

Spiritual Growth and Christian Character

Lesson 9 – Character – Faith

Introduction

We want to look at two areas of "faith" today: 1) a deep abiding trust in God and 2) the character of the one who can be relied upon

Faith

Faith is simply confident trust in God for everything. It involves loyalty to the Lord and unwavering confidence in His power, purpose, plan, provision, and promise. Faith is the atmosphere in which the man of God exists. He trusts God to keep and fulfill His Word. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: 1 Timothy

God indeed can be trusted in every way. They do not question His wisdom or power or love, and they do not lose trust in His goodness and grace or lose confidence in His divine plan and divine wisdom. They do not doubt the truth or sufficiency of His Word or waver in their divinely assured hope that His sovereign plan will be fulfilled. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Titus

¹*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.* Heb. 11:1 (NASB)

⁶*And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.* Heb. 11:6 (NASB)

²⁴*Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.* 1 Thess. 5:24 (NASB)

¹⁹*Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰*by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹*and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²²*let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; ²⁴*and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵*not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.* Heb. 10:19-25 (NASB)******

²¹*When they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete and incurred this damage and loss.* ²²*"Yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.* ²³*"For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me, ²⁴*saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'* ²⁵*"Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.* ²⁶*"But we must run aground on a certain island."* Acts 27:21-26 (NASB)*

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¹³For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, ¹⁴saying, "I will surely bless you and I will surely multiply you." ¹⁵And so, having patiently waited, he obtained the promise. ¹⁶For men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. ¹⁷In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, ¹⁸so 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. ¹⁹This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, ²⁰where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. Heb. 6:13-20 (NASB)

Examples of how God is faithful

¹³No 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 (NASB)

²³Now 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.

²⁴Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. 1 Thess. 5:23-24 (NASB)

³But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. 2 Thess. 3:3 (NASB)

¹⁹Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right. 1 Pet. 4:19 (NASB)

⁹If 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 (NASB)

Faithfulness

The apostle is not referring to saving faith but to the faithfulness and trustworthiness of those who are already saved. The idea is that of faithfully living the truth that is professed. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: 2 Tim

The supreme purpose of a believer with a **pure heart** is to please and glorify God by pursuing integrity, loyalty, and trustworthiness. It was for lack of such "weightier provisions of the law—"justice and mercy and faithfulness"—that Jesus excoriated the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 23:23). The truly faithful Christian will be loyal to God, to God's Word, to God's work, and to God's people. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: 2: Tim

²³"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. Matt. 23:23 (NASB)

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¹Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. 1 Cor. 4:1-2 (NASB)

⁸And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: ⁹I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. ¹¹He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.' Rev. 2:8-11 (NASB)

Examples of how to be faithful to God

¹Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. 1 Cor. 4:1-2 (NASB)

²¹But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. Eph. 6:21 (NASB)

¹¹Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. 1 Tim. 3:11 (NASB)

²The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Tim. 2:2 (NASB)

⁹holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. Titus 1:9 (NASB)

³For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. ⁴I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth. ⁵Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; ⁶and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. 3 John 3-6 (NASB)

¹⁴"These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful." Rev. 17:14 (NASB)

Homework

Think: Are there areas in your life where there is not the complete trust and confidence in God? When you get to heaven will Jesus say to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant ... enter into the joy of your master?"