

260 God's Steadfast Love

We're going to talk about God's character quality of being steadfast or, as another translation calls it, unyielding. And I looked up some synonyms to kind of set the tone and then we'll pray. Inflexible. Resolute. Rigid. Unyielding. Changeless. Constant. Dependable. Established. Firm. Immovable. Inexorable. Reliable. Stable, and sure. And this word "steadfast" is usually combined with God's steadfast love. So let's pray and ask God to reveal what it means for His love to be steadfast towards us. Father, thank You for revealing more of Yourself through Your Word, through Your Spirit. And I pray today that we would be helped by the Spirit of God to comprehend more of what it means that You are steadfast, unchangeable, resolute, inexorable in Your affection for us, in Your love for Your people, and we struggle to comprehend that, but I pray that You'd help us to take it in to a different degree today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

One of the reasons that this is so important to me is, as I've thought about my last newsletter, I talked about David and Moses, and I talked about Jeremiah, and all three of those men used this expression when they're talking about God. They talk about His steadfast love. It's interesting to me because all three of those men stood alone in the time in which they lived and they needed to have a connection with God. I really believe that in the last days, especially when evil men are waxing worse and worse and things get much more difficult and the times are harder to live in, that we will each need a connection with our Father where we not only believe theologically but that we have a personal connection with the living God and we are convinced in our hearts that He has steadfast love for us. That's what I'm hoping for. May God give us understanding of what it means that His love for us never changes. It's rigid and persevering. It's fixed and unyielding.

Psalm 36:5 says, "Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens." And another word that's often used in conjunction with steadfast love is "faithfulness," and that's what we see also in the rest of Psalm 36:5: "Your faithfulness to the clouds." That blesses me to think of God's steadfast love extending to the heavens and His faithfulness to the clouds.

Psalm 100 says, "The LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations." Not only is it high, extending to the heavens and pushing the clouds; it's also everlasting. It endures forever, and it extends to all generations.

When Moses met God on the mountain, God revealed Himself by saying, "The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, 'Yahweh, the LORD, the God of compassion and mercy. I am slow to anger and filled with unyielding love and faithfulness.'" Notice I used the word unyielding to break it up a little bit.

When we talk to each other, we normally begin by asking, “Where are you from? What do you do?” We don’t say, “Steve, tall and bald.” But God says, “This is Who I am, a God of compassion and mercy. I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.” 1 John 4 says, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.” God’s essence is love. Not only does His love extend to the heavens and endure forever, but at His very essence, God is love. The way His love was manifested is when He sent His son to take our sins upon Himself.

Romans 8 comes at it a little differently. “I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” It’s so strange to me to believe this.

When I first came to Christ and would sin I would struggle with whiter God still loved me. I had a brother in Christ come alongside and say, “You really need to memorize 1 John 1:9 and perhaps Psalm 103, because when you confess your sins, God will cleanse you, and He’ll separate your sin as far as the east is from the west.” I doubted that truth, because I have feelings, emotions, and memories. Eventually I became convinced from the Word of God that He really does forgive me.

It’s almost the same thing with God’s love. I mistakenly thought that somehow because I sinned, God doesn’t love me anymore, or God’s far away, or God’s turned His back. Believing that God’s affectionate love for each of us is steadfast, reaches the heavens, and is eternal helps us grasp this truth that God is saying, “Look, I love you to pieces! You have no idea how much I love you, and My steadfast love endures forever.”

Psalm 57:10: “Your steadfast love is great to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds.” This is similar to what we read before. Exodus 15: “You have led in Your steadfast love the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them by Your strength to Your holy abode.” Paul prays in 2 Thessalonians, “May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.” You know, Christ is the living representation of God. When we see Jesus, we see God. He’s God in the flesh, and so He’s love in the flesh. He’s the steadfastness of Christ. Deuteronomy 5: “I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love Me and obey My commands.” That’s the NLT.

I mentioned before in this podcast how I used to struggle with waking up in the morning wondering if God still cared for me in the same way that I had been convinced the day before, and I was helped by praying this prayer based on Psalm

90:14: “Satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.” When I wake up convinced that God is standing there with His arms spread wide and a big smile on His face just waiting for His morning hug, I am helped to rejoice and be glad all my days, despite my circumstances and my untrustworthy feelings.

Psalm 59 says, “O my Strength, I will sing praises to You, for You, O God, are my fortress, the God Who shows me steadfast love.” I’ve put together a meditation on God’s steadfast love, which will be part of the transcript for this podcast. It is for the soon to be released book *Come into His Presence*. The song that I chose is number 66 in *Hymns for Family Worship*, “Loved with Everlasting Love.” It goes like this, “Loved with everlasting love, led by grace that love to know; Spirit breathing from above, Thou hast taught me it is so. O this full and perfect peace! O this transport all divine! In a love which cannot cease, I am His, and He is mine.” And the last verse says, “His forever, only His; who the Lord and me shall part? Ah, with what a rest of bliss Christ can fill the loving heart! Heav’n and earth may fade and flee, firstborn light in gloom decline; but while God and I shall be, I am His, and He is mine.”

I’ll sing the third verse for you. “Things that once were wild alarms cannot now disturb my rest; closed in everlasting arms, pillowed on the loving breast. O to lie forever here, doubt and care and self resign, while He whispers in my ear: I am His, and He is mine.” The chorus is “in a love which cannot cease, I am His, and He is mine.”

I particularly like that phrase “Spirit breathing from above” which is a reference to Romans 5:5 where the Word declares that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Spirit. The Good Spirit not only convicts us of sin, He also convinces us of God’s love.

Also, in this new book, I have a thanks section. I have several passages that inspire me and exhort me to be thankful for His unfailing love. Psalm 136:2 says, “Give thanks to the God of gods, for His steadfast love endures forever.” Psalm 66: “Blessed be God, because He has not rejected my prayer or removed His steadfast love from me!” Psalm 51, David’s psalm of repentance after his sin with Bathsheba: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.” And the one that I think of probably the most is found in Lamentations 3, “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.”

A couple more passages. Just let yourself revel in these truths. Psalm 25 says, “All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.” Psalm 89: “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before You.” These are

special images, the idea that the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, and steadfast love and faithfulness go before Him. He walks on them, and they're the foundation of His very being. This is God, and He can't change. Not that He would ever want to change, but He is full of steadfast love, unfailing love, rigorous, inexorable love, firm, reliable love. This is our Dad and this love is for each of us.

2 Chronicles 6:14: "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like You, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart." This feeds me. If no one else is getting good, it feeds my heart just to meditate on God's steadfast love, because I want to know more about Him, and if this is Who He is, this is His essence, then may I take it in. May God help me to pass it on and enable me to be a source of steadfast love to those in my circle and ministry. Psalm 26:3: "Your steadfast love is before my eyes, and I walk in Your faithfulness." I choose to fix my attention like David did and focus on His steadfast love. "Your steadfast love is before my eyes." I see it, I want to think about it, and meditate on it, and chew on it. As I assimilate it, I want to pass it on to others as well.

In another podcast, I mentioned that Jonah, Nehemiah, David, Moses, Jeremiah all use the same words to describe God. He's slow to anger, full of mercy, and His steadfast love endures forever. They probably grew up having these words and verses repeated, and they sowed them in their heart, and tucked them away to be remembered. At the same time, I believe they experienced them. It is one thing to know something in your mind and another thing to experience it in your heart.

This is what I am hoping to do with this new book **Come into His Presence** – which is really close to being done – and with all these studies – is, not only do we read God's Word about His steadfast love, but then we need to connect with God by His Spirit and taste and see that His steadfast love endures forever, because that's worshipping God in the Spirit and in truth. When you have those two components, it transforms your understanding of God.

In closing let's pray: Father, thank You for what You revealed to David and to Moses and to Jeremiah and these other men and women of God through the ages, that they had a personal connection with You. And a lot of us have started strong. I pray that You would help us to finish strong. Help us especially when the love of many grows cold in these last days. Help our love for You to remain fervent. We love because You first loved us, and You eternally loved us in Jesus. Thank You for sending Your Son to manifest Your love to us and reveal Your love to us, and help us to assimilate it and link onto it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Meditation from *Come into His Presence*.

33. God Abounds in Steadfast Unfailing Love

His Name

“The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, ‘Yahweh! The LORD! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.’ (Exodus 34:6 NLT)

God is filled with unfailing or steadfast love. As I read through all of these synonyms for steadfast, they help me get a fuller picture of what God’s love looks like. God’s affection and care for us is: Resolute, Unswerving, Unwavering, Changeless, Constant, Dependable, Enduring, Established, Firm, Fixed, Immovable, Inexorable, Never-failing, Persevering, Reliable, Stable, and Sure.

It encourages me to note that not only Moses declared God’s name, but also Nehemiah, Joel, and Jonah. They affirmed the same description of God which He revealed to Moses. They agreed that God was who He said He was and we know that He never changes.

“They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that You performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.” (Nehemiah 9:17)

“Rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster.” (Joel 2:13)

“He prayed to the LORD and said, ‘O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that You are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.’” (Jonah 4:2)

God demonstrates His Love and Care

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” (1 John 4:7–10)

Nothing can Separate Us from His Firm, Unchanging, Constant Affection

“I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38–39)

God's Steadfast Love

"Your steadfast love is great to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds." (Psalm 57:10)

"The LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations." (Psalm 100:5)

"The earth, O LORD, is full of Your steadfast love." (Psalm 119:64)

"You have led in Your steadfast love the people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them by your strength to Your holy abode." (Exodus 15:13)

"May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ." (2 Thessalonians 3:5)

God's Abundant Unfailing Love

"I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love Me and obey My commands." (Deuteronomy 5:10 NLT)

"Satisfy us in the morning with Your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." (Psalm 90:14)

I. Come Into His Presence with Singing

"O my Strength, I will sing praises to You, for You, O God, are my fortress, the God who shows me steadfast love." (Psalm 59:17)

Loved with Everlasting Love, #66

Loved with everlasting love, Led by grace that love to know,
Spirit breathing from above, Thou hast taught me it is so.
O this full and perfect peace, O this transport all divine;
In a love which cannot cease, I am His and He is mine.

Heav'n above is softer blue, earth around is sweeter green,
Something lives in ev'ry hue Christless eyes have never seen.
Birds with ladders songs o'er flow, flow'rs with deeper beauties shine
Since I know, as now I know, I am His and He is mine.

Things that once were wild alarms, cannot now disturb my rest;
Closed in everlasting arms, pillowed on the loving breast.
O to lie forever here, doubt and care and self resign
While He whispers in my ear, I am His and He is mine.

His forever, only His; who the Lord and me shall part?
Ah, with what a rest of bliss Christ can fill the loving heart.

Heav'n and earth may fade and flee, firstborn light in gloom decline,
But while God and I shall be, I am His and He is mine.

II. Give Thanks unto Him

Thank You that your love endures forever.

“Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever.” (Psalm 136:2)

Thank You for always loving us.

“Blessed be God, because He has not rejected my prayer or removed His steadfast love from me!” (Psalm 66:20)

Thank You for forgiving our sins.

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.” (Psalm 51:1)

Thank You for a fresh batch of Your unfailing love each morning.

“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:22–23)

III. Bless His Name: God Abounds in Steadfast Love

“Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before You.” (Psalm 89:14)

“O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like You, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart.” (2 Chronicles 6:14)

“Thus says the LORD: ‘Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD.’” (Jeremiah 9:23–24)