

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## FAITHFULNESS

*Great is thy faithfulness. Lamentations 3:23*

One of the most endearing qualities found in the majority of domesticated dogs is their faithfulness and devotion to their masters. In fact a frequently used name or term which refers to dogs in general is Fido, which has its origins in the Latin word for faithful, fidelis. In spite of this fact it is not an uncommon occurrence for even the most steadfast of canines to turn on their masters in certain situations. Try taking old Rex's food bowl away when he's in the middle of a meal and you may find his loyalty strained.

Usually, when we hear faithfulness discussed by most Bible teachers, it is in the context of promoting and encouraging the children of GOD to be faithful to HIM. Sometimes the term is used to describe those whose actions are of a more devoted nature than is commonly seen. It is also used to describe some who have spent many years of service to the LORD. But all of these uses of the word are comparative in nature. (see II Cor 10:12) The term faithfulness, in its absolute sense, can never be used to describe man, because of the changeable and fickle nature of the flesh. Biblical faithfulness is that which allows no lapses. It does not wax or wane and it never experiences failure. It is said of the LORD JESUS, *"having loved HIS own which were in the world, HE loved them unto the end."* (John 13:1) This is the standard by which all who would be called "faithful" must be judged.

Out of nineteen occurrences of the word faithfulness in the scriptures, fifteen of them are directly descriptive of the LORD's loyalty and steadfast allegiance to HIS people. There is no shadow of turning with HIM of whom Jeremiah wrote, *"It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because HIS compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is THY faithfulness."* (Lam 3:22-23) So before we go admiring men for their "faithfulness" let us be reminded that there really is no such thing among men. The godliness and the upright nature of the walk of others may exceed ours by a mile but no man is worthy of such a portrayal which the scripture reserves for a description of the nature of our GOD. Though the bible does indeed describe some believers as faithful (see Gal.3:9; II Tim.2:2) the emphasis is on the object of their faith rather than their complete fidelity to that faith. Faithful Abraham for instance is not mentioned because he flawlessly believed GOD but because he believed the GOD who was flawless. Vine's word studies bears this out. David was a man after GOD's own heart, yet he failed miserably in faithfulness while he excelled others in faith. How flawlessly a man performs that which GOD calls him to do is not nearly as important as being stayed on HIM who is the rock of our salvation and the light of our path. Samson is not a portrait of faithfulness yet he is mentioned in the hall of fame of those *"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."* (Heb 11:33-34) The true believers faith is not based on the amount or steadfastness of that belief, but rather what that faith relies upon. Job said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."* (Job 13:15) Peter testified, *"LORD, to whom shall we go? THOU hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that THOU art that CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD."* (John 6:68-69) We are not

nearly as concerned with the “faithfulness” of GOD’s children as we are in seeing their souls and spirits fixed on HIM, whose blood was shed for sinners; HIM, who cannot fail; and HIM, whose word cannot be overturned. When we speak of “faithfulness” let our minds and hearts be turned to dwell on HIM whose faithfulness:

**Covers the earth.** *“THY mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and THY faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds”* (Psalms 36:5)

**Reaches to the LORD’s children in all ages.** *“I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known THY faithfulness to all generations.”* (Psalms 89:1)

**Is established in the gathering together of HIS people.** *“And the heavens shall praise Thy wonders, O LORD: THY faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.”* (Psalms 89:5)

**Is made manifest to those who fear HIM.** *“GOD is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about HIM. O LORD GOD of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to THY faithfulness round about THEE?”* (Psalms 89:7-8)

**Is set forth in the Kingship of HIS SON.** *“But MY faithfulness and MY mercy shall be with HIM: and in MY name shall HIS horn be exalted.”* (Psalms 89:24)

**Never fails, even when HIS people do.** *“Nevertheless MY lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer MY faithfulness to fail.”* (Psalms 89:33)

**Is constant and continual.** *“To shew forth THY lovingkindness in the morning, and THY faithfulness every night.”* (Psalms 92:2)

**Is demonstrated by HIS chastening of those who belong to HIM.** *“I know, O LORD, that THY judgments are right, and that THOU in faithfulness hast afflicted me.”* (Psalms 119:75)

**Is manifested in hearing and answering the prayers of HIS people.** *“Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in THY faithfulness answer me, and in THY righteousness.”* (Psalms 143:1)

**Is seen in the revelation of HIS word.** *“O LORD, thou art my GOD; I will exalt THEE, I will praise THY name; for THOU hast done wonderful things; THY counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.”* (Isaiah 25:1)

*“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and HE that sat upon him was called FAITHFUL and TRUE, and in righteousness HE doth judge and make war.”* (Rev 19:11)

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