

Chapter 7: God's Faithfulness and Our Unfaithfulness

God remained faithful even when His Chosen People were unfaithful.

Chapter Summary

When the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians, God sent Moses to free them. Even after God did many mighty works to free them, the Chosen People still doubted God. But God repeatedly proved His faithfulness even when they were not faithful to Him. On Mount Sinai, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments to show His people how to love Him and one another (see Exodus 20:2–17; Deuteronomy 5:6–21). Meanwhile, they had constructed a golden calf as an idol (see Exodus 32:1–6; Deuteronomy 9:16). The Ten Commandments lead us toward virtue and away from false idols and vice. A vice is a pattern of sin that opposes virtue. The nation of Israel eventually became the Kingdom of Israel, and God promised its king, David, that from him He would establish an everlasting kingdom. But due to sin, the Kingdom of Israel fell and all but two of the tribes were lost. So the people waited for the coming of the Savior who would reestablish the kingdom.

More for Parents

Throughout the Old Testament, we see God's people go through cycles of being faithful to God and then becoming unfaithful by turning to worship idols. Like them, our families can develop idols. While we don't erect golden calves in our living rooms, we tend to place other things in our lives before God and His love. We might make an idol out of television, work, or sports. This happens when our family life is primarily dictated by these things. What we devote our attention and energy to teaches our children what is most important in life. Instead of idols, we should structure our family life around what truly matters: loving God and one another.

Virtue in the Family

When we turn away from worshipping God and following His commandments, we can develop vices instead of virtues. Each virtue has an opposite vice. Vices lead us

further away from God and result in unhappiness. Following the Ten Commandments by loving God and others can help us grow in virtue instead of vice.

Recognizing Vice

- In quiet reflection, guide your family through the following questions in order to identify any vices:
 - Are there sins I commit frequently? (Think about things like using bad language, lying, disobeying those in authority, and missing Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.)
 - Do I commit these sins easily—that is, without much hesitation?
- Then take turns praying this prayer aloud: “Lord, increase the virtue of charity in me so that I may overcome my vice. Amen.”
- Be aware of any sins that your children continue to commit. Gently point out to them their reoccurrence and guide them to understand why they are wrong. With them, discuss alternative actions of virtue they can make instead.
- Teach your children how to read a map and then write directions to a destination nearby (like an ice cream shop, park, or parish). Have them read the directions as you drive. When you arrive, take time to explain how God's commandments are like those directions. They guide us to Heaven instead of getting lost in vice.

Vocabulary Words for Your Children to Review

- idol
- Kingdom of Israel
- vice

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