God as a grownup. Mainly because her life got too busy. She was traveling all over the world. And she didn't have room for church anymore. One Sunday morning, she was shopping at Lucky's Supermarket. And a black man walked up to her and said, "Hi, Connie. Good to see you again. I was wondering, 'Do you by any chance play the piano?'" And she said, "Yes." And he said, "Well, we really need a piano player at church right now. Can you help us out?" So she agreed to play piano for the church. Later on, she heard a sermon about the prodigal son's older brother. And how the older brother was smug. And self-satisfied. And didn't realize that he was just as distant from his Father as his brother was.
 - iii. And then Condoleeza Rice said this: "I realized that I was the older brother. I was the self-satisfied one. I was the one who needed to come back to God. So I became more active with my church. I started going to Bible study. And I began to have a more active prayer life. It was a very important turning point in my life. I tell this story because I thought to myself, "My goodness, God has a long reach. I had been running from him for years. And he found me in the middle of a Lucky's Supermarket on a Sunday morning."
 - iv. That's the way God is with us. He's persistent! He never gives up on anyone as long as they're alive. And he's constantly knocking on the door of your life. Because He wants something more than just our Sunday morning religion. He wants a life long relationship.
6. When your life concludes, will you, like Thomas Chisolm or Joshua of Israel, be able to say, 'great is Thy faithfulness!'

Good closing story: In the country of Armenia, in 1988, Samuel and Danielle sent their young son, Armand, off to school. Samuel squatted before his son and looked him in the eye. "Have a good day at school, and remember, no matter what, I'll always be there for you." They hugged and the boy ran off to school. Hours later, a powerful earthquake rocked the area. In the midst of the pandemonium, Samuel and Danielle tried to discover what happened to their son but they couldn't get any information. The radio announced that there were thousands of casualties. Samuel then grabbed his coat and headed for the schoolyard. When he reached the area, what he saw brought tears to his eyes. Armand's school was a pile of debris. Other parents were standing around crying. Samuel found the place where Armand's classroom used to be and began pulling a broken beam off the pile of rubble. He then grabbed a rock and put it to the side, and then grabbed another one. One of the parents looking on asked, "What are you doing?" "Digging for my son," Samuel answered. The man then said, "You're just going to make things worse! The building is unstable," and tried to pull Samuel away from his work. Samuel set his jaw and kept working. As time wore on, one by one, the other parents left. Then a firefighter tried to pull Samuel away from the rubble. Samuel looked at him and said, "Won't you help me?" The firefighter left and Samuel kept digging. All through the night and into the next day, Samuel continued digging. Parents placed flowers and pictures of their children on the ruins. But, Samuel just kept working. He picked up a beam and pushed it out of the way when he heard a faint cry. "Help! Help!" Samuel listened but didn't hear anything again. Then he heard a muffled voice, "Papa?" Samuel began to dig furiously. Finally he could see his son. "Come on out, son!" he said with relief. "No," Armand said. "Let the other kids come out first because I know you'll get me." Child after child emerged until, finally, little Armand appeared. Samuel took him in his arms and Armand said, "I told the other kids not to *worry because you told me that you'd always be there for me!*"

God is able to be there for you. His promises never fail.