



“Faith is trusting God even when you don’t understand His Plan.”

Faithfulness

“Fruit of the Spirit and more. . .”

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
Ephesians 2:8-9

It is difficult to think about faithfulness without thinking of a dog and its faithfulness to its master. We often hear of how a dog has saved the life of a human or how it has protected someone from danger, often putting its own life in danger. Some people in the military grow very close to their dogs as do people in the police force. Their dogs are a very faithful companion. Many dogs give unconditional faith and love.

Faithfulness is committing oneself to something or someone. That is a broad

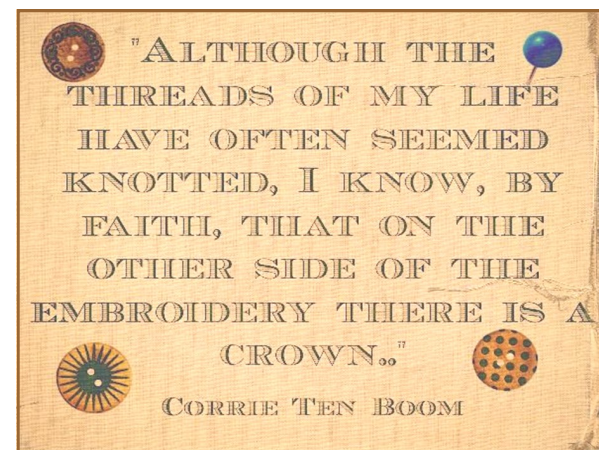
definition. Being faithful requires personal resolution not to wander away from commitments or promises. It's not always easy to be faithful. This Fruit of the Spirit is always needed not only in our time, but throughout time. The lack of faithfulness caused the Jewish people in the Old Testament major problems. They could not stay faithful and loyal to God consistently. There were times that God literally called them harlots and adulterers. They kept chasing after other gods.

Faith is needed in our own personal relationship with God and in our own personal relationships with our friends and our families. It is a matter of loyalty to what we know is true. God always allows us the free choice to do as we want. Life would be easier if the forces of evil were not there to tempt us. According to the Scriptures, faithfulness is a gift from God. How can faithfulness be visible?

We have been given faith as a gift from God. If we are faithful to Him, He will, through His grace and love, forgive our sins. Our faith carries the meaning of confidence and trust not only to God but to our personal commitments.

In the book of Matthew, Christ was met by a man who was very concerned about his son. The young boy had seizures but the disciples were unable to help him.

“His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”
Matthew 25:23



He approached Christ and asked for healing. After Christ had healed the boy the disciples asked why they were not able to heal the boy. Christ answered them *“And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”* Matthew 17:20 They thought they had faith, but they were also confused. We don't hear of the disciples doing miracles while Christ was alive, but after His death and resurrection, they did many miracles. Their faith had grown through their seeing Christ and his resurrection.

The grain of mustard seed is also compared to a grain of sand. The grain of sand cannot grow on its own. However when it is with other grains of sand, it can be very powerful. A mustard seed can grow on its own.

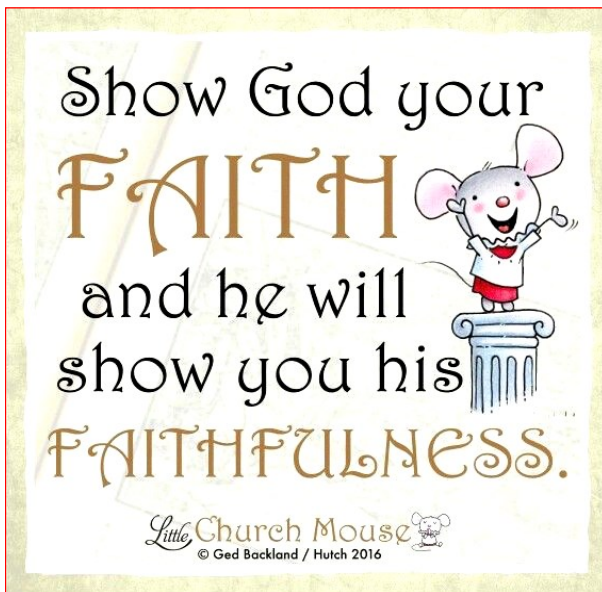
We have to do both. We need to grow on our own and be faithful on our own and we also need to work with others who are faithful to do wondrous things. I found an illustration of this which I thought might help us all to understand

why we have to work together.

The artist's chisel carves the statue. The artist cannot carve without his chisel, and the chisel cannot do it without the artist. Thought, feeling, imagination, and skill, flow from the artist's soul to the chisel's edge.

Let us also consider the army and its commander. The general has a plan, but it takes the army to carry it out. Together with the plan of the general and the faithfulness of the soldiers they can win the battle. We are that Christian army battling the world and all its temptations.

In Matthew 25 we are told a parable about a master who was leaving the town for a time and he gave various talents to some of his servants. Some multiplied those talents. Some hid them. We have all been given talents, maybe not the financial kind, but we all have talents. We can help others in various ways. We can pray for others.



We can help others in need. We can tell others about Christ by the way we live our lives. When the master returned, he praised those who had used their talents and criticized those who had hidden them. God does not judge us by our works.

Those with a few talents are just as good as those with many, but each of us is required to use what we have been given.



“True faith means holding nothing back. It means putting every hope in God's fidelity to His Promises.”

—Francis Chan,

Prayer: God, You are awesome. You have given us so much and yet we seem to always want a little more. Help us to accept Your gift of faith and love and then pass it on to others so they may know Your forgiveness and the gift of eternal life with You that is available to each one of us without price. Amen

1. How does your faith grow?
2. If a mustard seed can grow while the grain of sand is just present, are you a mustard seed or a grain of sand?
3. Does the grain of sand grow while it lodges in the oyster? Can the quiet faithful person be the catalyst for greatness?
4. Does your faith grow stronger when it is tested?
5. Explain “A little hut of faith can save us, while the storm passes overhead.”
6. Are there degrees of faith?

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