

ROBERT J MORGAN

GREAT

IS THY

FAITHFULNESS

52 REASONS TO TRUST GOD WHEN HOPE FEELS LOST

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

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ISBN 978-0-7180-8339-7 (HC)

ISBN 978-1-4002-3063-1 (audiobook)

ISBN 978-0-7180-8912-2 (eBook)

Printed in India

21 22 23 24 25 RPI 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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INTRODUCTION

Lines of Faithfulness

Once, when I was younger, I backed off of a perfectly good cliff, gripping a rope that was tied to a tree and hoping it wouldn't break. The forty or so yards down seemed like the Grand Canyon to me. Inching my way down the side of the cliff, I fought a sense of panic about the rope's integrity. I knew it had been tested, inspected, and adequately secured—and I was well harnessed. But my mind kept imagining the rope snapping like a string, plunging me backward to the ground. I was never really in danger, but it didn't *feel* that way.

Later I recalled several biblical characters who had similar experiences, and I wondered if they had felt as I had. The two spies in Jericho escaped when Rahab lowered them down the city walls from a high window, using a scarlet rope (Joshua 2:18). Perhaps they rappelled down like today's special forces. When David was

trapped by a hostile army, his wife lowered him through a window to the ground, enabling him to escape (1 Samuel 19:12). And when Paul's life was threatened in Damascus, his friends found a large basket, tied a rope to it, and hid him inside it. As they lowered it to the ground in the dark of night, it probably bounced against every stone (Acts 9:25; 2 Corinthians 11:32–33).

None of those incidents came to mind as I scaled down the cliff. But one thing *did* enter my mind in the moment—that *faith* is trusting in the *facts* I know, not in the *feelings* I have.

That was when the experience became exhilarating.

Whenever you're dangling over difficulties or suspended on the bluffs of life, you simply must trust God's facts more than your own feelings.

And the fact is—God is faithful.

We all have ups and downs, punctuated by moments of panic. But our heavenly Father lowers us into our daily tasks and lifts us from our anxious cares by a durable cable woven from thousands of lines of biblical promises. There is a promise in the Bible for every concern you'll ever have, every need you'll ever face, every burden you'll ever bear, and every challenge you'll ever confront. You can hang on to every word.

Every scripture is precise and precious. Each word is trustworthy and true. Not the smallest strand of God's rope can fray, nor can a promise be broken. It's secured to the unshakable

nature of God Almighty and guaranteed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

When we speak of God's faithfulness, we're talking about His integrity, dependability, and utter infallibility. He longs to give us His promises because of His unassailable love, and He intends to keep them through His infallible strength. His ropes will never break.

So, "let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23).

According to my count, there are nearly one hundred times in the Bible when the words *faithful* or *faithfulness* describe our Lord. I've chosen fifty-two of those passages to show you that when it feels you're at the end of your *rope*, you're not at the end of your *hope*.

When you realize that, life becomes exhilarating.

*This I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:
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.*

LAMENTATIONS 3:21-23

CHAPTER 33

HIS FAITHFULNESS REACHES TO THE SKIES

*God sends forth his love and his faithfulness. . . .
For great is your love, reaching to the heavens;
your faithfulness reaches to the skies.*

PSALM 57:3, 10

When missionary pilot Forrest Zander wrote a memoir about his experiences, he took his title from Psalm 57:10: *His Faithfulness Reaches to the Skies*. Zander had lots of opportunities to experience God's faithfulness because every flight in his small missionary plane involved rugged mountains, dense jungles, meager airstrips, emergency missions, and unstable weather.

On one occasion, Zander and his copilot were crossing the Andes Mountains in Colombia, cruising at 16,000 feet, which

required their wearing oxygen masks. As he watched the fuel gauges, he was alarmed to see the needles going down much faster than he expected. There was a problem somewhere, and Zander still had the last three ranges of the Andes to cross. He needed to refuel, but where? No commercial airport was near, and alternate airstrips were rare.

Having cleared the highest mountain peaks and passed the foothills on the eastern side, Zander quickly descended to preserve fuel and looked for a place to land. Then he spotted an airstrip right at the foot of the mountain. But what about fuel? Would they have any? Circling the airstrip, he saw containers of aviation-grade fuel—guarded by a contingent of armed soldiers. This airstrip was probably used by drug runners.

Zander had no choice but to land, and he was immediately surrounded by guards with their guns. When he explained his problem, the commander offered to give him the fuel, but as he refueled, a black cloud and storm approached. The entire group—missionaries and soldiers—fled to a protected area. It was a perfect setup. As the rain pattered on the roof, Zander read to the men from his Spanish Bible, shared the gospel with them, and left the Bible for them to study.

“Then joyfully, we departed, realizing again that our times are in the Lord’s hands. Sometimes delays and problems are His way of opening doors to new opportunities to love people and to serve Him.”¹

You don't have to be a pilot to realize His faithfulness reaches to the skies. You can experience it whenever there's turbulence in your life or your energy is low. Sometimes it's when we're at the lowest that His faithfulness seems the highest.

.....
God writes with a pen that never blots, speaks with a tongue that never slips, and acts with a hand that never fails. Bless His Name!

C. H. SPURGEON

CHAPTER 39

TEACH ME YOUR WAY

Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness. . . . You, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

PSALM 86:11, 15

My granddaughter Chloe was fretting about which college to attend. I didn't know the answer, but I knew Someone who did, Someone who has guided me many times throughout my life. Pulling Chloe aside, I gave her one of the old hymnbooks in my collection and showed her the index in the back. One category was for hymns of guidance. I've turned to these hymns many times and used them as prayers when needing direction—hymns such as “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Me” and “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah.”

One of my favorite guidance hymns is based on Psalm 86 and its plea, “Teach Me Your Way, Lord.” It was published by Benjamin Ramsey in 1919. I wish I had space to give you all four stanzas, but I’m only going to quote the first and you can look up the others on your own. This is a stanza I easily memorized, and it often comes in handy when I need to seek God’s will about some matter.

Teach me Thy way, O Lord, teach me Thy way!
Thy guiding grace afford, teach me Thy way!
Help me to walk aright, more by faith, less by sight;
Lead me with heavenly light, teach me Thy way!

God is faithful to guide us in all our decision as we yield them to Him. The psalmist said, “Teach me your way, LORD, that I may rely on your faithfulness” (Psalm 86:11).

Think of the implications of that. If we go down our own path, out of God’s will and away from His plan, we cannot rely on His faithfulness. We have to rely on our own ingenuity, wisdom, and resources. But when we ask for His guidance, He leads us; and as we follow Him, we can rely on His faithfulness every step.

Isobel Kuhn talks about “the Christian privilege of thinking through a problem in the presence of the Lord.”¹ That’s profound. In my desk, I keep a small prayer journal (a 5½” × 8½” loose-leaf notebook), and when I have a decision to make, I jot it down at

the top of the page. Every morning during my devotions, I'll take a moment to pray about it, think about it, and ask God for wisdom. In one case, it took about five years before I had the needed insight and inner peace for a decision, but when the time came, the Lord helped me know.

Some decisions, of course, have to be made quickly. But never so quickly that we can't pause and pray, "Teach me Your way, O Lord."

.....
Until the race is run, until the journey's done, until
the crown is won, teach me Thy way.

BENJAMIN RAMSEY