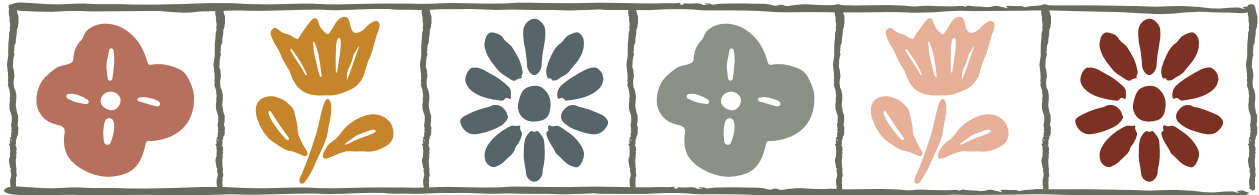


Fix Your Eyes: 5 Devotions on God's Faithfulness

BY GRETCHEN SAFFLES



Day 1 | God is faithful when we are faithless

If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

2 Timothy 2:13

There are seasons when I wake up and can't wait to open my Bible, and there are seasons when I leave it closed and reach for my phone instead. When I desire the things of this world more than God, he hasn't changed—I have. The things of this world, especially the constant entertainment available on my phone, weaken my love for God, and these things are fleeting at best.

Even in these wayward, half-hearted seasons, my faithless life does not nullify God's faithfulness. C.S. Lewis writes of our predicament when we choose the world over the Word: "It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."¹

I'm like that child who goes on making mud pies in the slums when I could be delighting in the riches of God's Word. And yet, God is faithful to draw me to him, to reinvigorate my love for him, to be true to his promises. His invitation to enjoy a holiday at the sea as we bask in the beauty of the gospel is still mine to take, and it's yours, too.

FIX YOUR EYES ON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Spend some time in reflection and prayer, asking God to reveal his faithfulness to you over the next few days.

¹ C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2001), 26.

Day 2 | God is faithful to extend mercy

The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22–23

I keep a long record of my wrongs: became angry with my husband, lost my temper with my children, was jealous of my friend's success, complained about my circumstances, and so on. I shackle myself to shame. I'm imprisoned in a cycle of condemnation when I define my identity by my failures rather than coming to Christ in repentance and receiving his forgiveness.

In the book of Lamentations, the author grieves over unrepentant sin that led to the fall of Jerusalem. In his faithfulness, God fulfilled the warning he gave to his people—if they did not repent and turn from their sin and obey him, they would be judged and receive just punishment. You might be wondering, *How could God be faithful in judging his people?* Lamentations 2:17a explains, “The LORD has done what he purposed; he has carried out his word.” God is who he says he is and does what he says he will do. Fulfilling his word is part of his faithfulness, including his words of judgment.

God is faithful to his holiness, but he is also faithful to extend mercy: “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lam. 3:22–23). God's new mercies supplied to his people free them from the prison of their sin. Through repentance, we find forgiveness and freedom.

When my mind starts to recite the record of my wrongs, God's new mercies invite me to repent and rest in Jesus. On the cross, Christ took on the judgment we rightly deserve, and now we can say with confidence, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

If you feel consumed by your failures today, look to Jesus, who fulfilled God's promises and purchased our forgiveness with his blood. God's mercies are new every morning, and by his grace, we are not consumed or condemned.

FIX YOUR EYES ON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Repent of your sin, surrender the record of wrongs you keep, and embrace the new mercies offered to you today in Christ.

Day 3 | God is faithful in our time of need

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

The moment I wake up, my mind floods with worries, to-dos, and *what-didn't-I-get-done-yesterday?* thoughts. I'm a recovering perfectionist, still learning what it looks like to pry my fingers off my plans and hand them to the Lord. My

worrisome thoughts try to convince me that I'm capable of holding the world together and being self-sufficient if I strive hard enough, but what they really show is that I'm an incredibly needy person.

As a wife and mother to three young children in the 1800s, Annie Sherwood Hawks was keenly aware of her own need for God's help in her life. One day, as she was doing her daily tasks, she became utterly "filled with the sense of neediness to the Master" and wrote these lines:

*I need Thee ev'ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.
I need Thee, O I need Thee;
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.²*

Annie's realization that there was no need to worry—only a need for God's presence and peace—transformed her and became part of a treasured hymn. Her testimony rings in my ears when my mind is filled with fear and anxiety. It beckons me to pray, plead, and sing, "I need thee, O I need thee; every hour I need thee."

It is always a good thing to be needy for God. Come to the throne of grace with confidence and find God's faithful help in time of need.

FIX YOUR EYES ON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

When you feel overwhelmed, say or sing this simple prayer of surrender: *I need thee, O I need thee; every hour I need thee.*

Day 4 | God is faithful to transform us through his Word

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.
Psalm 19:7-9

It's time to do it all over again. The dishes need washing, the laundry needs folding, the trash cans need emptying, and I'm tempted to include studying my Bible in this list. Sometimes my time in God's Word becomes a "have to" instead of a "get to," a task to check off instead of a delight to partake in. But my soul needs to be reminded of the promises of God day by day. I need the light of Christ in the Word of God to shine on the darkness of my circumstances.

Consider this: you did absolutely nothing to cause the sun to rise today, but you can fellowship with the One who did. True to his Word, God does not fail us or forsake us, even in the monotony of our lives. The same sun that faithfully rises each day is called forth by the same God who is faithful in every season. And God has caused his Son, Jesus, to

² Annie S. Hawks, "I Need Thee Every Hour," 1872, https://hymnary.org/text/i_need_thee_every_hour_most_gracious_lor.

shine on our darkened hearts with the light of the gospel, just as the sun illuminates the darkness of this world each morning.

G.K. Chesterton writes, “For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony. It is possible that God says every morning, ‘Do it again’ to the sun, and every evening, ‘Do it again’ to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we.”³

As we wake up each morning and remember that we did nothing to cause the sun to rise, we are granted endurance to open our Bibles and read the Word once more. God is faithful to fulfill his promises to revive our souls, rejoice our hearts, and enlighten our eyes again and again, and endless delight awaits in the repetition of reading his Word.

FIX YOUR EYES ON GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

Do it again today, friend. Open the Word and soak in God’s promises as he transforms what might otherwise seem mundane into worship.

Day 5 | God is faithful in our weakness

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

2 Corinthians 12:9a

Weak is the absolute last thing I want to add to my resume, but the apostle Paul urges us to boast in our weakness. Paul had a religious resume unlike any other (2 Cor. 11:16–29). But he also had a thorn given to him “in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass [him], to keep [him] from becoming conceited” (2 Cor. 12:7). Paul begged the Lord to remove the thorn, but instead the Lord told him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9a).

Paul responded exactly the opposite of how humans respond in the flesh—he gladly boasted of his weakness so the power of Christ would rest upon him. Here we see the paradox of what it means to be strong as a Christian: when we are weak, he is strong. Boasting in weakness looks like willingly admitting that we don’t keep the world spinning; God does. When we embrace the thorn pressed into our flesh, we receive God’s grace and supernatural strength. In this posture, we learn to rely on Christ alone.

Running from our weakness will never make us strong. The power of Christ belongs to those who accept their weakness as a means of grace and rely on him.

We come to Christ as weak vessels, hunched over in humility because of the thorn piercing our flesh, knowing that our Savior wore a crown of thorns in our stead so we could have his strength to continue on this journey for his glory.

FIX YOUR EYES ON GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

Make a list of your weaknesses. Next to each one, write how you’ve seen God’s faithfulness to give you strength to endure and how you’ve seen his power on display.

³ G.K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), 91–92.