

Lesson 9

WHAT IS FAITHFULNESS?

The fruit of the Spirit is ... faithfulness
(Galatians 5:23).

As we continue to learn about the fruit of the Spirit, we come to faithfulness. A good definition is “adhering firmly and devotedly to a person, a cause, or an idea.” It means loyalty. It means being worthy of trust and consistent with the truth.

God points to the Lord Jesus as our example of what faithfulness looks like and appeals to us to follow after Him.

1. Write 1 Peter 2:21-23.

Only God is faithful and the only way we can have the fruit of faithfulness is to rely on what Christ has already done for us, not according to our best efforts or logical reasoning.

2. Write 1 Corinthians 1:9.

As with all the qualities of Christ-like maturity, faithfulness is the product of God’s grace, which He produces in different ways to cause spiritual growth and maturity in a believer’s life. The results are in His hands, not ours.

For example, sometimes we ask, “Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?” or “Why does He allow the wicked to prosper?” These are good questions. While we tend to think only of our present comfort, God is thinking of our eternal welfare. And when we look to the Bible to answer these kinds of questions, we discover that God doesn’t test our faith to destroy us but to strengthen us.

Wanting and expecting everything to go our way is not only unrealistic, but it is also self-centered. It also suggests we are seeking our security and happiness in good times rather than in the sovereignty of God. It is living according to sight, not faith.

By contrast, when the apostle Paul was chained to a Roman soldier awaiting trial, even though he was innocent, and not knowing if he would live or die, he trusted God. Paul believed God had a good purpose in his suffering and he trusted God for the outcome.

3. Write Paul’s response when he was in prison. Write Philippians 4:4.

4. Write Philippians 4:6.

5. Write Philippians 4:7.

We read that one of the characteristics of Christian maturity is joy, even in the midst of trials and persecutions. The Greek definition for the word *rejoice* is “to jump for joy.”

6. According to 1 Peter 1:7, why does God want you to rejoice during a trial of your faith?

7. What is God’s definition of faith? See Hebrews 11:1.

When we get overwhelmed, we tend to lose hope and give up because we focus on our own limited expectations rather than focusing on God’s sovereignty and good plans for us in the future. The key to having the fruit of faithfulness is to look at God’s promises instead of looking at the situation.

8. Write God’s promise to the believer found in Romans 8:28.

9. How did Paul encourage the church of Ephesus in their faith? Write Ephesians 3:20.

10. When faced with the most difficult times in life, how can we follow Jesus’ example of faith when He prayed. Write Luke 22:42.

We follow Jesus by being in prayer and by examining the purposes of God in our situation. When Jesus committed Himself to the Father’s will, this strengthened His faith, instead of weakening it. It produced qualities of spiritual maturity like courage, endurance, a love for others, and a sense of destiny regarding the will of God. It also heightened His devotion and reverence for God.

11. Write 2 Corinthians 5:7.

12. Write Hebrews 11:6.