

Jesus and His Promises Acts 2:36-41

We expect people to keep their promises and we are unhappy when they do not. Those who have broken promises to us in the past we tend not to fully trust anymore. People may be well intentioned, but we are weak and forgetful. God however, is neither weak nor forgetful; He keeps His promises. **Numbers 23:19** puts it this way, ***“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will not do it? Or has He spoken, and will not make it good?”*** God is faithful, loyal and trustworthy; you can count on Him.

In the N.T. we have the apostle Paul who faced afflictions, struggles, conflicts, and even death; but he said this about God in **1 Thess. 5:24**, ***“He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”*** He didn’t doubt that God would do as He said, and in **2 Cor. 1:18-20** he said, ***“As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been Yes and No. ¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. ²⁰ For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.”***

Scripture always speaks well of Joshua – He was a courageous and faithful leader in Israel. He lived through the 10 plagues, he crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, he led Israel into battle, he ascended Mount Sinai with Moses, he spied out the promised land and gave a good report with Caleb, he stood beside Moses in all the wanderings, and led the people into the promised land and fought until the Israelites had conquered all the land that was promised to Abraham.

When he was an old man, he called Israel together and in **Joshua 23:14** he said, ***“And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one word has failed of all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one of them has failed.”*** Here was a man who saw God in action for many decades of his life, even when things seemed impossible! And yet he never wavered in his faith that God would keep every promise!

And I want you to know, we can trust God to keep His promises for many reasons: First, God is all powerful; and nothing is impossible for Him. God can easily do things you and I cannot do. Job in **Job 42:2** said, ***“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.”*** Again in **Jer.**

32:17 we read, *“Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.”* And Paul in **Eph. 3:20-21** said, *“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”* I am here to affirm to you this morning that God can and will keep all His promises.

Second, God loves us and provides for us His people. We only need to look at the cross to know how much the Lord loves us. **1 Jn. 4:10** says, *“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* God sacrificed His Son – and I am sure you understand this was no small or easy gift. Paul explains in **Rom. 8:32**, *“He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?”* God is not stingy with His love and care for us.

Third, He is God and cannot lie, Titus 1:2. The book of Hebrews describes the very character of God when He make promises. In **Heb. 6:17-18** the Bible says, *“So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope that is set before us.”* God’s character guarantees His oaths and promises. You can count on God!

So, **let’s think about some of the promises we have in Jesus Christ.** It does matter if we are in Christ or out of Him, for God’s promises are for those in Christ – those who love Him and follow Him. **First, Jesus promised those who love, believe, and obey Him to forgive their sins.** **Hebrews 8:12** says, *“For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”* Forgiveness is truly a great blessing. **2 Cor.5:19** says, *“in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them.”* When God forgives, He makes friends with us and no longer holds our sins against us.

When the guilty people at Pentecost asked what they needed to do, the apostle Peter said to them in **Acts 2:38**, *“Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for*

all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.” Again, Ananias told Saul of Tarsus in Acts 22:16, “*And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.*” The atoning blood of Jesus Christ will wash away our sins when we repent and are baptized. God promised it and we can know that God will do it. When we meet God’s conditions, God keeps His promises.

A Christian will sometimes find himself committing sin and needing forgiveness – such a Christian does not need to be baptized again, in 1 Jn. 1:7 we read, “*But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*” As we see, God continues His cleansing work in the Christian who walks in the light. John continues his thought in verse 9, “*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” We must be honest with God about our sins and confess them. God then responds by cleansing us from all unrighteousness – every sin. Christ stands by his promise – He knows our weaknesses, in 1 Jn. 2:1-2 we read, “*My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. He is the propitiation of our sins, and not for our sins only but also for the sins of the whole world.*”

Fourth, Jesus promises that God will take care of me. In Mt. 6:31-33 Jesus said, “*Do not worry then, saying, what will we eat? Or what will we drink? Or what will we wear for clothing? For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*” If we put God first, He’ll provide our needs. David wrote in Psalms 37:25, “*I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread.*” Paul in Phil. 4:19 said, “*And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*” Hebrews 13:5 reminds us, “*Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.’*” God will indeed take care of us.

Fifth, God promises to listen to our prayers. The Lord Jesus, in Mt. 7:7-11, said, “*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who,*

when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!” God knows what we need even before we ask, He will indeed answer our prayers!

Even in times of great stress and difficulty, we can call out to God. While he was bound with chains as a prisoner and in danger of death, you remember Paul wrote in **Philippians 4:4-7**, *“Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* When we call out to God, He hears us! And He’ll set a guard around our hearts and minds to give us that peace that passes all understanding. And that’s a powerful reason to rejoice.

Sixth, God’s love will never leave us. **Romans 8:35-39** puts it this way, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.’”* Then he says, *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* No matter what has happened to you, there has never been one moment where the Lord didn’t love you. We can say with Peter, cast *“all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you”* **1 Peter 5:7**.

Seventh, Jesus will not give us more than we can bear. In **Mt. 11:28-30** Jesus gave us some very comforting words, *“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and my burden is light.”* The Lord gives us a livable faith and a bearable burden! Christianity is not an impossible religion. You can live the Christian life and you can go to heaven! Some imagine God has no interest in saving them, but that is simply not true. God wants all men to be save and to come

to the knowledge of truth; **1 Tim. 2:3-4**. God takes no delight in people losing their souls.

Eighth, and last, Jesus has prepared a place for you in heaven. Jesus knew that when He died, he would go to be with the Father who sent Him, according to **Jn. 7:33** and **16:10**. And in **Jn. 14:1-3** He promised, “*Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you, for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.*” We have hope of eternal life and the hope of living with God in heaven forever.

Eph. 2:4-7 says, “*But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved, and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*” God wants to save you and bring you home to heaven so He might bless you for all eternity. **What a marvelous promise!**

Know this, God makes sure and gives firm promises to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose! We shouldn’t imagine that God forgets or ignores His promises to us. Paul went through many trials and struggles, and in **2 Cor. 1:19-20** we read, “*For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in Him it is always Yes. For all the promises of God find their yes in Him. And that’s why it is through Him that we utter our Amen to God for His glory.*” Paul, despite his trails and struggles could have confidence in Christ, and so can you!

The question for many of us is not whether God is faithful to us but whether we are going to be faithful and obedient to Him. Many who start out strong in faith and attend church regularly grow weary and some fall away. They stop reading the Bible, praying, attending worship, giving to God, being kind to others, and avoiding sin. They meant to live right, but slowly drifted away from God. Hebrews 2:1-3 says, “*Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?*”

God will redeem you only after you place your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God; second, repent of your sins and follow the Lord; third, confess your faith; and fourth, be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Now being baptized into Christ takes place when we are immersed in water. Being baptized into Christ, means that we are baptized into His death, and His blood washes us clean from all sin, giving us a newness of life. If your ready for this step and to receive all the blessings and promises in Christ Jesus – then let me know and we will make it possible. God bless you all!