

WELCOME

Most people would connect the virtue of faithfulness to the context of a marriage covenant, whether in the positive sense of being faithful or in the negative sense of being unfaithful. Marriage can certainly be one of the best cultural pictures of this virtue. Sadly, however, for too many couples, marriage can become the worst picture of this trait. Some spouses decide faithfulness has a limit and is no longer worth the effort. But there are also those who embrace and embody the biblical definition of faithfulness. These examples of faithfulness are motivated by a deep love and commitment to both Jesus Christ and their spouse. They look to God as the ultimate example of faithfulness, as demonstrated through his love and commitment to us.

Key Question: Why is it _____ to be loyal and committed to others?

Key Verse:

“Let love and _____ never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. 4 Then you will win favour and a good name in the sight of God and man. Proverbs 3:3-4

- George Macdonald writes, “To be _____ is a greater compliment than to be loved.”

Key Idea: I have established a good _____ with God and others based on my loyalty to those relationships.

(Key Application #1): God’s faithfulness to us _____ our faithfulness to him and others.

(Key Application #2): God does not call us to be _____ but faithful.

(Key Application #3): If we _____ to be faithful, he is faithful and just to forgive us.

GETTING STARTED

Begin your discussion by reciting the key verse and key idea together as a group. On your first attempt, use your notes if you need help. On your second attempt, try to state them completely from memory.

KEY VERSE:

Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favour and a good name in the sight of God and man. Proverbs 3:3-4

KEY IDEA: I have established a good name with God and others based on my loyalty to those relationships.

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging? Why?

- I take unpopular stands when my faith dictates.
- I discipline my thoughts based on my faith in Jesus Christ.
- I follow God even when it involves suffering.
- I follow through on commitments I have made to God

1. What do you think is the cause of unfaithfulness towards God or others?

2. Who is an inspirational example of faithfulness to you? Why?

3. In your opinion, what motivates genuine faithfulness?

4. How have you seen suffering test and/ or strengthen someone's faithfulness?

Read Ruth 1:1-22

1. Life for Naomi and Ruth was much different than for us today. Aside from grieving her loss, why would the death of her husband and sons be so devastating for Naomi? Why did she instruct her daughters-in-law to go back to their families?

2. Why was Ruth's decision to stay with her mother-in-law an incredible act of faithfulness?

3. Have you ever witnessed Ruth-like faithfulness in another person? If so, how?

CASE STUDY:

Use the following case study as a model for a real-life situation where you might put this week's key idea into practice.

Deidre had never stepped foot into a church building until she was well into her twenties. Something about church made her feel anxious. She felt that God was upset or disappointed with her. A year ago, she decided to face her fear and get involved at your church. Although she has been consistently involved in church community, she is reluctant to fully devote herself to Christ because she is sure she will mess up and disappoint God in the long run.

Use the following key applications from this session, discuss what you could say or do to help Deidre?

Key Application #1: God's faithfulness to us inspires our faithfulness to him and others.

Key Application #2: God does not call us to be successful but faithful.

Key Application #3: If we fail to be faithful, he is faithful and just to forgive us.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you put this week's key idea into practice.