

MOODY DISTANCE LEARNING

God is faithful and true, Part 1

Greg Wheatley:

Welcome to Radio School of the Bible. This program is a ministry of the Center for External Studies, which is a part of the Moody Bible Institute located in Chicago. Now, each quarter we take up a different topic on Radio School of the Bible. Sometimes a Bible study, sometimes a topical study, and that actually is the case this quarter, because we're studying the topic of God's will for your life. Our instructor is Dr. Bill Thrasher, professor of Bible and Theology in the graduate school of Moody Bible Institute.

Well, we've been talking about the righteousness of God and how very important it is to understand what this means in terms of understanding God's will. So without any further delay, let's get right into today's study with Dr. Bill Thrasher.

Dr. Bill Thrasher:

Thank you, Greg. I'd like to lead us today into the beginning of looking at God's faithfulness and God's truthfulness. We've seen that as we get to know God, a byproduct of that will be to experience His will, and we sought to demonstrate that by looking at a variety of His attributes: that He's a person, He's a spirit, He's immutable, eternal, omniscient, omnipresent and wise and omnipotent and holy and love and righteous, and today, faithful and true.

We've seen that there's a lot more to these than just a correct list of words, but this describes a person, and these truths are to be thought upon, as the Psalms would say, 'I've thought on thy loving kindness', and they are to be responded to. This idea of God being faithful and true, it's wonderful as you pursue doing His will, that He's absolutely faithful and He's absolutely true.

Joshua will record there – Joshua 21:45, "Not one of His good promises have failed." I don't know what promises you're counting upon today, but, you know, you can be sure if they're a promise of God, it is true. Certainly one promise is: He'll never leave you, never forsake you. He hasn't forsaken you. You may be confused, you may not sure exactly what God's next step is, but God's will be to, what? Live one day at a time and look to Him. He's true. If the whole world was a liar, it says, "Let God be found true, although the whole world may be a liar."

In other words, the lack of response to God's truth doesn't in any way affect the character of God. God is true. Unlike in a sense, the character of Satan. Satan is what? Declared to be a liar and a murderer. John 8:44, "Because we have, he's poisoned in a sense the human race, as he drew one away from God. But the Lord in His wonder has devised a plan that we can be restored through Him, through the Lord Jesus.

You see, it's wonderful to what? God's will involves trusting Him, putting your ultimate confidence in Him and not in man. Blessed is he who trusts in God. Cursed is he who trusts in man.

So there's a lot of reasons man can become unfaithful and untruthful. Maybe just out of fear. Through our shame, probably there have been times fear has struck us and we haven't told the truth. That's what happened to Abraham. That's what happened to his son, Isaac.

Now, he confessed that and he restored himself to the Lord, and we're encouraged by that as we see Abraham and how God developed him into a man of faith. But fear, or sometimes even the lack of desire or lack of interest, certainly it's God's will that you be faithful, in a sense, to the vows of your life, to the marriage vows of your life. That's the greatest – one of the greatest securities in a sense in your life, those vows that God will remember and He'll give you the grace to live out as you trust Him.

Well, God, unlike man, unlike Satan, is absolutely faithful and absolutely true, and we're to look to a God who is faithful. Now, as I've studied Scripture, I've seen that there's particular times that are emphasized in regard to leaning upon the faithfulness of God, and I think this will help you in pursuing God's will. Now, certainly all of life we're to be trusting Him. That is to be the very posture of our life as we looked at faith in an earlier broadcast and we saw that without faith it's impossible to please Him.

We looked at some evidences that we are living by faith, but special times to lean on God's faithfulness. One such time is this, at the beginning of each day, at the beginning of each day. You know, probably if I were to say, Greg, what's probably the most well known verse in the Old Testament in regard to the faithfulness of God?

Greg Wheatley: I think probably Lamentations 3, great is thy faithfulness

Dr. Bill Thrasher: Absolutely, which is the origin of the hymn.

Greg Wheatley: Mm hmm.

Dr. Bill Thrasher: Great is thy faithfulness. And it says, “Thy mercies are new every morning great as thy faithfulness.” You know, so – I think there’s a lot of reasons, and of course, I’m talking to somebody who gets up extremely early every day, cause you – probably sometimes you hear him here early in the morning. And I get up early too, you know, but it’s – it’s not always easy to get up early in the morning, and I think there’s a lot of reasons other than just physical that sometimes it’s hard to get up. You know, someone has said that many a mighty men are pinned by those sheets every morning, because – you know, there’s something sometimes that just feels cozy about being under those sheets or that bed, cause sometimes there’s something about that day that we don’t want to face.

And so I think it helps me to know that God wants me thinking about His faithfulness the very first thing. In other words, I don’t know how something is going to work out, and so you can pretend to try to dodge it or dread it, but God says, “No, face it. But face it looking also through the asset of my faithfulness. I’m faithful, depend upon me.” And sometimes we need that, quite frankly, to take that first step out of bed in the morning.

Greg Wheatley: That’s right. I forget who it was, Dr. Thrasher, but not too long ago I heard someone talk about the first responsibility of the morning is to get your mind programmed, in a sense, to dwell on what you’re saying, on God’s faithfulness, so that the direction is set for the day. So really, in a sense, I know a lot of people have their devotional times at varying times in the day, and I’m sure that’s fine, but in a sense, maybe there is something to say for doing that in the morning when it’s possible, so that we do get our minds programmed correctly.

Dr. Bill Thrasher: That’s true. I think there’s a great emphasis upon that in Scripture. I think in Psalm 5:3, “In the morning, I’ve directed my prayer to you, and I will eagerly watch.” Not that we’re here in a sense to badger somebody on the head. It may be that the first few minutes of the day can be given to the Lord, and it may be that later some of the time there may be a prolonged time. God can work that out as they develop their relationship with Him.

But there is something special about the first part of the day. It’s sort of like the rudder for the day. Now, in saying this, I remember when an individual was drilling that into my mind and my heart and I said, “Okay, Lord, you know, the first of the day, it’s so important to set the direction of the day.” In fact, I remember a godly preacher saying for him, he didn’t feel the freedom until the very first thing in the day look in the newspaper, because it tends to make him lazy toward spiritual things. But set that time with God.

But, you know, as I was seeking to work that out, there would be some times the first of the day was just discouraging. They get off to a bad start, and, okay, Lord, I know this first of the day is so important, and so I don't know—what am I going to do? Just go back to bed and try again tomorrow? You know, that's not the answer. But – but it's, like, you know, help me. I would tell the Lord, "Lord, I've already showed you if I take the day in today's hands and make a mess of it. And so, Lord, I'm going to praise you for what you're going to do with this day. I've already shown you I would make a mess of it." And so there is a way of rebounding back to God. God – God is faithful, but the – leaning upon that faith, in regard to the first part of the day is very important.

Another time in regard to leaning upon God's faithfulness is in regard to during times of trials and temptations. In fact, we said that familiar verse, "No temptation has overtaken you such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tested more than – more than you can handle and will provide a way of escape." So looking to the faithfulness of God in temptations.

Now, certainly when they're familiar temptations, sometimes that means preparing ahead for those things have tripped us up and we know would trip us up. Maybe it would be – it would be obeying the admonition of Romans 13:14, which says, "Make no provisions for the flesh." You know, if we know something, well, sometimes there can be preparations ahead.

But God is faithful. Sometimes to prepare ahead for those things and sometimes I find it helpful to pray over things that have tripped me up in the past. Lord, I'm going to be getting in this situation, and sometimes that situation, when I get in a conversation with this person it brings the worst out in me. And so – and so praying ahead for that and just experiencing the faithfulness of God, that is a time we can experience God's faithfulness, during the trials and temptations of our life.

In fact, God says, you know, talk to me about your temptations. That's been a tremendous help to me, is take your temptations and turn those into conversations with God. I don't think you'll ever get in trouble, you know, just talking to God, walking in the light with Him about your temptations. If you walk those in the light, I'd define that – that can take even some of the deceitful appeal out of that temptation when you walk in the light. Anything you remain – that remains secretive inside of you, you can never conquer. Now, sometimes opening up in the light means opening up in the light not only of God, but also another believer. But it is a time to experience the faithfulness of God.

Now, closely connected to that also, another special time to experience God's faithfulness and lean on His faithfulness is during times where there's Satanic conflict, where there's – it's more than just the flesh. One of my favorite versus is 2 Thessalonians 3:3, which says, "That God is faithful, who will guard you from the evil one and strengthen you."

Now, when they talk about Satan, how does Satan work, well, Satan works in regard to our – our minds. That's how he seeks to influence our life, by leading us astray, in the words of 2 Corinthians, "From the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ." He seeks to work in our thoughts. And so we need to realize, God says don't be ignorant of his schemes. I think all of us as God's children have the right to say, "Lord, would you expose the schemes of Satan that he uses against us."

Now, some schemes are very common in all of our life. He throws fiery darts of fear or feeling inferior. He can intensify even our flesh in regard to intensifying our fleshy drives, or whatever. But what I'm saying is we can trust God's faithfulness in exposing Satan's schemes, and also in leading us to His provisions. His provisions, of course, his strength. "Be strong in the Lord, in the strength of His might," and also his armor, those pieces of armor that we read about there in Ephesians 6. My little boys were just sort of trying to memorize those pieces of armor there in Ephesians 6. It helps we have a little – sort of a toy soldier that – so you can look at that and you can see in a sense the pieces of armor there.

Well, God is a faithful God. Whatever you – you know, Scripture says there – it says being strong and being able to stand at the evil day. Maybe that's the kind of day you're experiencing today, where there's just a real – there will be days like that—there's a real propensity for evil, and you sense that, boy, one of my goals is just surviving this day. The good news is what? You can lean upon the faithfulness of God.

Greg Wheatley:

What a great word, and a word of encouragement for you today in whatever situation you find yourself, to lean hard upon the faithfulness of God. Thanks, Dr. Thasher. That's Dr. Bill Thrasher, who is professor of Bible and Theology in the graduate school at Moody Bible Institute. Our topic this quarter, God's will for your life. And this is Greg Wheatley. Thanks for joining us, and we'll see you next time on Radio School of the Bible.

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