



CYNTHIA HEALD

the faithful way

REMAINING STEADFAST IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD



Each day of this thirty-one-day devotional will challenge you to explore the Word, learn to live faithfully, and remain faithful. Get ready for a month of motivation and encouragement! I highly recommend Cynthia Heald's new book.

LINDA DILLOW, author of *Calm My Anxious Heart* and *Satisfy My Thirsty Soul*

How Cynthia can be in her eighties and yet remain relatable to me in my thirties astounds me. She teaches through story and dives into the heart of Scripture in a way that provides depth and yet ease of comprehension. As a culture, we don't honor our older generations the way we should. But as for me, I want more of what Cynthia has . . . I want to glean her great knowledge, insight, and wisdom. Why? Because she has seen Christ in a way that magnifies all.

TERESA SWANSTROM ANDERSON, Bible teacher and author of *Beautifully Interrupted*

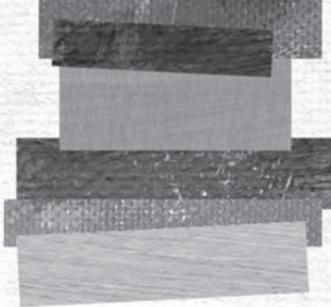
As usual, Cynthia Heald calls me higher. She intersperses rich thoughts from her own meditation with timeless quotes from broad reading.

JEAN FLEMING, author of *Pursue the Intentional Life*

Cynthia Heald offers rock-solid wisdom embedded with gems of Scripture and quotes that will strengthen the foundation of your faith. The ten-minute readings are perfect for personal devotions or group discussions. No “fluff” on these pages—only timeless truths about what it looks like to live a faithful life before God—faithful words from a faithful woman who models what she has written and spoken about for decades.

LORRAINE PINTUS, author of *Jump Off the Hormone Swing* and coauthor of *Intimacy Ignited*

THE FAITHFUL WAY



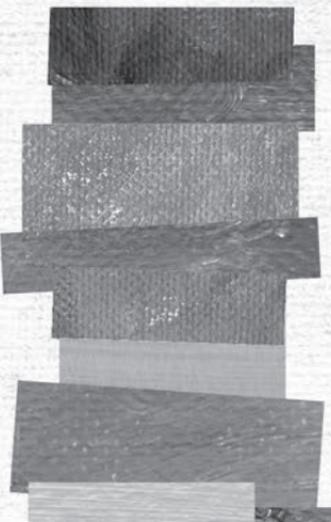
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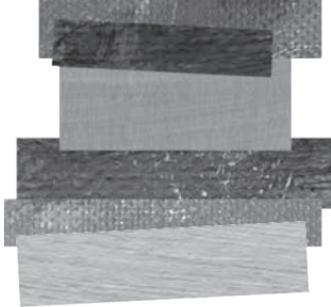
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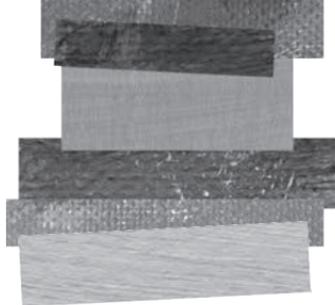
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“The Father and the child”

THE CHILD SPOKE:

Father, I've been thinking about Paul's words to Timothy: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful” (2 Timothy 4:7).

And what are your thoughts?

I want to be faithful and run my race well, but I know how vulnerable I am to the world's ways.

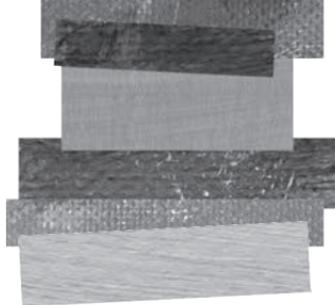
My way is the faithful way.

Yes, but it is not easy in today's world to fight the good fight of faith.

I am with you, giving you the strength and the power to do what is right and to choose the way of faithfulness in any circumstance.

I know that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me—and even remain faithful in an uncertain world. I guess I just need to be encouraged and reminded of your faithfulness.

Good, your heart is set to remain steadfast. I am most pleased when my children seek to live faithfully—for my best gifts are found on the faithful way.



introduction

PERHAPS IT IS FITTING that as I enter my eightieth year, I am writing a devotional study called *The Faithful Way*. The Lord has always prompted me to write on topics he knows I need, and remaining faithful in our uncertain world is an indispensable message for each of us, regardless of how old we are.

It was one of Paul's statements to Timothy that caused me to fully consider how faithfulness defines our lives. He announced, "The time of my death is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful" (2 Timothy 4:6-7). As he faced the end of his earthly days, Paul was expressing his wholehearted commitment to living as faithfully as he could for the Lord. He was not perfect, but he was passionate in wanting to live for the Christ he loved.

Paul's testimony challenges us to live in such a way that we, too, can say, "I have remained faithful." Yet living in today's culture presents countless temptations to live for ourselves and to compromise our faith. This is where we must fight the good fight and determine to remain steadfast. The consequences of choosing to live the world's way can be painful and heartbreaking. Unfaithfulness leads to unnecessary, unwelcome, and often lifetime consequences. Perhaps I have been around long enough to know that choosing to live faithfully surpasses any fleeting pleasure we might obtain by yielding to temptation. What I have discovered over the years is that God's desire for me to be faithful is an expression of his love for me. God's instruction and empowerment to live a faithful life is a gift; it is the way he created us to live.

Over the next thirty-one days, let us be intentional to choose and trust God's way. Since we are on this earth for a relatively short time, why not choose to travel the best path, where our Father guides, protects, equips, corrects, transforms, and gives our lives meaning? No other way promises the unconditional love and abundant grace of God.

The faithful way is a well-trodden path that is blessed at every turn by his presence and peace. This way leads to our eternal home, where the Lord awaits to greet us with, "Well done, my good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:23).

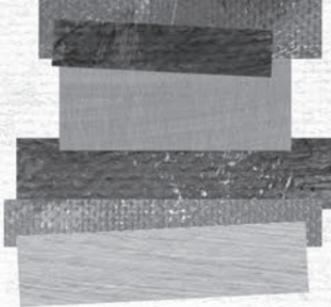
I pray that you will passionately commit to choose the

INTRODUCTION

faithful way and that you will finish your race with joy—
because you have remained steadfast in our uncertain world.

Keep your hand in his,

Cynthia Heald



DAY 1

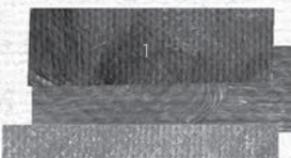
remaining faithful

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful.

2 TIMOTHY 4:7

Faith is the heroic effort of your life, you fling yourself in reckless confidence on God. God has ventured all in Jesus Christ to save us, now He wants us to venture our all in abandoned confidence in Him.

OSWALD CHAMBERS,
My Utmost for His Highest



ONE OF MY FAVORITE CHILDREN'S BOOKS is *Horton Hatches the Egg*, by Dr. Seuss. An irresponsible mother bird decides to go on vacation, and Horton, an elephant, faithfully sits on her nest, enduring winter storms and ridicule to keep the egg safe. Through it all he continually renews his commitment:

*I meant what I said, and I said what I meant . . .
An elephant's faithful—one hundred per cent!*¹

In an implausible and humorous way, Dr. Seuss used Horton to express the essence of faithfulness: persevering devotedness, steadfastness, and trustworthiness. It's a priceless lesson for everyone since we all desire and highly value these qualities in our lives and relationships.

Horton's surprising reward was seeing the egg he protected produce a baby elephant bird. While such a metamorphosis is reserved for fiction, we cannot miss the parallel with the spiritual reshaping of the human heart. God delights in transforming us into new creatures. One dramatic example is the transformation of Saul from a devout Pharisee and persecutor of the early church to Paul, a passionate missionary for Christ and a New Testament author. After his blinding encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus, Paul was commissioned as God's chosen instrument to minister and suffer for the Lord's sake. And suffer he did—yet all the

while, he remained steadfast “for finishing the work assigned . . . by the Lord Jesus” (Acts 20:24).

EXPLORING THE WORD

Bible expositor A. C. Hervey wrote of Paul’s faithfulness, “Through his long eventful course, in spite of all difficulties, conflicts, dangers, and temptations, he had kept the faith of Jesus Christ committed to him, inviolable, unadulterated, whole, and complete. He had not shrunk from confessing it when death stared him in the face; he had not corrupted it to meet the views of Jews or Gentiles; with courage and resolution and perseverance he had kept it to the end.”²

In his second letter to the Corinthian church, Paul summarized his ministry experiences. Read 2 Corinthians 6:3-10 and recount some of his struggles. Record the resources he depended upon in order to remain faithful and above reproach.

LEARNING TO LIVE FAITHFULLY

Paul lived a faithful and steadfast life in the face of many trials. But we don’t have to look far to discover a contrast to this kind of life. Demas was a companion of Paul during his first Roman imprisonment, but the lure of the world and the reality of Paul’s second imprisonment soon overwhelmed him. We read these regrettable words in Paul’s letter to

Timothy: “Timothy, please come as soon as you can. Demas has deserted me because he loves the things of this life and has gone to Thessalonica” (2 Timothy 4:9-10). Twentieth-century pastor and author Herbert Lockyer wrote of Demas,

The prison where [Paul was] languishing seemed wretched alongside the music-haunted, scented, dazzling halls of Rome. Thus Paul had to write one of the most heartbreaking lines in his letters:

“Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.”³

Certainly Demas was drawn to Paul’s love and faith in Christ. But perhaps, despite his desire to emulate Paul’s commitment to Christ, Demas had not yet wholly surrendered to live for the eternal; the temporal was still alluring. Not so with Paul. Because of God’s transforming grace, Paul gratefully and purposefully rejected anything that hindered his pursuit of Christ:

Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.

PHILIPPIANS 3:8

Faithfulness cannot be created through missionary trips or mere behavioral changes. Faithfulness begins with ardent love for the Lord and fervent determination to fling ourselves on him in reckless confidence. Paul fought the good fight of faith through hardships and calamities of every kind. Demas, apparently, was willing to abandon such a fight.

Are we seeking to fight the good fight of faith in order to remain faithful? Let us desire to fine-tune our hearts each day and become so motivated by God's grace, love, and faithfulness that we venture our all in abandoned confidence in him. Only then will we remain steadfast in an uncertain world.

REMAINING FAITHFUL

Paul's faith was tried and proven. In his letter to Timothy, he seemed to write his epitaph by proclaiming his unswerving commitment to the Lord: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful" (2 Timothy 4:7).

In stillness before the Lord, ask God to search your heart while you meditate on these questions:

- How does Paul's life of faithfulness challenge you?
- When you come to the end of your race, what would you like to be able to tell others about your faithfulness?

Father, I desire to venture my all in abandoned confidence in you. May I have the determination and confidence of Paul to fight the good fight of faith, to run my race faithfully, and to be able to say, "I have remained faithful." Amen.

God is righteous, and he not only will not forget our work and labour of love, but he will not allow those of his servants who have devoted their powers to his cause with the greatest energy, constancy, and self-sacrifice to miss the most generous and gracious recognition at his loving hand.

W. CLARKSON, IN *The Pulpit Commentary*