

BFF376 God Oozes Faithfulness

Scott Moore: Welcome to "The Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I'm well. How are you?

Scott: Good. After some technical difficulties, we are up and running.

Steve: Amen. What's Henry's progress?

Scott: He hit seven pounds yesterday.

Steve: Holy smokes. What's his status as far as his oxygen?

Scott: Abby had the oxygen thing off of him yesterday. She takes it off every once in a while just to see how he's doing because he can go without it some of the time. They watch his saturation levels for the oxygen. He had it off for nine hours yesterday and did fine. His sat levels were good, so who knows? They'll probably keep it all the way through cold and flu season, I imagine, but I don't know how much they'll have to use it. We'll see.

Steve: Cool. I saw a picture of him yesterday, and he looked pretty good.

Scott: Yes, praise the Lord. It's been awesome. They're packing up to move, and they're coming closer to us.

Steve: Wonderful. By the time people listen to this, the kid will be in first grade.

Scott: He is pretty smart.

Steve: Well, we're going to talk about a similar topic that we've had the last couple of podcasts, because I went through my notes to make sure there wasn't too much duplication, but there is some. I'm going to blame my studies. I don't know what else to call them, but I have 16 of them now. These studies I read through twice a day, and I cycle through them, so it takes me a little over two weeks to go through reading one a day.

Each study focuses on an attribute of God. The first one is God is holy, and then I have verses about God's holiness. Based on those verses, I give thanks to God, I come into His presence with singing. I make a joyful shout, and I praise His name, but that's the focus. It's really healthy. I don't know how else to describe it. It gets me thinking about God more than the things I'm praying for or the things I'm reading or the things I'm aware of and the battles that my friends and Henry and others that we're carrying on our hearts. It gets me focused on God. I'm going to ask you a question. What popular parable is in Luke 15?

Scott: The sower?

Steve: No.

Scott: I don't know.

Steve: That's a good guess, though, because that one's all through the gospels. It's the Prodigal Son.

Scott: Oh, that's my favorite lately.

Steve: That's what it's called. It's called the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The poor elder brother doesn't get much print. For most of my experience, I've heard sermon after sermon on the Prodigal Son. I've heard about him coming back smelling like pigs.

There's a lot packed into this parable. In 2012, when I was taking my own relationship with the Father to a different level, some people call it a grace awakening. I call it a deepening of my understanding of the gospel. But now when I read Luke 15, I look at the father, because the father is amazing. He listens to his younger son. He's humble. He gives him half of his inheritance, which had to hurt. He knew it was probably not healthy, but he honored his younger son.

Then he was looking out the window and praying day and night. He's watching out the window and sees that boy come back. He runs down the street and embraces him. Then he comes back and finds the elder brother has issues as well, but instead of rebuking his elder son, he reaches out to him and says, "Look, everything I have is yours." He's an amazing father.

Recently, I've been reading in Job. The last couple of weeks I was finishing up Ezra and Nehemiah and their return to the land. Nehemiah 9 is an incredible chapter where Nehemiah recounts the whole history of Israel. His prayer is full of gratitude, combined with confession and acknowledging their sin. It has wonderful passages honoring God and worshipping Him and describing God's character.

Then you read Ezra and Nehemiah, and hardly back in the land and it doesn't seem like any time at all before they're marrying foreign women. They're violating the Sabbath. They're not giving their proper tithes and offerings to the Levites and the priests. They went right back into sin after they had been in captivity for 70 years. What a painful, awful experience. I'm looking at all these things that they're doing, and I'm shaking my head. Then I thought about the Prodigal Son, and I saw God is doing His thing. God is forever faithful. God never changed. It was awesome.

I don't know how to tell you. I felt like I zoomed out, and instead of looking at all the little stuff down in the ground, I was looking at God and thought, "What a faithful, gracious Father. You brought them back, You did miracles, and then they're into sin again, and yet You still are faithful." He is always faithful, He can't change.

That's a big long introduction. Let's pray. Thank You, Father, that You are faithful. You just are. You're faithful to Your core. You ooze faithfulness, and You don't

change. When we get to heaven and see You, we're going to see faithfulness once again and we're going to look back at history perhaps. Maybe you've got some time machine or something that we can look backwards and understand things and we're going to see that despite all of man's ups and downs, You are present tense, You're the forever God. You're faithful, and You're true and You don't change and You're awesome. Help us today to grasp that a little bit differently from Your word, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: I do have to do a little Hebrew, though, because I was surprised what I found.

Scott: Cool.

Steve: When you think of Nahum, Nahum, minor prophet, not a comforting book. When you think of Nehem-iah, it's the same root word, N-H-M, Nehemiah. The root word is from those three consonants N-H-M, which means comfort or compassion. Nehem-iah.

Whenever you have I-A-H at the end of a word, it often means Yah. Nehemiah means comforted by Yah. Isn't that amazing? Then, when you look at the book of Nahum, I have one passage that will help to reinforce this word of comfort. Nehemiah 1:7, "Jehovah is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him."

God is good. He comforts us, and He remains faithful. The word for faithful in Hebrew is Emeth, E-M-E-T-H. It's used 105 times, and translated as faithful 19 times. The same Hebrew word EMETH is also translated true 80 times. How do you like that? It's a combination.

I'm realizing more and more as I study Hebrew, it's not a one-to-one correspondence with English. In Greek, you pretty much have one word in Greek and it means one word in English, but in Hebrew, it's a compilation. When you hear the word "Emeth," think of true and faithful, or truth and faithfulness.

The root word is "Aman," which means stability, or certainty, or trustworthiness, or established. We can see how EMETH, from AMAN means faithful and true. It's all the same word. I think it's helpful to me when I say all these words to fill out the picture, so to speak. It doesn't just mean faithful. It means true, it means stable, it means trustworthy, it means established, it means faithful.

Another word that's closely related is Emunah, which is feminine, and also translated faith, faithful, faithfully, honestly, stability, steady, trust, etc. Psalm 85:10 puts these two together, "Lovingkindness and truth," Emeth or, "Lovingkindness and faithfulness have met together. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

In the New Testament, the best example of these two words being used together is in Revelation 19:11, "I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True." In Greek, two different words are used, faithful and true. In Hebrew, you only need one, Emeth.

Exodus 34:6, "Jehovah passed before him and proclaimed, 'Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.'" I read this verse a lot because this is where God is introducing Himself to His people. He's introducing Himself to the world. "Do you want to know what I'm like? I'm not vengeful, I'm not picky, I'm not a nitpicker. I am merciful, I'm gracious, I'm patient, slow to anger. I ooze steadfast love and faithfulness." I hate to keep saying that word, "ooze," but it helps me.

Scott: Very descriptive. It works.

Steve: God met me in a special way one day and I started searching the scriptures. I noticed in 1 John 4:8 and 16, it says, "God is love." A light bulb went on and I thought, "He's not loving. He's not one day loving and one day not loving. He's not off and on. He doesn't have hormones. He's always on. He is love. That is who He is. That's His nature."

That's what I mean He oozes it because it just comes out of Him and God is faithful and true. This is His attribute. This is not just an attribute that describes Him on His good days. This is Who He is all the time. He never changes. It blesses my socks off just to meditate on God's nature and Who He is.

Lamentations 3:21–23, I hope everybody knows this passage. Contextually, this is when Jeremiah is witnessing the greatest, darkest, worst time in Israel's history. They're being overrun, the people are in famine, they're being taken to a different country. All the promises made to Israel about the land and the city of Jerusalem seem to have come to nought as he's watching the opposite take place.

Yet he gets his eyes back on God and says, "This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. Jehovah's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness." Now we're supposed to break into the song. Are you ready? You're going to sing with me?

Scott: I'm fine. I don't sound really good this morning.

Steve: It's a beautiful song. "Great is thy faithfulness, O God, my Father. There is no shadow of turning with Thee. Thou changest not. Thy compassions, they fail not, as Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be. Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness, morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided, Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me."

I'm going to do the last verse. "Pardon for sin, a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence, to cheer and to guide, strength for today, bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine with ten thousand beside. Great is Thy faithfulness, Great is Thy faithfulness, morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided, Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord unto me."

When you start singing that song every morning as you get up, it changes your perspective because there's no shadow, there's no turning. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Psalm 100, "Jehovah is good, His steadfast love endures forever, His faithfulness unto all generations." 2 Timothy 2:13, "If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny who He is." He can't not be faithful because that would deny His very existence, His nature, His character. He can't but be faithful.

Scott: What was that verse again?

Steve: 2 Timothy 2:13.

Scott: That was the one I was thinking of. I'm a little foggy at the moment, but I was thinking there's a verse where it talks about our faithlessness and His faithfulness in the face of that, and that's the one.

Steve: It's perfect. He's perfect. Deuteronomy 7:9, "Know therefore that Jehovah your God is God, the faithful God Who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations."

Psalm 91:4, "He will cover you with His pinions." That's the end of His wings. "Under His wings, you may seek refuge. His faithfulness is a shield and a bulwark." What a great place to be. That's a picture that is similar to what Jesus said, "Oh, that I could gather you like a hen gathers her chicks."

When things were tough at the beginning of COVID and we were being bombarded with horror stories and the world's coming to an end and everybody's going to get sick and die, I read Psalm 91 a good bit. "They that abide under the shadow of the Almighty." That means you're close. You're under His shadow. You're under His wings. You're under His pinions. He's faithful and He's a bulwark. He's a refuge.

Psalm 117:2, "Great is His steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of Jehovah endures forever."

Psalm 89:8, "Oh, Jehovah God of hosts, who is like You, a strong and mighty Yah, and Your faithfulness is round about You."

Psalm 31:5 "You have redeemed me Oh, Jehovah, faithful God."

I remember going to a Wednesday night meeting at our church many years ago, and the pastor said, "We are not leaving tonight until we have all memorized 1 Corinthians 10:13. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful

and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation, He will also provide the way of escape that you may be able to endure it." God's faithful. When confronted with temptation some people say, "Oh, I couldn't stop myself." Sorry, lie. The scripture says that there is always a way of escape.

Hebrews 2:17, "Therefore, He had to be made like His brothers in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." We know Jesus is God in the flesh, and Jesus is God, but it's nice the way he puts it, He became like us so that He would understand us, not only be faithful, but also merciful because He tasted all of our temptations.

On the opposite side of this, we have an unfaithful enemy. We're still talking spiritual warfare. John 8:44, "When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies." I guess Jesus would not be politically correct, but this is who the devil is. This is his character. He can't help but lie.

God can't help but tell the truth because He is the truth. He is faithful. He is the epitome and the source of all faithfulness. He's the source of truth and faithfulness. On the other side, our arch enemy, the devil, is a liar and the father of lies.

Revelation 12:9, "The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world." Of course, he's a deceiver, because he's a liar.

2 Corinthians 10, most people will quote this passage when talking about spiritual warfare. It's generally one of the first two or three to be quoted. "Though we walk in the flesh, we're not carrying on a warfare according to the flesh and using mere weapons. For the weapons of our warfare are not physical, but they are mighty before God for the overthrow and destruction of strongholds."

It is easy to overlook the rest of this passage. The last verse says, "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God." We're fighting against his lies. We're fighting against his deception. This is what we do.

Sometimes I pray and ask God to bind the liar in Jesus' name and bind the deceiver and bind him in Jesus' name and bind all his lies and all his arguments and all his opinions that are raised against the knowledge of God.

Sometimes I pray for Christians, that they will be able to grasp, in a whole new way, how much they're loved and liked, how much they've been forgiven, how much they are not under condemnation. These are the great weapons of the devil, to make us think He loves everybody else, just not us. "Yeah, you're close, but no cigar. You're on the outskirts," and all that. That is an example of the arguments and lofty opinions raised against the knowledge of God by the deceiver and the liar.

Then the last part of 2 Corinthians 10:5, "And take every thought captive to obey Christ." That's why He gave us these weapons. That's why they're mighty before God. That's why they destroy these strongholds, because most of these strongholds are in people's head, these lies, and they've lodged there and they've grown up with them. God has got to set us free from them.

He came to set us free, because He is the truth, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." There's a lot in scripture which declares He is true, He is faithful. I have 29 passages here.

Psalm 18:30, "This God, His way is perfect, the word of Jehovah proves true."

Proverbs 30:5, "Every Word of God proves true."

Jeremiah 10:10, "Jehovah is the true God. He is the living God and the everlasting King." This is Who we're talking about here. He is true. He is faithful. He is true through and through.

John 17:3, "This is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God." He's certainly not the devil, the god of this world, the deceiver, the liar, etc. We all need to be reminded of this on a daily basis. God created us, God knows us, God loves us, God likes us, God is greater than our foes. "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world." There you go.

Scott: Part of me hopes that someday I'll have all these on the tip of my tongue, just be able to rattle them off, but I'm not there yet. This is one of the reasons it's so important and so helpful to be in the word every day and trust that the Holy Spirit is going to bring the right verses to you at the right time because, it is so important to just be bathed in this stuff because we forget. I'll walk away from this microphone in 10 minutes from now and then have forgotten all of this. Yet when I get into His word, I'm like, "Oh, yeah, He is faithful all the time" and I am still going to be faithless because that's just what I do. Paul did it and everybody else did it too. Everybody except Jesus. There were a couple other who got close.

Steve: It's a good thing we're recording this then and then you can listen to it.

Scott: Yes. I'm telling you, it's really powerful. It's helpful.

Steve: It is, and it helps me. It helps just to clear the air to know that He is so true and so faithful that that's His essence. I don't know how else to say it. That's why He oozes it. If He's made up of atoms, every single atom is true and faithful, slow to anger, merciful, gracious.

Scott: The great ooze of faithfulness.

Steve: That's who He is. His antithesis, the devil, is the exact opposite. Anytime we see anything that is not true, we know it can't be from God because He is true and He's given us weapons. Let's practice what we preach.

Father in Jesus' name, deliver us from lies. We know that Your word is a sword and it divides bone and marrow. It discerns the thoughts and intents of our heart. I pray for Your word to reveal lies in our experience. I pray for Your word to reveal truth and reveal the truth of God's nature and character.

Thank You that we can just back up and get our eyes up off of all the things that face us on a daily basis and look at You who is true and faithful. We're going to see You coming back and You're going to be the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in the future because You are faithful. You are true. You are God, and we worship You, and we love You, and we believe in You.

We bind our enemy. We bind the liar. We bind the deceiver of the whole world. I pray that You will set Your people free first. Set us free to believe the Gospel. Set us free to believe every word of scripture. Set this whole world free from the deception.

Scripture says that the things of God's character are clearly revealed in the things that He has made, in the book of Romans. I pray that You will remove that fog, that veil that's over the whole world today, and help them to see God's nature.

This is vacation time when we're talking here in the Northern Hemisphere. I pray as people go to the beach and go for walks in the mountains that they won't just see prettiness, but they'll see God and they'll see Him who created every single piece of it, in Jesus' name.

That's what we're praying for, because we know that there's going to be a day when every knee is going to bow, and every tongue is going to confess that You are God, to the glory of God the Father. We're believing for that in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for The Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.