



Volume 8, No. 3, March, 2020



Theme: Great is Thy Faithfulness

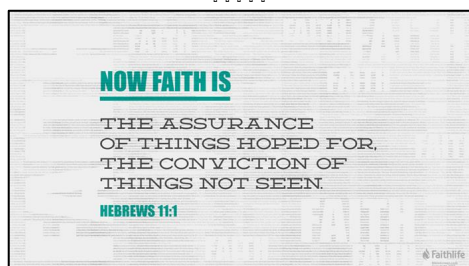
*Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not,
Thy compassions they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.*

*Summer and winter,
and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.*

*Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today
and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!*

Refrain:
*Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning
new mercies I see;
All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me.*

WORDS: Thomas O. Chisum (w. 1923)
MUSIC: William M. Runyan (w. 1923)



Faithfulness

Abraham is known as the father of the faithful. His faith in God’s promise sustained him through the many years of his life. When God asked him to leave his homeland and take off to an unknown destination, Abraham took his family and belongings and started the journey.

He believed in God’s promise that he would have a son and that his descendants would be as plentiful as the stars in the sky and the sand on the beach. Years later after the promised son, Isaac, had been born, God asked him to sacrifice that son on an altar. Abraham had faith in God and took Isaac up on a mountain with the full intention of sacrificing him. God supplied a substitute ram at the last moment.

Let’s look at it from the other side. God is watching Abraham as he loads up his family and starts off on the journey. How pleased God must have been that Abraham believed in Him and followed His commands. When Abraham and Lot gained so many animals that the herdsmen were fighting, God must have been pleased when Abraham let Lot choose one direction to live and he chose the other. Abraham had faith that God would take care of him, and that, too, must have pleased God.

Abraham and Sarah lived in the Negev, and King Abimelek of Gerar thought Sarah was beautiful. Abraham had told everyone she was his sister, so the king took Sarah for the purpose of becoming his wife. God was not pleased with this, so He sent a vision to Abimelek telling him that Sarah was Abraham’s wife and to return her and have Abraham pray for his life. God revealed His faithfulness by preserving the path to the birth of Isaac.

We are going to make mistakes, just like Abraham did. Sometimes he had a lapse in judgement and did things that would be contrary to the promise that God had

given him. But what we must remember is that we must depend on **God's** faithfulness – not ours.



God sent His only Son, Jesus, to live a perfect life in human form so that He could be the sacrifice for our sins. God's promise to us is that if we die to ourselves, are buried, and are raised to walk as a new person by being baptized into Christ, He is faithful to forgive us of our sins and that we will live forever with Him.

Does this mean we will never make mistakes? No! But we must try to keep our part of being faithful, knowing that God is **always** faithful. The victory is ours. We know how the story ends. Jesus paid the price for our sins, and we can know that we have a home with Him for eternity.

Lorna Smith, Lubbock, Texas
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FAITHFULNESS

Revelation 2:10 says that we are to "be faithful unto death." What does that mean? When we talk about faith, our thoughts will probably go to Hebrews 11, which we call the "great faith chapter." Hebrews 11:1 is a verse most of us memorized when we were kids. "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (NIV)

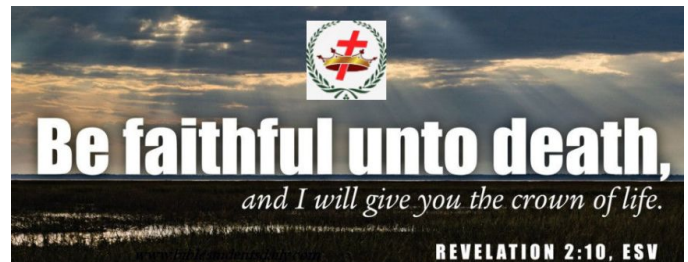
The word "faith," or some form of it, is probably only second to "God" as the word most seen in scripture, both Old and New Testaments.

I can't see God's personage or His face, but I can look out my window and see Him clearly. I see Him in every part of nature—the sky, trees, and flowers; the oceans, rivers, lakes, and mountains. I see Him in the intricate workings of the spider and the ant. I see Him in the awe of the butterfly and the bumble bee. The beauty of nature is displayed everywhere.

But I also see Him in the faces of my loved ones and the faces of my brothers and sisters in Christ. He is there in every inch of the universe, both in what I can see and what I can't.

Faithfulness is the act of being faithful or full of obedient faith. If I am full of obedient faith, it will lead me to love

others with His love. If I love as God loves, I will be able to love even my enemies. Obedient faith and love means I will share in my brothers' and sisters' lives; I will want to be with them as often as I can. Their wellbeing will be my concern. Being faithful calls for having a close relationship with my Lord and Savior, and spending time in prayer and His word daily. Faithfulness means that I will look forward to every first day of the week to worship the Father and to remember my Savior in communion. It won't be merely to "get my ticket punched" for another week.



Faithfulness means I look forward to Heaven, and it means that I do not consider this earth to be my home. It means that I will not be materialistic and will be content with what I have because God supplies all of my needs.

James 2:17 says, "...faith without works is dead." That does not mean that my works will save me. James means that I will work because I'm saved. Faithfulness means that I will find a way to serve Him, and I will do it with all of my heart. Whatever I do, I will do it "heartily."

The Lord desires relationship with Him above all else. Do I have a close daily relationship with Him? Or do I do what I do daily because I think it's my duty? Serving Him **is** my duty, but serving Him should be done because I love Him with all of my heart and because my gratefulness knows no bounds.

Mary Anna Melton, Rolla, MO
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DON'T GIVE UP

Do you remember years ago,
The day you became a Christian
It was the most wonderful-est day
Of your whole life
Even though it was a stormy Sunday
It was the sunniest day that ever was
In your life
And you were so happy you could really feel
God's most wonderful love
Then the years passed, you became busy with a job

And before you knew it you had a family and children to raise

And wow! The days flew,

And the years went faster and you got older.

And every once in a while you would remember back

About that day you were baptized

What a happy day ... and you would smile

Then you look around and you're retired

Sitting on the front porch

Keeping the rocking chair

In good working order

And those grandchildren

They're such a great gift from God

You just love for them to come for a visit

But you sure do get tired

Seems like you get tired quicker than before

When you were younger

You could do all sorts of things

But now...before the day's half over

Your get-up has gone

Your back hurts

And your knees hurt

Wow! Getting older is really getting tough

And seems like life itself is getting tougher

The kids have moved away, your spouse is gone

And life is very lonely

You get to wondering if your Christian faith

Is really worth the effort anymore

You just want to sit down

And stay there and give up

And you miss one Sunday ... at church

And then two

And it's just too comfortable

To stay in your easy chair

And your faith fades

If you get to feeling like throwing it all in

Just think about that wonderful day

Way back there when you were saved

Remember how happy you were

Just thinking about the day

When you would meet your Savior

And live eternally with him

In that pain free happy place called Heaven

The most wonderful-est place for ever and ever

So keep on praying,

Call and encourage someone

Or send a card there's other people out there

And they are hurting, they are sick

And they are very lonely also

They need encouragement

They need someone to reach out and lift them up

So keep wearing a smile and whatever you do

"Don't give up"

Remember back about that happy day

When you were saved

Because Heaven is getting closer

Where every tear will be wiped away

No more sadness and no more pain

The most peaceful and wonderful-est place

Don't throw Heaven away

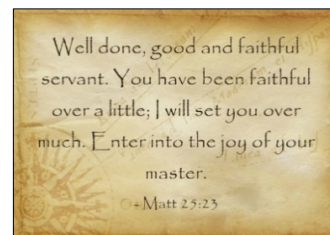
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That's what the devil

Is hoping you will do.

J. A. Dean, Springfield, MO

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Jet Trails

It was a crystal clear Indian summer day in Missouri when I looked out my office window and saw a jet plane streaking across the sky. Idly, I watched for a few moments, and then I started thinking...

Jet planes move rapidly from departure point to arrival point. They do not plod, walk or even trot. They fly! They leave a contrail behind them. Immediately behind the plane, the contrail is tight and clearly defined. The earliest parts of the contrail have lost their shape and begin to disappear.

Our lives are much like that jet plane and its contrail. Sometimes we think we are plodding through life, but in reality, we are flying through this life—just ask any 70, 80 or 90 year old how quickly life has sped by. Our departure point for this journey is our birth. Our destination, at least as far as this life is concerned, is our death.

We all leave trails behind us. The deeds done most recently are the clearest in our memories. Those deeds and their consequences—good or bad—and their aftermath are the things that affect our lives most for the moment. The deeds done in days gone by have faded somewhat from our memories but they, too, sometimes come back to affect us, even in the present. Their effects, though more distant and hazy, are real just like the jet’s contrails that have begun to fade and lose their shapes.

Some of us leave good trails, and some leave tragic trails. Pushers of heroin and other opioids leave a trail of tragedy. Innocent children lose parents to drugs and may become addicts themselves. Prescription drug abuse is rampant and also leaves a trail of destruction in the users and their loved ones.

The husband or wife who strays from the marriage relationship leaves the wreckage of a broken home and scarred children who cannot understand why mommy and daddy don’t live together any more. In addition to their own families, their destructive tentacles often reach into and destroy other families as well.

On the other hand, faithful Christian parents, who work hard to provide for their families and to instill Christian principles and values, leave a trail behind as well. Their influence on their children often results in their children growing up to become faithful Christians. The Christian lifestyle stresses knowledge of and obedience to Christ. The Christian lifestyle also stresses honesty, love for one’s neighbors, and good morals. It includes a life of service, first to the Lord and His church but also to one’s community. When stormy winds blow in Christian families, they depend on their faith to see them through.

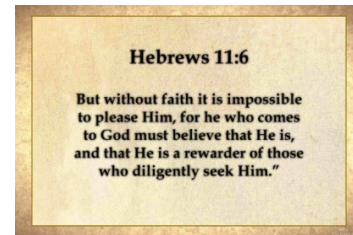
A dear Christian man in our congregation dedicated his life to teaching the gospel to anyone he could buttonhole long enough to teach. He and his wife converted hundreds, if not thousands, of people who now live all over the country. He served our congregation as a preacher, elder and tremendous Bible class teacher. In his trail are his family and those he has converted, many of whom are now teaching and converting others also.

Each of us leaves a trail as we travel through this life. What kind of trails are we leaving? Are we leaving trails of righteousness and faithful living? Are there any good works, kindness and compassion in our wake? Is there a life filled with love of God, family, Christian family and others? Have we left any marks of service in our contrail?

Just as the jet plane’s contrail dissipates quickly and vanishes into the atmosphere, so our lives are but a vapor (James 4:14). May the trails of our lives be filled with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, MO

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Don't Quit

By

John Greenleaf Whittier

*When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.
Life is strange with its twists and turns
As every one of us sometimes learns
And many a failure comes about
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow—
You may succeed with another blow.
Success is failure turned inside out—
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell just how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.*

(This poem is in the public domain)

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