

## Fruit of the Spirit FAITHFULNESS

Remaining true, constant, loyal, consistently reliable, accurate in detail, trustworthy.

The “sticky” fruit that builds trust and helps us stay together.

Areas of faithfulness to: God, spouse, family, church, enemies, friends, those outside the church.

Satan has used Hollywood and the media to bring a strong attack on faithfulness. Countless families have been destroyed. Many ministers have committed adultery and thrown churches into confusion and betrayal. Faithfulness is a **hotly** contested fruit. Faithfulness is a **vital** fruit for us to produce in our lives. 'Don't fall for the oldest trick in the book'

**1) Faithfulness to God.** God has demonstrated His faithfulness to us by sending Jesus to die for us. This should inspire our faithfulness towards God.

When Jesus was asked for the greatest commandment he replied **Mat 22:37** *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*

We are commanded to be faithful to God. This means that we give God our time in prayer and bible reading/study and make sure that nothing we do would disappoint our heavenly Father. Our actions and thoughts are in line with what He would want us to do and think.

We can tend to lose our patience with God thinking He is just a blessing machine and when we do not get what we want we ignore Him! Consider:-

**Daniel 3:13-18.** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego standing against the evil King. Notice the faithfulness of these three young men. Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage because he wanted their faithfulness. The 4<sup>th</sup> man in the furnace was our **faithful God** responding to the faithfulness of his servants.

The old covenant tells us that God's people continually swung between being faithful and unfaithful. God calls his unfaithful people a prostitute because they enjoyed following foreign gods. This shows us the depth of feeling God has for lack of faithfulness.

**Jer 2:1-13, v 13** *"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."*

**2) Faithfulness to others.**

**Ruth 1:16** provides a beautiful illustration of faithfulness *Do not persuade me to leave you or go back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go, and wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May Yahweh punish me, and do so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.*  
- She entered into the lineage of Jesus

**Proverbs 11:13** *A gossip goes around revealing a secret, but a trustworthy person keeps a confidence.* Are you a peacemaker? **Mat 5:9** *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

If we think we may say might harm others by what we say - then don't say it. Sometimes satan tries

to push a mischievous attitude within us. We must resist him. A word of gossip feels like a particularly juicy bit of information so tasty that it nearly hides the fact that we know it is wrong!

Being faithful to others is about treating them the way you would like to be treated - arriving when you said you would arrive, communicating to let them know what you are doing, telephone to say you will be late. etc. We are called to a **fierce loyalty** especially those who are close to us.

Faithfulness to your spouse is an area that is strongly challenged by our corrupt society. The attraction between sexes is very powerful and satan knows it. We must take all precautions that we don't fall for the oldest trick in the book.

Many Christians have gone through extreme suffering and refused to deny their Lord. If suffering comes will you betray church members - or will you stand fast in your faith?

The second part of the two great commandments is "*Love your neighbour as yourself.*" This brings out our faithfulness, reliability, loyalty, and calls us to have a selfless love - agapao love, for all our brothers and sisters in Christ, and maintain this through faithfulness.

Also faithfulness to the 'unsaved', sharing The Good News of Jesus.

Learn from the mistakes of others. Why did David commit adultery? Why did Judas betray the Lord?

“Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved.”— Martin Luther

### **3) Faithfulness to ourselves.**

We need to be faithful to our own commitment. We are the ones as individuals who promised allegiance to God, and entered into the covenant of the cross. We may not yet be perfect, but we must be faithful to ourselves, we must 'be on the way'. It is a journey, a process, but we are responsible for where we are and that involves avoiding sin.

We live in this sin stained world but we are not of this world, we are of **the kingdom of God**.

We no longer want to sin! - because we are born of God.

***1 John 3:9*** *Everyone who has been born of God does not sin, because His seed remains in him; he is not able to sin, because he has been born of God.*

We are not able to sin because God is too important to us. Many martyrs have died to prove this point.

**Rom 8:2** “ *through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*”

We cannot accept our sin as natural, it may seem natural, HOWEVER we are not natural we are supernatural - **born again of the spirit of God!!** If you're struggling with sin, consider Jesus was subjected to every sin known to mankind!! Yet He never gave in to sin .. to satan. This is the journey we're on a guaranteed journey, to clean ourselves up; it's a journey of faith and triumphant success, through the Holy Spirit.

This is the power, not ourselves, but the power that raised Jesus Christ from the grave, took Him into hell to get the keys of hell and then back to earth and then caused Him to ascend into heaven.

Nothing is too difficult for Him, just seek His help and use the fruit of self control He has given us to develop our faithfulness.

If His word remains in us then we will avoid sin and be faithful to our commitment to Him.