

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



The Reassuring Quality of Faithfulness

KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 5:22-23 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Genesis 32:9-10 | Deuteronomy 7:9
Psalm 33:4; 36:5; 119:90 | Lamentations 3:22-23 | Luke 24:40 | 1 Corinthians 10:13 | Philippians 4:7
2 Thessalonians 3:3 | 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 13:5; 1 John 1:9

► SUMMARY

Faithfulness is one of the most important qualities in a person's life.

We need to be able to believe what others say or promise to do, and they must be able to trust us as well. Unfaithfulness is a form of deception or hypocrisy, and it leads to feelings of disappointment and betrayal when we discover that our trust in someone has been misplaced. As Christians, we should always strive to be faithful to God and to others.

► SERMON POINTS

When Jacob considered all that the Lord had done for him, he prayed, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you,' I am unworthy of all the lovingkindness and of all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant" (Gen. 32:9-10).

God is always faithful, but we must pay attention to Him. We should consider the many ways He has proven Himself faithful in our life and then respond in gratitude.

Scripture affirms God's faithfulness.

- **Deuteronomy 7:9** "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."
- **Psalm 33:4** "For the word of the LORD is upright, and all His work is done in faithfulness."

- **Psalm 36:5** "Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies."
- **Psalm 119:90** "Your faithfulness continues throughout all generations."
- **Lamentations 3:22-23** "The LORD's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."
- **2 Timothy 2:13** "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."

Although our faithfulness wavers, these scriptures affirm that God is faithful all the time. Even the sin of His children will not nullify it. Because the Lord is immutable (never changing), none of His attributes change. That's why we can be confident that He will keep all His promises. His faithfulness is a certainty we can rest upon. When He says, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you," we can have confidence that we are secure (Heb. 13:5).

The Holy Spirit works to express within us the qualities consistent with God's nature, and this includes faithfulness. We should be who we claim to be and do what we commit to do. To give any other impression is deception. But none of us have the strength, fortitude, and faithfulness to live the Christian life apart from the enablement of the Holy Spirit who indwells us. Even Christ's disciples couldn't do it. That's why Jesus told them to wait in Jerusalem until they were "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

If we have trusted Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit who empowers us to be faithful in every circumstance. But if we fail and grieve the Spirit, He convicts us of sin so we can repent and receive forgiveness. He truly is our divine Enabler and Helper.

God has promised to be faithful to us.

- **He will always forgive us.** “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Forgiveness is only possible because Jesus paid our sin debt in full with His death on the cross. Now God can forgive us because Christ’s sacrifice satisfied His justice. Those of us who have accepted Jesus can now come to God and receive forgiveness because He is faithful to keep this promise.
- **God’s faithfulness limits the power of our temptation.** “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” (1 Cor. 10:13). If we will rely on this promise, we won’t have to yield to temptation. God has established a limit and provided an escape so we can endure the enticement without falling.
- **We can have the peace of God.** “And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7). If we bring our anxieties to the Lord in prayer, we can receive His peace even in the midst of trying situations. It will guard our hearts and minds and keeps us from giving up hope or blaming and accusing God.
- **The Holy Spirit limits the power of Satan in our lives.** “But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one” (2 Thess. 3:3). Satan is under God’s control and does not have freedom to do whatever he desires in our lives.

These four promises can enable us to face whatever challenges come our way because we can count on the faithfulness of our God. We may not understand our situation, but we can trust in the One who forgives our sins, limits our temptations, gives us peace in troubled times, and controls Satan’s access to us.

Our confidence in the faithfulness of the Scripture is tested when we go through trials because they challenge our belief in who God is and what He has said. These tests reveal our areas of weakness so that God can strengthen us to overcome them. His goal is that the fruit of the Spirit spoken of in Galatians 5:22-23 becomes a part of our character and is worked out in our lifestyles.

When we walk in the Spirit, we’ll have the following characteristics:

- **Devoted to God.** He will be the only One we follow.
- **Loyal.** We will be someone others can count on to do what we say we will.
- **Unwavering.** Our reliability won’t vary from day to day.
- **Steadfast.** We’ll be steady in our commitments and unshaken by changing circumstances.
- **Trustworthy.** Others can believe us because we will always speak truth.
- **Dependable.** People can rely on us to show up on time and accomplish what we undertake.
- **Obedient.** Although we won’t do it perfectly, our desire and aim will be to obey God.
- **Fruitful.** Our lives will have a positive influence on others.
- **Faithful.** We will be faithful to God and to others.

► RESPONSE

- How confident are you that you can trust the Lord in every circumstance? In what ways has He demonstrated His faithfulness in your life?
- How faithful are you to the Lord? To others?

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