

Cultivating Faithfulness (Proverbs 3.3)

Warren Brosi

07/06/2025

Dominant Thought: Love and faithfulness never leave.

Objectives:

I want my listeners to understand the value of faithfulness.

I want my listeners to treasure faithfulness like a precious jewel.

I want my listeners to remember faithfulness as written on our heart.

We live in a disposable world. Most of the things we buy are not meant to last. It's cheaper to replace it than it is to repair it. The sad part is many people treat people as disposable just as they would with the disposable products they buy online.

We were created for relationships with one another and with our faithful and loving God.

Our working description of a disciple of Jesus is: **“A disciples is a Spirit filled follower of Jesus learning to love God and others.”** We are learning to love God and others. We need one another. We need a deeper understanding of the faithfulness of God so we can grow in faithfulness in our relationships.

We continue looking at the descriptions of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5.22-23. This week, we look at faithfulness.

As we walk through Proverbs 3.3, we see an encouragement and two commands.

First, let love and faithfulness never leave.

In the early chapters of Proverbs, the writer who may be Solomon continues to give instructions with the introduction, “my son.” In Proverbs 3.1, “My son, do not forsake my teacher, but keep my commands in your heart.”

As we have studied the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5.22-23, where we see one description, we generally find another one nearby. In this case, it is love and faithfulness. Love is the covenant keeping love. It is a loyal love, a steadfast love. Some of the older translations say, “Lovingkindness.” Steadfast love and faithfulness seem to go well together.

God describes His name to Moses on Mount Sinai in the memorable passage in Exodus 34.6-7.

Exodus 34:6–7 ESV

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.”

Hosea is a prophet who was instructed by God to marry a woman who would be unfaithful to him. His marriage to an unfaithful woman would vividly portray Israel’s unfaithfulness to God.

In Hosea 14.8 in the New Living Translation, we hear a warning about unfaithfulness and a promise from God on his faithfulness.

Hosea 14:8 NLT

“O Israel, stay away from idols! I am the one who answers your prayers and cares for you. I am like a tree that is always green; all your fruit comes from me.”

A practice you may find helpful is to make a list of people who have kept a promise to you in the last few weeks. Those are faithful people. Then, make a list of people whom you have kept a promise to or shown up for them.

I had lunch with Rodger Shewmaker this week. Rodger and his wife Dixie have served as missionaries in the Philippines for 35 years. For most of that time, they lived in the Philippines serving faithfully to raise disciples of Jesus. Even now as health concerns require them to spend more time

stateside, they still advocate, encourage, and equip the team at the youth center in Digos City, Philippines.

Let love and faithfulness never leave you.

The final words of Jesus recorded in the gospel of Matthew are, “And surely I am with you always to the end of age” (Matthew 28.20). It sounds like Jesus plans to stay with us, to never leave us.

Love and faithfulness never leave.

Second, treasure love and faithfulness.

The writer commands his son, “bind them around your neck.” The image in my mind is binding love and faithfulness around your neck like a precious necklace.

In other places in Proverbs, the son or children are called to keep the commandments of their parents like a necklace or to bind them on their fingers. See Proverbs 1.9; 6.21; 7.3. One of the ways people talk about marriage is “tying the knot.”

In Deuteronomy 6.8-9, God instructs His people to bind His commands on their hands and foreheads as reminders.

Beth and I had been dating a few months when I moved here to Illinois. She still had one more year of Bible College at Ozark Christian College. We had a long-distance relationship in the era before cell phones and face time. We did have email and pre-paid calling cards.

She has a different perspective on the gifts that I gave her during that season. Her birthday came and I gave her a small jewelry box. I think it was a bracelet or a necklace. She saw a small box and had other expectations. Christmas came and another small box. Again, a necklace or earrings. I surprised her when she came home from Haiti on a mission trip. I gave her flowers. She thought a ring was coming. She said, “I got a cheeseburger out of that deal that his dad bought for me.”

Then, the night before her graduation I went to the jewelry store in Joplin, MO. I had been looking at engagement rings. I came out of the store that afternoon with another necklace. During the baccalaureate service, I changed my mind and went back to the jewelry store to exchange the

necklace for a ring. I had a heart shaped diamond ring picked out. They told me the jeweler had gone home for the evening, and it wouldn't be available until the next day. I told them I needed a ring to give to Beth that night. I got a ring that was a loaner ring. I purchased the ring I wanted with the help of a phone call to my grandma to co-sign for the ring because I didn't have access to the funds that night.

I made it back to the school before the baccalaureate service ended. I took Beth on a walk and got down on my knee to ask her to marry me. It was May 18, 2001. We were married three months later to the day.

We treasure faithfulness like a precious jewel. Bind love and faithfulness around your neck.

Jesus was bound when He was arrested. He was fastened to a cross. Some ponder if it was the nails or His love that kept Him on that cross.

Third, remember love and faithfulness.

The writer of Proverbs commands his son to "write them [love and faithfulness] on the tablet of your heart." We write down what is important, so we remember it. Notice again how these virtues keep coming from the heart. We saw these commands are to be in your heart in Proverbs 3.1. We will see it again in Proverbs 3.5.

Proverbs 7:2–3 NIV

Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye.

Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.

Early in my ministry, when I would preach a wedding, I would always stress over getting the marriage license signed. I would preach the wedding. They would exchange vows and rings. A pretty song would be sung. Scripture read. The groom would kiss the bride. They would walk out to people clapping. Then, the pictures would be taken. And more pictures would be taken. And I would have to insert myself at some point during the photography to get the marriage license signed. It would never be a problem. After all, the marriage license is one of the main reasons we were gathered together that day.

I wanted to make sure to get that signed and witnesses signed so I could turn it into the local county records to make it official.

One time I attended a wedding, and I saw the preacher have the wedding couple sign the license as part of the ceremony. After all it only takes 20-30 seconds to light a unity candle, and the song is 3-4 minutes. So, I started to incorporate signing the license as part of the ceremony. It makes sense. They were writing something down, so they remember the promises they are making on their wedding day.

The prophet Jeremiah hears a word from the LORD that sounds similar to these words in Proverbs.

Jeremiah 31:33 NIV

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

In the book of Hebrews, the writer encourages Jewish Christians to remain faithful to Jesus in the midst of life’s challenges and struggles. In Hebrews 10.11-25, we hear encouragements to remain faithful because Jesus is faithful.

Hebrews 10:23 NIV

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

The apostle Paul shows what it looks like to trust in Jesus, the faithful one.

Galatians 2:20 NIV

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Love and faithfulness never leave.

If you keep reading in Proverbs 3, you come across the theme verse for Lake Springfield Christian Assembly this summer.

Proverbs 3:5–6 NIV

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

We see the word, “trust” or have faith. We see heart repeated from Proverbs 3.3. May that be true of all of us.