



+ **YOU**

Sermon Series: How to Avoid Life's Pitfalls
To be used with: The Pitfall of Betrayal
Sermon Title Possibilities: God Is Faithful to Not Betray
Scripture: Romans 8:31-39

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study “*The Pitfall of Betrayal*,” this sermon will expound upon the faithful actions and love of God and how this can be experienced through the love of Christ.

Introduction: The opposite of betrayal is faithfulness. Betrayal hurts and yet faithfulness provides comfort and assurance no matter the circumstances. We all strive to avoid those who might betray us and gravitate towards those who are faithful to their words and actions. While some might either intentionally or unintentionally betray us, God is always faithful and nothing will separate us from His love that is found in Christ Jesus. Today’s message is one that looks closely into the faithful actions and love of God.

1. God’s faithful actions

Faithfulness, which is the opposite of betrayal, is found in both words and actions. A husband and wife promise to be faithful to each other and this is lived out over a lifetime. A soldier promises his battle buddy to stick with him no matter how bad the firefight gets. God’s words of faithfulness are shown to be true through His actions and this is revealed throughout history.

a. Faithful to offer His Son (v. 32)

The first faithful action revealed in this passage is that God offered up His only Son. The word offered shows a deliberate act or choice. His offering is neither deserved nor earned. If you are a parent or a grandparent, you would offer yourself for your child or grandchild. You would make this sacrifice out of love. It would probably be safe to assume, however, that you would not offer yourself for those who would betray you. Yet God offered His only Son knowing that you and I would betray Him.

A second key phrase in this verse further reveals the faithfulness of God. Through the offering of His Son, He grants us everything. A close study of this phrase shows freely bestowing upon another strictly based on grace. Let’s be honest, we do not deserve anything from God because of our consistent betrayal of Him. Yet, He graciously offered His Son and continues to faithfully offer us His sustaining grace today.

b. Faithful to justify (v. 33)

The word justified is a legal term that means to declare someone innocent. According to this passage, God is the one who makes this declaration. We all understand that we are not innocent. We also understand that God would be

justified in declaring that we deserve to be separated from Him throughout eternity. Yet, He actively and consistently declares our innocence.

God's declaration also stands up to all accusations. These accusations can come from Satan and his dark forces. They can also come from within ourselves, in that we are listening to our own words as opposed to the truth of God's word. No matter where the accusations come from, God's declaration of justification is secure for those who believe and follow Him.

c. Faithful to intercede (v. 34)

Have you ever had someone stand in the gap for you? It could have been a parent, coach, or teacher. You did something that was less than 100% and they took your side and offered to help as needed. This begins to show a picture of what Jesus is actively doing for His church. He is consistently and faithfully standing in the gap for those who know Him and call Him Lord. He does this because He is faithful and will not betray us.

The Old Testament has an example of one who tried to intercede for another. Reuben, the brother of Joseph, sought to convince his brothers to not kill Joseph. Reuben's plan was to temporarily put Joseph in a pit only to rescue him later. Before he could go get Joseph out, the brothers had sold Joseph into slavery. While Reuben's intercession was not accurately timed, the intercession that Jesus has for His followers is always timely because He is faithful.

2. God's faithful love

a. Present circumstances cannot separate us (v. 35)

Present circumstances can leave us with a feeling of despair. While watching the news we can hear of wars, social unrest, and economic uncertainty. All of this can lead to being anxious. Yet God tells us that nothing this present world can throw at us will be able to separate us from His love. He does not tell us that we will not experience some of these things. Instead, He tells us that all the current realities are unable to separate us from His love.

b. Future circumstances cannot separate us (v. 38)

Let's take a moment to think about things we tend to worry about. We worry about what the stock market might do this week. We worry about what the boss thinks about us and if this will have impact on our income. We worry if we have studied enough to pass the Algebra test. Each of these worries, and most others, are all future oriented. We might regret things in our past, but we worry about things in the future.

This passage tells us that God has the future in hand and the things that we worry about are unable to separate us from His love. It would be wise for all of us to begin to focus upon the faithful love of God and not worry about future things that are unable to ultimately harm those who are in Christ Jesus.

Conclusion: If we know that someone is apt to betray us, we tend to avoid them and would never seek to engage in an ongoing relationship with that individual. If, however, we come to understand that someone is faithful and loving, then we are much more apt to have an ongoing relationship with the person. We know that God is faithful and loving. Paul told the church at Rome that nothing “will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (v. 39). We also know that this is true because it is impossible for God to lie (Titus 1:2). Given these facts the question becomes, how are we going to respond to this? If you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, take time to thank Him for being faithful and loving. If, however, you do not know Him, will you respond to His faithfulness and love and engage in a relationship in which you will never be betrayed?

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