

Life on the Vine
Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community

Lesson Seven: **Faithfulness**

Introduction

1. “Promise Keepers.”
2. Why has the idea of making and keeping promises struck such a chord in our culture? What is it about our culture that makes this difficult to do?

Lesson Plan

1. In Scripture, the same word (*pistis*) is translated either “faith” or “faithfulness” depending on the context. In faith, the emphasis is on trust; in faithfulness, the emphasis is trustworthiness. What other pairs of words can serve as synonyms for faith and faithfulness?
2. Like the other fruit of the Spirit, faithfulness grows out of the very character of God. God is faithful. (Psalm 100.5; Exodus 34.6) What else do these two scriptures also illustrate?
3. What are some of the promises God made to people in scripture.
 - Did he keep his promises?
 - Did the people he made promises to ever doubt that he would during difficult circumstances?
4. What does “covenant” imply? _____. With whom are we called to live in covenant relationships?
5. We depend deeply on God’s faithfulness. Give examples below:
 - a. It is through his faithfulness that we were _____.
(1 Corinthians 1.9).
 - b. We depend on his faithfulness _____.
(1 John 1.9).
 - c. Read 2 Timothy 2.11-13 and discuss.

6. Probably nothing causes us to doubt God's faithfulness more than times of trial or suffering. Using James 1.2-4 and 1 Corinthians 10.13, how can times of suffering strengthen our own faithfulness and lead us to rely more completely on the faithfulness of God?

7. In closing,
 - What about our culture makes faithfulness difficult?

 - Do we see the impermanence of relationships increasing in our culture, i.e., marriages, friendship, church?

 - What forces are at work here?

 - How can the faithfulness of God inform these relationships?

Obstacles to a life of Faithfulness

1. Nurturing ephemerality and disposability
2. Shunning commitments
3. Learning the proper objects of our loyalty

Cultivating Faithfulness

4. Celebrating God's abiding presence
5. Making and keeping promises
6. Telling the truth