

## CAN GOD CALL YOU FAITHFUL

Can God call you faithful? Have you been a faithful servant of the Lord for many, many years? It is such a wonderful thing. There are people you see all the time all over the world serving God. One of my greatest blessings has been to travel and see people that do not know much about America. Americans often think they are the ones carrying the Gospel out to the world, and they are over there just working their heads off. And they love God, especially in the nation of Belarus. Most people have never even heard of Belarus. It is very vague to them. It is the last country in Europe with a dictator. And this man has been in power for quite a few years now. The difference it makes to be in freedom serving God and being in a repressive country and serving God is huge. There is a big difference, and yet the people I met serving God I watched them over eight years. It did not matter if they had a bad president or a good president. It did not matter if their finances came in or they did not come in. Nothing mattered. They reminded me of little worker ants. They would just come up with more ways to get things done. To get God's work done. When it looked like there was no way it was going to happen, it would happen. They would say we want to build a church. We want to build a building. The government will not let us have church services unless we have a building, and we have no money. They will not let us meet in homes, they will not let us do anything. We have to have a building. We have to get permits. They are against us. They do not want to help us get permits. Everything is against us. Next thing you know, there would be that church.

During the communist era, there was this church and the people loved the pastor. I believe it was a Russian Orthodox Church. They loved him and they loved that church, and they wanted to serve God. And so the authorities said, we are going to get rid of him. He is a trouble maker. We are getting rid of him. He will not do what we want him to do, so we are going to get rid of him. Do you know what the people did? Now you talk about being faithful to what God wants. Those people circled that church with their bodies. They said if you get him you have to go through us, because we are all going to serve God.

Just think about when Joshua said, "Choose this day whom you will serve. As for me and my house, we are going to serve the Lord." Have you said that with your family? You may be a young father listening to this who does not have the background of being raised in a church. Maybe you do not know much about God, but there is something in you that is calling you. You can feel it. It is calling you to come. Come to God. Serve God. Serve him faithfully. God will show you how to do it. You can pray, "Lord make me a faithful servant. I want to be a good servant. You know Jesus even said, "I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends." There is an intimacy that you can move into with God. And anybody can have it that wants it. Do not ever let anyone tell you that cannot have it. You pay the price, you can have it. And it is worth the price, I can tell you that.

You know God's faithfulness to us is legendary isn't it? I mean all you have to do is read the Bible. All you have to do is read history, Christian history. But can God call you faithful to him? I was on a tour in Rome and went to this area called the catacombs. Have you heard of it? And it is out a little bit from Rome where there are a lot of graves. It is down below the ground and you can walk all through this area and see where all these period people are buried. The guide told us, "It has been said that this is where the Christians came when they were trying to escape from the Romans being cruel to them, but it is not true. However many Christians are buried here, and we want to show you their tombs." The one that made the most impression on me was a white marble tomb. On the top of it was the woman's body carved out in marble. She was lying on her side and she had three fingers on her hand standing up. You could also see where her neck had been severed. So the guard said, this is the story of that woman. She was wealthy, as you could tell by her tomb. But she was a believer in Jesus and she wanted to leave a testimony, and so she died for him. But she said when you bury me, I want you to bury me with three fingers standing up like this, for the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And so she has been a testimony for all of these years doing that. Her faithfulness has continued after her death and yours can too. It does not stop just because you stop. The things that you say go on forever.

I had a pastor one time say the reason you do not get your reward when you die is because your reward keeps going on. All the people you touch. All the people they touch. That faithfulness goes on for generations. You can teach your children how to faithfully serve the Lord. How to be there and do what God wants. And what a blessing it is to see that.

What does God require of you in terms of faithfulness? That you be faithful in the little things and then you will be faithful in the big things. Generally, if you can be faithful when things are little; would you do this, would you do that? Then you will be faithful when it is big. But I want to tell you something that I have learned. When you decide to help God, to serve God, to do something for God, have you ever noticed it always take more than you thought it would take? Have you ever noticed that when God has to discipline you it is not so pleasant? You just wish it would get over quick? Let me tell you a little prayer you can pray, and it is hard. I believe I heard Billy Graham say it, "Lord do not let this be over until I have learned everything I am supposed to learn, because I do not want to ever go through this again. That is part of faithfulness, being willing to be corrected and then continuing. You see people all the time that get corrected. Sometimes they say that it was just some man doing that, and that they are not doing that to me and I am out of here. And really, it was the Lord talking to them. He was trying to talk to them about something.

In 1 Corinthians 4:2 it says, "Moreover, it is required of a steward or a servant that a man be found faithful." If you cannot do anything else for Jesus, just be faithful through the years doing what He has called you to do. Just doing what He says in his Word. This is what I want you to do. Then you will be found faithful and you will be so glad some day. I heard someone say, do you know what you are going to do with your crowns? You are earning rewards right now, you are earning crowns. Do you know what you are going to do with those when you get to heaven? You are going to lay them at the feet of Jesus. Do not you want to have that? Do not you want to have those to lay at the feet of Jesus? It is going to be like going to a birthday party and you did not know you were supposed to bring a gift. And everybody there is giving the birthday person a gift and you do not have one. And you feel, oops, I feel weird. I feel embarrassed. But with faithfulness, faithfully serving the Lord you can do it. You have gifts to give him. They may surprise you. You might be really surprised.

Now I want to talk to you about some people who are examples of faithfulness in the Bible. Daniel is the first one I want to talk to you about. And I probably pray to be more like Daniel than anybody in the Bible because I admire him. I cannot wait to get to heaven and meet him. Why? What was so faithful about him? Well, he was faithful even in the presence of being thrown to the lions. He did not suddenly start screaming. Think about the Hebrew children when they were thrown in that fire. They said, "King Nebuchadnezzar, we believe our God will rescue us, but if he does not, we are still going to believe in him. We are still going to say that He is God. Now that's faithfulness. Do you think you would have that kind of faithfulness? Do we not all hope we would? I believe that God will give us grace to do it. There is nothing that you do in the Christian life that is by your own power. So if you have to be there, I believe it will be there.

Do you know who Corrie ten Boom was? She was a woman who lived in Holland, Amsterdam during World War II. She had spent her whole life serving God. She thought she was doing what she was supposed to be doing. She worked in her father's watch shop taking care of the watches. When she was a little girl, she spent a lot of time with her daddy and talked to him about things. One day she asked him, "Father, how do I know I would have enough faith to serve God even if it meant losing my life? How do I know I would be that faithful?" And her father said, "Corrie, when you get on the train, when do I give you your ticket?" She said, "Well, right before I get on the train." He said, "God will give you the faith right before you get there." And that is what happened to that woman. That is exactly what happened to her. She ended up hiding people, Jews, that the Germans were trying to kill. She was betrayed by a neighbor. Her family was. They all went to a concentration camp. Everyone in her family died except for Corrie. She lived to tell the story of God and she was a faithful Christian into her eighties. I know that at 82 she was still out preaching.

In Daniel 6:4 it says, "Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs. But they could not find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible and completely trustworthy." Wow. Wow. Wouldn't you love to have that said about you? Wouldn't you love for people to say that you are faithful, always responsible and completely trustworthy? Can God trust you? Can he trust that if He needs something done, He can ask you? He knows you will do it and He does not even have to wonder. Yes, I will do it Lord.

Who else in the Bible had that kind of faithfulness to God? Someone we can look up to and be our hero? Abraham. He was faithful to God when he had to move to a distant land, even when he did not know God very well yet. You see, you have to start out somewhere with God. And you have to start out somewhere being faithful. And Abraham was faithful even when he barely knew God. God just began to speak to

him. He said, "Abraham," except he called him Abram at that time. Come out from your father's house. Come out to a land I need you to go to. And the Bible says in Hebrews, Abraham went out not knowing. There are times in this faithful walk with God, that He is going to ask you to do some things and you will not know what is going to happen. You go out not knowing, but you know it is God. You know God is calling you to something. You just do not know how it is going to turn out or what is going to happen. But you obey.

When God called Abraham, he was probably living in the area that is present day Iraq. He had to go a long distance, move his family, his belongings, his servants and everything to another land. He had to live in tents. And through all of that, he came to know God better and better. And God spoke to him more and more. The most wonderful thing about being faithful to God is that He reveals more and more of Himself. He speaks to you in deeper and deeper ways. The longer you serve God, the more He can expand your ministry. That is why some of you are so frustrated. It is like, well why has He not done what I thought he was going to do? Well, have you been faithful? If you have not, repent. I love to repent. I think it is great. I love to say, I was wrong. I am sorry, please change me. If you do not change me, then I do not know if I can change or not Jesus. Change me. And He does. And I change.

I love the Bible because to me it is always full of surprises. I just did a search on Abraham and up pops this verse in Nehemiah. And I thought, what is Nehemiah doing talking about Abraham? Often we think, oh they all lived at the same time. No, they did not. They lived hundreds of years apart from each other, and they heard about each other. Nehemiah heard the stories of Abraham. Abraham heard the stories of Moses. Nehemiah 9:7-8 says, "You are the one true God, the God who chose Abram and brought him from Ur of the Chaldees and changed his name to Abraham. You found his heart to be steady and true to you. You signed a covenant with him to give him the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Perizzites, Jebusites, and Gergashites." Now that is a lot of "ites" is it not? It really is. Do you ever get tripped up with all those words? It does not matter, they were real people. God made a covenant to give Abraham the land because of his faithfulness. God will do things for you because of your faithfulness to Him. You will be so glad you have been faithful. Do not give up if you are discouraged. Do not quit trying. Maybe something has happened, and it all blew up and it looks like it is destroyed. My life is destroyed. It is over. It is never going to be like it ought to be. Oh, that is not true with God. That is not true at all. Maybe He let it be blown up because you would not move any other way. How about that? But here is the greatest thing that Nehemiah said, "and you kept your word because you are righteous." Now why do you think Nehemiah was talking to God about Abraham? It was because Nehemiah was being called by God to do something very difficult.

Nehemiah was also in that same land where Abraham had been, and he wanted to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the city. He had heard that the walls were down and there was hardly anybody there. It was in terrible shape. He was heart-broken because he was faithful to God, even in another country where nobody around him was a believer. And he had to encourage himself so he said, "God you were faithful to Abraham because you are the true God, the only God, the living God. And you were faithful to him. You made a covenant with him. And you gave him what you said you would give him because you are God, because you are righteous." He used that to encourage himself; get in this thing, do this thing, keep on with this thing, it is going to pay off.

Have you ever noticed that when you are trying hard to be faithful to God, there can be people around you that seem to be either religious or to know more than you know? They try to tell you not to do it, you are not going to succeed and it is not going to work. Think about Nehemiah. He is another example of great faithfulness. He built that wall so fast. People said that could not have happened. Well it did, because God said it did. And to make it worse, all these leaders were coming against him; unrighteous, ungodly, unbelieving men constantly harassing him. The people were also fearful. He was just determined to faithfully complete the job that God had assigned him.

Who is somebody else in the Bible that was faithful to God? Joseph. Oh, isn't Joseph's story amazing? He had the gift of administration. It is such a wonderful gift, if you have that gift. It is so needed in the body of Christ. You can be a fiery preacher and not be able to administrate your business. You can have a great ministry everywhere, but if you cannot keep it in order, what good does it do? It is a big mess. And Joseph had that ability. And everywhere he went, he could see what needed to be done. He did such a good job of administrating everything when he was living in Potiphar's house, the man who was the captain of the guard for the Pharaoh, that Potiphar put him over everything. Then he was accused wrongly, and he was put in prison. The prison was in the basement of Potiphar's house. He had been the administrator of everything, and now he was in prison in the same place. That would be a good

reason to give up on God. He had that dream when he was a young boy of what was going to be happening to his life. I think we are all like that, we kind of know what is going to happen. I think God puts it inside us. I know he does for a lot of people. So there he was in prison. What did he do? He did what he always did. Steady, steady faithfully serving people in the way he was equipped to do. What happened to him? Well, the jailor put him in charge of everything in the prison. He was just going along and still people disappointed him. Two men that had a chance to really help him because he interpreted their dreams forgot him. They got busy and were just glad they were out of prison themselves. They forgot him, and he was still left in that prison. Now I want to tell you something, one of the ways that you learn to be faithful is when things are hard. You can be faithful when everybody loves you and you have everything you need. It is difficult to be faithful when life is hard, but that is when God judges. He says, oh, look at this, isn't he faithful? And we want to be like that.

Joseph was faithful to God when everybody around him disappointed him. He could have given up. Your life may be like that right now. But look, Joseph just kept on. Now let me ask you something. What does it take to stop you? Have you ever asked yourself that? Have you said something like, "Well, that's it, I am not doing that. If I have to do that, I am not doing it. That is too hard. I am not doing it." And God says, cannot you just have the attitude to just keep going until? In other words; whatever it takes, however long it takes, whatever I have to go through, I do not care. I will keep at it until it happens. And that is how we need to be about serving Jesus. I will until. Until I see His face. Face to face with Him. I will do it. I will be faithful to you God. Give me the power to do it. Yet many people look like they are religious and yet the faithfulness is just not there.

God says to be a fruit inspector. What kind of fruit are you seeing in the person's life? God judges people by their fruit. Look at Psalm 5:9 from the Amplified Bible, "For there is nothing trustworthy or steadfast or truthful in their talk; their heart is destruction [or a destructive chasm, a yawning gulf]; their throat is an open sepulcher; they flatter and make smooth with their tongue." Have you ever known anyone like that? They say all the right words, but something in my heart says, "No, no it is all talk and not on the inside."

What would our lives be like if we were faithful the way God sees faithfulness? Many of you have been faithful. God bless you for it, especially if you have been through extremely difficult circumstances. People who have served faithfully for a long time have a look on their face of joy, peace and contentment. The attributes of faithfulness are steady in service, always looking for a way to serve the Lord, always looking for a ministry to be involved in and always available to Him. I used to tell the Lord, and I meant it, "When you are looking around for someone to do something, I want you to say 'Betty will do it. If I ask Betty she will do it'." You can do it, too. We can do it together.

It is important to have a great "can do" attitude. Lately I have had people come into my life with the most beautiful attitudes; anything you ask them to do, anything, sure, no problem, can do, you bet. It is different than how people normally act when things go bad; moaning and groaning, saying oh no and laughing about some aspect of it. I cannot help but notice it when people are so positive, because there are not many like that. Does God have very many who are like that? Do we want to be like that when God looks at us? In our quiet place where no one can hear us, and we are not moaning and groaning and complaining. The children of Israel wandered for 40 years when they could have made the trip in about two weeks. What was the deal? They kept coming up against hard times and would grumble and complain. They could have just said, "I do not care what it looks like, I am going on with God. If He said we are going to the Promised Land, we are going to the Promised Land. That's the way it is."

Be open to instruction. God will give you instructions. Even if they are hard, you can still do them. Another important thing is to always speak highly of God. Sometimes you may be thinking, "Well, wait a minute God, you didn't help me. You didn't do it the way I thought it should be done. I do not think I like that." You know that temptation, do not do it. Just say, "I do not know what's going on, but I know the Lord, and He is good. He is always good."

Let's look at a couple of Scriptures. Psalm 40:10 says, "I 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 89:1 states, "I will sing of the lovingkindness of the LORD forever. To all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth." So you can sing and praise and be faithful.

Quiet Time Questions:

1. What does God require to be faithful?
2. Part of being faithful involves allowing God to correct you. Are you willing to submit to His correction?
3. Can you God call you faithful?
4. Who are some of the faithful people in the Bible, and what makes them stand out to you?
5. What are the rewards of faithfulness?
6. Have you ever thought about what it takes to stop you from getting something done for God? Describe a time when you persevered, even when everything and everyone seemed to be stacked up against you.
7. How can a person learn to be faithful?

To watch the video, CAN GOD CALL YOU FAITHFUL, go to 7IG\_83 at [www.bettyswann.com](http://www.bettyswann.com)

Permissions: Feel free to reproduce and distribute any articles written by Betty Swann, in part or in whole, in any format, provided that you do not alter the wording in any way or charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction. It is our desire to spread this information, not protect or restrict it. Please include the following statement on any distributed copy: by Betty Swann, Betty Swann Ministries, P.O. Box 8882, Amarillo, TX 79114-8882, phone 806-433-4649, [www.bettyswann.com](http://www.bettyswann.com), [betty@bettyswann.com](mailto:betty@bettyswann.com)