

"God Is Faithful"

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." We can give thanks to our good God because of His lovingkindness. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. And we can rejoice in the Lord always, because of His covenant love. We are people of God today because of a new covenant ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ. The terms of that blood-bought covenant can be found in the teaching of Christ found in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all the truth, and we have access to that truth today in the written word. We can respect every command and trust every promise because the Lord never breaks His covenant. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

God is described by a very beautiful word in the Old Testament. It is sometimes translated "lovingkindness," sometimes "steadfast love," and sometimes "mercy." It reveals God's loyalty and His faithfulness to His covenant people. Now this word is used twenty-six times in Psalm 136 declaring God's loyal love, and how it endures forever. God understands our weaknesses and yet He loves us.

It's also used to reflect God's mercy and His forgiveness. And even when people sin, God is compassionate and forgiving. David proclaimed in Psalm 103:8 to 14 that, "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust."

We offer this study, God is Faithful, free! And if you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have programs and free materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. And you can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from Proverbs 3:5 to 8, and examine how God is faithful to His people.

Our reading today comes from Proverbs chapter 3 verses 5 to 8. And they show us the wisdom of God and the need to trust in God.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He will make your paths straight.
Do not be wise in your own eyes;
Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
It will be healing to your body
And refreshment to your bones.

That's a reading from God's holy word and lots of wisdom. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that we can always come to You and trust You. To know that Your promises are true. To

know that Your word will never mislead us. Help us always to love You for all the lovingkindness that You have given to us. In Jesus name, Amen.

After the flood, when Noah came out of the ark, God promised in Genesis 8:22, "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat, And summer and winter, And day and night Shall not cease." Thousands of years have passed, and you know what, this is still true.

You see God made a promise to Abraham and Sarah that they would bear a child in their old age, when childbearing didn't happen well they began to wonder. Romans 4:18 to 21 says, "In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "so shall your descendants be." Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform."

Hebrews 11:11 reveals, "By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised." Sarah did conceive, and Isaac was born to them. Moses many years later could say about the Lord God in Deuteronomy 7 verse 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." David could say in Psalm 36:5, "Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies." Psalm 100 verse 5 says, "For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." Psalm 30 verse 5 says, "For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning."

In Isaiah 54 verse 10, God told Zion when they had strayed for a time, "For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, But My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, And My covenant of peace will not be shaken," Says the LORD who has compassion on you.

The psalmist said about God's word in Psalm 119 verses 89 and 90, "Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness continues throughout all generations; You established the earth, and it stands."

When Jeremiah was broken-hearted over the destruction of Jerusalem he wrote the book of Lamentations, weeping over the devastation the people of Judah brought upon themselves by their sins. In spite of this Jeremiah wrote of hope and assurance in Lamentations 3:21 to 25. He says, "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 'The LORD is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.' Oh the LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him."

In the New Testament, God's faithfulness is demonstrated through various actions: providing for all people, and rewarding those who do His will, offering believers a way through temptation, and fulfilling His promises. So let's look at some of these promises.

You remember the Lord Jesus promised in Matthew 7:7 to 11, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or what person is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? So if you, despite being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

Do you question whether we can know the will of God? Jesus spoke about this in John 7:17, he said, "If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know about the teaching, whether it is of God, or I am speaking from Myself." Pick up your New Testament, read it, study it, and apply it to your life. And you'll see that what the Lord says is truly from God. Oh this is a practical challenge I know. Do what God wants you to do and you'll see it is truly His teaching.

Romans 8 and verse 28 says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Not every experience is good; many things, in fact, are painful and difficult. God's love has a wonderful way of taking life's most unhappy problems and then using them for good. You know we think God must show His power to prevent every problem if His love is loyal. But when the all-powerful God is able to make eternal good out of those hurts, has He loved us any less. Paul said in Romans 8 and verse 18, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." The tests of today shape and mold our lives for an eternal life in heaven.

1 Peter is a book dealing with the challenges of his time in Rome with a world that didn't understand or appreciate Christianity. He wanted to prepare them for the challenges ahead. Now speaking about our salvation, Peter said in 1 Peter 1:6 to 7, "In this (salvation, he says) you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." God's allowing us to be tested is to ready us, prepare us, for something far greater and more blessed than we can know in this life.

When Paul was in chains in Rome and didn't know whether he would live or die, he was willing to accept whatever happened. Paul said in Philippians 1:21 to 24, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake."

God's wisdom ensures that He knows what's genuinely best for us. He always selects both "the best end" and "the best means" to accomplish it, with God's glory and with your transformation into Christ's likeness as His ultimate aim. He wants you to be like Him. Your immediate circumstances may seem senseless, but God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him.

1 Peter 4 and verse 19 says, "Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right."

God's love provides the emotional foundation for trust. Calvary is the undeniable demonstration of God's love. He loved you enough to give His Son when you were weak, ungodly, sinful, and even His enemy; and now in Christ He loves you more and more as His child. Having given such a priceless gift, that is His Son, He will also provide what we need and what will bless us. We must learn to be thankful for all things.

We all face difficult days and we wonder if God loves us, how could we face such heartache if He loves us? Some think if we suffer, then God ceases that love. Folks that's not true. Love doesn't remove every challenge or barrier, but God's loyal love does provide a presence and an assurance. That's always there. Romans 8 was written with the understanding that God's people would face great persecution in Rome in days to come. The inspired words that Paul writes gave the people hope and comfort, and it should comfort us as well.

Romans 8:35 to 39 says, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” (then he says) No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

We should understand that even in the trials of life, God is at work for our good. James encourages us in James 1:2 to 4, “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet (various) trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness (patience) have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” Rather than complain and whine about all our difficulties, let’s see what good God can make of them and how He can help us become better people.

God’s faithfulness is also demonstrated in times of temptation. 1 Corinthians 10:13 assures us that, “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.” The Lord knows that we all face temptation. Jesus himself faced temptation; and because He was tempted, He can help us when we are tempted. Hebrews 4 verses 15 to 16 says, “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

As Christians we may still fall weak to temptation and sin. The love of God doesn’t quit on us. We do not have a cheap grace that asks nothing from us. 1 John 1 and verse 9 reminds us that, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Now we have to be honest with ourselves and with God and confess our wrongs. We must also repent. If we’re penitent, like the prodigal son who came home, forgiveness is still waiting for us. We must turn from our sins and come back to God. 2 Peter 3 and verse 9 says, “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” When we confess our sins, repent of them, and ask God’s forgiveness as Christians, He will surely forgive us. You can count on His faithfulness.

Hebrews 10:23 to 25 encourages us, “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 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.” Oh the Lord wants His people to encourage each other, to gather for worship with one another. And being together helps us keep faith and hope alive. Just as God is faithful to us, God desires that we be faithful to Him.

Let’s pray together. Heavenly Father help us always to be faithful to You just as You have been faithful to us. To love You and serve You every day of our lives. In Jesus name, Amen.

Whether we live for the Lord matters. The Lord expects His people to act in faith and love, using their abilities to produce fruit. In Matthew 25, the Lord Jesus tells of the judgment of the three servants on whether they were faithful servants. Two servants produced, but one didn’t. The Lord blessed the two faithful servants but He cast out the lazy one. You remember the Lord said to in

Matthew 25:20 to 21 that, "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' I tell you that's what I want to hear from my Master, and I want you to hear that too! Are you faithful?"

The apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 4 verses 6 to 8, "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing." Oh I hope that you too have stayed faithful and have the hope of heaven.

Believing in Jesus Christ, the Son of God is a lifelong pursuit. Repentance is also a lifelong pursuit. We must confess the Lord Jesus, that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10 verses 9 and 10). Then we must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins according to Acts 2:38. My friend be saved today!

We hope that our study about, God being Faithful, has caused you to be faithful to God with all your heart. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free. It's 1-800-321-8633. There's also a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. Now SEARCH is on YouTube! And we ask that you subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and then like the programs as you watch them. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, if you get a hold of us, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

Show God your love by worshiping at church. I tell you you need a church family. If you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And we want you to go and find it and be a part of those folks. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God with us and tell a friend about the program. And as always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.