



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

THE
FRUIT



FAITH

10/19/25 - Sunday AM

Fruit That Is Never Out Of Season - Faith

When we have weddings in this church and the bride walks down this aisle, that whole wedding is filled with hope. 96% of all Americans sometime in their life will get married. And that wedding ceremony is filled with hope and anticipation. Yet, to keep a marriage together, you need more than hope. You need faithfulness. You need commitment. Let me do a little informal survey among you. I'm going to poll those that are married. How many of you would raise your hand and say, "Pastor, it's a lot easier to get married than to stay married?"

I want to talk to you about faithfulness. I want to talk to you about sex as God created it to be. You know, sex is a wonderful thing. We've got a great God, don't we? What an incredible God we serve. But he gave this to us for our pleasure **in a right context**. Because something beautiful can become extremely dangerous. It's just like water. Water can keep us alive, but too much water destroys us. Just like fire. It's wonderful to have a fire in the fireplace, but it's awful to have a house on fire. I want to share with you five ways to remain faithful. These things are simple and biblical, and if you follow them you will be faithful. So here we go, Five helps to remain faithful...

1. Make a commitment to God's standard.

There's a standard that God's word gives us concerning marriage, and if we make a commitment to His standard, it is truly life changing. Look at Psalm 119:9. It says, *"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."* We will be living the right way when we follow His way. Look at Proverbs 5:15, *"Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well."* By the way men, this is a command, not a suggestion. This verse is saying to be faithful to your own wife. Let me give you some suggestions:

- Share with your spouse your commitment to God's standard for marriage.
- Let your spouse know that you are committed to the standard that God gives us concerning marriage and sex.
- Share with your friends your commitment to God's standard for marriage.
- Let them know you are committed to God's standard concerning marriage. And the reason for this is to send out a signal to everybody. You see, most affairs begin with family and friends. And you're sending a signal out to everybody that that standard is important and you are literally telling people, "I'm off limits."

Let me just stop for a moment. Because we have so many wonderful single people in this church, I want to say this also means you. The word in the Bible for you is fornication, but it's the same thing. It's basically having sex outside of a marriage relationship. Sex outside of the marriage relationship is wrong all the time. This wonderful gift from God was made to be enjoyed only inside the marriage relationship. In fact, single people, let me give you a suggestion: When you get into a dating relationship, let them know that you're going to follow God's standard concerning sexual relationships right up front. Let them know that you're a Christian and that you do not have sex outside of marriage. You say you're not sure how they'll respond. Well, let me tell you something, if they respond in any way except positive, you're with the wrong person anyway.

First step for faithfulness is make a commitment to God's standard.

2. Magnify the consequences of the affair.

What I want you to understand is that when you get into an affair, the consequences are going to be so much more severe than you could ever imagine. I believe that if you could see the consequences, you would keep from becoming emotionally and physically entangled. Proverbs 6:32 says, *"But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul."* That's powerful, isn't it? What does it mean? Nothing damages the emotions like sexual sin. Nothing. The tears flow and people say, "If I could just turn the clock back. If I could just have that one day over again." Well, you can't turn the clock back.

I'm telling you, the reason I teach a lesson like this is I want to help you on the front end, because when you get on the back end, it's too late. It's not too late for God's forgiveness. God will forgive you for any affair that you ever had. God will forgive you for any sin that you have ever done. God forgives all sin. And I'm glad for that. Amen?

But, you still have to pay the piper. And the best way to not get involved in that whole process is to understand and magnify the consequences on the front end. Proverbs 6:26 says, *"For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life."* That means adultery will cost you all that you have. And that's talking about more than going to court and having to pay alimony. Maybe you'll say, "But Pastor, you don't know the problems I've got in my marriage." No, I don't, but I want to tell you something, I know the problems you'll have when you get out of the marriage. Try to heal that and get over that. Because if you don't the problems will be much more severe.

3. Maintain your marriage.

You see, marriage needs constant maintenance and constant work. It's not an, "I do," and then it's set for the rest of your life. You've got to maintain that marriage. I Corinthians 7:3 says, *"Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband."* Notice that each should satisfy the other's needs. Not their needs, but the other's needs. There's a great book entitled *His Needs, Her Needs*, by Dr. Willard Harley. And in this book he talks about interviewing thousands of couples and he has listed the top five needs of most men and the top five needs of most woman and let me give them to you.

Top five needs of most men:

- 1. Sexual fulfillment.**
- 2. Recreational companionship.**
- 3. Attractive spouse.**
- 4. Domestic support.**
- 5. Admiration.** Men want to be admired.

Top five needs of most women:

- 1. Affection.** Affection needs explanation to at least half of this crowd. He's talking about tender love, hugs, pats, kisses. He's not talking about going through this process to lead them to the bedroom.

2. **Conversation.** I mean they like to talk. And when you think they're done, no, no, they want to talk some more.
3. **Honesty and openness.**
4. **Financial support.**
5. **Family commitment.**

Think about those two lists. I'm going to show you now why there are marriage problems. If you look at the five for men and the five for women, do you see that they don't relate? They don't parallel at all. That's where the problem is. The problem is when a man gets married he thinks as a man. He hasn't been trained yet, ladies. He tries to meet his wife's needs according to how he wants his needs met. And when a woman gets married, she thinks as a woman and she tries to meet her husband's needs as she would like. And a lot of times that's why there's marriage problems.

I want to say one more thing about maintaining your marriage. If you're really going to maintain your marriage, you do so through friendship. Dionna and I are best friends. I'd rather be with her, spend time with her, talk with her than with anyone else in this world. Now, here's what I learned a long time ago, because marriages can get pretty tough: It is easy at times to leave your spouse, but — listen to me — it's not easy to leave your best friend. So have the best friendship right in the middle of that marriage. If your spouse is your best friend, your marriage is going to succeed. And if your spouse is not your best friend, you're going to face some problems and God's going to have to help you.

4. Manage your mind.

If you want to be faithful to your spouse, manage your mind. And here's the reason why. Affairs develop through the mind first. This is how affairs develop:

1. Accepting sinful thoughts in the mind.

When we let our guard down and accept sinful thoughts in the mind, pretty soon it will progress to something much deeper. Look what James 1:14 says, *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."*

Now there's an incredible bombardment of this in our culture. If you're single, Paul told Timothy something to do that I want you to note here. 2 Timothy 2:22 says, *"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."* What he's saying is that you've got to be your own "thought policeman" as a single person. And there may be some movies you shouldn't be watching. There may be some books you can't read. There may be

some websites you cannot visit. But get active in ministry and begin to do good for others and that will help release you until you're privileged to be married.

2. Emotional (not physical) involvement.

Now I think this is especially true with Christians. What I'm saying is that there becomes a heavy, emotional involvement where you like being together, you want to be together all the time. I think non Christians just cut through all that and go to bed. But I think Christians, because they know this is wrong, they'll hang out in this area way too long.

3. Physical involvement.

It's going to eventually lead you there.

4. Rationalization of the affair.

We begin to convince ourselves that everything is okay. But Jeremiah says, "The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked." We say things like, "Well, if my husband or wife were meeting my needs like this, I'd be okay." "Well, we're in love." "After all, what are you going to do? I've got these feelings."

5. Minimize the opportunity.

If you want to stay faithful to your spouse, minimize the opportunity. The pattern downward is as follows:

- **Familiarity** — you become familiar with somebody.
- **Feelings** — you begin to feel something for them.
- **Frequency** — you now want to be around them more and more.
- **Failure**

That's exactly the way the trend works. Look at what Paul said in I Corinthians 10:12, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* In other words, none of us can look around and say, "Well, that would never happen to me." In fact, in pastors who messed up sexually in their life, one of the three things they all had in common was them saying, "Oh, that won't happen to me." That's an arrogant statement. We all have to begin to build some ways to protect ourselves.

How to protect yourself from affairs:

- 1. Seldom travel alone.**
- 2. Call your spouse every night.**
- 3. Avoid being alone with someone of the opposite sex.**
- 4. Talk positively about your spouse.**
- 5. Be accountable to others.**

6. Choose your friends carefully. Be careful who your friends are. Listen, the Bible tells me, “Bad company corrupts good character.” Don’t hang around with bad friends. They’ll mess you up. You’ll get in trouble with those people.

7. Look beyond the temptation to the consequences.

The pathway back to purity:

1. Acknowledge the sin. Do what David did in Psalms 51 after he committed adultery. Don’t rationalize it. Admit that you are wrong. It’s not an affair; it’s adultery.

2. End the relationship immediately. I mean cut it off now.

3. Avoid ALL contact with that person from now on. Don’t say, “This year sometime I’m going to break that off.” You don’t break things off in a year. Break them off now. Now, there’s healing for you. There’s grace for you. Do whatever it takes to do this!