

October 18 / Sunday

Finding Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control

Read [Hosea 3:1 and 4:1](#) / [Colossians 3:12](#) / [Titus 2:11-14](#)



19 / Mon – God never gives up | Read [Hosea 1:1-9 and 3:1-5 and 4:1](#) / [Psalm 89:30-34](#)

You know God is faithful but do you sometimes wonder how far He will go? This unusual story in the Old Testament answers that question. God told his prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute and have children with her. For a while she was content but after bearing him three children, she got restless and went looking for love elsewhere. If you were Hosea, how would you have responded? What unexpected thing did God tell him to do? What point was God trying to make?

20 / Tue – You can be faithful too | Read [Job 1:1-22 and 2:1-10](#)

You know trusting God is important but consider this question: can God trust *you*? When life is great, it is easy to sing His praises. It is not quite so easy to stay faithful when you wrestle with difficult circumstances over which you have little or no control. When life falls apart, do you keep trusting God anyway, as Job did (1:22, 2:10)? This fruit will grow as you practice being faithful to God in the small choices of everyday life and you will be more prepared for bigger storms.

21 / Wed – God understands | Read [1 Kings 19:1-12](#) / [Isaiah 42:3](#)

Often people focus on God's great power and strength, but have you experienced His gentleness? The prophet Elijah did. As God's spokesperson, he wrestled with obstinate people being tempted to worship false gods, undecided about their allegiance to the Lord God. After a decisive victory over the false prophets, an exhausted Elijah was unable to go on so God dealt gently with him. The Lord knows what you can endure and He will bring the restoration you need as you wait.

22 / Thu – Your gentleness speaks volumes | Read [Philippians 4:5](#)

We live in a get-it-done world. There is very little accommodation for those who can't keep up. You may find it tempting to become impatient with another's weakness in circumstances that are easy for you. But if you choose to respond with gentleness and encouragement, it can serve to motivate others and strengthen their resolve to keep going. Will you take these opportunities as a challenge to demonstrate how God has treated you in your weaknesses and so bless others?

23 / Fri – Everyone's favorite exercise - not! | Read [Genesis 39:6-21](#) / [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)

Self-control requires saying 'no' to things that are wrong because the negative consequences are not worth a temporary pleasure. Joseph is a great example. He was a man of integrity and held fast to a higher standard than his culture expected, even when it backfired on him. Are there things that may be acceptable to your friends but you know God asking something better of you? What helps you stay the course when you are tempted to take the easy way out?

24 / Sat – Self-control is possible | Read [Hebrews 12:1-3](#)

Self-control can mean doing difficult things because of a desired outcome. Look as Jesus' example. Life on earth was hard for him, probably harder than anyone realizes. He battled the devil's lies and temptations; he faced hunger and discouragement and fear. The people he loved misunderstood and rejected him. But he never gave up. This verse tells us why. What is the joy you anticipate that motivates you to keep pushing forward when it might be easier to quit?