

**General Topics :: Need article on "Loyalty"****Need article on "Loyalty" - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/6/6 17:19**

For sometime I have been looking for an article discussing the virtues of loyalty but cannot find any from the Biblical point of view; there are those that espouse the secular one but that is all.

Years ago "Christianity Today" printed a lengthy one detailing how people no longer are loyal but pragmatic, if I recall. Folks used to be fiercely loyal to their church, their denomination, their car company's, brands of products used, friends, family, spouse.. But no more: all these are readily disposed of if they interfere with life at the moment.

(I will readily admit one will have to move out from institutions that have abandoned God's calling on their lives - this is not what I am talking about. People no longer are loyal to friends ... people are there to be used for my personal satisfaction.)

Can anyone help me with this request? Thanks!

ginnyrose

**Re: Need article on "Loyalty" - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/7 9:23**

Hi ginnyrose,

Here are a couple of short articles that look at loyalty from a couple of different perspectives, possibly a place to start from.

Loyalty  
the meaning of loyalty  
the importance of loyalty

Loyalty is one of our highest achievement in our earthly and eternal spiritual personality.

Loyalty means being absolutely true to all at all times in all and any circumstances Being true to our living partner, children, family members and relatives.

Being true to all our friends, employees, employers, neighbors, ..

Being true to all those who ever help or assisted us in any way. Those who have provided for all the goods and conveniences of life we ever enjoyed or simply needed for life, ...

Above all - loyalty means being fully true to God and all divine principles of LOVE at all times ! Loyalty means being true to all even in the darkest or most dangerous hours of eternal life.

Loyalty means rather dieing and giving all - your life, property, even your physical body - rather than betraying anyone - even a single one.

And for all those who have been our enemies, or failed to help us in even the smallest way, we will learn to ask for grace and mercy and forgive them in full ... - because we all have failed many times to help others and be loyal to others when they needed our loyalty or help of any kind.

It's very easy to die in true loyalty and love to all and to God, and it may be very hard to die as betrayer, coward or liar.

Author unknown

The subject of loyalty.

Are you loyal?

The obvious default answer is going to be obviously "to my friends and family" (assuming of course, you have friends or family). For the patriotic folk, they can throw in a group, organization, or a governing body as well. Your country. Your home. Your team.

But what does it mean to be loyal? That you support the views with whomever it is that you say you are loyal to? That you are biased in their favor? That there is some form of a relationship with them?

If the above definitions were true, then loyalty would be a very sad thing. No significance, no power, no meaning. The above definitions say: "I am on your side as long as no harm befalls me". Then loyalty is casual. Easily formed and easily lost.

But loyalty is not defined that way. Loyalty is faithfulness or a devotion to a person or cause. Devotion. Devotion, meaning dedication. Dedication, meaning time, meaning effort, meaning priority, meaning 'we'. 'We', meaning 'we' stick and swim together. The key point is that loyalty requires dedication and dedication requires sacrifice. Sacrifice equals effort. So keeping this in mind, are you really loyal to what you profess to be loyal to?

Loyalty, it seems, expands beyond the simple "I'm on your side" mantra.

by blank

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/6/7 12:14**

Thanks, Pastor. This helps.

You see I compile our church bulletin and I will fill it up with inspirational pieces after all the announcements are in place. So I cannot use something too long, unless I will divide it into segments and print it as a continuation.

Now about loyalty - one seldom reads about it anymore, neither is it discussed much....can't you tell I come from an older generation?

Blessings,  
ginnyrose

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2008/6/7 12:23**

a small excerpt:

*The object of the church in this training of disciples is well expressed in the words of Paul, "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ!"*

*This thought of the church as the school of Christ and of young Christians as entering the school, is very suggestive. We are not to expect perfection—but we have a right to expect an increasing knowledge of spiritual things and also spiritual growth in all the qualities which belong to Christian character. We should become more patient, more loving, more unselfish, more helpful, and more faithful in all duty, more like Christ.*

*Uniting with the church, brings its duties. It allies us with Christ and makes us coworkers with him. We are not to think merely of what the church may do for us—but also of what we may do for the church. Church loyalty is a mark of true and wholesome Christian life. One need not be a narrow sectarian to be a good church member; but one will always be the better Christian for being entirely devoted to his own church and enthusiastic in all its life and work. Anything that weakens a man's loyalty to his own particular church, hurts his spiritual life and lessens his usefulness as a Christian.*

*In many ways church members may serve their church. They should be interested in all its work of saving souls and promoting the cause of Christ. They should regularly attend its services. They should contribute for its support. They should study its interests and seek in every way to extend its influence. They should keep the church in their prayers, daily making supplication for it. They should bring to it always the best they have to bring, not of gifts and service only—but also of love and personal helpfulness.*

*It is a high privilege to be a church member, and one who has such honor—should seek to be worthy of it, as the church is the body of Christ in this world.*

taken from ([http://www.gracegems.org/Miller/in\\_his\\_steps.htm](http://www.gracegems.org/Miller/in_his_steps.htm)) In HIS steps by J.R Miller

**Re: Loyalty - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/7 12:28**

Hi ginnyrose,

You are welcome.

Quote:  
-----Now about loyalty - one seldom reads about it anymore, neither is it discussed much....can't you tell I come from an older generation?  
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Yes Maam, and i as well. I believe the greatest example we will ever see of loyalty is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 22:42

Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

In His Love  
pastorfrin

**Re: Need article on "Loyalty" - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/6/7 15:07**

Hi ginnyrose,

Here is a very good sermon on loyalty; though much longer than what you are looking for, is well worth the read. Simple and matter of fact, kind of like some older folks we know. 8-)

In His Love  
pastorfrin

The Marks of Loyalty  
Rev. John Newton  
Proverbs 19:20-29

"What matters most is loyalty. It's better to be poor than to be a liar." That is how the Contemporary English Version of the Bible renders Proverbs 19:22. If there is one theme that binds this chapter together, it is of loyalty. The subject of loyalty is not limited to the book of Proverbs, however. The Bible is full of stories of loyalty. One has only to turn to the first pages of Genesis, to the creation of the first man and woman, to hear Adam declare to Eve as he first set his eyes upon her, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh..." And the author comments, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh."<sup>1</sup>

Or think of the touching story of the young widow Ruth. When her mother-in-law Naomi decided to return to her homeland to live out her own widowhood, Ruth would not let her go alone, but declared, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."<sup>2</sup>

In the New Testament we have the moving account of Peter's failure to be loyal to Jesus in his final hours. At the supper in the upper room Peter had vowed to lay down his life for Jesus. Jesus, however, knew better; and later that night outside the temple court Peter denied not once but three times that he even knew Jesus. When he realized what he had done, he wept bitterly. The story has a happy ending, however. For, although Peter failed in his loyalty to Jesus, Jesus continued loyal to him and after his resurrection entrusted his mission to him once again.<sup>3</sup>

This morning's verses from Proverbs focus on two areas where loyalty comes into play: in the way we handle truth and in our relationships with our family and friends. This morning I want us to look together at each of these two important facets of loyalty, and then to go on to look what the Bible says about it in a more general fashion.

#### Loyalty to the truth

What, then, does it mean to be loyal to the truth? We've all heard the old saw, "My mind is made up, so don't confuse me with the facts." Let me suggest that loyalty to the truth involves exactly the opposite point of view. It means a willingness to accept the truth even when it may not fit comfortably with my own preconceived notions. Here is one way in which the book of Proverbs puts it: Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.

This emphatically does not mean that we allow ourselves to be subject to every wacko notion that comes our way, or that we grant equal credence to every idea that we hear. If that were the case, we might become like weather vanes, changing our minds with each new whim that comes into fashion. The letter to the Ephesians warns us not to be "infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching".<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand it does mean that our commitment to the truth is such that we are prepared to change our minds when the facts demand it. I confess with shame that this is an area where we Christians have not excelled. What happened

to Galileo in the seventeenth century is a case in point. As a leading astronomer Galileo had come to accept Copernicus' theory that the earth revolved around the sun, and not vice versa. This led him into trouble with church authorities, who held that the only view consistent with Christian doctrine was that the earth stood at the centre of the universe. As a result Galileo and his teachings were condemned and he was forced to live under house arrest for the last ten years of his life.

Jesus promised his disciples, "You shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free."<sup>5</sup>

Proverbs teaches us,

Those who get wisdom love their own souls;  
those who cherish understanding prosper.

Loyalty to the truth means allowing our minds, our thoughts and our attitudes to be shaped by it—even in those circumstances when the truth may be inconvenient or downright uncomfortable.

It also means speaking the truth, doing the truth, living it out in the course of our daily lives.

Better the poor whose walk is blameless  
than a fool whose lips are perverse.

What we are talking about here, in a word, is integrity: that commitment to truth that is such that it is reflected in all our words and actions. One of the most marvelous pictures of what that brand of loyalty means is found in the little vignette of the early church that Luke gives us in Acts 2:42:

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Here was a group of men and women who had not only been persuaded by the truth, but who lived it. And that transparent loyalty was such that people were immediately attracted to it. Luke tells us that "they enjoyed the favour of all the people. And the Lord added daily to their number..."<sup>6</sup> Would that we in the church today could display the same loyalty, the same unqualified devotion to the truth. We might be a different place.

Loyalty to family and friends

It is clear too that the loyalty of those first Christians was not merely to a set of abstract doctrines, but to one another. Luke tells us that they devoted themselves not only to the apostles' teaching, but also to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. I cannot but believe that the latter three loyalties were every bit as important as the first. This brings us to a second aspect of loyalty: loyalty to family and friends.

Chapter 19 of Proverbs has even more to say about that kind of loyalty than it does about loyalty to the truth:

Those who rob their father and drive out their mother  
are children who bring shame and disgrace.  
Houses and wealth are inherited from parents,  
but a prudent wife is from the Lord.  
Discipline your children, for in that there is hope;  
do not be a willing party to their death.

God has created us as social beings. Our relationships are fundamental to our being. We cannot be truly human without them. Being in relationship with others is basic to what it means to be made in the image of God. And without loyalty those relationships cannot survive. So it is that the Bible (and Proverbs specifically) has a great deal to say about loyalty in relationships.

That loyalty is enshrined in the ten commandments: Honour your mother and your father, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving to you. That is, healthy family loyalties are the bond which holds the whole of a society together. Do not kill; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not lie; do not covet. That is, do not allow anything to become more important or to have greater prominence than the people in your lives. The New Testament goes even farther when it teaches us that the loyalty shared by husband and wife is so sacred that it may be seen as a model of the relationship between Christ and the church. "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her..."<sup>7</sup>

In his book *Married for Good* Paul Stevens outlines six kinds of loyalty that ought to characterize a healthy marriage. Let me share four that ought to characterize not just marriage but any healthy relationship. First there is attitudinal loyalty, which seeks to see the other person from Christ's perspective, concentrating on their qualities rather than their faults. Secondly there is verbal loyalty, choosing both how we address other people and how we speak about them when they are not around. Thirdly there is spiritual loyalty, which very often amounts to nothing more complicated than respect, releasing people to be themselves rather than having our own agendas for them, loving them for who they are, rather than for what we think they might become. And fourthly there is heart loyalty, a commitment to stay in relationship with another person no matter what, a willingness to work together on difficulties and to work out differences together.

#### The pattern of loyalty

Where does this pattern of loyalty come from? I believe that its origin is in the Lord himself. The word which the Bible translates "loyalty" in Proverbs 19:22 is in the Hebrew of the Old Testament *chesed*. We find it used in the dramatic revelation of God to Moses in the book of Exodus: "And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in *chesed* and faithfulness, maintaining *chesed* to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin..." Or again in the elegant beauty of Psalm 103:

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,  
slow to anger, abounding in *chesed*....  
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his *chesed* for those who fear him...  
... from everlasting to everlasting  
the Lord's *chesed* is with those who fear him,  
and his righteousness with their children's children...<sup>8</sup>

The word is used more than 250 times and really has no single precise English equivalent. Perhaps the closest is something like "covenant love". One translator defines it as "the mutual liability of those ... belonging together", another as "a free act of kindness". Yet another can describe it only in terms of a situation: Someone is in a position to offer vital help and does so in his or her own freedom.<sup>9</sup>

Surely the picture we are being given here is the one that our Lord Jesus gave when he told the story of the man who was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho when he fell among thieves. What the Samaritan showed to that wounded Jew as he lay naked and half dead by the side of the road was *chesed*, loyalty—a loyalty which reached above the distinctions of race and class and which cut through the barriers of prejudice and preconceptions. It is a human reflection of the divine loyalty which has reached out to sinful, wayward, rebellious humanity and embraced us as his children and adopted us as his heirs.

"Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person," comments the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans, "though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."<sup>10</sup> Such is the loyalty that God has to the likes of you and me. Like Jesus' parable the wisdom of Proverbs is calling us to go and do likewise.

Gracious Father,  
we cannot fathom the loyalty you have shown to us  
in sending your Son to die for us  
and adopting us as your own:  
by the power of your Holy Spirit  
help us to show the same loyalty to you  
and to those whom you have placed in our lives;  
for we ask it in Jesus' name.

1 Genesis 2:23,24

2 Ruth 1:16,17

3 See Matthew 26:31-35;69-75; John 21:15-19

4 Ephesians 4:14

5 John 8:32

6 Acts 2:47

7 Exodus 20:12-17; Ephesians 5:25

8 Exodus 34:6,7; Psalm 103:8,11,17

9 Harris, Archer & Waltke, eds, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, volume 1, pages 305-307, article on "hsd"

10 Romans 5:7,8