

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: FAITHFULNESS

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE

Ruth 1:6-19

ADDITIONAL STUDY

Lamentations 3:22-23

Proverbs 25:13, 28:20

I Corinthians 15:58

PRAYER

Holy Spirit I ask that you inspire me to faithfulness whenever I feel my flesh or selfishness rising within me; and may I always be found faithful in all I do in Jesus name.

But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, *or to turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.*

- Ruth 1:14

King Solomon (*I believe, in his frustration of having been disappointed over and over by people he trusted or relied on for one thing or the other*) one day said, "Most men will proclaim each his own goodness, but who can find a faithful man?" (Proverbs 20:6). Why is faithfulness so scarce amongst many?

Faithfulness speaks of trustworthiness, loyalty, dependability, reliability and constancy. In our world today, these virtues don't agree with what our selfishness and flesh wants. Faithfulness also speaks of being 'faith-full.' That is, having faith in God; trusting in His Word and acting accordingly. It is to continue to believe in who God is and what He has said in spite of the challenges of life. God Himself is the definition of faithfulness – constant, reliable and trustworthy; e.g. take a look at the sun He created; it is faithful in its rising and setting. The lack of this virtue in marriage results in infidelity and it has wrecked many marriages. Many businesses have lost money because employees are not loyal, dependable or trustworthy, and many of our dreams die unfulfilled because we lack the constancy to stay with them till we see fruits. Ultimately, we are the victims of one another's lack of faithfulness.

In today's passage, we see Ruth demonstrate faithfulness to Naomi. In spite of all Naomi lost, and the lack of prospects she held for Ruth, yet, Ruth stuck with her through it all – that was loyalty and dependability. You may not know it, but it takes faith in God to do what Ruth did, faith that what you are giving yourself wholeheartedly to will eventually pay off. Sure enough in Ruth's case, God rewarded her with Boaz and later, the Messiah as her seed. When God saw her faithfulness, He saw a woman He could trust with such a responsibility to be the forebearer of Jesus Christ.

How much will God do in and through you if He finds you trustworthy, reliable, dependable and consistent – in your service to Him, in your marriage, business or relationships? Only eternity will tell. Faithfulness doesn't quickly give up, it doesn't cheat, it doesn't disappoint trust and it believes to the end.

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