*THE PRACTICE of GODLINESS* by Jerry Bridges

**Chapter Twelve– “FAITHFULNESS” – Proverbs 20:6**

**“Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?”**

**(Proverbs 20:6)**

*“…The entire Bible is a treatise on the theme of the faithfulness of God. God’s faithfulness appears in precept or illustration on almost every page. It is impossible to describe the acts of God without in some way touching upon His faithfulness to His own. In our effort to become like God in our character, we must ensure that the grace of faithfulness is very high in our value system. This is not a natural virtue, as indicated by Solomon’s lament, “Many a man claims to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?” (Prov. 20:6). Many people will profess faithfulness, but very few will demonstrate it.” (pg. 148)*

**F** aithfulness is absolutely an essential character quality for one who desires to live a godly life.

**A** ccording to the scriptures we not only see the faithfulness of God declared but also see the

**I** ntense struggles of the godly person who lived totally dependent upon God’s faithfulness in

**T** he battles of life. *“…And under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield…”*

**H** ere in Psalm 91:4b we see the psalmist’s resolve to firmly fix himself to God’s faithfulness!

**F** or we too, must be absolutely dependent upon God’s faithfulness not only through all of the

**U** ncertainties we face in life, but also for deliverance from temptation (1 Cor. 10:13), for His

**L** oving promise to sanctify us (1 Thess. 5:23), for His forgiveness of our sins (1 Jn. 1:9), for the

**N** eeded hope that is necessary in times of suffering (1 Pet. 4:19), and for the fulfillment of our

**E** ternal and final salvation (1 Cor. 1: 8-9). Our lives must rest on God’s faithfulness! (pg.147)

**S** urely we can trust and be assured that “The LORD is faithful to all His promises” (Ps. 145:13).

**S** o, in light of taking a glimpse into God’s character of faithfulness towards us*,* we must ask ourselves this: In my effort to become like God in character, how do I practice faithfulness towards God and others?

Let’s take a brief look together at the heart of this chapter:

**Faithfulness entails UNQUESTIONABLE HONESTY-**

*Motivation for honesty:* Pro. 12:22; Lev. 19:11; Ex. 20:16; Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9-10; Jam. 3:14

*Mortifying dishonesty:* Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal and repent of “any lying or deceit: in word, act, attitude—or silence; in deliberate exaggerations, in distortions of the truth, in creating false impressions, or manipulating the facts of a story just a bit.” (pg.149-150)

*Manifestations of honesty:* We are called to be like Jesus—unquestionably honest (Jn.8:46).

**Faithfulness entails UTTER DEPENDABILITY-**

*Motivation for dependability:* Dan. 6:3-4; Prov. 10:26; Psalm 15; Philippians 2:20-22

*Mortifying irresponsibility and unreliability:* Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal and repent of any laziness, not keeping your word, making excuses that inhibit you from keeping your promises and your commitments, and seeking your own personal interest’s instead of Christ’s.

*Manifestations of dependability:* Called to be like Jesus—utterly dependable (Mark 14:12-*16*).

**Faithfulness entails UNSWERVING LOYALTY-**

*Motivation for loyalty:* Proverbs 17:17, Proverbs 18:24, Proverbs 27:6

*Mortifying disloyalty:* Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal and repent of any “blind loyalty.” This kind refuses to not only confront sin in others but refuses to offer godly correction…Loyalty says, “I care enough about you that I will not allow you to continue unchecked in your wrong action or sinful attitude that will ultimately be harmful to you.” (pg.155)

*Manifestations of loyalty:* We are called to be like Jesus—unswervingly loyal (Heb.13:5)

Ladies, I will close with a few of Jerry Bridge’s challenges and thoughts, “Do you seek to be scrupulously honest? Can others depend on you even when it is costly? Will you stick by your friend when he *or she* is in difficulty, and will you confront him *or her* in love when he *or she* is wrong?” “…faithfulness to God includes faithfulness to one another. That is the ultimate point of each of the Scripture passages we have considered *in this chapter*. It is God who requires that we be faithful in all of our earthly relationships *with the aid of the Holy Spirit.* So only if we seek to grow in the grace of faithfulness toward one another will we have any hope of hearing our Lord say, “Well done, good and faithful servant (Matthew 25:21).” (pg.156 *italicized mine*)

Pressing onward and looking upward in our pursuit of holiness and our practice of godliness,

Christyn