

No One Like Him

A
Study
of
God's
Perfections

Men of the Word
2022-23

Faithfulness

Wednesday,
May 24, 2023

“Great is Thy Faithfulness”

Thomas Obadiah Chisholm (1866–1960)

“My income has not been large at any time due to impaired health in earlier years which has followed me on until now. Although I must not fail to record here the unfailing faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God and that He has given me many wonderful displays of His providing care, for which I am filled with astonishing gratefulness.”



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“Unfaithfulness is one of the most outstanding sins of these evil days. In the business world, a man’s word is no longer his bond. In the social world, marital infidelity abounds on every hand, the sacred bonds of wedlock being broken with as little regard as the discarding of an old

garment. In the ecclesiastical realm, thousands who have solemnly covenanted to preach the truth make no scruple to attack and deny it. Nor can reader or writer claim complete immunity from this fearful sin: in how many ways have we been unfaithful to Christ, and to the light and privileges which God has entrusted to us!”

—A. W. Pink, *Attributes of God*, 66

I. Definition of Divine “Faithfulness”

A. What faithfulness means.

- **The faithfulness of God refers to His reliability.**
- God is always motivated by the same purposes, always acts according to His unchanging nature, and always fulfills the promises He makes.
- He is unwaveringly consistent with what He has revealed Himself to be and will always do what He said He will do.
- He is the source and standard of perfect loyalty and trustworthiness.

- The primary emphasis typically found in the context of biblical texts describing God's faithfulness is that of ***promise*** or ***covenant***.
 - A "promise" is "a declaration or assurance that one will do something or that a particular thing will happen."
 - A "covenant" is "a formal agreement, contract, or promise" (*Oxford Dictionary*).
- God's perfection is displayed in His commitment to honor His promises and keep His covenants; He never allows His word to fail.

No Broken Promises

“Because he is ethically reliable, God is covenantally faithful, that is, there is a precise equivalency between what he says he will do and what he actually does.”

—Robert Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith*, 201

“God’s faithfulness is His reliability, His determination to fulfill all that He promises. His faithfulness is grounded in His absolute truth. God is perfectly sincere in all His undertakings and dependable in discharging all His engagements.”

—A. A. Hodge, *Outlines of Theology*, 161

- God's faithfulness is contingent upon His *truthfulness*.
 - God only reveals what is true about Himself and only makes promises that are true; He can never mislead or lie.
 - **Numbers 23:19** – “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?”
- God's faithfulness is possible because of His *omnipotence*.
 - “He could never commit himself to do something of which he would eventually prove incapable” (Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 317).

- God's faithfulness is inseparable from His *immutability*.
 - "There is no shadow of turning with Thee."
 - "God, being who He is, cannot cease to be what He is, and being what He is, He cannot act out of character with Himself. He is at once faithful and immutable, so all His words and acts must be and must remain faithful" (A. W. Tozer).
 - "God's immutability presupposes His faithfulness. If He is unchanging, it follows that He could not be unfaithful. Upon God's faithfulness rests our whole hope of future blessedness. Only as He is faithful will His covenants stand and His promises be honored" (A. W. Tozer).

“God writes with a pen that never
blots, speaks with a tongue that
never slips, acts with a hand that
never fails.”

—Charles Spurgeon



B. What God's faithfulness does not mean.

- That God is unwaveringly consistent in His motivations, nature, and promises does not mean that He cannot *change* the way He *interacts* with His creation.
- The Scriptures do describe different *dispensations* or *eras* in redemptive history in which God relates differently to His people.
- Although the *way* of salvation has always remained the same (by grace through faith in God's promise – Gen 15:6; Rom 4:1–5), different dispensations show God working differently at different times (pre-Fall; post-Fall; patriarchal; Mosaic Law; church age; etc.).
- God remains faithful to what He has revealed in each era in the progress of redemption.

II. Biblical Testimony to God's Faithfulness

A. God's faithfulness is extolled for its immeasurable greatness.

- **Psalms 36:5** – “Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness *reaches* to the skies.”
- **Psalms 100:5** – “For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.”
- **Psalms 119:89–91** – “Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness *continues* throughout all generations; You established the earth, and it stands. They stand this day according to Your ordinances, for all things are Your servants.”



- **Psalms 146:5–6** – “How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God, who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever.”
- **Lamentations 3:22–23** – “The LORD’s lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. *They* are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.”

B. God’s faithfulness is evident in the titles used to describe Him.

- **Deuteronomy 32:4** – “The Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is He.”

- **Psalms 18:2–3** – “The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.”
- **Isaiah 26:4** – “Trust in the LORD forever, for in GOD the LORD, *we have* an everlasting Rock.”
- **1 Peter 4:19** – “Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”
- **Revelation 19:11** – “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.”

“Faithfulness is the idea of the very name Yahweh,
the One who can be counted upon to be present.”

—J. Barton Payne, *Theology of the Older Testament*, 162



C. God's faithfulness is established by His nature as promise-keeper.

- **Deuteronomy 4:31** – “For the LORD your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.”
- **Deuteronomy 7:7–9** – “The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. 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.”

- **Psalms 119:65** – “You have dealt well with Your servant, O LORD, according to Your word.”
- **2 Corinthians 1:18–22** – “But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no. For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave *us* the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.”
- **Hebrews 10:23** – “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”

“God’s faithfulness toward us springs from his faithfulness to himself. When he speaks a promise to us, his character is on the line. To break a promise to us would be to deny himself.”

—Mark Jones, *God Is*, 172



D. God's faithfulness is exhibited in His plan of salvation.

- **1 Corinthians 1:7–9** – “. . . awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”
- **Philippians 1:6** – “*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*”
- **1 Thessalonians 5:23–24** – “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.”

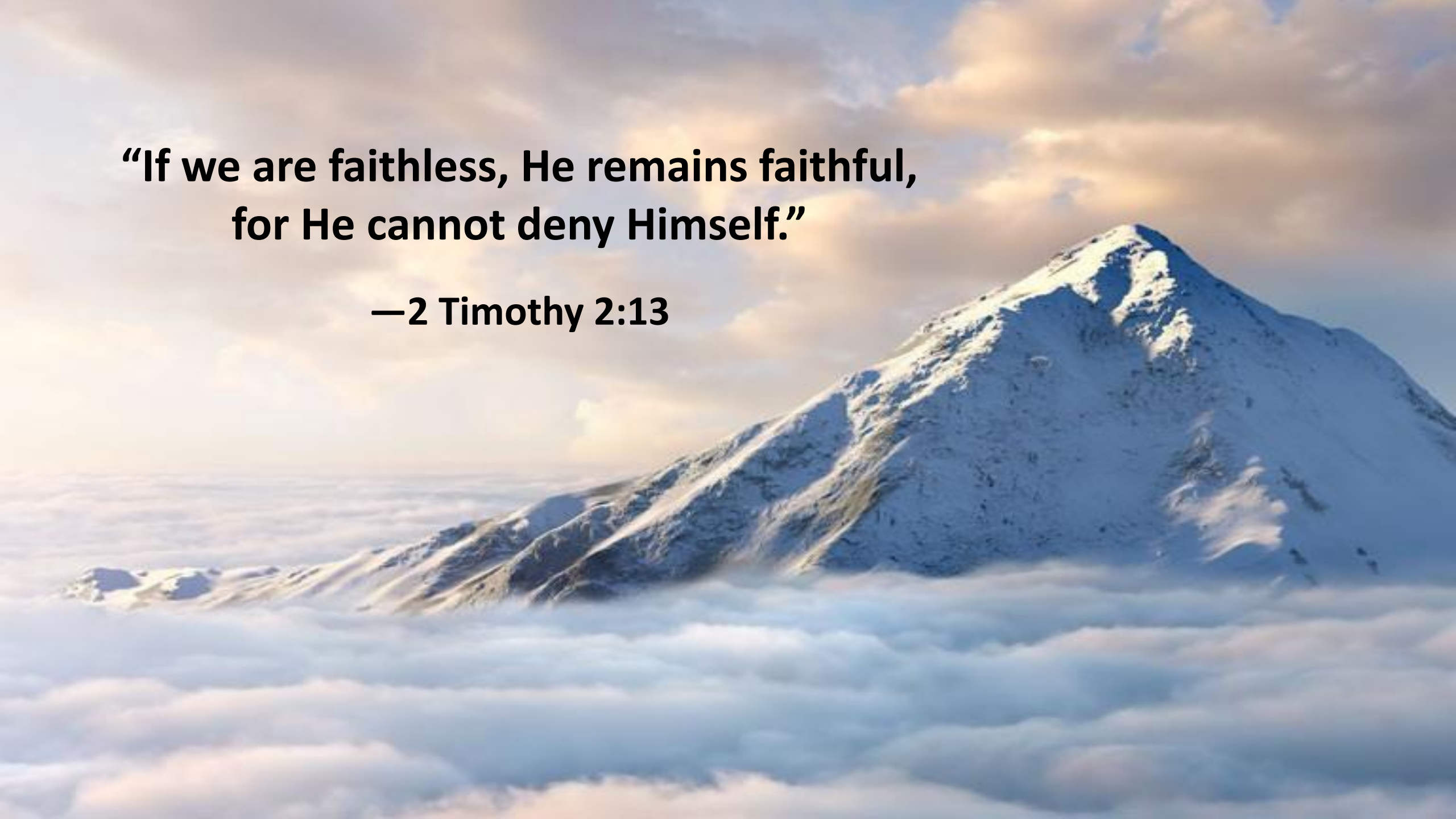
- **2 Thessalonians 3:3** – “But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil *one*.”
- **Hebrews 6:17–18** – “In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.”
- **1 John 1:9** – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

E. God's faithfulness is emphasized in contrast to man's infidelity.

- **Daniel 9:4–5** – “I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, ‘Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.’”
- **Psalms 78:36–39** – “But they deceived Him with their mouth and lied to Him with their tongue. For their heart was not steadfast toward Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant. But He, being compassionate, forgave *their* iniquity and did not destroy *them*; and often He restrained His anger and did not arouse all His wrath. Thus He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and does not return.”

**“If we are faithless, He remains faithful,
for He cannot deny Himself.”**

—2 Timothy 2:13



III. What Faithfulness Demands from Us

A. Extol God's faithfulness.

- **Psalms 92:1–2** – “It is good to give thanks to the LORD and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; to declare Your lovingkindness in the morning and Your faithfulness by night.”
- **Psalms 100:4–5** – “Enter His gates with thanksgiving *and* His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name. For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations.”
- **Isaiah 25:1** – “O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; for You have worked wonders, plans *formed* long ago, with perfect faithfulness.”

“I know of nothing which so stimulates my faith in my Heavenly Father as to look back and reflect on His faithfulness to me in every crisis and every chilling circumstance of life. Over and over He has proved His care and concern for my welfare. Again and again I have been conscious of the Good Shepherd’s guidance through dark days and deep valleys.”

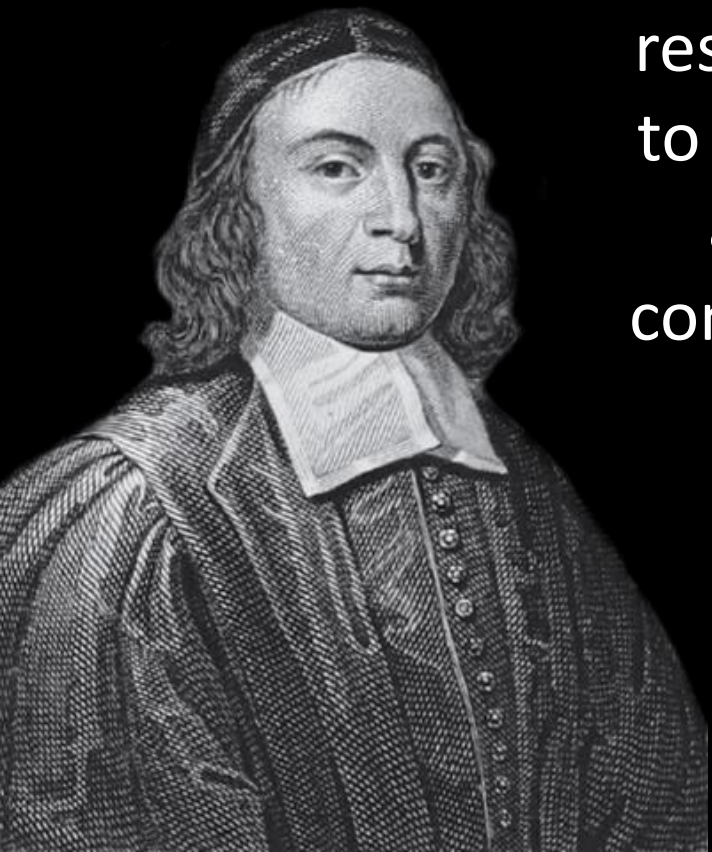
—Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, 82



B. Trust God's promises.

- **Isaiah 50:10** – “Who is among you that fears the LORD, that obeys the voice of His servant, that walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.”
- **Hebrews 10:23** – “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”
- **1 Peter 4:19** – “Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”
- Because God is faithful, trusting His word even against enormous pressure is the only logical option; to worry or doubt His promises is to question His faithfulness.

“There are seasons in the lives of all when it is not easy, no not even for Christians, to believe that God is faithful. Our faith is sorely tried, our eyes bedimmed with tears, and we can no longer trace the outworkings of His love. Our ears are distracted with the noises of the world, harassed by the atheistic whisperings of Satan, and we can no longer hear the sweet accents of His still small voice. Cherished plans have been thwarted, friends on whom we relied have failed us, a professing brother or sister in Christ has betrayed us. We are staggered. We sought to be faithful to God, and now a dark cloud hides Him from us. We find it difficult, yea, impossible, for carnal reason to harmonize His frowning providence with His gracious promises. [But] when you are tempted to doubt the faithfulness of God, cry out, “Get thee hence, Satan.” Though you cannot now harmonize God’s mysterious dealings with the avowals of His love, wait on Him for more light. In His own good time He will make it plain to you.” —A. W. Pink



“Oh! that you would once learn firmly to depend on God’s faithfulness, and fetch your daily reliefs and supports thence, whensoever you are oppressed and assaulted! . . . In a word, having sheltered your souls in this chamber of rest, and thus shut the doors behind you, all that you have to do is to take your rest in God, and enjoy the pleasure of a soul resigned into the hands of a faithful Creator, by contrasting the faithfulness of God to all the fickleness and unfaithfulness you will daily find in men.”

—John Flavel, “The Righteous Man’s Refuge—
The Faithfulness of God”

Ultimately, it is not the strength of our faith,
but the consistency of His faithfulness,
that saves us.

C. Imitate God's reliability.

- Faithfulness is a communicable attribute; God's image-bearers were created to be *faithful*.
- Sin has marred man's capacity for and appreciation of faithfulness.
 - **Psalms 12:1** – "Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases to be, for the faithful disappear from among the sons of men."
 - **Proverbs 20:6** – "Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, but who can find a trustworthy man?"
- But regeneration and sanctification restore this capacity and desire.
 - **Galatians 5:22** – "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness"

- Fundamental for God's people is faithfulness to one's own promises.
 - **Numbers 30:2** – “If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”
 - **Matthew 5:33–36** – “Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.’ But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil.”

- God's faithfulness to us must translate into our faithfulness to others—to our wives, families, employers, churches, friends, neighbors, and strangers.
- "Yes" must be "yes" and "no" must be "no."
- Ultimately, faithfulness is not proven in easy times or in easy commitments; it is a quality that shines brightest in hardship, difficulty, and suffering.
- **Proverbs 21:21** – "He who pursues righteousness and loyalty finds life, righteousness and honor."

No
One
Like
Him

**“A God of faithfulness and
without iniquity, just and
upright is he.”**

—Deuteronomy 32:4b