

What do we mean when we speak of faithfulness? Faithfulness means to be trustworthy and loyal. When I say my dog is faithful, it means that she is waiting for me when I get home, loves me no matter how many times I yelled at her, protects me when there is danger. A great example of faithful is Donkey in the movie Shrek. It doesn't matter what Shrek does to Donkey, he is always there for him. The Bible tells us in many places that we are to be faithful to God and that God is faithful to His people.

Just this week, I had a chance to experience what it means to be faithful to God. I had a list of things to do on Friday and got much of it accomplished. But one of the things I didn't get to was creating Invite Cards. These Invite Cards are simple little cards that fit in your wallet and can be given to people to invite them to Church. I have had them sitting around the house for about 3 months now and I never even thought twice about them. But after all the work I had to do and then we had our Experiencing God course, I figured I'll get to it over the weekend.

Yesterday morning, one of our members dropped by. She came in to ask whether she had done the right thing in an interaction earlier at Starbucks. You see, we've been studying about how God works around us and how we need to be open to what He is doing and then join Him in His work. She happened to be sitting, drinking her coffee and doing her Experiencing God book when she heard a couple of girls next to her talking about God. She recognized that God was working around her and got up to join Him in His work. However, when she began speaking to them, they looked at her as if she had no eyes! So she told them she would pray for them and what they were doing and then went back to her table. She came over to see me afterwards and asked me if that was the right thing to do, because it sure didn't feel right. I told , YES! She did what God was prompting her to do. There are no coincidences! She didn't get the reaction that we would have liked, but she might have made a difference in one of those girls' lives that we won't see for several years.! I told her she had been faithful to God in what she did and that was what God is asking us to do.

Getting back to the cards, if I had been faithful in doing what God wanted me to do, I would have had those cards done before the class on Friday night, been able to hand them to people to use and Lisa would have been able to leave them something rather than know that the last thing she heard from these girls as she was walking out was that "She's a Christian too."

When we hear God speak to us, we need to be faithful to do what He is asking right then. Philip was in Samaria in Acts 8. He had started a revival for Jesus! People were being saved and they were receiving the Holy Spirit. Then God told him to go down the desert road – no objective, no plan. Philip immediately goes and he comes across the Ethiopian, who then also accepts Jesus as savior. What would have happened if Philip did what I did and said, ok – soon as I finish these last few baptisms? God has a plan that we cannot see. If we presume to know better than God, then we are no longer faithful. We prove our faithfulness by listening to Him, and doing what He requires immediately. Otherwise, we can miss our chance.

So we can see our faithfulness is important to God. How about His faithfulness to His people? Is God really faithful to His people? We look at things going on in the world, in our lives and we ask “Why are you doing that?” It would be a lot easier to understand if God stooped down to my level and did things the way I want Him to. I don’t want to learn hard lessons. I don’t want to abide by His laws. I don’t want to struggle in life. I want God to do what I want Him to do. I want Him to be faithful based on what I consider right and fair.

There are gods that can fit my mold of who God should be, but none of them are the God of the Bible. Those gods would say that I am going to be rich and famous if I just bow down to them, if I just have enough faith in them. They would say that everyone is good and we’re all going to heaven when we pass away. They would say that there is no consequence for sin.

But aren’t we just believing God when we say these things? Doesn’t the Bible tell us that this is right?

We do what we want and ask God to bless us.

Ps 67:7 God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear Him.

We want a God that heals when we are sick or injured.

Ps 103:3 Who heals all your diseases

We want a God that provides whenever we are for want of anything.

Phil 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Then why did Abraham have to wait

Then why is it that Moses was left in the desert for 40 years?

(Some bible characters that might seemingly be left alone but then saw God)

Job was put through torture and lost his family and all his wealth. Where is God? Where is His faithfulness?

God’s faithfulness is not in all these things, but in the fact that He has come to us! He is with us right now! He is with us when we are up and He is with us when we are down. When Job was at the end of his rope, God shows up! He speaks to Job and doesn’t answer any of his questions. However, He explains that He is God and that no one can grasp all He knows.

God’s faithfulness is not that He gives us what we want when we want it. God’s faithfulness is that He is with us, no matter what.

He loved us so much that He gave His only son so that whoever believed in Him would never perish. God walked this earth with His people when Jesus came down from Heaven and lived among us. Even though we were yet sinners, He came down for our salvation. Imagine there is someone who does something unthinkable – treats you poorly, ignores you, calls you names to everyone they can, goes against everything you ask them to do. How do you respond to that? Do you thank them? “Thanks for telling everyone I’m a liar. Thanks for ignoring me. Thanks for doing the opposite of

everything I asked you to do.” No! We get angry with them. We resent them. We look to get them back at the first chance we get. But not God. We did that exact thing to him! Yet He loves us anyway. We don’t do the things He asks. We do the opposite. We don’t love our enemies. We don’t visit the prisoners. We lust after and covet our neighbor and their property. We don’t believe the things He tells us. God tells us that Jesus is the resurrection and the life and if we believe in him, though we may die, yet may we live. He tells us that He is the way, the truth and the life and that no one comes to the Father except through the son. Do we believe these things? That the only way you can get to heaven is through belief in Jesus as God the son? Do we believe that God came down to earth in the form of Jesus to die as a sacrifice for our sins? God tells us these things. If we believe what He is saying, we must recognize that we fall way short of what He expects. Yet He stays with us and continues to love us. That is the faithfulness of God.

People were disappointed in Jesus when he was on the earth. They expected him to be the king of the Jews. They expected him to rain down his wrath on the Romans. They expected him to judge those who opposed his people. But that wasn’t what Jesus did. From man’s perspective, God wasn’t faithful if Jesus was the savior. But they didn’t understand the meaning of savior. Their picture of savior was too small. God had a much bigger picture of savior.

God could be what we want Him to be – healer, provider, blessing. And He is all these things, but He is so much more. Our picture of God is too small. God has a much bigger picture of what He wants to do in our lives. He wants to be with us!

Heb 13:5 – Never will I leave you. Never will I forsake you.  
Immanuel - God with us

God’s faithfulness to us is that we know we have His promises, but most amazingly of all: that He is with us always until the end of time.