

Series: God Is Faithful #1886

**Title: *God's Faithfulness to Everyone*
2 Timothy 2.13**

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Today we begin to discover this about the One True and Living God: God is faithful. I am glad you are here, because in the days that follow we will open the Bible and discover the faithfulness of holy God to us. We will move around a little in the text, so if you are not driving and are able to have the Scripture with you, that will be a blessing to you as you follow along. Let me encourage all of us to read these texts for ourselves later in the day or evening if we can't quite get to them at this time. Reading the Bible for yourself really helps God's Word come alive in your mind and heart.

As we begin, let me say that we talk about the faithfulness of God in what has become, for us, a *faithless* age. Loyalty is low. Steadiness is slow. Reliability is rare. Most, if not all of us, will be able to relate to the feeling of abandonment, betrayal, of not having a person to lean on when we most need them, of a lack of loyalty, steadiness, reliability, and faithfulness towards us in our lives. Often, if we are honest, we have likewise been unfaithful towards others. This lack of faithfulness shows itself most profoundly in marriage and family, where there is a fast rate of divorce, absent parents, even where disagreements about politics and culture has led families to break apart. Whereas it used to be brothers and sisters and parents and aunts and uncles and cousins could openly and passionately disagree, but still be faithfully connected to one another, now it seems even the slightest difference in point-of-view leads to a breakdown in relationship. Interaction around the table at Thanksgiving and Christmas isn't what it once was.

What about in our jobs? Isn't there a lack of faithfulness employee to employer and employer to employee? It goes both ways, a two way street. Maybe you have experienced this? You faithfully went to work every day and did your job, with excellence. But one day you are called into your boss' office and told you are no longer employed by the company that you had given many of the best years of your life. Or, you are on the other end: you are the employer and no matter how diligent you are, you just cannot hire help that shows up on-time, rarely if ever calls in sick, and will not resign the second he or she can get even slightly more money elsewhere. There's virtually no loyalty left in business.

And in the church also. People are a part of your congregation, the church is even growing. But all it takes is for the pastor to preach a couple of controversial sermons – good sermons, sound, biblical material – and now a few people are in a huff! The leaders start meeting with them, the pastor is brought into the mix, and things begin to simmer down, but then the politicking begins as those who were offended start to draw others into the conflict and soon a group of members are high tailing it out of your church for the church down the street or across town or city. Even though they had covenanted to be faithful to this congregation, now they are gone! There is faithlessness in church life.

We live in a *faithless* age when it comes to truth. (As we will see in our study.) There is a sweeping departure from orthodox Christianity. Sound doctrine *sounds* like a bad thing. Churches are full of false teaching – sometimes subtle and often not-so-subtle. Christians are shallow and weak. The Bible is unread, uninterpreted, and unapplied. Many believers (most?) are disinterested in an in-depth Bible study and would rather be watching a football game or a reality TV show or mindlessly scrolling through a social media app on the phone. Brothers and sisters, we are by and large, not faithful to God's Word.

These are some examples. On top of all this, we live in unstable times. The world is changing, rapidly. Events, sometimes life changing events, come at us with often no notice. We get caught unawares. There just does not seem to be a faithful, regular, steady rhythm to life. This leads many of us to struggle with anxiety, to experience great fear, and to feel exposed and forsaken. The way ahead looks more turbulent, not less. The airplane is still flying, as it were, but we are getting jostled around, the wings are out of balance and we wonder if soon the ground will come rushing up at us or us down into it. And we will crash. That analogy describes life for many.

Am I being too negative? Maybe, but may be not negative enough. These are *faithless* times.

Yet, despite this, I have good news. I have *great* news. God is faithful. It is very valuable that we learn this about the nature and the character of the One True Living God. He is faithful to us.

And I want to begin with this: God is faithful to everyone. God is faithful to everyone. There is not a person within the sound of my voice (or beyond the sound of my voice) for whom God is *unfaithful*. Think about it. Did the sun come up this morning where you are? And will the sun go down tonight where you are? Now yes, it may have been a cloudy day, but you can still see enough to know it is daylight and then it is darkness. Of course! The sun faithfully comes up in the morning and goes down in the evening. This happens to all people, wherever we live. And that is because God is faithful. The One who created the sun, the One who governs the universe, the Creator faithfully rotates the earth in such a way that there is day and there is night. We can count on it, all the days of our lives.

The sun rises on everyone, the good and the bad, the righteous and the evil, on those who believe in God and those who do not believe in God, on those who love God and on those who do not love Him. God is faithful to everyone. Soon we will talk about how God is faithful to those who love Him. But let's begin with how God is faithful to those who do not love Him; to those who reject the Person of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. This may describe you. Dear friend, I am glad you are here and I hope to have you with us in this short series, so you can hear the voice of faithful God calling you to Himself.

There is an intriguing verse that right about now many Christians will have in mind. Being in the church my whole life I have often heard this verse quoted, almost always out of context and without the correct interpretation. Here it is: **"If we are faithless, [God] remains faithful, for [God] cannot deny Himself."** This is 2 Timothy chapter 2, verse 13. Most often this is interpreted (or understood) as applying to Christians; to those who have faith in Jesus Christ, but whose faith is weak or so small as to be doubted. But while God *is* faithful to Christians, and believers whose faith is as small as a mustard seed (which is remarkably small) – God is faithful to these - that is not the point here.

The Greek word here for "are faithless" is *apisteo* and it means a lack of saving faith, not merely weak or unreliable faith (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 2 Timothy*, 66). Here, people who are faithless are those who do not possess saving-from-sin faith in Jesus. These men and women reject Christ as their Savior for their own sin, perhaps because they do not see themselves as sinners in need of redemption. Their pride keeps them from admitting their deep spiritual need. Therefore, they are the faithless being written about in this verse. 2 Timothy 2, verse 13.

But notice this, stick with the text, this verse continues, "He remains faithful..." "He" is God, specifically God in the Person of Christ (Jesus is God). "If we are faithless, God (Jesus) remains faithful. Let's ask how is God faithful to people who do not have faith in Him? He is faithful like this. Jesus is faithful to judge and condemn those who reject Him. Friends, God promises to save those who trust in Jesus. That is what John chapter 3 and verse 16, this very famous verse, says, **"Whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."** And yet we also read John chapter 3, verse 36, **"But he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."** Friends, God promises to condemn those who do not trust in Jesus. Those who do not obey God's Son, the wrath of God abides on them. The curse of sin has not been forgiven and removed. There is condemnation. All of John 3 must be read and understood, as well as applied, *together*.

One Bible teacher says, "Just as Christ will never renege on His promise to save those who trust in Him, He also will never renege on His promise to condemn those who do not. To do otherwise would be to deny Himself, which His righteous and just nature cannot allow Him to do (66)." That is what this verse is saying. Let me read it again, "If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself." You see, because God is faithful, because God is consistently true to Himself, He will judge unrepentant sinners to an eternal, *just* punishment. In this hard way, God is faithful. God is faithful to *everyone*.

Join us for more next time because God Is.

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