

FAITHFULNESS

DEFINITION

- *pistis* and *pistos* have active and passive meanings: (1) faith and faithfulness, and (2) believing and faithful (worthy of belief)
 - to be faithful is to keep your promises (in the form of agreements, commitments, vows, oaths, responsibilities, obligations, duties, pledges, contacts, covenants, and treaties)

CONCEPT

- promises are made to increase trust and to guarantee future actions or behavior (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.4.7; 4.8.7–8)
- promises may be explicit (spoken, in writing) or understood (e.g., implied promise to do a good job or to do the job right)
 - faithfulness is keeping your word—even though it may be costly, painful, and to your disadvantage
- a test of faithfulness is anything that may cause you to break a promise—loss, suffering, or fear of death:
 - the test is: Are you willing to pay a price to keep your word?
 - faithfulness is the basis of trust; unfaithfulness diminishes the trust others have in you
 - faithfulness is one of "the weightier provisions of the Law" (Matt 23:23)

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

- God is always faithful in keeping His promises ("a faithful God who keeps the covenant" Deut 7:9; cf. Psa 36:5; 100:5; Rom 3:3; 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 1:18; 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Tim. 2:13; Heb 10:23; 1 Peter 4:19)
 - God faithfully forgives our sins when we confess them (1 John 1:9)
- God is faithful in not testing us beyond our abilities and in providing a way of escape (1 Cor 10:13)
 - God is faithful in protecting us from Satan (2 Thess 3:3)
 - faith in God's promises depends on His faithfulness (Heb 11:11)

JESUS' FAITHFULNESS

- Jesus was a faithful Son to God (Heb 3:2, 5–6)
- Jesus is a faithful witness (Rev 1:5; 3:14), a faithful High Priest (Heb 2:17), and is called "Faithful and True" (Rev 19:11)

FAITHFUL SCRIPTURES

- "it is a trustworthy statement" (*pistos ho logos*) is found five times in the pastorals (1 Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim 2:11; Titus 3:8)
 - the words of the Risen Christ are faithful and true (Rev 21:5; 22:6)

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

- faithfulness is a fruit of the Spirit—a supernatural ability to keep your promises in times of testing and persecution (Gal 5:22)
 - we are faithful when we keep the promises we have made to God—to be obedient, serve Him, and carry out His will
 - we are faithful when we keep the promises we make to one another (1 Sam 22:13–14 LXX; Prov 14:5 LXX; Dan 6:4–5 LXX)

MINISTRY

- a requirement for ministry: 'it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful' (1 Cor 4:2; cf. 1 Tim 1:12–13)
 - bible doctrine should be committed to faithful men who can teach others (2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:9)
 - choose helpers who are faithful (1 Cor 4:17; Eph 6:21; Col 1:7; 4:9; 1 Peter 5:12; 3 John 5)
 - women (wives of deacons and deaconesses) should be faithful in everything (1 Tim 3:11)
 - faithfulness is the basis of promotion to greater service and responsibility (Matt 24:45–47=Luke 12:42–44):
 - if you're faithful with little, you'll be faithful with much (Luke 16:10–12; cf. Matt 25:21, 23; Luke 19:17)
- faithfulness is rewarded with participation in the second coming of Christ (Rev 13:14) and the crown of life (Rev 2:10; cf. 2:13)