

## STUDY SIXTEEN – BEING FULL OF FAITH!

### Introduction

When it comes to living a life of faith, there’s a fruit of the spirit you need to develop which is “faithfulness”. Sometimes people say to me, “I’m having trouble walking consistently in faith. I’m strong in The LORD on one day and weak the next.”

If that’s how you feel, no problem! Faithfulness is a fruit of the spirit that flourishes when you maintain a living connection with God. So, if you’re lacking in faithfulness, all you need to do is start spending time each day fellowshiping with The LORD in His WORD.

The dictionary defines *faithfulness* as being “(1) full of faith; believing; strong or firm in one’s faith, (2) firmly adhering to duty; of true fidelity, loyal, true to allegiance; constant in the performances of duties or services.” To be faithful is to be trustworthy and dependable. If you want a perfect picture of faithfulness, look at God Himself, for He is faithful (1 Corinthians 1:9)!

Actually, the Greek word for *faithfulness* used in the New Testament can also be translated *faith*. So, faith and faithfulness are very closely related.

You might say it this way: Faith is faithfulness to God’s WORD. Faith is being faithful to believe what God says, even when circumstances, obstacles or people seem to contradict His WORD.

Analyse this story below. What was God’s Word to these people? What would faithfulness to God’s word look like here? Why did these people “reason out” of God’s WORD? How did their reasoning affect their confession? Who in this story remained faithful to God’s WORD and therefore is faithful?

*“Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. Then they told him and said: “We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless, the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan.” Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, “Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.”*

*But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.” And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, “The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.”” (Numbers 13:26-33)*

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## ACTIVATING FAITH!

Daily time in The WORD and fellowship with The LORD causes you to grow in faithfulness. It strengthens you in your walk of faith so that you can reach out and receive the blessings of God, blessings like healing, prosperity and protection. Proverbs 28:20 promises, *“A faithful man shall abound with blessings.”*

You see, Jesus has already bought everything we need in this life with His blood. As Galatians 3:13-14 says: *“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”*

If you'll read Deuteronomy 28, you'll see that every good thing imaginable is included in God's blessing, and every bad thing imaginable is included in the curse. So, we're set up in style! God has already provided everything we could ever need. We don't have to talk Him into giving us these things. They're already ours. The blessing has “come upon us”!

All we have to do is put ourselves in a position to receive. And the primary key to receiving is *faithfulness*. We must be faithful to believe and faithful to act on The WORD of God.

Of course, before you can even begin to believe God's WORD, you must know what He has said. You must do more than casually read it now and then. You must believe it and act on it consistently. And to do that, you must have confidence in the One who spoke that WORD. You must have confidence in God.

Such confidence is developed by spending time with Him. Just as you grow to trust another person (assuming he is a trustworthy person) by getting to know him better, by listening to him speak and deepening your relationship with him, so it is with God. The more time you spend with Him, the better you will know Him – and the better you know Him, the greater will be your confidence in Him.

That confidence will enable you to faithfully take God at His WORD. You won't sit around wondering if He will do what He said. You won't believe Him one day and doubt Him the next. You'll be able to believe and act consistently as if His WORD is true even when circumstances try to tell you it isn't.

When you're in The WORD and fellowshiping with God every day, you'll be able to look beyond the circumstances staring you in the face and screaming at you, *“You'll go bankrupt!”* or, *“You'll die young!”* You'll have the strength of character to see past those circumstances and focus, instead, on the power and love of God and His ability to bring you through in victory.

In this book on the fruit of the spirit, Donald Gee wonderfully illustrates how living fellowship with the Spirit of God brings forth faithfulness in our lives. *“Our human natures in all their unreliability [are like] ...the loose powder of cement,”* he says. *“But when water is mixed with the cement it turns into concrete hard as a rock. So, the living water of God's Holy Spirit can turn our lack of steadfastness into magnificent faithfulness, and convert many an impulsive ‘Simon’ into a devoted ‘Peter.’”*

That, in itself, is reason enough to spend time every day in The WORD and in prayer. But there are more reasons still!

Staying in living contact with God will enable you to live in peace and be full of joy. It will also strengthen your ability to be patient. As we recently learned, patience is a powerful force that undergirds your faith and keeps you from quitting when tests and trials come. When patience is operating in your life, instead of succumbing to the pressure of circumstances, you can keep on believing God.

So, get in The WORD consistently, every day, and develop the fruit of faithfulness in your life. When you do, you'll find living by faith is the only way to live!

**Define faithfulness.**

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**How are faithfulness and faith related?**

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**How do patience and faithfulness work together? How does this combination affect your faith?**

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**What other lessons have you taken from this study?**

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