



# Family Values

## Virtue Realities

### Faithfulness

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*Bruce Strade, Chief Officer of Organizational Delight, Lutheran Community Services NW*

What comes to mind when I think of faithfulness is loyalty. People who are faithful are loyal to friends, principles and self. You can count on them to be there for you. You can take them at their word. You can trust that they will not compromise who they are nor will they compromise the relationship. On the other hand, we consider those persons unfaithful who have violated a relationship or have broken a promise made to a significant other.

Another way to define this word is through the term “full of faith.” People who exhibit such faithfulness strongly trust and believe in something or someone. They remain firm in their convictions and are not easily swayed even during hard times. They exemplify the definition of faith offered by the writer to the Hebrews: *“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”* (Heb. 11:1) People who demonstrate such faithfulness tend to be hopeful and unflappable. We might even on occasion call them “the faithful.”

Trustworthiness or faithfulness is an essential characteristic of God. When Moses receives the law on Mt. Sinai, a voice proclaims the Lord as *“abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”* (Ex. 34:6) Faithfulness is the foundation on which the covenant relationship is built. A major theme throughout the Old Testament is God’s faithfulness in response to Israel’s repeated disobedience. On more than one occasion the Lord bemoans the fact that his special people have turned their backs on Him and labels them *“a perverse generation, children in whom there is no faithfulness.”* (Deut. 32:20) This is their response to the Lord’s unwavering faithfulness.

In spite of repeated rejections, God remains faithful and sends his Son to again heal the breach and reaffirm the promise. Jesus resonates with those who have faith in his healing power. These include the faithful few who lower the paralytic through the roof

and the dogged conviction of the Canaanite woman who requests that Jesus remove a demon from her daughter. They recognize the power of God. They see the faithful Father working through his Son. By faith they know him.

By faith we are connected to God through Christ. Faith is our response to God’s gift of Himself. Faith is our trust in God’s faithfulness and our determination to be faithful to God. Yet any lack of faith on our part, according to the writer to the Romans, in no way nullifies the faithfulness of God. (Rom. 3:3). God by definition is faithful. God deserves our undivided loyalty. Faithfulness is one of the gifts of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), which makes it possible for us to remain true to God, ourselves and one another.

Here are some ways to practice faithfulness:

1. **Pray for the gift of faithfulness.** On a daily basis ask that God keep you focused on the Word and the Way.
2. **Uphold faithfulness in your relationships.** Remain true to your word. Honor your promises. Be someone who can be counted on.
3. **Reward faithfulness.** When your children, spouse or friends give evidence of faithfulness to you and to God’s Word, show your appreciation.
4. **Stay connected with “the faithful.”** Spend time with people who share your values and reinforce your commitment to faithfulness.
5. **Find strength in your faithfulness.** Entrust yourself *“to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good”*- even in the face of adversity. (1 Peter 4:19)

Affirmation: *Today I will remain steadfast in my faith!*

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