

The Implication/Application of the Excellencies of God

Lesson 9 – Truth and Faithfulness

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Review

We are studying the excellencies of God. God has made us true worshipers (John 4:23) for the purpose of declaring His excellencies (1 Peter 2:9).

⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for *God's* own possession, **so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him** who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (1 Peter 2:9)

His excellencies are the perfect, full manifestation of characteristics that describe His intrinsic eminence, His nature. They are what God has stated and/or exhibited in His self-revelation, the Scriptures. We are studying the excellencies in order to know God better (have correct, true knowledge) and be impacted by that knowing (grow in sanctification).

We started with the *absolute* or *incommunicable* or *divine* excellencies; excellencies that deal with God's transcendency and belong to Him alone.

- **Transcendence** means that God is distinct, far above, greater than His creation.
- **Immanence** – God remains in His creation and is intimately involved in it.
- **Perfection** – God lacks nothing in type or quality of excellency.
- **Beauty** – God is the possessor and the sum of all desirable qualities.
- **Blessedness** – God delights fully in himself. He is self-happy, self-content, self-fulfilled.
- **Aseity** – God does not need anything, He is perfectly independent and self-sufficient.
- **Glory** – the composite of His excellencies so magnificent that He shines.
- **Immutability** – God is unchanging in being, excellencies, eternal purposes, and promises.
- **Omniscience** – God fully and perfectly knows all things actual and possible in one simple, eternal act.
- **Omnipresence** – God is present at every point of space at every point of time.
- **Omnipotence** – God is able to effortlessly do all His holy will. He has an unfathomable plenitude of power.
- **Sovereignty** – God's exercise of His rule over His creation using His absolute power.

Now we are studying the *relative* or *communicable* or *personal* excellencies; excellencies that deal with God's immanency and are qualities that He is working to build, to some degree, in His children through the Spirit's work of sanctification.

- **Holiness** – God is pure and separated from sin.
- **Wrath** – God intensely hates all sin.
- **Righteousness** – God always acts rightly and is Himself the final standard of what is right.
- ❖ **Are you striving to allow the truth of these excellencies to impact your life?**

Introduction

Each of us knows of someone who is in the middle of some personal difficulty (or maybe that is you): perhaps a financial crisis; employment issue; personal, serious illness or that of a family member; the lingering results of an injury; chronic pain; being acquainted with death; grief; heartache; criticism; loneliness; ostracism; etc. This should not be surprising since we live in a fallen world.

Even more so, the Scriptures tell us that all people will experience trouble in their lives.

⁷For **man is born for trouble**, As sparks fly upward. (Job 5:7)

¹Man, who is born of woman, **Is short-lived and full of turmoil**. (Job 14:1)

Yet, among God's people there are those that experience particular trouble. Spurgeon noted that God calls some Christians to shoulder extraordinary hardships in this life.

“Spiritual darkness of any sort is to be avoided, and not desired; and yet, surprising as it may seem to be, it is a fact that some of the best of God's people frequently walk in darkness; ay, some of them are wrapt in a sevenfold gloom at times, and to them neither sun, nor moon, nor stars appear. As the pastor of a large church, I have to observe a great variety of experiences, and **I note that some whom I greatly love and esteem, who are, in my judgment among the very choicest of God's people, nevertheless, travel most of the way to Heaven by night.**” (Sermon on Isaiah 50:10 delivered on Sept 25, 1887)

It is entirely possible that a dear brother or sister (or you) who is suffering may never experience relief from that suffering this side of heaven. However, they have an incredible opportunity to present the truth of the Gospel to the world (to prove their faith) by how they respond to the trial or suffering. Their life can show that Christ's work in their heart is real and He has made supernatural changes to their heart.

Understanding God's excellencies gives us hope when going through difficult life situations (trials and suffering). God is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, good, loving, and wise. Particularly reassuring during difficult times are His sovereignty and faithfulness. Sovereignty because we know that He is working out His perfect plan for His maximum glory and our sanctifying good. Faithfulness because we can fully trust His word.

❖ **Where do you go to seek comfort in the midst of difficulty?**

Today, we will look at the excellencies of truth and faithfulness.

Faithfulness

Before we look at faithfulness we need to look at a related excellency, truthfulness.

God's truthfulness means that the God of the Bible is the one true God and that all His words are both true and the final standard of truth.

The God who has self-revealed Himself in the Bible is the only real God, only true God.

⁵“I am the Lord, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; ⁶That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other, (Isaiah 45:5-6)

¹⁸For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it *and* did not create it a waste place, *but* formed it to be inhabited), **“I am the Lord, and there is none else.** ¹⁹“I have not spoken in secret, In some dark land; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, ‘Seek Me in a waste place’; I, the Lord, speak righteousness, Declaring things that are upright. ²⁰“Gather yourselves and come; Draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; They have no knowledge, Who carry about their wooden idol And pray to a god who cannot save. ²¹“Declare and set forth *your case*; Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the Lord? And **there is no other God besides Me, A** righteous God and a Savior; **There is none except Me.** ²²“Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; **For I am God, and there is no other.** (Isaiah 45:18-22)

⁸“Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. ⁹“Remember the former things long past, **For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,** ¹⁰Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’; (Isaiah 46:8-10)

¹⁰**But the Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King.** At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation. (Jeremiah 10:10)

³This is eternal life, that they may know You, **the only true God,** and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (John 17:3)

²⁰And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know **Him who is true;** and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God** and eternal life. (1 John 5:20)

❖ **Have you elevated something else in your life to the level of God?**

God is the one true God and “is” truth, therefore, all His words are true and the final standard of truth.

⁶Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and **abounding in lovingkindness and truth** (ESV – faithfulness); (Exodus 34:6)

⁶Jesus said to him, **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life;** no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6)

¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; **Your word is truth.** (John 17:17)

¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (2 Timothy 3:16)

²⁰But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one’s own interpretation, ²¹for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

⁹The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; **The judgments of the Lord are true;** they are righteous altogether. (Psalm 19:9)

¹⁴²Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And **Your law is truth.** (Psalm 119:142)

¹⁵¹You are near, O LORD, And **all Your commandments are truth.** (Psalm 119:151)

¹⁶⁰**The sum of Your word is truth,** And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting. (Psalm 119:160)

❖ **Do you go somewhere else for “truth” other than God’s word?**

Because everything that God says is true, He is faithful.

God’s faithfulness means that God will always do what He has said and fulfill what He has promised. He is steadfast, unchanging, perfectly reliable all the time, utterly dependable, and completely trustworthy.

“Far above all finite comprehension is the unchanging faithfulness of God. Everything about God is great, vast, incomparable. He never forgets, never fails, never falters, never forfeits His word. To every declaration of promise or prophecy the Lord has exactly adhered, every engagement of covenant or threatening He will make good, ...” (The Attributes of God by A. W. Pink)

Because God is faithful, He can be completely trusted. Because He is faithful, we can fully submit ourselves to His sovereignty.

“The apprehension of this blessed truth will beget increasing *confidence in God*. ... When we trustfully resign ourselves, and all our affairs into God’s hands, fully persuaded of His love and faithfulness, the sooner shall we be satisfied with his providence ...” (The Attributes of God by A. W. Pink)

❖ **If you truly, at the heart level, believed that God is faithful, how would you go through difficult times?**

Let’s examine what the Scriptures declare about God’s faithfulness.

⁹Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, **the faithful God**, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; (Deuteronomy 7:9)

⁴“The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; **A God of faithfulness** and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He. (Deuteronomy 32:4)

⁴For the word of the LORD is upright, And **all His work is done in faithfulness.** (Psalm 33:4)

⁸⁹Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. ⁹⁰**Your faithfulness continues throughout all generations;** You established the earth, and it stands. (Psalm 119:89-90)

⁹**God is faithful**, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:9)

¹³If we are faithless, **He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.** (2 Timothy 2:13)

1. The Scriptures declare that God's faithfulness is:

- Great (abundant in quantity and quality)

²²The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. ²³They are new every morning; **Great is Your faithfulness.** (Lamentations 3:22-23)

- Incomparable

⁸O LORD God of hosts, **who is like You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.** (Psalm 89:8)

- Infinite

⁵Your lovingkindness, O LORD, extends to the heavens, **Your faithfulness reaches to the skies.** (Psalm 36:5)

- Unwavering

Concerning God's promises to David... ³³"But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him, Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness. ³⁴"My covenant I will not violate, Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. (Psalm 89:33-34)

- Established

¹I will sing of the lovingkindness of the Lord forever; To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth. ²For I have said, "Lovingkindness will be built up **forever**; In the heavens **You will establish Your faithfulness.**" (Psalm 89:1-2)

- Everlasting

⁸⁹Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. ⁹⁰**Your faithfulness continues throughout all generations**; You established the earth, and it stands. (Psalm 119:89-90)

2. God's faithfulness is displayed in:

- Creation

⁵The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. ... ⁸O LORD God of hosts, who is like You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You. (Psalm 89:5, 8)

²⁰For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20)

- Forgiving sin

⁹If we confess our sins, **He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins** and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

- The permanence of our salvation
 - ⁷ ... awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. **⁹God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.** (1 Corinthians 1:7b-9)
- His sovereignty
 - ¹O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; **For You have worked wonders, Plans *formed* long ago, with perfect faithfulness.** (Isaiah 25:1)
- Bringing trials and discipline into our lives
 - ⁷⁵I know, O LORD, that Your judgments are righteous, And that **in faithfulness You have afflicted me.** (Psalm 119:75)
- Provision in times of trial, temptation, and suffering
 - ¹³No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; **and God is faithful**, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - ¹⁹Therefore, **those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator** in doing what is right. (1 Peter 4:19)
- Answering prayer
 - ¹Hear my prayer, O LORD, Give ear to my supplications! **Answer me in Your faithfulness**, in Your righteousness! (Psalm 143:1)
- Fulfilling His promises
 - (to Jacob) ¹⁵Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for **I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.**” (Genesis 28:15)
 - ¹¹The LORD has sworn to David **A truth from which He will not turn back:** “Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne. (Psalm 132:11)
 - (Abraham) ²⁰yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹and **being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.** (Romans 4:20-21)
 - ⁹Know therefore that the LORD your God, **He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;** (Deuteronomy 7:9)
 - ⁷The works of His hands are truth and justice; **All His precepts are sure.** ⁸They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness. (Psalm 111:7-8)

- Executing His judgments

²⁰“The anger of the LORD will not turn back **Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart**; In the last days you will clearly understand it. (Jeremiah 23:20)

4. God’s children are commanded to depend on His faithfulness in difficult times

¹⁹Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall **entrust their souls to a faithful Creator** in doing what is right. (1 Peter 4:19)

5. God’s faithfulness should be proclaimed

¹⁰I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; **I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation**; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation. (Psalm 40:10)

¹I will sing of the lovingkindness of the LORD forever; **To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth.** (Psalm 89:1)

¹It is good to give thanks to the LORD And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; ²**To declare** Your lovingkindness in the morning And **Your faithfulness by night**, (Psalm 92:1-2)

❖ **How does God’s truth and faithfulness give you hope?**

Implications of truth and faithfulness

- Because God is truth, every word that He speaks is important.
- Because God is truth, His words (and only His words), sanctify. (John 17:17)
- Because God is truth, you can trust His promises.
- Because God is faithful, you should strive for faithfulness in your walk with Christ, body relationships, family relationships, vocation, etc (i.e., every area of Biblical responsibility).

Pink describes three results of understanding at the heart level God’s faithfulness:

“The apprehension of this blessed truth **will preserve us from worry**. To be full of care, to view our situation with dark forebodings, to anticipate the morrow with sad anxiety—is to reflect poorly upon the faithfulness of God.”

“The apprehension of this blessed truth **will check our murmurings**. The Lord knows what is best for each one of us, and one effect of resting on this truth will be the silencing of our petulant complainings. God is greatly honored when, under trial and chastening, we have good thoughts of Him, vindicate His wisdom and justice, and recognize His love in His very rebukes.”

“The apprehension of this blessed truth **will beget increasing confidence in God**. ... When we trustfully resign ourselves, and all our affairs into God's hands, fully persuaded of His love and faithfulness, the sooner shall we be satisfied with His providences and realize that ‘He doeth all things well.’”

❖ **As you meditate on God’s faithfulness, what is the result in your life?**

Three different groups of people should respond differently to God's faithfulness:

1. To His children, called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28), that are walking with Him on a consistent basis by presenting their bodies a living and holy sacrifice (Romans 12:1), God's faithfulness should be a **comfort** at all times because He will execute His Word perfectly. He provides all you need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3) in the easy and hard times.
2. To His children, who walk in willful, unrepentant sin, there is the fearful expectation of discipline (Hebrews 12:4-13). God will not allow His true children to continue in rebellion; discipline is imminent. God's faithfulness should drive this person to **repentance**.
3. To those that currently do not know Christ, there is the expectation of impending judgment and the unimaginable horror of eternity separated from their creator (Psalm 96:11-13; Revelation 19:11; 2 Thessalonians 1:9). This person should **surrender** their life to Christ.

❖ **Which group are you?**

– Others?

❖ **Are you trusting God's truth and faithfulness?**

Conclusion

We are studying God's excellencies in order to know Him better and be impacted by that knowing. God is true; He is faithful. May we be impacted by those excellencies.

Additional Study

- Each day this week, reread the passages that we looked at today.
- After reading the passages, spend time in prayer adoring God. Ask Him to build godly responses to His truth and faithfulness into your life.
- Memorize Deuteronomy 32:4 and John 17:17.

⁴“The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; **A God of faithfulness** and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He. (Deuteronomy 32:4)

¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; **Your word is truth.** (John 17:17)