

God's Continuing Faithfulness

By Barbara Johnson

God has always been and is faithful. He continues to work in marvelous ways as I get out of the way and allow His Spirit free course. This past year has been a time of instruction for just that. It has been a testing time for interactions with acquaintances, friends and family. It has also been a time for letting go of my own past presumptions, stubbornness and willfulness. This is an ongoing process.

By making an effort to stay close and meditate on God's Word when I've been at a loss as to how to conduct myself or deal with an unfamiliar situation at hand {Ps 119:15} gives us guidance: I will meditate on thy precepts and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes, I will not forget thy Word."

He continues to keep me grounded in the midst of turbulence and for that I am very grateful. The rocky time of estrangement from loved ones, financial uncertainty, career path choices have almost lead to a state of indecision. Finally, I determined and decided to literally put God first even if that meant just sitting quietly and focusing my thoughts on His Word. Ruminating on His truths might be a better description. Sitting still has not been easy for me as I usually tend to act in some way. Waiting on God has become a challenging discipline.

Another spiritual discipline that has also been challenging is praying early in the morning. It seems I can rationalize all kinds of reasons for not needing to bend my knees and open the Word and pray. Although my flesh may not feel like praying, I am so thankful afterwards because God, then, sets up my day. Knowing that I have acknowledged Him first fills me with a calm and peace. Although I may not have the details regarding the course of my day, God does. Knowing this is a relief and then I am thankful for the choice I made that morning. This is an area in my spiritual life that requires constant effort.

I'd like to convey that God truly responds to our faithfulness (James 4:8). His will may not be clearly revealed to us and our relationship of faith may seem tenuous at times, especially when we do not perceive

His will in our lives but He always delivers with rock solid directives and guidance as long as we reach out to Him. There is a certain weightiness in waiting for Him. It is an almost palpable passing of time; knowing that He is working out something that will be in my best interest; something that I could never do on my own. (Rom. 8:25), (Gal. 5:5) Trust, is key to having His best and this requires real commitment and most importantly establishing priorities.

So, I have purposed to stay close to His Word instead of straying in order to move forward in the most efficient and effective way. On a practical level, I have joined another Bible study in order to increase my time in the Word and in fellowship. The study meets in the evenings and has been a blessing as we are studying Proverbs and have group discussions. I can apply what I've learned for the rest of the week. It is a discipline to not lean on my understanding (Proverbs 3:5) as I always have but He is exercising in me the fruit of patience as I wait on Him.

Allocating time for study has proved to be challenging as excuses and distractions easily crop up and time slips away. Another week has passed swiftly and I have not spent the intended time in His Word. There are no valid excuses that I can truly give for this.

Walking with the Lord is an individual and corporate journey. I must fellowship with other believers, and not only on my own. We are the Body of Christ (Acts 2:42) I am very grateful for fellowship time, to be encouraged, edified and strengthened. People often ask me, "How are you doing?" Invariably, I respond that I am doing well, taking one day at a time and staying in the Word. This is truly the case. I find assurance in knowing that no matter what happens, as long as I am drawing near to Him, He is drawing near to me and is ever present in my daily trials (Heb 10:22).

We, as believers, have no other foundation as strong as our God to draw near to, to cling to, to focus on and meditate on in the stormy uncertainties of this world.

♥ A Merry Heart ♥

Atheist: "Do you honestly believe that Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish?"

Preacher: "I don't know, sir, but when I get to heaven, I'll ask him."

Atheist: "But suppose he isn't in heaven?"

Preacher: "Then you ask him."



A racehorse is an animal that can take several thousand people for a ride at the same time.



There was a Catholic priest who liked to bet on horses. There was one particular horse he favored and when that horse was running he would always go down to the stables to pray and bless the horse. A Baptist noticed when the priest did this the horse always won. So he decided to put money on that horse because it kept on winning every time the priest prayed for it. On a particular day the priest went down to the stables, blessed the horse with water and prayed over it. At once the Baptist went and placed his bet. The horse came in last. Feeling very angry, and very poor, the Baptist challenged the priest. "Every time you pray, your horse wins. I saw you pray today, and I bet, but he came in last!" The priest replied, "You know nothing about our Roman Catholic sacraments. You have to know the difference between a blessing, and the last rites."



There is the story of a minister who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: "I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets."



A young man once asked God how long a million years was to him. God replied, "A million years to me is just like a single second to you."

The young man asked God what a million dollars was to him. God replied, "A million dollars to me is just like a single penny to you."

Then the young man got his courage up and asked, "God, could I have one of your pennies?"

God smiled and replied, "Certainly, just a second."

LET THERE BE TRUTH



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