

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING FAITHFUL

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“Most men will proclaim each his own goodness,
But who can find a faithful man?” (**Proverbs 20:6**)



The Webster’s dictionary defines faithful as being:

- Steadfast in affection or allegiance: loyal - *a faithful friend*
- Firm in adherence to promises or in observance of duty: conscientious - *a faithful employee*
- Given with strong assurance: binding - *a faithful promise*
- True to the facts, to a standard, or to an original - *a faithful copy*

In a world which now so often de-emphasises the importance of commitment, we as believers can truly stand out in our world by our faithfulness in the way that we live and conduct our lives here on earth.

As Christians we are meant to be the salt and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16) and to help leaven our world with the goodness of God as we demonstrate Christlike conduct in the way that we live our life here on earth as we allow Christ to live through us. As Christians we have an opportunity to set an example to those around us of what faithfulness and commitment really is.

God is our example of what it is to be faithful. We can see this in the following passages of Scripture in the bible;

King David wrote,

“Trust in the Lord, and do good; Dwell in the land, **and feed on His faithfulness.** Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.” (**Psalm 37:3-5**)

In the book of Hebrews we read,

“...For He Himself has said, ‘**I will never leave you nor forsake you.**’ So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” (**Hebrew 13:5-6**)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“If we are faithless,

He remains faithful;

He cannot deny Himself.” (**2 Timothy 2:13**)

The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“**But the Lord is faithful,** who will establish you and guard *you* from the evil one.”

(**2 Thessalonians 3:3**)

If we are consistently faithful in all areas of our life, others will have confidence to rely upon us when we make commitments and will be prepared to entrust to us greater responsibilities.

As Christians we need to learn to let our yes be yes. That if we say that we will do something, people can depend upon us and make plans based on our commitments.

Jesus Himself said,

“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.” (**Matthew 5:37**)

This is why we need to learn to carefully and prayerfully consider things before making commitments to others. We must be careful that we are not people pleasers who say yes to everything, but who honour few of our commitments. If we are like this in our life, people will begin to take our word and commitments with a pinch of salt.

Of course on some very rare occasions things may crop up in our life that are unavoidable and which may make it impossible for us to honour a particular commitment. However, if we are people who **consistently** let our yes be yes, others will know that they can depend upon us to honour our promises and commitments and SAFELY make plans that involve us.

King David was very selective in giving responsibility to people and looked for faithful people to serve him. We see this in Psalm 101

King David wrote,

“My eyes shall be on the faithful of the land,

That they may dwell with me;

He who walks in a perfect way,

He shall serve me.

He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence.” (**Psalm 101:6-7**)

The way that we live our life has a great effect on the lives of those around us, and especially our children who spend much time with us in their formative years. Being faithful in the way that we live our lives and in how we relate to others will greatly influence the lives of those around us for the good.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him.” (**Proverbs 20:7**)

Being faithful is also a great key to promotion in God's Kingdom.

Jesus made it clear that if we are not faithful in the little things neither will we be faithful in the big things.

Jesus Himself said,

“He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” (**Luke 16:10**)

There are several important areas that we need to be faithful in. These include:

i) MOST IMPORTANTLY IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD

Everything flows out of our relationship with the Lord. We do life best when we are living in an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. God knows what is best for us at all times. True joy and peace and purpose only come from loving God and living for Him.

Jesus made it clear that our relationship with Him needs to be always our greatest priority in life. Jesus Himself said,

“‘And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.” (Mark 12:30)

“‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.’” (Luke 14:26-27)

Our whole hearted allegiance to Christ is the key to having stability in our lives and to having healthy relationships with others. When Christ is the centre of our life, we will never be totally shaken and devastated when others in our life reject or abandon us.

We can only ever depend on Christ to never leave nor *forsake us*. For this reason cultivating our relationship with the Lord needs to be always our greatest priority in life.

When Christ is continually our first love in life, we have the ability to have healthy relationships with others as we love people with God’s unconditional love. When we love people with God’s love we do not place unrealistic expectations on them and we see them the way that God sees them.

Growth in Christ-like character also comes from maintaining an abiding relationship with Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself said,

“‘Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.’” (John 15:4-5)

Being continually faithful in our relationship with the Lord is the key to having purpose and stability in our life and to seeing God’s ongoing provision in every area of our life. Jesus Himself said,

“‘Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ Or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.’” (Matthew 6:31-33)

The Apostle Paul had a great love for God and achieved much for the Lord during his time here on earth. His consuming desire was to know Christ and to make Him known to others (1 Corinthians 9:19-22)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.” (Philippians 3:7-8)

King David was a man after God’s own heart and Israel’s greatest King. His greatest passion was to know God intimately. In Psalm 63 he wrote,

“O GOD, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for you; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.” (Psalm 63:1-3)

Like King David we need to purposely make time to develop our relationship with the Lord. We are now living in a world full of many temptations and distractions that can draw us away from having intimate fellowship with the Lord.

Jesus Himself said in relation to the times that we are now living in,

“And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold, But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:12-13)

So being faithful in our love for the Lord needs to be our greatest priority, particularly given the times that we are now living in

ii) In our relationships with others. (That we seek to consistently do the right thing by others. That we are loyal and committed in our relationships)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” (Galatians 6:10)

The Apostle Paul also wrote,

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love,” (Ephesians 4:1-2)

As Christians our friendships should be genuine and sincere as we seek to look out for the best interests of others. It is important that we always value our friendships with others and never take them for granted.

Having genuine friendships with others is a great key to experiencing the life and life more abundantly that Jesus spoke of. Being consistently faithful to others helps us to build strong and lasting relationships with others.

We should always seek to relate to people in a way that we would want them to relate to us.

Christ Himself demonstrated what sacrificial love was when He gave His life for us so that we can have an eternal relationship with Him

Jesus Himself said,

“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.” **(John 15:12-13)**

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” **(Philippians 2:3)**

As Christians we can truly shine in our world by being faithful in our relationships with others. Jesus Himself said that it was by our love for one another that all would know that we are His disciples. (John 13:34-35)

iii) In following God's plan for our life (Ephesians 2:10)

In faithfully following God’s plan for our life we will also help many others to come to Christ and to fulfil God's plan for their life.

It is also crucial that we do not try and imitate others, nor allow the opinions of others to draw us away from God’s plan for our life, but that we seek to be simply the best at what God has called us to be in life.

God has uniquely gifted each and every one of us for His plan and purpose for our life. We are most blessed and fulfilled and effective when we follow God’s blueprint for our life.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” **(Ephesians 5:15-17)**

We have one gift of life to store up treasures in heaven and to make a great difference in this world for eternity. We must not allow the distractions in this world and the cares of life to stop us from fully embracing God’s plan for our life

We need to be continually faithful in living for the Kingdom cause so that our lives make a great difference in this world for eternity

Jesus Himself said,

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” **(Matthew 6:19-21)**

iv) In keeping confidence with others. That if people confide in us they can be confident that it will go no further

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“A talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.”
(Proverbs 11:13)

“Debate your case with your neighbour, And do not disclose the secret to another;
Lest he who hears it expose your shame, And your reputation be ruined.”
(Proverbs 25:9-10)

v) In being on time for appointments.

It is important that people can depend upon us turning up on time for all of our appointments. If we are continually late we will inconvenience and waste the time of many people.

Being punctual is a trait of all successful people in life.

If we are continually late to meetings we will invariably develop a poor reputation and have little credibility in the eyes of others.

In the book of Ecclesiastes we read,

“A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one’s birth.” **(Ecclesiastes 7:1)**

vi) In the little things. It is in faithfully doing the little things that we position ourselves for promotion in God's kingdom.

David was faithfully tending his father's sheep and loving God before he was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel the prophet to be the next king of Israel. (1 Samuel 16:1-13)

David by simply being faithful to his father's request to take dried grain and bread to his brothers and ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand positioned himself for the next phase of his journey to becoming the greatest King of Israel. (1 Samuel 17:17-58)

God will always look at our faithfulness in the little things before He entrusts to us greater responsibilities. We see this in Jesus' Parable of the Talents in the gospel of Matthew. (Matthew 25:14-23) Promotion in God's Kingdom comes when we have developed the necessary character to assume greater responsibilities, with faithfulness in the little things being the key criteria.

vii) In completing all the tasks that God gives us to do in life.

In each season of our life we need to be faithful in completing each task that God assigns to us before we enter into the next season of our life.

God's plan for our life unfolds over time. (Psalm 37:23) God cannot move us to step two until we have already completed step one of His plan for our life. It is what we learn *during* the journey of life that most prepares us for the tasks that God gives us to do.

The longer I have gone on in my walk with the Lord, the more I have appreciated that it is during the journey of life that we learn many of the greatest lessons that help us to be prepared for promotion in God's Kingdom as we do life together with others.

For this reason we must learn not to cut corners in life but to be faithful in completing all those things that God gives us to do in life. Jesus is our example of what it is to be faithful in completing God given assignments (tasks).

At the beginning of His ministry here on earth Jesus said to His disciples,
"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." (John 4:34)

Near the end of His time here on earth Jesus prayed to His Father in Heaven,
"I have glorified You on earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do." (John 17:4)

viii) In first serving the vision of others before God gives us our own vision

Joshua faithfully served Moses before God raised him up to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land (Joshua 1:1-3)

Moses faithfully served his father in law Jethro before God raised him up to lead the Children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt (Exodus 3:1-10)

Jesus Himself said,

"And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? (Luke 16:12)

Developing a servant heart is a great key to becoming great in God's kingdom and to seeing His destiny and plan for our life coming to pass.

Being prepared to serve another person's vision first helps us to develop a servant heart. Jesus Himself said,

“You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave - just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:25-28)

ix) In fully utilising our God given gifts and talents to bless others.

God has uniquely gifted every believer. Every believer has a significant part to play in the body of Christ. Because we have only one life here on earth to use our spiritual gifts to invest in the lives of others and to store up treasures in heaven, it is important that we are faithful stewards of our spiritual gifts. (1 Corinthians 15:58) (Matthew 25:14-23)

God has uniquely gifted each and every believer to help make a great difference in our world for eternity. When we flow in God's plan for our life (Ephesians 2:10) and our spiritual gifts, God anoints us to make a great difference in the lives of many others.

For this reason being faithful in the use of our spiritual gifts is very important. The Apostle Paul emphasised this when he wrote,

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:6-8)

Being faithful in using our spiritual gifts is crucial for many reasons:

- 1) The eternal destinies of other people are at stake (Proverbs 24:11) (Romans 10:14-15)**
- 2) We all need one another in the Body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12-28) When we remain planted where God would have us be AND faithfully use our spiritual gifts, we will also help others to fulfil God's plan for their lives**
- 3) When we work together in unity with other Christians, with every member flowing in their own unique gifts and calling, the church makes a great difference in the world (Ephesians 4:16)**
- 4) We are most fulfilled when we are flowing in our own unique gifts and calling, (Matthew 25:19-23) (Psalm 40:8) (John 10:10) and**
- 5) One day we will be rewarded for our faithfulness in using our spiritual gifts (Matthew 16:27) (Romans 14:10-13)**

Especially for those who are called into the five-fold ministry, it is important for them to fully invest their lives in helping to build up and equip those who have been entrusted to their care as pastors and leaders and in helping to equip the wider Body of Christ: That they are faithful in equipping the saints for the work of ministry. Our spiritual gifts have been given to us as believers to help see God's Kingdom established here on earth.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the **EQUIPPING** of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **but, speaking the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ –

from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself IN LOVE." (**Ephesians 4:11-16**)

Our motivation for using our spiritual gifts should always be one of blessing and serving others and in helping to build up the Body of Christ. All that we do in life should also always be motivated by love. (1 Corinthians 13:1-8)

The Apostle Paul also wrote,

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:" (**1 Corinthians 12:4-7**)

"Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel." (**1 Corinthians 14:12**)

So given the importance of being faithful in the use of our spiritual gifts, it should affect our lives as believers in the following ways;

- 1) How we use our time. That we make the most of every God given opportunity to use our spiritual gifts**
- 2) The priorities that we have in our life and how we plan our weeks. That we ensure that we complete all the major tasks that God gives us to do in life. This is the key to bearing much fruit in our life**
- 3) That we have a desire to know and to follow God's plan for our life, and**
- 4) That we are careful to stay in the area of our giftings so that we are the greatest blessing to the lives of others. That we continually seek to operate in our own unique gifts and calling**

x) In honouring God with our life.

Jesus Himself said,

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” **(Matthew 5:16)**

The way that we live our life has the greatest influence on others. If we live our life in a God glorifying manner we can help to influence many others to come to Christ. On the other hand if we live loose and undisciplined lives the enemy can use our lives to push others away from coming to Christ.

xi) In remaining connected to other Christians that God has placed in our life. We all need to be part of a church family if we are to remain strong in our faith. (Hebrews 10:23-25) Being planted in the house of the Lord is a key to longevity in ministry and to bearing much fruit in our life.

The Psalmist wrote,

“Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing.” **(Psalm 92:13-14)**

When we find our fit in the Body of Christ and remain faithfully connected to those that God has brought into our life and committed to His individual plan for our life, we will make a great difference as a team in this world for eternity.

When isolated we are more prone to becoming discouraged and distracted from following God’s plan for our life. Working together in unity with other believers helps us to stand out for Jesus in a greater way as our spiritual gifts help to complement and enhance the gifts of others.

A good analogy is when you look at a jigsaw puzzle. Each individual jigsaw piece on its own does not look much, but when they connect together with other pieces in their designated positions, we see a great picture and outcome when all the pieces have connected together. **WE ALL NEED EACH OTHER IN THE BODY OF CHRIST. (1 Corinthians 12:12-28)**

It is as we remain connected with other believers that God’s plan for our life unfolds and we collectively as the Body of Christ make a great difference in our world for eternity.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself IN LOVE.” **(Ephesians 4:16)**

xii) In helping to promote unity in our churches, homes and workplaces. The enemy is continually trying to undermine the family unit and to bring division and strife into our churches. We need to purposely strive to maintain unity so that we can see God's continual ongoing blessing upon our lives, our families and church fellowships. The bible makes it clear that God commands a blessing when brethren dwell together in unity.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (**Ephesians 4:1-3**)

In the book of Psalms we read,

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing –Life forevermore.” (**Psalms 133:1-3**)

xiii) In living a daily Christian walk where each day we are open to being used of the Lord to share the hope that we have in Christ (the good news of the gospel) with others, EVEN when it is not convenient

As Christians our walk with the Lord needs to be a lifestyle and not just a Sunday to Sunday experience. We need to be faithful in seizing the God given opportunities that come our way in life to share our faith with others

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law, to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.” (**1 Corinthians 9:19-23**)

xiv) In having integrity in the little things such as observing the road rules as best we can. It is important that we as Christians set an example for others in the world. Even though others may not see what we do, God sees everything that we do including our heart's motivations.

Though we may fool others God sees all that we do in life. This is why when God sees us being faithful in the little things He can then entrust to us greater responsibilities. For Christians there should be no such thing as half truths. Things are either true or false.

xv) In the way that we do our secular work.

One of the most spiritual things that we can do in our workplace is to do a good job with a right attitude

Doing things with a right attitude and continually being on time helps us to be an effective witness in our workplace and gives us credibility to share our faith with others

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

xvi) In sowing our lives’ into the lives of others and making disciples.

It is so important that we make disciples of the next generation. In this way we will leave an ongoing eternal legacy from our life here on earth. Jesus Himself emphasised the importance of making disciples in His great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)

The Apostle Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy,

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)

xvii) In desiring to have a spirit of excellence.

God gave His best for us, His own precious Son Jesus. Out of gratitude for this we as Christians should desire to enhance our Christian witness by the way that we live our life here on earth. Our enthusiasm and commitment to excelling for Jesus in the things of God should always be as great, if not greater than our commitment to our secular world activities. The world admires and rewards excellence in the various fields of life. How much more should we as Christians seek to excel in all that we do on earth for the Lord so that He can be glorified through our life here on earth.

Daniel was used mightily of God and wrote the book of Daniel which contains prophecies for the last days. He held influential positions in King Nebuchadnezzar’s government due to his godly and excellent spirit

In the book of Daniel we read,

“Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm.” **(Daniel 6:3)**

xviii) In the use of our most precious resource - TIME

God has given each of us one gift of life to make a great difference in this world for eternity. God has often used the people least esteemed by others in this world to do great things for His glory. They have been simply available to be used by God and have used their time wisely. Every believer has the potential to make a great difference in this world for eternity.

However the enemy will continually try and get us to waste and squander our time so as to minimize what we do for God’s Kingdom. The Devil will try and waste our time by continually getting us to focus on things that have no real eternal significance and to get us continually preoccupied with the cares of this world.

Given that we have one life to make a difference in this world for eternity, we need to be faithful stewards of our time. Prayerfully planning our days and weeks helps us to use our time wisely

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty.” **(Proverbs 21:5)**

Without a clear God given vision for our life and healthy boundaries, the Devil will invariably rob us of much valuable time by distracting us with things and tasks and wrong relationships, that draw us away from pursuing God’s will for our life

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” **(Ephesians 5:15-17)**

When we look at the world today we can see the nearness of the rapture of the saints (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18) and the second coming of the Lord (Revelation 19:11) which are two distinct events. (See also Revelation 22:12)

With this in mind there is no better time than now to be available to be used of the Lord and to fully invest our lives for the Kingdom cause: That we are faithful stewards in the use of our time and allow the Lord to guide and direct our steps in life. That Jesus Christ is truly Lord of all of our life.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
(1 Corinthians 15:58)

xix) In how we use the finances that God entrusts to our care

When we are committed to living for the Kingdom Cause it will also be reflected in how we use our money. It will be reflected in:

- 1) What we spend our money on and how we use our finances
- 2) Our generosity in giving to the work of the Kingdom
- 3) Our obedience in giving to what God puts on our heart to give to
- 4) The joy that we experience when sowing into the work of the Kingdom. Truly it is more blessed to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35)
- 5) That our focus will be more on storing up treasures in heaven than on accumulating possessions here on earth. In reality we come into this world with nothing and we leave this world with nothing. It is only what we have done in the context of eternity that will matter when we get to heaven, and
- 6) That we will simply see ourselves as being stewards of what God has entrusted into our care in the area of finances

The Devil will continually try and starve the flow of finances into the work of the Kingdom to hinder the advance of the gospel and to stop people from coming to Christ. The simple fact is that it costs money to buy bibles and tracts to give to people and to print manuals for the poorer pastors in the third world countries.

Being faithful in the use of our finances will cause us to be wise with the use of our money and to be generous towards financing the work of the Kingdom. When we are faithful in giving to the work of the Kingdom we will never out give God. God’s heart is to bless us that we can be a greater blessing to others.

The closer we are in our walk with the Lord the more we will appreciate the importance of sowing into the work of the Kingdom and in being faithful in our giving.

The more intimate we are in our walk with the Lord, the more we will gain God’s heart to give as was seen in Him giving His best in His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sins on the cross at Calvary.

Jesus Himself said,

“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.” **(Luke 6:38)**

Money is a good servant but a poor master.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out... But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” **(1 Timothy 6:6, 7, 9-10)**

WHEN WE ARE FAITHFUL IN HOW WE USE OUR MONEY, GOD CAN THEN ENTRUST TO US TRUE RICHES AND GREATER SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

Jesus Himself said, “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, how will you commit to your trust the true riches?” **(Luke 16:11)**

Jesus also said, “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” **(Matthew 6:24)**

xx) In our spiritual disciplines. This is a great key to continually growing in our walk with the Lord. The more that we grow in our knowledge of the Word of God, the more we can impart into the lives of others. (Joshua 1:8) Having a lifestyle of prayer is a great key to seeing all that God has planned for our life coming to pass. (1 Thessalonians 5:17) (Luke 18:1-8)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” **(Colossians 3:16) And**

xxi) In praying for others

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” **(1 Timothy 2:1-4)**

I WILL NOW QUICKLY LOOK AT A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER IN RELATION TO REMAINING FAITHFUL IN THE WAY THAT WE LIVE OUR LIFE

1) We need to continue to remain faithful to God's plan for our life EVEN when faced with discouragement and opposition.

Nehemiah refused to allow discouragement and opposition to stop him from seeing the completion of the construction of the wall around Jerusalem.

When confronted with opposition and challenges in life, we need to continue to press into God for His help and Strength.

When David's men were looking at stoning him at Ziklag after all of their families had been abducted, David encouraged himself in the Lord. (1 Samuel 30:1-6)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (**Galatians 6:9**)

We must not allow trials and disappointments to stop us from being faithful in completing God's plan for our life. (Ephesians 2:10)

2) It is in maintaining an intimate and abiding relationship with Jesus that we are able to remain faithful as we gain God's heart and perspective for life and for others.

King David wrote,

“Delight yourself also in the Lord, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.” (**Psalms 37:4**)

3) We must continually connect with people of character and who are faithful in the way that they live their life. We become very much like the company that we keep.

In the book of Proverbs we read,

“The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.” (**Proverbs 12:26**)

“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed.” (**Proverbs 13:20**)

4) We need to be continually committed to being faithful to God ahead of all other people.

Many people over the course of our lifetime, sometimes with selfish agendas, will at times try and get us to deviate away from God's unique plan for our life.

We need to purpose in our heart to be always faithful to God rather than trying to continually please people. Without this commitment we will invariably be drawn away from God's best plan for our life by others

In the book of Acts we see the apostles commitment to pleasing God,

“But Peter and the other apostles answered and said, “We ought to obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29)

5) Being faithful in every area of our life needs to be a continual choice which becomes a habit. Our character develops from the continual choices that we make in life. (2 Peter 1:5-8) (1 Peter 1:13-15) (James 1:12) (Micah 6:8)

6) The bible makes it clear that without Christ the heart of a person is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

Hence no wonder the bible says who can find a faithful man.

In the book of Jeremiah we read,

“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

However when we come to Christ we get a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26) and God's love is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5:5)

Therefore as believers, IF Christ is TRULY on the throne of our heart and Lord of all of our life, His faithfulness will be reflected in the way that we live our life.

For this reason having a heart that is fully surrendered and yielded to the Lord, is a great key to us living a life of faithfulness in every area of our life

7) Because of God's faithfulness, what He has called us to do in life will come to pass if we simply remain faithful ourselves

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.” (1 Thessalonians 5:24)

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;” (Philippians 1:6)

8) Joseph was a great example of what it means to be continually faithful in our relationship with God and with others

- He had two dreams of greatness when just 17 years of age. (Genesis 37:5-10)
- His jealous brothers upon hearing of these dreams were going to kill him before they decided to sell him to some Midianite slave traders. (Genesis 37:17-28)
- He was sold by these slave traders to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard. (Genesis 39:1) After fleeing the advances of Potiphar's wife he was wrongly accused and thrown into prison for many years after honouring God by fleeing her advances. (Genesis 39:7-20)
- He refused to grow bitter and continued to honour God in prison.
- He was forgotten after he interpreted the dreams of the king's butler and baker after they had been thrown in prison with him. (Genesis 40:23)
- But in one day he was promoted from the prison to the palace to become the second most powerful man in Egypt, second only to Pharaoh after he interpreted the two dreams that Pharaoh had. (Genesis 41:1-42)
- He forgave his brothers for their harsh treatment of himself when they met with him in Egypt seeking to buy grain from him. (Genesis 45:1-8) (Genesis 45:13-15)
- The key to Joseph's great success was his faithfulness in every area of his life during 13 years of great trials, injustices and temptations, when he could easily have become bitter in life or compromised to make life easier for himself.
- Joseph remained committed to honouring God with his life and in due time saw God promoting him to a position of great prominence in Egypt,

AND

9) Continual ongoing faithfulness in every area of our life is the key to seeing in the long run all that God has planned for our life coming to pass. Rome was not built in a day. We must never despise the day of small beginnings (Zechariah 4:10)

SO IN CONCLUSION:

May I encourage you to be faithful in your walk with the Lord and in the way that you relate to others: In doing this you will position yourself to embrace the fullness of all that God has planned for your life.

As we prove faithful in the little things and in using our spiritual gifts and as we continue to faithfully follow God's plan for our life, we will see God opening up doors of opportunity for us to make a great difference in our world for eternity. Truly the Lord is just looking for people who are AVAILABLE to simply just faithfully follow His blueprint for their lives.

It is these people that God will raise up to do great things for His glory in the times that we are now living in.

The Apostle Paul,

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,” (**Ephesians 3:20**)

I will finish with two concluding thoughts.

Firstly, if we remain continually faithful in doing the right things in life and committed to following God's blueprint for our life, we will ultimately see our lives making a great difference in our world for eternity and we will see the goodness of God in our life (Psalm 27:13) (Psalm 31:19)

The Apostle Paul wrote,

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” (**Galatians 6:9**) AND

Secondly, if we continually remain faithful to living for the Lord, we will one day hear the words from Jesus, “Well done my good and faithful servant”

So may I encourage you to be committed to living a life of faithfulness so that you can appropriate all that God has planned for your life in the days to come.

