

It's All in the Fruit (of the Spirit) (Part 7) - Faithfulness
Galatians 5:22-23

Galatians 5:22-23. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

A. Now what is this aspect of the fruit of the Spirit translated faithfulness?

1. Now this Greek word could refer to either **faith or faithfulness**, and that is why it is translated either of those two ways depending upon the context.

Now we understand faith as believing and trusting God as we should.

Hebrews 11:1. Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Faith is taking God at His Word.

Faithfulness is referring to trustworthiness or reliability or dependability. (**Genesis 47:29**)

So in summary, I believe that this aspect of the Spirit means that we believe God like we should and we are dependable like we should be.

B. Let's look at the basis for this fruit of the Spirit.

1. God is faithful.

Deuteronomy 32:4. "The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

Lamentations 3:22-23. ²² The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. ²³ *They* are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

God's faithfulness is part of the very foundation of our relationship with Him.

God is faithful to give us eternal life as He promised through believing in Yeshua.

1 Corinthians 1:9. ⁹ God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Yeshua the Messiah our Lord.

When you are tempted to sin, God is faithful to provide you with a way to avoid it.

1 Corinthians 10:13. ¹³ 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.

When we confess our sins, God is faithful to forgive our sins as He promised in 1 John 1:9.

God is faithful to His promises to Israel.

Hosea 2:19-20. ¹⁹ "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion, ²⁰ And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the LORD.

But because God is faithful, He has not cast Israel aside as a people.

Yeshua is Faithful.

Revelation 19:11. ¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

2. Because God is faithful, He expects us to have both faith and faithfulness.

God expects us to have faith in Him and His word.

Numbers 23:19. ¹⁹ "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?

Psalm 37:3a. Trust in the LORD and do good;... (Hold your Bible here)

God expects us to be faithful: faithful to Him and faithful to others.

Psalm 37:3b. ... Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. (Hold your Bible here.)

All of us who are followers of Yeshua are servants or stewards of His.

1 Corinthians 4:2. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

We are to be faithful in our words.

Proverbs 12:22. ²² Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal faithfully are His delight.

We are to be faithful in keeping confidentialities.

Proverbs 11:13. ¹³ He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, But he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.

We are to be faithful in our responsibilities.

Proverbs 25:13. ¹³ Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest Is a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he refreshes the soul of his masters. (Hold your finger here.)

We are to be faithful to our commitments and covenants.

James 5:12. But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.

Don't make commitments unless you have thought and prayed them through thoroughly. Don't make important decisions under pressure or when you are vulnerable.

We are to be faithful even in small things, because that indicates our faithfulness in bigger things.

Luke 16:10. ¹⁰ "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.

So if someone is not faithful in a small task that you give them, then you won't have any confidence in them being faithful in a bigger task.

I mentioned earlier that the Greek word for this aspect of the fruit of the Spirit includes both concepts of faith and faithfulness and if you think about it, they are related. We can only have faith in someone if they are faithful. We can only have faith in God because He is faithful. Someone can only have faith in or trust another person if they are faithful.

(Now we all know that we are to have faith and faithfulness.)

C. But there are challenges to faith and faithfulness.

1. In regard to faith:

We may not see anything happen when we have believed.

We may face a bigger problem than we have ever faced before.

Appl. Are you believing and trusting the Lord like you should? Do those who know you the best consider you a person of faith?

2. Also there are challenges in regard to faithfulness.

Selfishness – We are tempted to do something else than keep our commitments.

Psalm 15:4. [who may dwell on God's holy hill] ⁴ In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honors those who fear the LORD; he swears to his own hurt and does not change;

So we are to keep our commitments.

Pressures in our lives (like financial or time pressures, pressures with people) that make it harder to keep our word or meet deadlines or commitments.

Weakness of the flesh – We want to keep commitments but we have personal struggles which make it harder.

Proverbs 20:6 (KJV) Most men will proclaim everyone his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?

Faithfulness is important in every relationship. It is important in a marriage. It is important in a job or business. It is important in a business transaction. It is important in ministry and service for the Lord.

Appl. Are you faithful and dependable? Do those who know you the best consider you faithful to follow through on projects or appointments or commitments? Can they depend on you?

We can always grow in faith.

We should always be faithful.

In fact, it is a sin not to have faith and faithfulness like God wants us to.

D. How to grow in these areas?

Yield to the Lord and seek to be controlled by the Spirit and don't get in the way.

1 Corinthians 12:9 even speaks of a spiritual gift of faith. God through His Spirit gives all of us faith, but to some He gives even greater faith to believe Him for great things for His work.

Trust God to grow you in these areas. God will put you in situations where you have to grow in faith. He will allow you at times to be put in challenging situations which will test your faithfulness, but as you keep responding like you should, your faithfulness will be strong.

Ask the Lord to make you aware when you are not exercising faith like you should or being faithful like you should. Confess and repent of any lack or failures or mistakes.

Conclusion

I pray that whenever we go to be with the Lord someday that He will say to us, 'A good and faithful servant you have been. I'm indeed well pleased! Enter into your rest.'