**Closing Appeals from a Pastor’s Heart**

**Lesson 15 1 Thessalonians 5:23-28**

1. **An Appeal for Complete Sanctification. 5:23**
2. **An Appeal for Sanctification’s Final Security 5:24**

**“God being who He is, cannot cease to be what He is, and being what He is, He cannot act out of character with Himself. He is faithful and at the same time immutable, so all His words and acts must remain faithful.” Tozer**

**“God’s faithfulness means that God will always do what He has said and fulfill what He has promised.” Wayne Grudem**

1. **An Appeal for Prayer 5:25**

*Know, appreciate, and pray for your spiritual leaders.*

1. **An Appeal for Brotherly Affection 5:26**
2. **An Appeal to the Leaders 5:27**
3. **An Appeal for Grace 5:28**

**The antidote to fear in a terrifying world is not trying to arrange our lives to be free from trouble but anchoring our hearts on the unfailing character of God.**

**God’s Faithfulness**

Is part of His character *Is. 49:7; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 Thess. 5:24*

Is declared to be great *Lam. 3:23*

Is incomparable *Ps. 89:8*

Is unfailing *2 Tim. 2:13*

Is infinite *Ps. 36:5*

Should be pleaded in prayer *Ps. 143:1*

In afflicting believers *Ps. 119:75*

In fulfilling His promises *Heb. 10:23*

In keeping His Covenant *Deut. 7:9*

In helping us endure temptations *1 Cor. 10:13*

In forgiving sin *1 John 1:9*

**He’s Always Been Faithful to Me**

Morning by morning I wake up to find
The power and comfort of God's hand in mine
Season by season I watch Him, amazed
In awe of the mystery of His perfect ways

All I have need of, His hand will provide
He's always been faithful to me.

I can't remember a trial or a pain
He did not recycle to bring me gain
I can't remember one single regret
In serving God only and trusting His hand.

All I have need of, His hand will provide
He's always been faithful to me.

This is my anthem, this is my song
The theme of the stories I've heard for so long
God has been faithful, He will be again
His loving compassion, it knows no end

All I have need of, His hand will provide
He's always been faithful, He's always been faithful
He's always been faithful to me.

**What God’s Faithfulness Doesn’t Mean**

**By Trulia Newbell**

One of the first sayings I heard when I became a Christian was that God is faithful. We sang about the faithfulness of God. Whenever someone would endure a trial, we’d remind them that God is faithful. Faithfulness is a characteristic of God that is often talked about, but I wonder if it’s completely understood. Because we are always communicating about God’s faithfulness in the affirmative—God is faithful—I thought it would be helpful to examine faithfulness from a different perspective: what God’s faithfulness doesn’t mean.

Faithfulness doesn’t mean that God will answer every prayer the way you pray. When things are going well and it seems we are getting what we desire (perhaps through answered prayers), we may be quick to acknowledge God’s goodness and faithfulness. But the real challenge to our belief in God’s faithfulness is when we continue to experience unanswered prayers and when the trials of life begin to squeeze us like a lemon in a juicer. It’s hard, it’s sour, it doesn’t feel right. Can we still say and believe that God is faithful during those seasons? We can and should. God does not promise to give us everything we desire, nor is His faithfulness based on such a promise. Instead, He says that He will work all things together for the good of those who love Him (Rom. 8:28), and He determines what is good. If we knew all that He knows, we’d trust Him fully and rest. This truth helps us to rest in the faithfulness of God even during trials.

God doesn’t exercise degrees of faithfulness. He’s not faithful to some and unfaithful to others. It can be tempting to scan our lives and think that God has withheld His faithfulness to us as we look at our neighbor’s life. Even though we wouldn’t verbally subscribe to the prosperity gospel, when we believe that God is only faithful to us when we receive what we define as good things, we are relating to Him as a prosperity God—He is only good for the giving. And when we compare ourselves to others, judging our Holy Father based on what He withholds from us and gives to others, we are essentially believing that He cannot be all good and all faithful. We are ascribing sin to a perfect God.

God is faithful not because of our trite sentiments, but rather because His Word says He is. God is pure and, therefore, His faithfulness is pure and true. God’s faithfulness means that He can never act against His nature and character. When you’re tempted to believe He’s absent, the Bible tells us that He’s near. When your sins and guilt tell you that you are unloved, the Bible tells us that Jesus came out of great love and has removed the stain of sin from your life. When you fail, struggle, and question your worth, the Bible says that your identity as a Christian is found in Christ.

Let’s continue to proclaim that blessed truth: God is faithful. And let’s sing with a loud voice, “He’s always been faithful to me.” Let’s do this because we understand the truth of God’s Word and because it is true of who God is. God is faithful.