

The Challenge of Living a *Consistent* Life of Faith

Key verses:

(Heb 11:29-30) "²⁹ By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days."

(Num 14:22) "²² Surely all these men have seen my glory and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet they have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice."

Main idea:

Often our lives are filled with great contradictions: moments of faithfulness in one period of time, and moments of great unfaithfulness in the next. The challenge for us is to live a consistent life of faith over the long haul.

The Israelites had both periods of faith and rebellion.

- I. God said that his people tested Him 10 times.
 1. When they were being chased by the Egyptians (Ex 14:10-12)
 2. When there was nothing but bitter water (Ex 15:22-24)
 3. When there was no food (Ex 16:1-3)
 4. When they disobeyed by keeping manna until the next day (Ex 16:19-20)
 5. When they disobeyed by looking for manna on the Sabbath (Ex 16:25-29)
 6. When they could not find water (Ex 17-16)
 7. When they made & worshipped the golden calf (Ex 32:1-35)
 8. When they complained about Yahweh (Num 11:1-2)
 9. When they complained about having no meat (Num 11:4-34)
 10. The climax: When the people refused to enter the promised land (Num 14:3).
- II. Yet God's people showed faith in two instances.
 1. When they crossed through the Red Sea (Ex 14:5-31)
 2. When they marched around the walls of Jericho. (Josh 6:1-20)

Application:

1. You can lead others by your example of faith.
2. It is possible for us *as a body of believers* to be considered faithful (or not). That is, faithfulness is not just an individual thing.
3. It is not always so cut-and-dry as to whether or not we are a 'faithful' people or not. Sometimes we may be quite faithful, and other times we might be quite rebellious.
4. It is sometimes easier to perform one heroic act than to live a whole life of consistent faithfulness.