

Integrity/Faithfulness

Tuesday, September 30th, 2008

READY: "Above all, my brothers, do not swear--not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your 'Yes' be yes, and your 'No,' no, or you will be condemned."

-James 5:12

SET: The statement, "Let your 'Yes' be yes, and your 'No,' no" is at the heart of what it means to be faithful. A faithful person is a one who can be trusted for his or her word, work and actions. In Matthew 5:33-37, Jesus tells the disciples that they should be known so well for their integrity that they should never have to take an oath. The oaths of yesterday are the legal contracts of today. We can do almost nothing today without signing a legal contract. Fifty years ago a handshake was still considered binding, because people felt that keeping their word was important. But, today our word means nothing to anyone because of a general lack of societal integrity. Faithfulness is not just keeping your word, it is telling the truth. What you say must be true.

The Bible talks about God's faithfulness. The Psalms are filled with acknowledgments of God's faithfulness. He is absolutely trustworthy in all that He has promised. Faithfulness is just as critical in my actions. In my actions, it is being so consistent in my character that people know how I will respond in tough situations. It is critical for our witness to others that we be beyond reproach in this area. Below are three things you can do to grow in this area:

1. Stay close to God through prayer and Bible study. Let Him penetrate your soul. (Hebrews 4:11-13)
2. Spend time in personal evaluation. (Psalm 139:23,24)
3. Let others hold you accountable. (Proverbs 27:17)

Trust is at the heart of any good relationship--with God or with others. God has certainly held up His end of the relationship. Are you ready to hold up yours?

GO:

1. If God is faithful, then why do we have such a hard time trusting Him?
2. In what areas do you struggle to trust God?
3. Are you consistent in your word and actions?

WORKOUT:

Psalm 100:5

Psalm 101:6

Ephesians 4:25