



The Senior Scene



Love people. Know Jesus. Live Transformed.

Volume 23

April/May 2024

God's Faithfulness

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
Lam. 3:22-23

We love this verse, don't we? God's faithfulness is the rock we plant our feet on. It's the assurance that He will do what He says He will; that He will never fail us even when everyone else does.

Yes, we believe it, but too often we forget it in our responses to life's challenges. God's people have had that problem from early days. The people of Israel experienced a miraculous deliverance from slavery and then miraculous provision of food in the wilderness. God came through for them every single day for 40 years, and yet they persisted in moaning and fretting and complaining. It's easy for us to say, "didn't they ever learn?" But do we?

How many times have I agonized over stressful circumstances and have fretted over how to "fix" it. I lob up a quick prayer and tell myself I'm waiting on His timing when what I'm actually doing is frantically trying to work it out for myself.

And then I watch in utter amazement as He has "fixes" it with a solution I never could have imagined. It happens too many times to be coincidence, and yet I am apparently a slow learner because when I again face uncertain circumstances, I fall into the same trap. How do I so quickly forget how He has always helped me in the past? Why is it when life throws us a curve ball, our initial response often is not to just trust God, but instead to question why He would let it happen or to fret about what "I" am going to do about it?

All of us seem prone to forget what God has done for us. And so, we need to pause periodically to look back over our life and see how He's provided, guided, and guarded us along the way. He is faithful! He always has our good in mind! (Even if it's not the same "good" we envision or want!) In spite of our circumstances and in spite of the anxiety we harbor in our hearts, God has a way of bringing good out of difficult circumstances that isn't always easy to see when you are going through them. (Romans 8:28).

Here is another verse we can rest in - *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.* (Hebrews 10:23) Unswervingly – that's how we hold on to His faithfulness.

Peter was a man that we could not always describe as unswerving. He is a favorite of many people, probably because even though he was a chosen disciple of Jesus and went on to do great things for Him, he was also flawed and was so very human in his responses to life. He was quick to jump out of the boat toward Jesus in a burst of faith, but then suddenly he notices the wind and the waves, and he panics. And the Lord says, "Why were you afraid, oh you of little faith." Again, aren't we the same? We start running toward Jesus, and then our heads swivel toward the turmoil of the wind and waves around us and we let them overwhelm us instead of simply holding the hand of the One who can speak peace to both. We forget who is holding us up.

How many times has God provided exactly what you needed – either miraculously or by simply orchestrating everyday events? While we are fretting and straining, He is faithfully working for our good. Even our wavering and unbelief and sin cannot nullify His faithfulness to us.

We are weak and weary, but our heavenly Father is all-powerful. Our feelings fluctuate, but He is unchangeable. Our minds are frustrated, but He is peaceful. Our eyes wander, but He is steadfast in His watch over us.

Can we walk on water? Maybe not. But we know that the version of the wind and the waves that is surrounding us in our lives is not too much for Him to calm. Our strength for the present and hope for the future are not based on our own stability or perseverance but on the constancy of God. No matter what our need, we can be certain of this – great is His faithfulness.



In Him I Trust

I was saved at my dad's house, in my bedroom, while watching the 700 Club in 1976. Pat Robertson asked who would like to give their life to Jesus? I found myself on my knees in front of the TV. I was going to turn to another channel and Pat said, "Don't turn that dial!" I asked Jesus to be my Lord and Savior then.

It was in 1976 that I was introduced to a group named Ephesians 5 - a Christian Outreach where most were born again believing hippies. It was there that I learned how to pass out tracts to people and pray for them. Later in 1982, I wed a wonderful born again and Spirit filled woman named Joani.

In 2022, God brought back together my friends, Pastor Chuck and Joe - friends I met at Ephesians 5. We have been evangelizing and praying for people on the streets of Pittsburgh. Pastor Chuck and I started evangelizing on the buses and since Joe joined us, we have been in Pittsburgh, Oakland, Bellevue, Butler, and the North Side.

God has asked that we let the church body know that God wants them to come together to be able to break through the power of the evil one. It is time to take back what satan has had all these years for Christ's power is in His sons and daughters who truly love Him and are born again and Spirit filled. God wants MPC and other churches to stand up for Him. Only through the born-again believers will the church grow.

Various things like traditions, bitterness, resentment, and politics are holding people back. But it is not our way but God's way.

Let us lift up our hands and hearts to our Father. God will show all of us what we need to repent of. When we seek Him with all our heart, by His grace, He will help us repent and shake the bad things away.

God planted Joani and I in many areas. Faith Community in South Hills was where we met. We went to Beacon Full Gospel in Oakland and Bethel Assembly on the North Side where I served at times on the Board. Last year, God called us to relocate and led us to MPC where we joined in March 2023. Over these many years, God has proved to be my refuge and fortress. In Him I/we trust. (Psalm 91:2)

(Isaiah 6:9-10; Ezekiel 32:36; Matthew 13:15-17)

Dan Hayden

2nd Thursday

We invite you to join us for the next 2nd Thursday lunch on April 11th. Menu: stuffed shells, salad, and dessert. After lunch we will welcome historian and author, Gary Augustine who will present the topic – Abraham Lincoln, the Women in His Life. Gary has enjoyed a lifelong fascination with the people and events which have shaped our world. Gary has spoken at Civil War roundtables, military history seminars, and adult university programs as well as appearing on radio talk shows. Using primary sources such as Civil War actions reports, he has taught history classes to high school and adult students. Prepaid registration of \$10 for this luncheon is due by Friday, April 5.



Then in May, join us on 9th for the last luncheon of the season. Enjoy a grilled chicken salad for lunch along with the popular make-your-own-sundae bar! After lunch we will welcome back entertainer Vaughn Hudspath, Elvis impersonator. Prepaid registration of \$10 for this luncheon is due by Friday, May 3.

At all the luncheons this season, if you are able, please bring a non-perishable food item to donate to North Hills Community Outreach.

Summer Bible Study

David - a Man After God's Own Heart...

Thursdays June 6 thru August 15 at 10AM
in the Edinburgh Room.

In many ways, David was an extraordinary man - intelligent, handsome, abundantly gifted as a poet, musician, warrior, and leader. David brought his nation to a pinnacle of strength and glory. And yet in other ways, he was very ordinary, and often the light of the Golden Hero shone through the tarnish of personal and political upheaval. Why is he described as a man after God's own heart? David's life shows that devotion doesn't mean perfection; that God loves us in spite of our weaknesses and failures. When we look at the life of David, we can also look at the life of you and me because his is a very human story including all its wonder and joy as well as its fear and discouragement. Registration will open in May.

Faithfully

Songwriters: Kyle Williams / Toby McKeehan

*I've had a hard time
Finding the blue in the skies above me
And if I'm keeping it real
I've been half-faking the happy others see
I may look like the same man
But I'm half the man I was...*

*It's been a long year, it almost took me down,
I swear life was so good
I'm not so sure we knew what we had, but now
I'll never be the same man
I'll never feel like I felt before.*

*In my darkest hour, You met me
So quietly, so gently
You said You'd never leave
And You stood by Your word
So quietly, so gently
In all my pain, You met me
You said You'd never leave
And You stood by Your word.*

*But when my world broke into pieces
You were there faithfully
When I cried out to You, Jesus
You made a way for me
I may never be the same man
But I'm a man who still believes
When I cried out to You, Jesus
You were there faithfully.*

Typically, this column is about an old-time classic hymn of the church, but recently I heard this contemporary Christian song on the radio and heard the story behind it and wanted to share it with you. While we have not all had the exact same experience that led to the writing of this song, we have all felt the depth of pain that can cause us to “have a hard finding the blue in the sky.”

This song was written by Toby Mac (Toby McKeehan), a contemporary Christian musician and songwriter who has sold over 16 million albums and has garnered 7 Grammy awards. His career and his faith were on a fast track. Then tragedy struck in October 2019. This father of five tragically lost his firstborn son, Truett McKeehan, from an accidental overdose. Truett, 21, had just launched his own musical career. He had battled addictions in his past but was putting it behind him and was heading toward a bright future.

His family were proud of what he had seemingly overcome. And then the unthinkable happened.

And amid unimaginable sorrow, Toby wasn't sure he'd ever write another song. “I remember thinking, ‘How can I ever write a song again? How can I ever do anything again? Why is the world still moving?’” He lived in a world of raw grief.

When he went to his next songwriting session, he didn't experience the usual feeling of excitement and anticipation. Something felt not quite right. He couldn't help feeling, “Am I going to write songs like everything's back to normal?” He felt like he shouldn't go back to what he does, as if in going back to normal, in some way we dishonor our lost loved one.”

But not so. And then, he started leaning on his faith in God and battling his way out of that dark place of grief. There were times when it was a painful struggle, but as he pressed on, a glimmer of hope appeared. And he wrote this song “Faithfully,” an honest picture of a man who's experienced the goodness of God in the deepest of valleys. He describes it as a song that “is deeply personal” It's about God's faithfulness at the hardest times in life. In the end, He found our God to be kind. He meets us in the hardest places. It doesn't scare Him. He remains. “I will never be the same man, but I'm a man who still believes.”

The song is the story of TobyMac's journey after his son's death. A story that progressed in small steps from indescribable pain to slowly reaching a point of hope and trust that God would be present for him and his family as they dealt with the tragic loss. And he believes that people that listen to his music are no different. We're all trying to live out this faith and walk with God in this crazy world that hurts us and mixes us up sometimes. But we find our footing as we cling to God as the unshakeable goodness in a life that has so many broken pieces.

His song speaks to us in our own dark days when we look for a ray of hope from God's love to filter through the darkness until we come to a sense of acceptance that life comes with struggles and pain, but we can look to Jesus and say, “You were there faithfully.”



Puzzle Page – Welcome Spring and Summer

Find warm-weather words in this month's puzzle. The leftover letters reveal this month's Scripture



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AIR CONDITIONING

BARBECUE

BAREFOOT

BASEBALL

BEACH

BICYCLE

BIRDS

BREEZE

CAMP

DAFFODILS

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

FIREWORKS

FLIP FLOPS

FOURTH OF JULY

FRUIT

GARDEN

GOLF

GRASS

GRILL

HAMMOCK

HOTDOGS

ICE CREAM

LAWNMOWER

LAZY

LEMONADE

MEMORIAL DAY

OUTDOORS

PICNIC

POOL

POPSICLE

RAIN

RELAX

ROBIN

SAND

SPRINKLER

SUMMER SURGE

SUNGLASSES

SUNSCREEN

SUNSHINE

SWIMSUIT

TULIPS

VACATION

WATERMELON

