

LIFE CHURCH OF NEW JERSEY

22 Laurence Parkway, Old Bridge, NJ

FRUIT SALAD SERIES — WEEK 7

FIVE-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Pistis

Faithful to the Faithful One

The Fruit of the Spirit: Faith / Faithfulness

The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23

Pastor Andrew Chung-Ying

FRUIT SALAD SERIES — WEEK 7

How to Use This Devotional

Over the next five days, you'll walk through the fruit of faith and faithfulness one layer at a time — from what faithfulness actually means, to the faithfulness God has already shown you, to the doubt that tries to pull against it, to the faithfulness He's now calling you to live out. Each day includes a scripture to read, a short reflection, a Digging Deeper section for a bit more theological depth, questions to search your heart, a practical step to take with you, and a closing prayer. Space is provided for you to write. Take your time — fruit doesn't ripen in a hurry.

Where We Are in the Harvest — Week 7

TOWARD GOD	TOWARD OTHERS	TOWARD SELF
✓ Agapē — Love ✓ Charā — Joy ✓ Eirēnē — Peace	✓ Makrothymia — Longsuffering ✓ Chrēstotēs — Kindness ✓ Agathōsynē — Goodness	 Pistis — Faith — THIS WEEK ○ Prautes — Meekness ○ Enkrateia — Temperance

DAY 1 What Faith and Faithfulness Actually Mean

READ

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

— Hebrews 11:1, KJV

REFLECT

Faith looks forward. It is substance for something you cannot yet hold, evidence for something you cannot yet see. But faith that only ever looks forward and never puts down roots isn't finished growing yet. Faithfulness is what faith becomes once it's been tested by time and hasn't moved. If faith is the seed, faithfulness is the root system that keeps the tree standing after the storm has already come through.

DIGGING DEEPER

The Greek word behind “faith” in Galatians 5:22 is *pistis* (Strong's G4102). It's a word that carries a double weight our one English word can't fully hold — it means both trust placed in God and the reliability that trust produces over time. The New Testament never really separates the two. According to W.E. Vine's Expository Dictionary, *pistis* describes conviction that produces conduct; it isn't finished being faith until it has become the kind of trust other people

can rely on, too. It's also worth knowing what faithfulness is not: commitment. Commitment is a decision of the will — “I will” — and it can be made in an instant, the way Peter promised Jesus, “though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee” (Matthew 26:35), only to see that same vow collapse in a courtyard a few hours later (Matthew 26:74). Faithfulness is different. It's fruit, grown by the Spirit and not manufactured by willpower (Galatians 3:3). Commitment says, “I will.” Faithfulness says, “He will, and so I can stay.”

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Where in my life do I have faith that hasn't yet had the chance to become faithfulness?*
- *Am I measuring my spiritual life by how strongly I feel, or by how long I've stayed planted?*
- *Have I been leaning on my own commitment lately, or on His faithfulness?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Write down one promise of God you are currently standing on. Thank Him for being the ground under it, even before you see it fulfilled.

PRAY

Father, thank You for the faith You have already placed in me. Grow it into faithfulness — trust that doesn't just start well but stays planted. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 2 The God Who Cannot Deny Himself

READ

If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

— 2 Timothy 2:13, KJV

REFLECT

Read that verse again. "If we believe not." Paul is describing our wavering, our little-faith moments, our sinking-in-the-waves moments — and he says even there, God's faithfulness does not bend to match ours. His faithfulness was never a reaction to yours. It is who He is, not what you've earned from Him.

DIGGING DEEPER

Lamentations 3:22-23 was written in the ashes of a fallen Jerusalem — not after the recovery, but in the middle of the wreckage: "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed... they are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." Guzik's Enduring Word commentary notes that this confession comes from the same writer who, just verses earlier, described his soul as bowed down within him. Great faithfulness and great grief were true in the very same breath.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Where has God been faithful to me in a season when I didn't feel like praising Him for it?*
- *Have I been waiting for my circumstances to improve before I acknowledge His faithfulness?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Name one season of ashes in your own story where you can now see His faithfulness was still at work. Speak it out loud as a testimony today.

PRAY

Lord, You cannot deny Yourself, and so You have never denied me Your faithfulness — even when my faith was small. Let Your mercies, new this morning, meet me right where I am. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 3 Doubt — The Wave Without an Anchor

READ

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

— James 1:6-7, KJV

REFLECT

James doesn't call doubt a lack of intelligence or a moral failure in the usual sense. He calls it a wave — something with no anchor, no root, no home port, pushed wherever the last gust of wind blew it. Doubt isn't the honest question you bring to God; it's the refusal to stay planted while the question is still being answered.

DIGGING DEEPER

Remember Peter walking on the water in Matthew 14:28-31. The wind didn't get stronger the moment he began to sink — it had been blowing the whole time he was walking on top of it. Peter sank the instant his eyes left Jesus and doubt took the wheel. David Guzik notes that Jesus didn't rebuke Peter for getting out of the boat; the rebuke was reserved only for the doubt that followed. Doubt didn't change the water under Peter's feet — it changed where he was looking. And doubt didn't start with Peter, either. Ten of the twelve spies looked at the very same giants Caleb and Joshua saw, and said, “we were in our own sight as grasshoppers” (Numbers 13:33) — and Hebrews 3:19 hands down the verdict on that whole generation: “they could not enter in because of unbelief.” Doubt doesn't just cost a few wet steps; left unchecked, it can cost an entire promise. Doubt can even take your voice, the way it silenced the priest Zacharias when he demanded proof from an angel (Luke 1:18-20) — while Mary, asked to believe something far harder, answered instead with surrender: “be it unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38). The difference was never the question; it was what each of them did with it. And if you're carrying real doubt right now, there's a prayer for that too. A father in Mark 9:24 brought Jesus his faith and his doubt in the very same breath: “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” That prayer gets answered, not condemned.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Where have I been like that wave lately — tossed by whatever circumstance blew through last?*
- *Is there an honest question I've been carrying that I've let turn into a refusal to stay planted?*
- *Am I more like the ten spies who saw giants, or like Caleb and Joshua who saw the same giants and still trusted God?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Identify one specific place your eyes have drifted off Jesus and onto the wind. Name it in prayer and consciously look back to Him.

PRAY

Lord, I confess the moments my eyes left You and doubt took the wheel. I don't want to be a wave, tossed by whatever blows through. Anchor me again in what I know to be true about You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 4 Found Faithful

READ

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

— 1 Corinthians 4:2, KJV

REFLECT

Not brilliant. Not gifted. Not impressive. Found faithful. A steward doesn't own the house, but the master's whole reputation rests on whether the steward can be trusted with the keys while he's away. That's your position right now, in whatever place God has put you — you carry keys that aren't yours, for a house that isn't yours, and faithfulness is the only qualification that's actually being measured.

DIGGING DEEPER

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:21), notice exactly what gets commended: “thou hast been faithful over a FEW things.” Not the size of the portfolio — the faithfulness in small, unseen places. Guzik points out that the reward for faithfulness is always more responsibility, never retirement: “enter thou into the joy of thy lord” is an invitation into deeper partnership, not a finish line.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Where has God given me “a few things” that I've been treating as too small to matter?*
- *Am I chasing recognition for faithfulness, or am I content to be faithful where no one is watching?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Do one faithful thing today in a place nobody will notice or applaud — and let that be enough.

PRAY

Father, I don't want credit for faithfulness — I want to actually be faithful. Show me the few things You've entrusted to me right now, and help me steward them well. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DAY 5 Faithful Unto Death

READ

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

— Revelation 2:10, KJV

REFLECT

Not faithful until it gets hard. Not faithful until the feeling fades. Faithful unto death. This is the finish-line word of the whole fruit — the promise isn't given to whoever starts the strongest, but to whoever is still standing at the very end, still trusting the same faithful God who has never once failed to be faithful to them.

DIGGING DEEPER

Seven fruits in, a pattern is emerging: love gave us the root, joy and peace gave us the settledness, longsuffering and kindness gave us patience and gentleness with people, goodness gave that gentleness a spine — and now faithfulness gives the whole thing endurance. It's what keeps every fruit before it from being a single good day instead of a whole life. Next week we turn to prautes, meekness, because you can only surrender your strength to a God you have already learned to trust.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

- *Looking back over this week, where did God's faithfulness catch up to me the most?*
- *Where did I actually choose faithfulness this week over the pull of doubt — even in something small?*

TAKE IT WITH YOU

The next time doubt tries to move your feet, let it become a prayer instead: “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief” (Mark 9:24).

PRAY

Father, thank You for growing this fruit in me this week. Let me be found faithful — not just today, but unto death — trusting the God who has never once failed to be faithful to me. In

Seven Weeks in Review

Take a few quiet minutes to look back — not just over this week, but over all seven weeks of Fruit Salad so far.

- Agapē (love), charā (joy), and eirēnē (peace) turned my heart toward God. Which of these three still needs the most tending in me?
- Makrothymia (longsuffering), chrēstotēs (kindness), and agathōsynē (goodness) turned my heart toward others. Where have I actually grown, and where am I still just aware that I should?
- Pistis (faithfulness) is now turning my heart toward the trust that steadies everything else. Where do I most need to trade doubt for faithfulness?
- Which day's scripture challenged me the most this week, and why?
- What is one way I sensed the Holy Spirit producing faithfulness in me, rather than me forcing it?

A CLOSING WORD

Fruit is grown, not manufactured. If faithfulness has felt more like striving than growing this week, go back to Day 2 and remember: He abideth faithful, even when we believe not — He cannot deny Himself. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.