

# “Faithfulness”

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Our English word “faithful” occurs 51 times in the ASV New Testament. Kindred ideas include constancy, steadiness, reliability, trustworthiness, loyalty, and dependability. Since God is faithful, we are assured that He will keep His Word (1 Cor. 10:13, et al). He is not capricious and arbitrary (Jam. 1:17), but reliable, predictable (Heb. 13:5). The faithfulness of the Father is the root of our hope. Christ is also described as “faithful” (1 The. 5:24; 2 The. 3:3; Heb. 2:17; Rev. 1:5, et al). He faithfully discharged all that God sent Him to do (John 17:4). Men might prove to be unfaithful, but not Christ (2 Tim. 2:13). God's written Word is faithful (1 Tim. 1:15; Tit. 1:9, et al); the Gospel is utterly true and dependable.

Abraham and Moses were faithful men (Gal. 3:9; Heb. 3:2). Paul's apostleship was based in part on the fact that God counted him faithful (1 Tim. 1:12). Several others (e.g., Timothy, Tychicus, Epaphras, Onesimus and Sylvanus) were “faithful.” Timothy was to commit the Gospel to “faithful men” who would teach others (2 Tim. 2:2). Antipas was faithful to the point of dying for the Lord (Rev. 2:13). Such individuals are held before us as worthy examples of God's best, most noble, and righteous people.

Faithfulness is often urged upon us by the Gospel. We should be “faithful and wise” servants of Christ (Mat. 24:45–47). Even in “little matters” we are to be faithful, as proof that we can properly handle great responsibilities (Luke 16:10). As stewards of God's Word, we must be faithful (1 Cor. 4:2). Wives of elders must be “faithful in all things” (1 Tim. 3:11). The crown of life is reserved for faithful ones (Rev. 2:10).

From the aforementioned passages we can see that the faithfulness of God's people caused them to be unwavering in their loyalty to Him, even when great sacrifices and fierce suffering were required. The faithful men in the New Testament preached the Truth without fail and lived in a manner consistent with it. In light of the above, it is a serious prostitution of “faithfulness” to apply it to one who merely attends worship regularly. Certainly, one who is “faithful” will not forsake the assemblies, but there is far more involved than “church attendance.” Some of the most unfaithful Christians I have known might never miss an assembly, but they think nothing of being stingy, foul-mouthed, dishonest winebibbers. They would not consider standing for Truth if any inconvenience or ridicule is involved. To call such

“faithful” merely based on an attendance record is worse than a travesty! Let us all soberly ask,  
“Am I a faithful servant of Christ as the Scriptures define and demonstrate ‘faithfulness’?”

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, March 3, 1988, of which I was editor.]

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