

Doctrine of God Part 16- the Faithfulness of God

“The faithfulness of God is of the utmost practical significance to the people of God. It is the ground of their confidence, the foundation of their hope, and the cause of their rejoicing. It saves them from the despair to which their own unfaithfulness might easily lead, gives them courage to carry on in spite of their failures, and fills their hearts with joyful anticipations, even when they are deeply conscious of the fact that they have forfeited all the blessings of God” Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, II.71

Faithfulness...Part of God’s Character

- **Isa 49:7...** Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel *and* its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, “Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of ***the Lord who is faithful***, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.”
- **Psalm 36:5...** ⁵Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, ***Your faithfulness reaches to the skies.***

1 Kings 8:56... ⁵⁶“Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; ***not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.***
- **Deut 7:9, 9:5...**⁷⁹ Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, ***the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation*** with those who love Him and keep His commandments; ¹⁰but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them; He will not delay with him who hates Him, He will repay him to his face.

⁹⁵ It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but *it is* because of the wickedness of these nations *that* the Lord your God is driving them out before you, ***in order to confirm the oath which the Lord swore to your fathers***, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- **Psalm 89:1...** I will sing of the lovingkindness of the Lord forever; To all generations I will make known ***Your faithfulness*** with my mouth.
² For I have said, “Lovingkindness will be built up forever; In the heavens You will establish ***Your faithfulness.***”

- **Psalm 105:8...** ⁸ *He has remembered His covenant forever,*
The word which He commanded to a thousand generations,
⁹ *The covenant* which He made with Abraham,
And His oath to Isaac.
¹⁰ *Then He confirmed it* to Jacob for a statute,
To Israel *as an everlasting covenant,*
¹¹ Saying, “To you I will give the land of Canaan
As the portion of your inheritance,”
¹² When they were only a few men in number,
Very few, and strangers in it.
¹³ And they wandered about from nation to nation,
From *one* kingdom to another people.
¹⁴ He permitted no man to oppress them,
And He reproved kings for their sakes:
- **Heb 6:18...** ¹⁷ In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise *the unchangeableness of His purpose,* interposed with an oath, ¹⁸ so that by two unchangeable things in which *it is impossible for God to lie,* we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a *hope* both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, ²⁰ where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.
- **1 Cor 1:9...** ⁴ I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, ⁶ even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ *God is faithful,* through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- **1 Thess 5:24...**²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.*
- **1 Peter 4:19...**¹⁹ Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to *a faithful Creator* in doing what is right.

Faithfulness...Declared to be

- **Great - Lam 3:23...**²² The Lord’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,
For His compassions never fail.
²³ *They* are new every morning;
Great is Your faithfulness.

- **Incomparable -Psalm 89:8...**⁸ O Lord God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty Lord?
Your faithfulness also surrounds You.
 - **Infinite -Psalm 36:5...**⁵ Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens,
Your faithfulness reaches to the skies.
⁶ Your righteousness is like the mountains of God;
Your judgments are *like* a great deep.
O Lord, You preserve man and beast.
 - **Established -Psalm 89:2...** I will sing of the lovingkindness of the Lord forever;
To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth.
² For I have said, “Lovingkindness will be built up forever;
In the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness.”
 - **Everlasting -Psalm 119:90...** Forever, O Lord,
Your word is settled in heaven.
⁹⁰ ***Your faithfulness continues throughout all generations;***
You established the earth, and it stands.
 - **Psalm 146:6...**⁵ How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
Whose hope is in the Lord his God,
⁶ Who made heaven and earth,
The sea and all that is in them;
Who keeps faith forever;
 - **Unfailing -Psalm 89:33...**³³ “But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him,
Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness.
³⁴ “My covenant I will not violate,
Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips.
³⁵ “Once I have sworn by My holiness;
I will not lie to David.
³⁶ “His descendants shall endure forever
And his throne as the sun before Me.
³⁷ “It shall be established forever like the moon,
And the witness in the sky is faithful
- 2 Tim 2:13...**¹³ If we are faithless, ***He remains faithful***, for He cannot deny Himself.

God's faithfulness applies to His...

- **Temporal blessings (Ps 84:11)...**¹¹ For the Lord God is a sun and shield;

The Lord gives grace and glory;

No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

¹² O Lord of hosts,

How blessed is the man who trusts in You!

- **Spiritual blessings (1Co 1:9)...**⁴ I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, ⁶ even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ ***God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.***
- **Support in temptation (1Cor 10:13)...** 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.
- **Forgiving and Cleansing Faithfulness (1 John 1:9)...**⁹ If we confess our sins, ***He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.***
- **Sanctifying discipline (He 12:4-12)...**⁴ You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; ⁵ and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,

Nor faint when you are reproved by Him;

⁶ For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,

And He scourges every son whom He receives.”

⁷ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? ⁸ But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, so that we may share His holiness. ¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

- **Direction in difficulties (Ps 32:8)...**⁸ ***I will instruct you and teach you*** in the way which you should go; ***I will counsel you with My eye upon you.***

- **Support in trials (Isa 41:10)...**¹⁰ ‘Do not fear, for I am with you;

Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, ***surely I will help you,***
Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.’

- **Bringing to glory (1Jn 2:25)...**²⁵ ***This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.***

Thus, God’s Faithfulness Should be...

- **Proclaimed -Psalm 40:10...**¹⁰ I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart;
I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation;
I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation.
- **Pleaded in prayer -Psalm 143:1...**Hear my prayer, O Lord,
Give ear to my supplications!
Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness!

Edited compilation of Scriptures by R A Torrey

“God is true. His Word of Promise is sure. In all His relations with His people God is faithful. He may be safely relied upon. No one ever yet really trusted Him in vain. We find this precious truth expressed almost everywhere in the Scriptures, for ***His people need to know that faithfulness is an essential part of the Divine character. This is the basis of our confidence in Him. But it is one thing to accept the faithfulness of God as a Divine truth, it is quite another to act upon it.*** God has given us many "exceeding great and precious promises," but are we really counting on His fulfillment of them? Are we actually *expecting* Him to do for us all that He has said? Are we resting with implicit assurance on these words, "He is *faithful* that promised" (Heb 10:23)?" A W Pink

“Faith is holding on to the faithfulness of God and, as long as you do that, you cannot go wrong. Faith does not look at the difficulties. . . . ***Faith does not look at itself or at the person who is exercising it. Faith looks at God Faith is interested in God only, and it talks about God and it praises God and it extols the virtues of God. The measure of the strength of a man’s faith, always, is ultimately the measure of his knowledge of God.*** . . . He knows God so well that he can rest on the knowledge. And it is the prayers of such a man that are answered.” D Martyn Lloyd Jones

Thomas Manton on “God's Faithfulness from Generation to Generation”

Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.
—Psalm 119:90.

Doctrinal observation. That in all ages God ever showed himself a true God, and faithful in all his promises...

1. God's faithfulness relateth to some promise wherein he hath engaged himself to his people: Heb. xi. 11, 'She judged him faithful who had promised.' It is his mercy to make promises, but it is his faithfulness and truth to fulfil them...

2. His truth dependeth upon his unchangeable nature, but it is confirmed to us by experience. His unchangeable nature, Heb. vi. 18. **If a promise can be made out to be of God, we have no more reason to doubt of it than of the nature and being of God.** Yet, it is confirmed by experience: Ps. xviii. 30, 'The word of the Lord is a tried word.' We are led by sensible things, and what hath been done doth assure us of what shall be done, or may be expected from God.

3. Therefore God hath been ever tender of his truth, that the event may answer the promise, and we might know that God that hath been faithful... the true God is known by his mercy and his fidelity; he never failed to perform his part of the covenant with any: Ps. cxxxviii. 2, 'I will praise thy name, for thy lovingkindness and thy truth; for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.' As he hath made us admirable and great promises of giving his Son, and with him all things, so he will certainly perform all to the utmost importance of them. The matter of his word is mercy and loving-kindness, and in the performance thereof there is great truth and fidelity; as he hath made great and excellent promises, so he performeth them most punctually. So that in fulfilling his word, God will be known above all that is named, or famed, or believed, or apprehended, and spoken of them. Here is his great glory and excellency.

4. That the experience of all generations doth confirm God's faithfulness in his promises; for it is said in the text, 'His faithfulness is unto all generations.' In the Hebrew it is, 'From generation to generation.'

The point may be amplified by two considerations:—

First, That some promises have been received by one generation, and fulfilled in another.

Secondly, That the same common promises have been fulfilled to the faithful in all ages.

First, That some promises have been received by one generation, and fulfilled in another, when the matter so required; as, for instance, Israel's going out of Egypt: Gen. xv. 13, 14, 'And he said unto Abraham, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterwards they shall come out with great substance.' Compare now Exod. xii. 41, 'and it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self-same day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.' Thirty years were added, because of their fathers dwelling in Canaan; but God kept touch to a day. **So for the promise of the Messiah...**; that God fulfilled in due time, and sent a Saviour into the world: Gal. iv. 4, 'In the fulness of time God sent his son.'...so in all that is yet to come, we should depend upon the veracity of God; as the calling of the Jews, the destruction of antichrist, a more ample effusion of gifts on the church, together with a dilation of its borders; as the patriarchs 'all died in faith:' Heb. xi. 13, 'Having not received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them.'

Secondly, That the same common promises have been fulfilled to the faithful in all ages; there is but one and the same way to eternal life in necessary things...God's faithfulness hath been tried many ways and at many times, but every age furnisheth examples of the truth of his promises. From the beginning of the world to the end, God is ever fulfilling the scripture in his providential government...

5. That the experience of God's faithfulness in former ages is of use to those that follow and succeed, to assure them of God's faithfulness; for God's wonderful and gracious works were never intended merely for the benefit of that age in which they were done, but for the benefit also of those that should hear of them by any creditable means whatsoever...Ps. cxlv. 4, 'One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts;' Joel i. 3, 'Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation;' Josh. iv. 6-8, 'That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, What mean you by these stones? then shall you answer them, that the waters of Jordan were cut off from before the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God.'...

From all which I observe:—

[1.] That we should tell generations to come what we have found of God in our time, and more especially parents should tell their children; they are bound to transmit this knowledge to their children...By word, by remembering the passages of providences, and publishing his mercies to posterity: Ps. lxxxix. 1, 'I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth I will make known thy faithfulness to all generations.'...

[2.] That this report of God's gracious works...is a special means of edification....

[3.] And more particularly I observe, that this tradition is a great means and help to faith; for it is said, ver. 7, 'That they may set their hope in God.'

6. That to be satisfied in God's faithfulness is of great importance to believers. Partly because their fidelity to God is much encouraged by his fidelity to us. They that do not trust God cannot be long true to him: Heb. iii. 12, 'Take heed lest there be found in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God;' and James i. 8, 'A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, ...one that doth not stick fast to God, and is ever unresolved, being divided between hopes and fears concerning his acceptance with God. **A wavering Christian is divided between God and some unlawful course for his safety, divided between God's ways and his own, and cannot quietly depend upon his promises, but is tossed to and fro, doth not entirely trust himself in God's hands, but doth wholly lean upon his own carnal confidence...Now, nothing will support us but the faithfulness of God:** Prov. xi. 18, 'The wicked worketh a deceitful work, but to him that soweth righteousness there shall be a sure reward.' Men think to be happy by their sin, but find themselves deceived at last; but none can be deceived that trust in the living and true God. Partly because many of the promises contradict sense; as when the soul is filled with anguish because of the guilt of sin: 1 John i. 9, 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' And the power of sin: 1 Thes. v. 24, 'Faithful is he who calleth you, who also will do it.' Supported in great distress: 1 Cor. x. 13, 'He will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able.' That we may be able to stand in the judgment: 1 Cor. i. 9, 'God is faithful, by whom ye are called into the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ.' **Here is a Christian's great security and support, God's faithfulness, testified by Christians now and in all ages, confessing they have found by their experience the word of God to be true;...and therefore we should persevere in our duty to God...**

Let us be then more firmly persuaded of God's faithfulness, that we may depend upon it both for his preserving the church and ourselves in the way of our duty, till we enjoy our final reward...

A W Pink on the Christian's Trusting in God's Faithfulness

There are seasons in the lives of all when it is not easy, no not even for Christians, to believe that God is faithful. Our faith is sorely tried, our eyes bedimmed with tears, and we can no longer trace the outworkings of His love. Our ears are distracted with the noises of the world, harassed by the atheistic whisperings of Satan, and we can no longer hear the sweet accents of His still small voice. Cherished plans have been thwarted, friends on whom we relied have failed us, a professed brother or sister in Christ has betrayed us. We are staggered. We sought to be faithful to God, and now a dark cloud hides Him from us. ***We find it difficult, yea, impossible, for carnal reason to harmonize His frowning providence with His gracious promises. Ah, faltering soul, severely tried fellow pilgrim, seek grace to heed Isaiah 50:10, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth***

the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee,
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not,
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.

*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!*

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above;
Join with all nature in manifold witness,
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today, and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside.