



New Mount Zion M.B. Church
Bible Class
July 27, 2020

“Understanding The Fruit of The Spirit”
7th Fruit

What is faithfulness?

Faithfulness is the seventh in the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22. Essentially, faithfulness to God is loyalty to Him and to His teachings, which should shape how we think and act.

What the Bible says about faith and faithfulness.

“Faithfulness” is translated from the Greek word pistis. In the King James Version this word is translated “faith.” Pistis includes both meanings (faith and faithfulness), but in Galatians 5:22 it seems to carry more of the meaning “trustworthiness or reliability.”

We grow in faith and faithfulness as we use the power God gives us through His Spirit to obey Him and build a relationship with Him. Faith in God grows in us as it did in Abraham as we see that God will always do what He has promised (Romans 4:18-22). So, faithfulness would include being full of belief and confidence in God and all that God promises.

Hebrews chapter 11, shows us the “Hall of Faithfulness”.

Faith is what keeps us from believing that we are all here on earth by accident. It assures us of our Creator's existence and love.

Faith involves the way we live. (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Faithfulness includes loyalty. In Titus 1:9, toward the end of a list of qualifications for ministers, Paul says that an elder should be "holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict." "Holding fast the faithful word" means remaining loyal to what we have learned from the Word of God.

So the fruit of the Spirit of faithfulness includes trusting God and remaining loyal to Him and His doctrines.

Lamentations 3:22-23 tells us, “Through the LORD’s mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.” God calls on us to make a promise to Him through baptism. Will we be faithful and true to Him as He is faithful to us?

*So why does God want us to demonstrate
faithfulness to Him?*

*How else will He know that we trust Him and are
truly committed to being a part of His family?*

James 2:17-20.

*Our faithfulness greatly influences how we love
God and love others, including whether we remain
loyal to relationships, sound doctrine and God.*

Examples of faithfulness to follow:

Hebrews 11 lists Abraham and Sarah as examples of faithful people who did many things by faith. Abraham left his home, not knowing where he was going but depending on God. He dwelled in a foreign country with his wife and waited many years for promises from God. Sarah received strength to have a child after she was well past the childbearing age, holding onto the promise made to her by God. Abraham was even willing to obey God's command to offer his only son as a sacrifice because he completely believed that God could raise him from the dead.

Abraham and Sarah's examples of faithfulness are timeless in their demonstration of commitment, willingness to believe God and to act on their beliefs despite growing physical evidence to the contrary. They did have some difficulties with faith, but they made God the priority, and He bountifully blessed them.

Abraham turned his back on everything that wasn't approved by God and moved forward with only God's promises guiding Him. Talk about faithfulness!

Examples to avoid

The story of Abraham and Sarah (found in Genesis 12 through 24) is often called a “journey of faith,” because their lives also provide some specific examples to avoid. There were times they both struggled with accepting what God had told them and with trusting that God would do what He said.

(However, in time they turned back to the conviction that God not only was able to do what He had spoken and promised, but also that He would do it.)

For example, Abraham was deceptive on two occasions about Sarah being his sister, not having the faith to trust that God would protect him in those situations (Genesis 12:11-20; 20:2-13). Instead of believing that she and Abraham would have a son, Sarah insisted on using her maid Hagar to try to bear the son of promise (Genesis 16:1-15), leading to much conflict and heartbreak (especially when Isaac, the true promised son, came along). In fact, Sarah and Abraham both laughed when they heard from God that they would have a son (Genesis 17:17; 18:12)! Despite their overall faithfulness, they both had some hard lessons to learn about faith.

Many of the things God commands and tells us in the Bible truly don't seem physically possible, making it hard for us to believe. Well, that may well be because they aren't physically possible and require God's intervention and help. Like Abraham and Sarah having a child in their old age! They had to wrestle with faithfulness, but in the end, God was faithful, and they came to be counted faithful as well.

How do we demonstrate more faithfulness?

It takes a lot of faithfulness to make an invisible Being and an ancient book the very center of our lives. We must allow our belief and trust in God and the teachings of the Bible to shape our thoughts, speech and actions toward God and others.

How do we grow in faith and faithfulness? We can:

Write out a list of reasons we believe the way we believe. If we are lacking in spiritual evidence in some areas, we can study, pray and meditate about those areas where we are weak in faith.

Remember and think about God's faithfulness in every area of life: protecting and providing for us, giving us forgiveness of sins, promising us eternal life and His coming Kingdom of peace. We can let His faithfulness inspire our commitment to be faithful.

Make God and other people a priority in our lives. How? We can make a list of our relationships and commitments and then honestly evaluate ourselves on how faithful we have been. Any unfaithful behaviors and practices must be eliminated from our lives.

Faithfulness is more than just being there for someone. It is total commitment and loyalty to God that flies in the face of human reasoning. We may easily believe in God, but it takes faithfulness to believe His teachings enough to change our lives.

Faithfulness is necessary when God's promises seem to completely contradict what we see. When God's ways are hidden from us (Isaiah 45:15), when evil strikes, when hardships come one right after another—that's when we need the Spirit to produce His fruit of faithfulness in us.

Faith is the opponent of fear. Faith protects us from fear, and fear erodes faith. Ephesians 6:13-17 lists the armor of God. Faith, "in addition to all," is the shield. If our shield of faith is strong enough to put out all the flaming arrows of the enemy, we are spiritually invulnerable.

God is faithful, and He grants that quality to His children. The Holy Spirit produces in believers His faithfulness. As a result, we believe God is who He says He is and that He will do what He says He will do. His faithful character directly affects our lives. We have nothing to fear as we wait for Him to fulfill His promises. This assurance is a fruit of the Spirit.