

FAITHFULNESS

Today we will be discovering what 'faithfulness' means to us.

What does the word 'faithfulness' mean?

The dictionary definition of faithfulness is: the act 'of firm and not changing in your friendship with or support for a person or an organization, or in your belief in your principles.

For example:

- A faithful friend.
- His faithful old dog accompanied him everywhere he went.

(Cambridge dictionary)

Pause for thought

Can you think about two instances where someone you know has shown faithfulness or unfaithfulness?

When you think about it, what is it about those actions that stands out for you?

Faithfulness is relational

As we have seen in the examples above of the word 'faithfulness', we get to understand that it is a word that describes a relationship with someone or something. Please watch a short video on Ruth and Naomi.

<https://youtu.be/gR2sZRAVcwc>

God created us to be relational beings but good relationships can only happen when we are faithful. An unfaithful person may find it hard to keep good relationships with those people around them as they may be considered to be unreliable.

Throughout the Bible we see that there are people who were known for their faithfulness to God for example:

- Noah who agreed to build an ark when God told him to do so although he faced ridicule from those around him about how foolish he was. Genesis 6:9 - 22
- God asked Abraham to leave his home and go to another land far away and he agreed to do so. Genesis 12: 1 - 6
- Moses agreed to lead the Israelites out of Egypt even though he faced a lot of opposition from Pharaoh the Egyptian king. Exodus 3
- Ruth followed her mother-in-law Naomi to her country when she was not certain about the situations that she would face there. Ruth 1:6 - 18

God's faithfulness

God's faithfulness to humanity is shown throughout the Bible. In fact, the message of the bible is all about God's faithfulness to us. It describes his commitment to humanity through the promises that he made right from the beginning. He renewed this commitment through Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses in the Old Testament.

This was due to his love for his creations and not because of anything that they had done to deserve it.

The people of God have disobeyed him and done what they please right from Adam, but God has always forgiven them and confirmed his promises to them.

- Adam disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden Gen 3:1-7
- Noah would sometimes be overtaken by strong drinks. Gen. 9:21
- Abraham had a child with Hagar outside of God's plan. Gen.16:3-4
- Moses disobeyed God by hitting the rock to get water although God had instructed him to speak to it. Numbers 20:1-13

Jesus Christ

- Although the people of God disobeyed God time and again, he did not abandon them. God did allow the Israelites to be invaded by the Assyrians and the Babylonians who sent them into exile to Babylon due to their sin, but he did not abandon them. They were able to return to their land after 70 years.
- After years of testing his people, God decided that it was time to redeem them from their sin and disobedience by sending his Son Jesus. God was not going to abandon his creation no matter what. God had made this promise in Deuteronomy 18:15.
- Jesus Christ was given as a gift to humanity to take on their sin. God out of his great faithfulness gave up his only son and allowed him to be crucified so that mankind would be free to have a good relationship with him. God has always longed to have children that obeyed him so that they would have a good relationship with him.
- Through Jesus we can live the life that God has always wanted us to live, to have him as our father who can provide for us with all that we need.

²⁹⁻³⁰ God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him. After God made that decision of what his children should be like, he followed it up by calling people by name. After he called them by name, he set them on a solid basis with himself. And then, after getting them established, he stayed with them to the end, gloriously completing what he had begun.

The One who died for us—who was raised to life for us!—is in the presence of God at this very moment sticking up for us. Do you think anyone is going to be able to drive a wedge between us and Christ's love for us? There is no way! Not trouble, not hard times, not hatred, not hunger, not homelessness, not bullying threats, not backstabbing, not even the worst sins listed in Scripture:
They kill us in cold blood because they hate you.
We're sitting ducks; they pick us off one by one.

With God on our side like this, how can we lose? If God didn't hesitate to put everything on the line for us, embracing our condition and exposing himself to the worst by sending his own Son, is there anything else for us? And who would dare tangle with God gladly and freely do for us? And by messing with one of God's chosen? So, what do you think? Who would dare even to point a finger?

Romans
8:29-39 msg

None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us. I'm absolutely convinced that nothing—nothing living or dead, angelic or demonic, today or tomorrow, high or low, thinkable or unthinkable—absolutely *nothing* can get between us and God's love because of the way that Jesus our Master has embraced us.

And Finally:

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS
MEANS
THAT GOD
WILL ALWAYS DO
WHAT HE SAID
AND
FULFIL WHAT HE HAS
PROMISED

Lord we
thank you
for your
faithfulness,
that you did
not spare
your son but
gave him for
us. Help us
to be
faithful.