

AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY

STUDY SERIES: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

Lesson 8: FAITHFULNESS

Facilitator: Pastor Tunde Odeyemi

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, **faithfulness**, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law (NIV)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, **faith**, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law (KJV)

Question 1: What is your favorite element of the fruit of the Spirit and why?

Question 2: Is God faithful all the time? Does He have to be faithful when we are not?

Question 3: Is God expecting us to be faithful always?

Faith(fulness)

The Greek word being translated here is the word “*Pistis*,” which is Apostle Paul’s primary word for “faith,” having to do with one’s basic stance toward God- of utter trust in His trustworthiness. Or stated another way- faith in God’s faithfulness.

Hebrews 11:11 And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she[a] considered him faithful who had made the promise.

There are two parts to this element of the fruit of the Spirit- Trustfulness and Trustworthiness.

Trustfulness

Trustfulness can be defined as a quiet, steady, unwavering trust in the goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness of God. No matter what trials or seeming disasters may be encountered, the person who has cultivated this element of the fruit remains calm and restful in the midst of them all. He has an unshakeable confidence that God is still in complete control of every situation and that, in and through all circumstances, God is working out His own purpose of blessing for each one of His children.

Psalm 125:1 *Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever.*

The key to this kind of trust is commitment. Trust must be developed. Mature trust is in the realm of the Spirit rather than the emotions.

Psalm 37:5 *Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do it.*

Psalm 62:2 *He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.*

Psalm 62:7 *He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken.*

Psalm 56:3 *When I am afraid, I put my trust in You. Fear is superficial, in the emotions; trust is deeper down, in the spirit.*

2 Timothy 1:12 *That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.*

Trustworthiness

This is faithfulness, reliability, steadfastness, constancy, allegiance. It is also being careful to keep what we are entrusted with.

Probably no attribute of God is more persistently emphasized throughout the Scriptures than His trustworthiness. The Hebrew word “chesed” variously translated as “goodness,” “mercy,” “lovingkindness,” “steadfast love,” and so on, can also be translated trustworthiness.

There are two distinctive features of God’s *chesed*, or trustworthiness. First, it is the expression of God’s free, unmerited grace. It goes beyond anything that man can ever deserve or demand as a right. Second, it is always based on a covenant that God voluntarily enters into. We may combine these two features by saying that *chesed* is God’s trustworthiness in fulfilling His covenant commitments, which go beyond anything that we can deserve or demand.

Psalm 89:24 *My faithful love will be with him, and through my name his horn[a] will be exalted.*

Psalm 89:28 *I will maintain my love to him forever, and my covenant with him will never fail.*

Psalm 89:33-34 *but I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. 34 I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered.*

There is a special relationship between God’s trustworthiness and the words of His mouth. There are two things God will never do: break his covenant or go back on what He has said.

God’s trustworthiness, imparted by the Holy Spirit, will reproduce the same characteristic in us. It will make us people of unfailing integrity and honesty. Read **Psalm 15:1-4**.

A Christian who does not honor his word and keep his commitments has not yet developed the fruit of trustworthiness.

While God requires this kind of trustworthiness in our dealings with all men, we have a special obligation toward our fellow Christians. God’s own trustworthiness is based on His covenant. Through Jesus Christ, He has brought us into a covenant relationship both with Himself and with other believers. The distinguishing mark of this relationship is that we exhibit, both toward God and toward our fellow believers, the same trustworthiness that God has so richly and freely demonstrated toward us.

We have already seen that God’s *chesed*, expressed in His covenant commitments is based on His grace, going beyond anything that we, who are its recipients, can ever deserve or demand. This grace, too, will be reflected in our covenant relationships with our fellow believers. We will not limit ourselves to the mere requirements of justice or of some legal form of contract. We will be ready to make the full commitment that God made in establishing His covenant with us: to lay down our lives for one another.

1 John 3:16 *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.*

