

FEASTING ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

What Does That Mean?

Psalm 37:1-9

INTRODUCTION: Well, this is different isn't it? Who would have thought a month ago that we would be in this place as a community and as a nation? I am praying for those of you for whom this has already become a special burden, those who have lost jobs, and those who are facing other new and difficult challenges.

However, I tell you that I and all of us have much to be grateful for. At this point we are not San Francisco or New York. While thanking the Lord for His protection, let's remember to pray for these that are more seriously threatened at the moment.

I am thankful for our staff. They have responded courageously to the challenge and have worked feverishly, hum, maybe that's not the best word. They have worked ferociously to get things moved to an online format so that we can still worship and grow in God's Word.

One is deserving of special mention: Derek Boggs. Suddenly everybody needs him all at once! Every ministry suddenly flows through his hands. Yet in his usual calm, unshakable demeanor and tremendous knowledge and skill in all things digital and electronic, he has worked day and night to get the job done. Derek, I thank you! The whole staff is grateful for you! Our church sends you a virtual hug!

I am thankful for our leaders and our workers at the COH. Both the Medical Center, Benevolence Center, and A Sheltering Tree have developed innovative ways to protect their people yet to still serve the poor and needy with medical care, food, and baby items and love. God bless you all!

As I was reading the Scriptures this week in search of comfort and consolation in the midst of our current crisis, the Lord drew my attention to Psalm 37.

Psalm 37

- 1 Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
- 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.
- 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
- 4 Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring *it* to pass.
6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
And your justice as the noonday.

7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.
8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;
Do not fret—*it* only *causes* harm.

9 For evildoers shall be cut off;
But those who wait on the LORD,
They shall inherit the earth.

Walk with me through this fascinating description of what feasting on the faithfulness of God will do for you. We will start in verse 3 to see what feasting of God's faithfulness means.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;

Trust – to set one's hope and confidence in the Lord – lean, depend

What are you hoping for each morning? Lower rate of increase? News of progress on meds? A sign of stability in the stock market?

Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

Feed – freely graze

Faithfulness – steadfastness to perform His Word

Paraphrase - **Go feast in a land where the pastures are overgrown with the faithfulness of God to keep His promises.**

The Bible pictures God's faithfulness as a banquet. - Like the buffet at Harpoon Harry's on Christmas Day – turkey & dressing, mashed potatoes & gravy, squash, crab legs, boiled shrimp, fried shrimp, grilled and fried fish, breads, fresh fruit including big sweet strawberries, four kinds of pie, cheesecake, carrot cake, and banana pudding. It was a banquet!

So also the Bible shows us the banquet of the faithfulness of the Lord.

In Genesis, God is faithful to Adam and Eve after Cain murdered Abel

- to give them Seth to be the father of the line of the promised seed to one day crush the head of the serpent who led them into sin against the Lord.

Also in Genesis, God was faithful to Noah, his wife, his sons and their wives

- to save them out of a wicked world by grace through faith
- and then save them in the ark while the world perished in the righteous judgment of God.

And can we forget Abraham and Sarah,

- to whom God was faithful to give them a son when they were far past the years of fatherhood and motherhood. Abraham was 40 years old in Ur. He was 100 when Isaac was born. He waited 60 years for fulfillment. God is faithful! It's His timing, not ours.
- And God was faithful to take that one little boy and through him to turn old Abraham into the father of a great nation.
- And God was faithful from the seed of Abraham to bring God's one and only Son into the world to be a blessing to every family on the face of the earth by dying on a cross for the sins of the world.
- And then by offering God's forgiveness and eternal life to anyone who would trust in Him, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

And we have not even finished Genesis. We could talk of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and all his conniving brothers, to whom God showed Himself faithful in spite of their propensity to sin.

In Exodus there is Moses and Aaron and the children of Israel, and God proves faithful to each and every one.

Then there's Joshua and each one of the judges, like Jephtha and Gideon, and even ole Samson who dishonored his parents, abandoned his countrymen, and betrayed the God who set him apart while he was still in the womb. Yet even to Samson, God proved faithful.

In every book of the OT, I can show you again and again the banquet table of the faithfulness of God.

And then when you leave that table and pass into the next room of the New Testament, you discover that all on the table of the OT are appetizers. The main course is yet to come!

Because in the NT, we meet God in the flesh in the person of **Jesus Christ**, who **demonstrated the faithfulness of God day in and day out, often dozens of time.**

- We see the Lord faithful to the disciples as their boat was tossed upon the sea.

- He was faithful to the multitude who spent all day camped at His feet to hear Him teach about God.
- He was faithful to Peter by providing his taxes from the mouth of a fish.
- Most of all Christ was faithful to us all by saying, “Not My will but Thine be done” and going to the cross to die for your sins and mine.
- Jesus was even faithful to the scoffers whom He told He would rise again the third day, because on day three, Jesus Christ walked out of that tomb and began to appear to people all over Judea and Galilee.

And I myself am here to tell you that Jesus promises me in His Word that He will never leave me nor forsake me, and I am telling you, He has been faithful to keep His promise.

- Before I was 40, I had a quadruple bypass, but the Lord has been with me ever since and here I am.
- Ten years ago I had prostate cancer with the cancer having escaped from the prostate gland before it was removed, but He has been with me, and here I am.
- In our first church in Tulsa, OK, our house was flooded along with many others in our church family by the largest flash flood the city ever experienced.
- In our second church in Slidell, LA, our house and our entire church were flooded during hurricane Katrina.
- And do I even need to tell you that in our third church, right here at St. Andrew, our house and the houses of most of our members and the entirety of our church plant were devastatingly damaged by the winds and rains of hurricane Michael. Lord knows with a resume like that I'll never have a fourth church!
- Yet my friend, through it all, God has been faithful. God has been faithful!

What stories can you tell of the faithfulness of God?

So **the Holy Spirit through the Psalmist says, “Feast on the faithfulness of God!”** When this service is over, stop and remember, share with one another. FEAST! What good is a banquet if you don't eat?

Then He tells us to do four things.

- 1. Ps. 37:4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.**

Delight – be exceedingly happy with God. Rejoice in Him! Pick your favorites from the table.

- Begin your prayers praising God for who He is – Creator, Savior, Sovereign, Lord, Merciful, Benevolent
- Sing often to the Lord – He loves to hear you!
- Be expressive in worship – try this at home.

Desires – requests, petitions

Paraphrase: If you truly want to know God, and the things of God bring you real joy, then you will not be disappointed! God will give you these things!

2. Ps. 37:5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass.

Commit – literally - to roll as in roll downhill with someone. Tell the Lord, “Let’s roll!” only be sure you are rolling down His path of choice and not your own!

Trust Him to pick the path, and He will make it work. He will bring it to pass.

3. Ps. 37:1 Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

7 ...Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;

Do not fret—it only causes harm.

3 times, Do not fret!

Fret – Hebrew chara – glow or burn with anger. Like my head! My fret meter! Cease from anger! It only does harm. Through this time of trial there will be many temptations to anger. 3 times! Don’t do it! Don’t let yourself heat up. Instead...

4. Ps. 37:7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; ...those who wait on the LORD, ... shall inherit the earth.

Rest – Be still, silent; wait on Him to speak and lead.

This is what we need to do in this season.

FEAST ON THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

- **Delight yourself ... in the LORD,**
- **Commit your way to the LORD**
- **Do not fret, ... Do not fret, ... Do not fret!**
- **Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him.**

Every Sunday while we are going through this, I am going to take you back to the banquet table in the Scripture loaded with the stories of the faithfulness of God.

I want to stay in touch and will be doing a daily blog (except Sundays) starting Monday about Walking with God through Difficult Days.

You, please keep in touch with us. Let us know your needs.

Those that have lost jobs, get food in the drive thru at the Benevolence Center.

Now, to all of you, the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.