

“MY LOVE IS STEADFAST”

“I want you to walk *with* Me until the end, but I see that you have much apprehension. I know that life often feels uncertain, and the future seems bleak. I understand when you question my actions or my stillness; I understand your doubts when you cannot fathom where I am going. But I need you to know that everything I am doing will one day make sense, and that even when you waver, I will not falter (2 Timothy 2:13). I have a plan and a purpose concerning you (Romans 8:28). And I will not turn back until it is accomplished. I am committed to you. And I will remain steadfast until I have fulfilled My promise.”

God is loyal even when we are fickle. While our love and devotion can change based on our circumstances, emotions, and perceptions, His love remains constant, *“For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you, nor forsake you.’”* (Hebrews 13:5, NKJV).

Lamentations 3:22-23 says, *“The unfailing love of the Lord never ends! By His mercies we have been kept from complete destruction. Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each day”* (NLT).

How often do you determine truth based on your feelings? _____

Do you ever allow your perceptions, emotions, or circumstances to determine *God’s* faithfulness to you? If so, explain. _____

Fickle

Read Luke 19:28-40, and the parallel account, John 12:12-19.

Amid the crowd stood a man. In one hand he held a palm branch, in the other he clutched a stone. While there was hope of a promising future—freedom, reformation, restoration, healing, peace, and increase—he cried out, *“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord”* (Luke 19:38). When circumstances did not play out as he imagined, he shouted, *“Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!”* (John 19:15, NKJV).

When you trusted Christ as your Savior, did you have any preconceived ideas of how your life would play out? Explain. _____

Have you ever faltered in your faith or devotion to God? If so, what happened to initiate these feelings? _____

Read Isaiah 9:6-7, Luke 1:31-33, 67-75. Who did the Jews believe Christ, the Messiah, would be? What would He accomplish? _____

Now read Matthew 26:31-35 and John 16:16-33. What adverse things did Christ communicate would occur? _____

The multitudes, including the disciples, rejoiced and praised Christ while all was progressing according to their expectations. Later, we find them doubting and uncertain; some standing against Him. See Matthew 26:55-56 and John 19:14-15.

When things don't turn out the way you've imagined, do you question God's character or claims? Does your view of God's dedication *to you* change? If so, how? _____

The disciples regularly misunderstood the written word and Christ's teachings. Describe a time when you failed to hear Christ due to preconceived ideas. _____

After an extended period of trial, even the "*greatest of prophets*" (Luke 7:28), experienced doubts. Per Luke 7:18-28, what uncertainties did John the Baptist entertain? _____

Why might he have asked this? (v.20) _____

How can personal difficulties blind us to the evidences of God's goodness? _____

What did Christ warn against in verse 23? _____

How can one be offended¹ by Christ? _____

How did Christ respond to John's doubts? _____

How has He encouraged you when you have had misgivings? _____

Return to Matthew 26:31-35 and John 16:16-33. How did Christ communicate hope? _____

After His triumphal entry, how did Christ feel about the people's lack of understanding? (Luke 19:41-44)? What does this tell you about His love for all people? _____

¹ The Greek word for offend, *skandalizo*, means "to entrap, i.e., trip up (figuratively, stumble) or entice to sin, apostacy or displeasure."

Christ wept over the people's inability to see and experience His love due to their preconceived ideas and expectations, their misunderstandings and uncertainties. Pride blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts; He knew the pain this would eventually bring to their lives.

Loyal Love

According to John 2:23-25, 6:64-66 and 7:5, what did Christ know before He set out on the road to the cross? _____

Will *your* emotions dissuade or deter Christ from fulfilling His commitment to you? _____

Define steadfast love: _____

Why is it difficult to comprehend this kind of love? _____

Steadfastness “implies a steady and unwavering course in love, allegiance, or conviction.” One who is steadfast possesses “unswerving faith, loyalty, or devotion.” Synonyms include resoluteness, commitment, dedication, persistence, determination, faithfulness, dependability, and trustworthiness.

In the list above, circle any aspects of love that you have struggled with in the past and/or present. Take a moment and ask the Lord to reveal the reasons for your struggle.

What does Luke 9:51 reveal about God's determination to show you His love and fulfill His promise? _____

Record 2 Timothy 2:13. _____

Christ pressed forward with foreknowledge of man's fickle heart, but nothing could keep Him from fulfilling His promise. Whether you wavered yesterday or are uncertain of tomorrow, He will love you to the end (John 13:1). Daniel 6:26 says, “*For He is the Living God, and steadfast forever.*” Malachi 3:6 says, “*For [He is] the Lord, [He does] not change.*” “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever*” (Hebrews 13:8, NASB). James 1:17 says, “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from [Him], with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*”

Thomas Chisholm wrote: “Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning in Thee; Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not; as Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.”

In closing, read Psalm 51:10.