*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

October 4 - 9

*The Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness*

**Monday, October 4 Lamentations 3:22-26**

“Great is your faithfulness”

 Three wonderful qualities of God are given in these verses. First is God’s ***hesed*** which is often translated “great love” or “unfailing love.” The term in Hebrew also carries the meaning of kindness and loyalty, springing from the character of the one who acts.

 The second quality is God’s ***rahmin*** meaning compassion or mercy. This term is often used to describe the concern of a parent for a wayward child. Although the child has been disobedient, the parent still seeks reconciliation and relationship. Thirdly, the writer tells us that God is great in ***muna***, faithfulness. Specifically, God is faithful to the promises that he has made. Whether it is God’s dealings with Noah and his family, with Abraham and Sarah or with Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness, God keeps the covenants (agreements) he has made with his people and he fulfills the promises that are a part of those covenants.

 Our God is not an aloof, abstract God. He desires to be known through his concrete relationship with us: he created us and he faithfully continues to provide for us. As the prophet Isaiah said: “He will never leave or forsake us.”

*My faithful God. Thank you for never leaving or forsaking me. Every day I count on your unfailing love, your tender compassion, and your great faithfulness. Amen.*

**Tuesday, October 5 2 Timothy 2:8-13**

“He remains faithful”

 In this letter to Timothy, Paul affirms God’s consistency and integrity. Although human beings may not keep faith with God, he will keep faith with us because he keeps his promises. God is faithful to his people, faithful to his own righteousness, and faithful to his own judgments. That is, he is faithful to us and to himself, and he is able to be both while being true to himself.

 Jesus said, “If anyone acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will openly acknowledge that person before my Father in heaven. But if anyone denies me here on earth, I will deny that person before my Father in heaven” (Matthew 10:32-33). A faithful God will stay true to his promises, both with regard to those who accept him and those who deny him.

*Dear God. You are a faithful God who I can count on to do exactly what you have said you will do. Give me the courage to be a person whose words and actions are consistent with each another. As you are faithful, may I be faithful, as well. Amen.*

**Wednesday, October 6 Psalm 100:1-5**

“God’s faithfulness continues to each generation”

 The Psalm speaks to the character of God and contains multiple reasons to praise him with great joy and gladness. He is good, gracious, kind, and loving . . . indeed, God is love.

 God’s mercy has been evident in the past, and it will continue to be ours into eternity. He is not a fickle god, promising and then forgetting. He has entered into covenant with his people, and he will never revoke it, nor alter the word that has gone forth from his mouth. A changeable God would be a terror for us, for we would have no assurance that amid a changing world God himself would not change and abandon us.

 The truth of divine faithfulness causes our hearts to praise him joyfully as we bow before the One who has never broken his word or changed his purpose.

*Dear Lord. Resting in the sure word of your faithfulness toward me, I rejoice and I am strengthened to live faithfully for you. Amen.*

*DAILY DEVOTIONS*

October 4 - 9

*The Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness*

**Thursday, October 7 John 1:14-18**

“He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness”

 The Word, which was with God and was God (verse 1), became human and lived among us, and when he did we beheld the glory of God in the Word-become-human, that is, in Jesus Christ. This experience of the glory of God is concrete; it is not a mystical idea or a merely inward awakening and illumination. The glory of God came to us in a human being who lived the unfailing love and faithfulness of God in all that he did and said.

 The unfailing love (grace) of God is seen most clearly and concretely in God the Father sending God the Son into the world so that we may be saved. God did so in spite of the hostility and rejection of the world. Similarly, the faithfulness (truth) of God is seen in the way that God’s Son fulfills the promises (truth statements of what God will do) of the Old Testament. Christ is the promised Messiah, and his life, death and resurrection brings to fruition all that is meant when we say that in him, through the work of the Spirit, we have been saved.

*You are a loving God, desiring my salvation, and a faithful God, true to your promises. As your child, may I love others and may they find my commitment to them to be true. Amen.*

**Friday, October 8 1 Corinthians 4:1-5**

“What about me? Have I been faithful?”

 Paul declares that as a servant of God, his primary responsibility is to be faithful to his master. Thus, other people’s view of Paul matter little relative to God’s view of him. Even his own self-estimation pales against the divine assessment of God. While Paul is aware of nothing against himself that would question his faithfulness to God, he leaves it to God to judge him.

 God does not require us to be successful, certainly not by worldly standards, and often he does not supply success even on a spiritual level, as much as we might desire it. Rather he calls us to constant faithfulness regardless of external results.

 To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to be his faithful follower. This means that we allow nothing to get in the way of living our lives in such a way that we are getting to know him, becoming like him, and sharing him with others.

*Dear Jesus. I want to be your faithful follower. I may not be able to say with Paul that there is nothing against me that would question my faithfulness, but where I have failed you I confess my sin and rely on your forgiveness to enable my return to faithfulness.*

**Saturday, October 9 Matthew 25:14-30**

“Well done, my good and faithful servant”

 I remember a famous TV personality interviewing Billy Graham. At one point she asked Dr. Graham what he thought heaven will be like. He replied that the Bible does not give us much information but, he said, “There is really only one thing I pray for when I arrive in heaven: that I will hear God say to me, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant.’”

 Jesus is no longer physically present with us, his followers, here in the world. But, when he departed this world, he made it clear that he was leaving behind resources and it would be our responsibility to use them well in his service. Chief among these resources is the Holy Spirit who is able to cultivate in us the fruit of faithfulness. How well are you and I bearing this fruit?

*Jesus, you are my Lord and Savior, and I desire to invest in my life, and in the lives of others, the resources that you have blessed me with. May I use them well for you, showing myself to be your good and faithful servant. Amen.*