

## Faithful Servants

We have surrounded ourselves with servants who make our days more comfortable and productive. Our thermostat is the servant regulating the temperature of our home to our exact needs and desire. We don't have to cut wood or bring wood into our home to light a fire. When we consider the time we save and the comfort we possess from that small box on the wall, we can truly appreciate the value and importance of a faithful servant. When we add in all the other servants we own that bless our days so abundantly, we begin to comprehend just how important faithful servants are:

Alarm clock   Coffee Maker   Car   Air Conditioner   Washer & Dryer   Stove/Microwave  
Light bulb   Refrigerator   Phone   Hot water Heater   Electricity   Computer

We expect and even demand that our own servants to be reliable. We grow accustomed to the benefits they bring into our lives, and when any of them they become unfaithful, either because they are unreliable or because they are broken, we get them fixed or replaced quickly. We can't have a car with an unfaithful battery, or an unreliable water heater that doesn't always give hot water. They are too disruptive to our lives. The more reliable they are, the greater the crisis when they fail. Yet we know that they will fail. There is nothing we can build or create that has perfection.

Yet God does have this perfection and His faithfulness is fixed and absolute for all eternity. We can rely fully and completely upon Him, at all times and under all circumstances, because:

*"He has said, I will in no wise fail you, neither will I in any wise forsake you." Heb. 13:5*

Since we can always rely on God, we never have to wonder or be concerned about any of the things He has promised to do for us. This is what led the Psalmist, in praise and adoration, proclaim:

*I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations. ... 7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him. 8 O Lord God of hosts, Who is mighty like You, O Lord? Your faithfulness also surrounds You. Ps. 89:1, 7-8*

While God is not our servant, the countless blessings and benefits He can bring into our lives if we are faithful to Him are immeasurable. We must never lose sight of the comfort and peace that this has brought into our lives. God's reliability is fixed and absolute. No matter what our outward circumstances are, we can trust Him. When this trust in Him is full and complete, no matter what is happening in our lives, we know He is still there, working with and helping us.

This is what led Peter to say:

*"Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right. 1Pet. 4:19*

What a blessing to be able to do this!

God's faithfulness is also reflected in the material creation. They will never fail because He created them perfectly, and they have no free will to do otherwise. When God made a promise for this creation, there can be no doubt it will be fulfilled.

*"Forever, O LORD, your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; you established the earth, and it abides. They continue this day according to Your ordinances, for all are Your servants. Ps. 119:89-91*

God used this as the basis of all His promises and covenants:

*"Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers.'" Jer. 33:20-21*

This covenant was given after Noah left the ark:

*"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease." Gen. 8:22*

No one can break this covenant. It will be fixed and absolute until the end of time. Since no one can break this covenant, God uses it as the basis of all His covenants. They too can never be broken.

It should come as no surprise that God assesses us based upon our own faithfulness to our covenant. Because of freewill, we are the only servants in this creation who can fail or forsake Him.

After promising that "Jesus is Lord" when we make "the good confession," we enter into "the New Covenant" with Him, if we become then become unfaithful, whatever plans God had determined to use us for will not happen. This is the saddest aspect of our humanity. We are unable to keep our emotions and decisions fresh in our minds, and over time they can seem onerous and unfair. The truly faithful will keep their commitment, not matter what just as God has kept His. We can only

be faithful and reliable regardless of the circumstances if we have made the decision to do so. Those who make this type of commitment are the faithful. God will bless them abundantly. When God was leaning and relying on Noah, Abraham and Moses, they proved their reliability

by doing exactly what God had asked and expected of them. It was because that God could use him to build the ark.

*"Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did. Gen. 6:22*

Since God found Abraham's heart faithful, He was able to make "a covenant with him" because of God's righteousness and faithfulness,

*"You are the Lord God, Who chose Abram, And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, And gave him the name Abraham; 8 You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him To give the land of the Canaanites, The Hittites, the Amorites, The Perizzites, the Jebusites, And the Girgashites — To give it to his descendants. You have performed Your words, For You are righteous. Neh 9:7-8*

He is still performing these words today to his children who "like Isaac are children of promise." Since He wanted to show the heirs of this promise His own immutability, He also swore with an oath.

*Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. Heb 6:17-18*

Like the battery in our car, these men proved faithful and true to God.

One of the most emotionally distressing things to look back on are all those who made great promises of faithful reliable service to God, but then in a moment of weakness or evil desire, they cast away all the promises and commitments, leaving God bereft and finding it necessary to find another means to fulfill that task. This is what God lamented about Israel:

*"O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, And like the early dew it goes away. Hos 6:4*

God has described how difficult it can be when those we trust fall short.

*"As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy man to those who send him. Pr. 10:26*

Who hasn't felt that way when the car won't start in the pouring rain, or the alarm did not sound on the day of an important appointment. Yet the pain and anguish of counting on a fellow human being to do something important for us is not limited to the loss that occurred because of the failure. The greater loss is when we realize that someone we thought we could count on, is not loyal and also is not truly the friend we thought they would be. This is the lament that God made of Israel.

*"My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, None at all exalt Him. "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." Hos. 11:7-8*

God wants us to succeed. He wants us to be faithful so He can bless us. We are His children, which are far more highly prized than our appliances. God is depending on us to do His will on earth as it is done in heaven and to seek first His kingdom and righteousness. He created us for this purpose and we should want to be exactly what God created and desired for us to be. We do not want to be to God anything like "vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes," because if we fall short in a time of trial, God's pleasure will be gone, left only with hurt and disappointment. *"Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. Heb. 10:38-39*

The real beauty of being faithful to God is the opportunity, like Abraham, to be seen by God as a friend.

*"But you, Israel, are My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, The descendants of Abraham My friend. 9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its farthest regions, And said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and have not cast you away: 10 Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.' Isa 41:8-10*

Like all friendships, it is the sacrifice and devotion that proves its depth and quality.

Job's faithfulness led to a great compliment from God. (Job 1:8; 2:3),

David a man after God's own heart, seeking to do His will at all times and under all circumstances to the very best of his ability (1Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22,36).

Jesus was "My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," for exactly the same reason.

Now it is our turn. We can be as faithful and reliable as we choose to be. The next time one of our appliances fail, think of our own faithfulness to God. How many times have we done a similar thing to Him?