

FAITHFULNESS - PART 1

EVIDENCE OF REMAINING ROOTED IN CHRIST

NOTE: The context of Galatians 5:22-23

Paul writes to the church in Galatia about freedom in Christ and life by the Spirit. As the chapter unfolds, he warns them not to be drawn back into what they had been delivered from. Certain teachers were trying to convince them that outward works like circumcision could produce righteousness. That path only led them back into the bondage of the Law. Paul's concern is that they are letting go of the gracious gift of Christ's atoning blood, the only way to be reconciled to the Father. In Galatians 5:6-10, he reminds them that true faith, faith in the reconciling blood of Christ, finds its expression in love. By verse 7 and onward, Paul voices his fear that they are being persuaded away from what they first believed. Later in verses 13-21, he contrasts two ways of living: the life of the flesh versus the life of the Spirit. The two bear very different fruit, and the two are always in conflict.

Jesus made this clear in John 3:6, when He told Nicodemus, "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." In Luke 6:40, He explained that "The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher." In other words, anyone who truly follows Him will reflect what they have been taught and believe. In Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus warns that false teachers will come with a counterfeit gospel, just like the ones Paul confronts in Galatians 5. The test is simple. You will know them by their fruit, whether it is rooted in Christ or in something else.

So what does this have to do with the fruit of faithfulness mentioned in Galatians 5:22?

Faithfulness is when, over a period of time or after a season of testing, our faith in Jesus Christ becomes evident because we have continued to believe in the atoning work of the cross. It is demonstrated by carrying on His ministry of reconciliation, which is reconciling the lost to the Father by pointing them to Christ...in love. We will take a deeper look at this over the span of this week and next. But first, let us understand the definition of the word Paul uses for faithfulness in Greek.

***The biblical definition of *faithfulness* is "pistis" (Strong's G4102) -** Conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour (intense and passionate feeling) born of faith and joined with it

- **Relating to God**

- The conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ

- **Relating to Christ**

- A strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God
- The religious beliefs of Christians
- Belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same

- **Fidelity, faithfulness**

- the character of one who can be relied on

*Definition source: BlueLetterBible.org Strong's Concordance

faithful / always ready to hear

GET YOUR BIBLES READY. LET'S READ & OBSERVE...

In the previous page, *pistis* (faithfulness) was broken up into 3 points. We will use those defining key points to dissect the point Paul is making in Galatians 5:22. In this session, we will cover the first two points, *Relating to God* (the Father) and *Relating to Christ*. The final point, *Fidelity*, will be covered next week:

- **Relating to God** - The conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ
 - **Read Romans 3:25-26 and John 3:16** - God the Father sent His Son to pay the penalty for our sins.
 - **Read Romans 5:10-11 and Colossians 1:19-20** - We were once enemies of God, but Jesus has reconciled us!
 - **Read Romans 3:25-26** - God the Father chose His Son Jesus as the means to solve the sin problem. Jesus is the only solution to bring about righteousness.
 - **Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-19** - Now we who have been justified by faith have been charged to reconcile the lost to the Father. How? Only through the blood of Jesus. Why? Because we have been persuaded and now believe, we pass the good news along to the next.
- **Relating to Christ** - A strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God
 - The religious beliefs of Christians
 - Belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same
 - **Read John 20:31** - Here's a start on how to share it!
 - **Read Romans 10:9-10** - Here's what you tell them.
 - **Read Galatians 2:16** - Always remember where righteousness comes from.

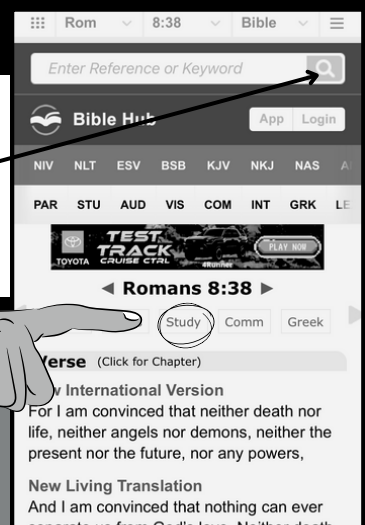
Role Play: Read Romans 8:38-39, then take turns “persuading” others at the table why you are convinced that Jesus is who He claims He is, and why they should believe. Pretend that they have never heard the gospel. Give them a brief testimony of His faithfulness in your life and how it encouraged your faith (*pistis*). Keep it brief so everyone has a turn.



ONLINE RESOURCE ACTIVITIES

Observe Romans 8:38

- Go to BibleHub.com and do a search for **Romans 8:38** in the “Enter Reference or Keyword” box and then click on the magnifying glass.
- Once it loads, click on the button titled “Study”
 - Read the **Study Bible** section.



- What do you believe all of these verses mean?
- What is God speaking to you personally through this study?
- Read a trusted commentary and compare to your interpretation.



LET'S READ THE AFTER-SUMMARY TOGETHER

Faithfulness in Galatians 5:22 is more than a nice quality. It is conviction. To be faithful is to be persuaded deep down that God is who He says He is and that Jesus is the Messiah who saves. Romans 3:25–26 and John 3:16 remind us that God the Father chose His Son to pay the penalty for our sins. This is not random or optional. It is the only way righteousness could come. Romans 5:10–11 and Colossians 1:19–20 drive the point further, showing that we were once enemies of God but through Jesus we have been reconciled. That reconciliation is not fragile. It is the plan of God, anchored forever in the blood of Christ.

If we have been reconciled, then we are also called to carry the same ministry of reconciliation. God has given us the message of reconciliation as stated in 2 Corinthians 5:18–19. This means we tell others what we ourselves have been persuaded about. The gospel is not just words, it is persuasion born of conviction. When we believe the Father has sent His Son for us, we now persuade others that His blood is enough for them too. Faithfulness starts vertical, but it always moves outward toward others.

Faithfulness also means holding to a strong and welcome conviction that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. John 20:31 says the stories of Jesus were written so that we may believe He is the Christ and have life in His name. Romans 10:9–10 gives the clearest picture of what this looks like. If we confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we are saved. Galatians 2:16 reminds us of the foundation. We are not justified by our works but by faith in Christ alone. This is the bedrock of Christian faithfulness.

Paul's own words in Romans 8:38–39 show what this kind of persuasion looks like. He said he was convinced that nothing in all creation could separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Not death, not life, not angels or demons, not the present or the future. That is faithfulness on display. It is a heart persuaded so fully by the truth of Christ that no circumstance, no enemy, and no fear can shake it. This is not blind optimism. It is rooted confidence in the victory of the cross and the resurrection.

So when we speak of faithfulness, we are not talking about trying harder. We are talking about living persuaded. Faithfulness is conviction toward God and trust in Christ that spills over into action. It is being so sure of the love of God through Jesus' blood that others can hear it in our words and see it in our lives. And when others see our faithfulness, they are drawn to the same Messiah who reconciled us. That is the fruit of the Spirit at work. That is what it looks like to be faithful to Christ.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

IN RELATION TO GOD THE FATHER

Application Questions for Romans 3:25–26, John 3:16, Romans 5:10–11, Colossians 1:19–20, & 2 Corinthians 5:18–19

1. Where do people around you turn today for hope and solutions to solve the problems of the world around us? How does the cross of Jesus offer a better answer to those same struggles?
2. When you think about your past mistakes or feelings of guilt, do you honestly believe that the blood of Jesus was enough to cover it all? How does that conviction (or lack of it) show up in the way you live today?
3. If God has reconciled you through Jesus, how are you personally stepping into the ministry of reconciliation? Who in your life needs to hear that God is not counting their sins against them?

IN RELATION TO CHRIST THE SAVIOR

Application Questions for John 20:31, Romans 10:9–10, Galatians 2:16, Romans 8:38–39

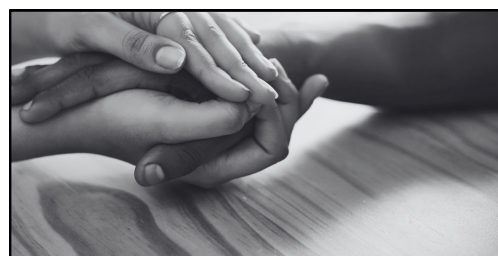
1. In a world full of competing “truths” and voices, what convinces you that Jesus is the only Savior and the only way to eternal life? How do you keep your heart anchored to that conviction?
2. Romans 10 says faith involves confessing with your mouth. When was the last time you openly told someone why you follow Jesus? What held you back if you did not?
3. Paul said he was convinced that nothing can separate us from God’s love (Romans 8:38–39). What are the things right now that try to convince you otherwise; anxiety, career pressure, culture wars, broken relationships? How do you combat those lies with the truth of Christ’s love?

Bringing it all together...

If people watched your life this week, would they be persuaded that Jesus is the answer? What changes could you make so your faithfulness points more clearly to the cross and resurrection of Christ?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, we come before You confessing that too often we have looked to other things for answers instead of to the cross of Christ. Forgive us for the times we have let circumstances, fear, culture, or our own pride persuade us away from the simple truth of the gospel. We repent and turn back to Jesus, the only one who saves and reconciles us to You.



Remind us daily of the power of the atoning blood of Jesus. Seal in our hearts the conviction that His sacrifice was enough and that nothing can separate us from Your love. Strengthen our faithfulness so that our lives reflect Christ and persuade others to follow Him. In His holy name we pray, amen.

WHAT'S AHEAD...

Next Week

Part 2 of the Fruit of the Spirit: “Faithfulness”

Homework

Read Matthew 7:24–29