



# Teaching God's Word to Train Disciples

## Fellowship BIBLE CHURCH

Audio of Pastor Don Griffin's sermons is available at  
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How many people do you know who are truly faithful people? By that, I mean that they can be trusted to do what they say they are going to do in the way they said they would do it and in the time they said they would do it—Probably not very many. We live in a world where people are constantly telling us something other than the truth. With all the scandals that we hear about almost on a daily basis, it is very hard to really trust someone to be faithful. And then there are those people who not only lie to you, they also insult your intelligence while they are

lying. For example, some time back grocery store tabloids contained the following headlines:

## Learning to Relate to God

### Faithfulness

### Part 6

- \* Dinosaurs Honked Like Buicks
- \* Cow Mattresses Help Cows Produce More Milk
- \* Mom To Be On Diet Of Only Chicken, Lays Huge Egg
- \* WWII Bomber Found On The Moon
- \* Woman Gives Birth To 2 Year Old Baby: Child Walks & Talks In 3 Days
- \* Adam & Eve's Bones Found In Asia: Eve Was A Space Alien

It is no wonder that Solomon wrote in Proverbs 20:6, "Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?"

In the midst of all the unfaithfulness of people, we have the blessed privilege of knowing that there is

someone we can trust, someone who will never let us down. That person is god.

When Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the 10 commandments, verse 6 says, "And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,

Not only is god faithful, he abounds in faithfulness.

*Psalm 89:8 O LORD God Almighty, who is like you? You are mighty; O LORD, and your faithfulness surrounds you.*

Our study on relating to god based on who he is would not be complete without saying, "god is faithful."

#### 1. GOD IS FAITHFUL WHEN WE DOUBT

Unfortunately, our Christian life is not like a rocket ship that continues to go straight up into the sky, higher and higher. Rather than being a rocket ship, sometimes we are more like a roller coaster. We have our ups, and we have our downs.

*2 Timothy 2:13, "if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself."*

God is faithful, and our unfaithfulness does not change who he is in the least bit. There has been and there will come times in our lives when we will not be faithful to God.

There will be times when we'll wonder where he is in the midst of all of this stuff that we are going through. The answer will always be the same. As a faithful father, he is watching over you, and your belief or unbelief will not change that in the least bit. He will remain faithful to you.

## 2. GOD IS FAITHFUL WHEN WE'RE NEEDY

We have many needs. We have physical needs, emotional needs and spiritual needs, and we have those needs every day of our life.

*Lamentations 3:22-23, "Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed. For his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."*

God's mercies are brand-new every morning.

When the Israelites were without food in the desert, God sent manna, every day. And they weren't to store it up (except on the day before the Sabbath). They were to gather enough for each day, and in doing so, they would learn to trust God day by day to meet their daily needs.

We also need God to meet our needs every day.

We wonder what will happen tomorrow. Will our health hold up or will we have a heart attack or a sudden stroke? What about our children? Will they serve the Lord? Singles wonder if they will ever marry. We have concerns about our career choices, and we wonder where we will be in ten years.

And According to Lamentations 3:23, God takes care of all of that on a daily basis. His grace and mercies come day by day. Nothing we truly need will ever be withheld from us because God is faithful.

## 3. GOD IS FAITHFUL WHEN WE STRUGGLE WITH SIN

I have a confession to make. I'm not proud of it, nor do I want it, but it is nevertheless true. The confession is this, "I struggle to live the Christian life," and I don't always do the right thing. It is not that I don't want to do the right thing because I do, but the reality is that I often fail.

As I face every new week, I do so with the expectation of walking closer with god than I ever have before. Sometimes I do, and that is a glorious time. On the other hand, sometimes I not only fail to walk closer to god, I take some steps back from the former week. Sometimes instead of joy, I experience frustration or discouragement. To make matters worse, when I do fail, I'm down on myself for doing so.

Is there anyone else here that experiences anything that even remotely resembles those problems? If so, what is wrong with us? How can we who have been miraculously saved by the grace of god not do we know we should do? If we are so thankful to god for what he is done in our lives, why don't we show him our appreciation by living a more holy life?

The culprit within each one of us is what theologians call a "sin nature." A sin nature is what it sounds like it is. It is a nature within you that's motivates you to do the wrong thing.

We might say of a Doberman pinscher that it is his nature to be aggressive. There are other dogs whose nature leads them to be very passive. Some are very playful, and they roll around on the ground like little balls.

Just as we can say a different animals have different natures, we all have a nature that is inclined to sin. That sin nature is inherited from our first parents and is born into every child.

How many of you had to teach your children to disobey? You don't have to teach anyone to disobey because they're all programmed to do so.

One of the most well known passages describing the influence of the sin nature on our lives is found in

*Romans 7: 14 I know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.[c] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.*

*21So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23but I see another law at work in the members of my body; waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. 24What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

*So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.*

If we could put that all in one word, that word would be struggle, and that is what goes on within each one of us no matter how long have been saved or how godly you may live.

The problem is not simply sin out there somewhere. The problem we have to face is sin on the inside. It reminds me of that cartoon strip Pogo where the hero comes and says "We have met the enemy and he is us."

That's what Paul is saying. We have met the enemy. The enemy is us. The enemy is not just out there somewhere. The enemy is on the inside.

As long as you live, you will never be completely free from the pull of the sin that is inside you.

What about this struggle that we all face as believers? How is God going to respond to our struggle? Is he going to take a big hammer and it is with it? Romans 8: 1 gives us the answer to that question.

*Romans 8: 1, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,"*

He is not saying there is therefore now no cause for condemnation. That wouldn't be true. You fail and I fail. You stumble and I stumble.

Most of the time, we've barely got our fingers on the edge and we're just hanging on for dear life. Paul is not saying there is no cause for condemnation in us because if God were to judge you moment by moment, he'd find plenty of cause for condemnation in you, but for the believer in Jesus Christ, there is no condemnation because God has said it is so.

#### **4. GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IS SEEN IN THAT HE ENABLES US TO OBEY HIM**

*Romans 8:2-4, "Because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life, has set me free from the law of sin and death." Notice there are two things set up as opposites in this verse. On one side there is the law of sin and death. On the other side there is the law of the spirit of life in Jesus Christ. One "law" cancels the other "law."*

What does that mean? Go back to the Red Sea experience. The Children of Israel come up to the Red Sea facing a crisis. There's Egypt behind them, the Promised Land in front of them. Somehow they've got to cross the Red Sea. Here comes Pharaoh and his armies. Here are Moses and the Children of Is-

rael backed up against the Red Sea. No place to go. They are in terrible trouble. Why? Because the law of gravity is keeping the waters in the sea. As long as the law of gravity is working, there's no way to cross the Red Sea. They don't have any ships, boats, canoes, anything. The law of gravity is going to cause their destruction.

But wait. What does the Bible say? The Bible says that God sent an east wind that blew across the Red Sea. When the east wind blew across the Red Sea, it blew the waters apart and held back the and water so that the Children of Israel could get across. When they got across, the wind stopped blowing and the waters came back together. The Egyptians tried to follow and they drowned in the Red Sea.

What happened?

The law of gravity was still there. It was superseded by the law of the east wind of the Almighty God. The law of the east wind set the people of God free from the law of gravity. As long as the law of the east wind was in force, they could walk across to freedom. One law was greater than the other. In the same way, the law of God's Spirit living within you and controlling you gives you victory over the law of sin in your life.

## **THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

### **1. KEEPING RULES WON'T WORK**

There are many people whose view of the Christian life is just a list of do's and don'ts, but they soon find out that they don't have the power to keep their own rules.

### **2. FORMULAS WON'T WORK**

Some try to live the Christian life by a formula. You may have read books that gave you formula. Three steps to answered prayer, four keys to Christian victory, five ways you can walk in the Spirit. The problem with formulas is they often can produce mechanical Christianity.

### **3. EXPERIENCES WEAR OUT**

Some people live the Christian life by seeking for a deeply moving, life-changing emotional experience with God, but experiences don't last. You feel great

as long as you have the experience, but what happens when it runs out? You're going to be down and discouraged. You may even feel as if God is angry with you. So you'll seek for another experience and the whole cycle starts again. You're going to be constantly going up and down.

#### 4. GOD'S POWER WITHIN YOU NEVER FAILS

God's way of winning the victory in the Christian life is to allow the spirit of god who lives within you to control you. How does the Holy Spirit work in my life? Somebody said it's the difference between being in a car or on an elevated train. A car runs on the principal of storage. You put gas in the tank and you drive it. You burn the gas and when you're out of gas, you stop, you get more gas, you run it again, you burn it, you get more gas, you keep on driving until you run out. You're constantly running and stopping, running and stopping, filling and refilling.

On the other hand, an elevated train runs on the contact principle. You have the two rails on the outside and the electrified third rail in the middle. What is it that keeps the elevated train going? As long as the train stays in contact with that third rail in the middle, it will go and go and go and never stop. Too many people think that walking with the Holy Spirit is like riding in a car. You get filled with the Holy Spirit and you get run down and you get filled up again and you get run down. So they're constantly up and down, up and down, being filled and emptied, being filled and emptied. That's not the Christian life of the New Testament. The New Testament tells us that the Holy Spirit is always here. Our job is to stay in contact with the Spirit. When we stay in contact with the Holy Spirit, he continuously provides the power we need for effective Christian living.

What should our response be to god's faithfulness? We should be faithful to him. A decade or more ago, a song came out entitled find is faithful. The words to like this

We're pilgrims on the journey Of the narrow road  
And those who've gone before us line the way

Cheering on the faithful, encouraging the weary  
their lives a stirring testament to God's sustaining  
grace

Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses Let us  
run the race not only for the prize but as those  
who've gone before us

Let us leave to those behind us the heritage of faith-  
fulness passed on through godly lives. After all our  
hopes and dreams have come and gone And our chil-  
dren sift though all we've left behind May the clues  
that they discover and the memories they uncover  
Become the light that leads them to the road we each  
must find.

Chorus:

Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful

May the fire of our devotion light their way

May the footprints that we leave

Lead them to believe

And the lives we live inspire them to obey