

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT “Faithfulness”

Introduction

Gal 5:22-23

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

*If you are reading out of any other version aside from the King James, the word faith will have been translated “faithfulness.” Without getting too technical, the Greek word used is the same word translated faith. It is the well known **pistis**. But context in this section argues for the translation faithfulness.*

What is the difference between faith and faithfulness? Well, faith would be the thing itself, faithfulness the quality of the thing. Another way of saying that I have faith is to say that I trust. But the comparative phrase for faithfulness would be “I am trustworthy.” I believe that the fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness (in the spirit realm, faith is more technically a manifestation).

One stark way of seeing the difference between the two is understanding that God is faithful and our faith does not affect or influence that truth one bit.

Rom 3:1-3

1 What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision?

2 Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God.

3 What if some did not have faith? **Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?** NIV

2 Tim 2:13 **if we are faithless, he will remain faithful**, for he cannot disown himself. NIV

What are the deeper implications of this?

- He will be faithful regardless of what we do – which means we can trust Him.
- The measure of His faithfulness is the sure accomplishment of His word – which means we can trust it.
- Since our faith doesn't affect His faithfulness, we cannot believe *for* it – which means that we must have faith *in* it.

Heb 11:11

By faith Abraham, even though he was past age-and Sarah herself was barren-was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. NIV

God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is faithful.

Isa 49:7

This is what the LORD says-- the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel-- to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: "Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the LORD, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you." NIV

It is not in the scope of this study, but if you want to have fun look up “Holy One” in the KJV. Look for combinations like we have just read: LORD, redeemer, and Holy One. LORD in this verse speaks of the Father, Redeemer of the Son, and Holy One of the Holy Spirit. Want to see another one?

Hos 11:7-10

7 My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, None at all exalt Him.

8 "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I set you like Zeboim? My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred.

9 I will not execute the fierceness of My anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God, and not man, The Holy One in your midst; And I will not come with terror.

10 "They shall walk after the LORD. He will roar like a lion. When He roars, Then His sons shall come trembling from the west; NKJV

“I am God and not a man” who is that? The Father. “The Holy One in your midst” who is that? The Holy Spirit. Who roars like a lion? The Son.

In any event, the point is that God is faithful, amen? We are studying the fruit of the Spirit to better understand the Holy Spirit of God. He is faithful. We are going to see that He is a faithful presence who gives us faithful promises and provides a faithful power that we might reproduce in order to expand and establish the Kingdom of God.

Faithful Presence

Ps 139:7-10

7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. NIV

The Spirit of God is omnipresent. He is everywhere. He is a faithful Presence.

1 John 2:27

As for you, **the anointing you received from him remains in you**, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit-just as it has taught you, remain in him. NIV

1 John 3:24

Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. **And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.** NIV

1 John 4:13

We know that we live in him and **he in us**, because he has given us of his Spirit. NIV

He faithfully abides in us. When we were born again, the Holy Spirit of God took up residence in our degenerated spirit of man and regenerated it! Even though we may become faithless, He remains faithful and continues to abide in us.

Ps 51:10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. NIV

In the sense of a truly renewed spirit, this prayer of David's is prophetic. A renewed spirit is what we received when we were saved.

Titus 3:4-7

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,
5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and **renewal by the Holy Spirit**,
6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,
7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. NIV

Ps 51:11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. NIV

In reading this verse, we must ask what David's relation to the Holy Spirit was.

1 Sam 16:13

So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD **came upon** David in power. Samuel then went to Ramah. NIV

Acts 2:4

All of them were **filled with** the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. NIV

There is a big distinction between having the Holy Spirit upon us and having it fill us. If we ever have to pray a Ps. 51:11 prayer it will only be regarding an anointing upon (ministry or office) and never the anointing within. We never have to live in fear of losing the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit within us!

Faithful Promise

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.

21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV

The word of God came to us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He gives faithful promises.

Heb 10:23

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. NIV

Because the One who promised is faithful, then His word is a faithful word. Overseers or elders are to be faithful men who hold the faithful word.

Titus 1:9

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. KJV

His word can be trusted to come to pass!

Faithful Power

Acts 13:34

The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: "I will give you the holy and sure blessings promised to David." NIV

*The sure blessings or mercies of David could be read as the faithful blessings promised to David (sure being **pistos** – faithful). What was this sure mercy?*

Eph 1:18-23

- 18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
19 **and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,**
20 **which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,**
21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.
22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,
23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. NIV

That faithful mercy was exhibited when He used His mighty power to raise Jesus from the dead. That is the power available to us who believe!

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." NIV

What was the purpose of the power? To give witness of the Lord Jesus.

So we see that the Holy Spirit is faithful. He is faithfully present, gives faithful promises, and is a faithful provider of power to accomplish His will. And as I said, He is a faithful presence who gives us faithful promises and provides a faithful power that we might reproduce in order to expand and establish the Kingdom of God. I'll demonstrate this with three examples from the Old Testament.

Creation

Gen 1:1-2

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

2 Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. NIV

“The Spirit of God hovering over the waters” is His faithful presence.

Gen 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." NIV

“Be fruitful and increase” is the faithful promise.

Gen 1:26

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." NIV

“Let us make man in our image” is the power and “let them rule” is the exercise of that power.

Prior to this it was chaos and darkness. By His faithful presence, promise, and power, His kingdom was expanded from heaven to be established on earth.

The Exodus

Ex 13:22

Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people. NIV

The pillar didn't leave them. This is His faithful presence.

Ex 13:21

By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. NIV

“To guide them on their way” is the faithful promise. He was leading them to where? The Promised Land! And this shows the faithful power, because the Holy Spirit as the Pillar led them into the land, which was an expansion and establishment of the kingdom of God.

War with the Amalekites

Ex 17:8-13

8 The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim.

9 Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."

- 10 So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.
- 11 As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning.
- 12 When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up--one on one side, one on the other--so that his hands remained steady till sunset.
- 13 So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword. NIV

"I will stand with the staff of God" this is His presence.

"Fight the Amalekites" this is the promise.

"His hands remained steady (faithful)" this is the power.

By God's presence and promise, Joshua moved in the power of His Spirit and overcame the Amalekites, thus expanding the kingdom of God by defeating His enemies.

What does this have to do with us, the church?

Luke 12:42

And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? KJV

*Portion of meat is the Greek word **sitometron**, which means a measure of wheat or grain.*

Luke 6:38 NIV

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

The thing being measure here allegorically is wheat or grain. Measure is a very important word for us in the church.

Rom 12:3

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. NIV

Eph 4:7

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. NKJV

Eph 4:16

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. KJV

Each of us has a measure imparted to us and how we use that measure will be the basis of our judgment.

Faithfulness is to continually walk in the presence of our Lord, believing His promises and exercising His power to the end that we may be fruitful and expand and establish the His kingdom!