

Alpha Counseling Service

May

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Dear Friends,

May has several important days that we celebrate. Mother's Day is first and then at the end of the month is Memorial Day. Growing up just after World War 2 I have vivid memories of the intense emotion expressed by men and women during the Memorial Day observances. It saddens me to see how little we remember the sacrifices made to keep our country safe all these years. Even worse we now have citizens who will bomb and shoot fellow Americans for one cause or another. Working with people over these years has shown me a major cause of the decline of our society is lack of loyalty.

Loyalty is defined as *having or showing complete and constant support for someone or something. It can be defined as faithful allegiance to one's lawful sovereign or government, faithful to a person to whom fidelity is due.* Loyalty can be applied to keeping one's promises. Following through on commitments that cause difficulty is a reflection on our attitude toward others and our selves. Years ago I knew a couple who made a pledge to give a certain amount to missions monthly then the husband lost his job. After praying about it, they borrowed the money each month to pay their pledge until he was back to work. Others would have understood if they had not followed through on their promise but their attitude was that God had lead them to the pledge they made and difficulty didn't negate their promise. It would seem today that very few keep their promises, especially when coming to marriage. I remember a wedding rehearsal when the mother of the bride was trying to comfort her nervous daughter said "Don't worry if this marriage doesn't work out you can try again!" The look on the daughters face told me that comment wasn't appreciated.

To me a very outstanding story of loyalty in the Bible is the gentile widow Ruth who chose to follow Naomi and her God. Ruth's loyalty was abundantly blessed with a new husband and she is a direct descendant of Jesus Christ.

Ruth 1:16--But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.

Ruth 1:17--Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

Her statement illustrates the definition of loyalty perfectly. Having and showing complete and constant support for someone.

On a different topic I would like you know that this is my anniversary month at Alpha! On May 10th, 1990 I walked in the door of Alpha and began work. I really didn't know much about the area or how much work there would be for me. But, 36 years later I have counseled over 30,000 hours! I regularly see people from several local counties and currently talk with someone in Europe! Our website has drawn interest from people from all over this country! Your prayers and gifts have made all this possible! Thank you for all you have done to bring healing and hope to so many people.

Please pray especially for God to provide strength and wisdom to minister to the needs of hurting people.

Thanks for your support and for praying for Alpha!!

Richard