



# A WONDERFUL DAY IN THE LORD

WITH PASTOR GARY GILLEY OF SOUTHERN VIEW CHAPEL

## The Promises of God

September 19, 2022

Welcome once again to our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are starting a whole new theme today on the promises of God. I want to read to you a quote by D.L. Moody, he says, "Take the promises of God. Let a man feed for a month on the promise of God, and he will not talk about how poor he is." Then a little later from this same quote, "if you would only read from Genesis to Revelation and see all the promises of God to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to the Jews, and to the Gentiles, and to all His people everywhere—you would spend a month feeding on the promises of God—you wouldn't go about complaining how poor you are. You would lift up your head and proclaim the riches of His Grace, because you couldn't help doing it!" That's a pretty good quote and that's going to be our theme for the next several weeks. The Promises of God.

I have a book in my hand. It's an older book. Most people may not be familiar with it, although these books have been around for a long time. Herbert Lockyer was a man who scoured the Scriptures to find out all there was to say about a particular issue. He has numerous volumes he has written—they're in our church library—and this is all the promises of the Bible. This is really quite a treasure trove of information concerning all that God has promised to us in Scripture. So, we are going to look at some of the things that he has identified and maybe some others as well. As we do so, we are going to start with Christ.

This week, we are going to look at five promises pertaining to Christ. Five promises given to us about Christ. There are many others, but we will look at five together. We start with Isaiah 9:6-7. This promise in the Old Testament would cover from the beginning of the incarnation all the way to the end of the Kingdom. It says, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this." We often read this passage of Scripture at Christmas time because the opening words that, "a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us." So, it starts that there is the promise

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of the incarnation. God was going to send us a son who would be given to us, but then it moves quickly from the incarnation to who He is and what He would accomplish. It skips over pretty much His whole life, the cross and the resurrection, and moves to the end, "and the government will rest on His shoulders." We moved right into the Kingdom Age here in which Christ will reign over this earth and the government will be on His shoulders. Before we get into a little more detail about that in the next verse, He says that "His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." We're not talking about an ordinary baby here. We're talking about the incarnation of the Son of God. God would become man and He would be described in a number of ways. Wonderful Counselor—how He counsels us. Mighty God—He is the God-man, the great deity. The Eternal Father—not in the sense that He is the Father of the Trinity, but that He is the Father over all who follow Him. Prince of Peace—He's the One who has come to give us peace.

Then it says, "There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace." This kingdom that He will rule over, this kingdom of peace, will have no end. It will go on perpetually. It will never cease to exist. "On the throne of David and over his kingdom; to establish it and to uphold it." We are going back to the fact that Jesus Christ was the Messiah of the Jews. He would rule from the throne of David over the kingdoms of the earth.

So, we have this connection, this promise, given all the way back and throughout the Old Testament of Christ coming to sit on His throne—the throne of David—and rule over the earth and to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. So, this is not a kingdom like any other kingdom that the world has ever known. It's a kingdom of righteousness. It's a kingdom of justice, and the Lord Himself will uphold this kingdom by His power. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. The Lord's zeal. The Lord's power will accomplish this.

So, these are the promises we will start with. The incarnation, and then moving right to the end of the Kingdom Age in which the Lord will rule over the earth from David's throne at that time. What a set of promises. All in two verses that give us this background parameter and foundation for the promises of Christ that we will look at the rest of the week. So, that's our first promise. Join us tomorrow for the second one.

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Someone has computed that there are 800 promises in the New Testament alone. Some of these promises are given to us about Christ. Some have to do with Israel. Some have to do with individuals. Some have to do with the church, and many of these promises apply to you and me. In this little series that we are looking at right now, we are looking at some of the promises that the Lord has given to us. This week we are looking at the promises concerning Jesus Christ. Last time we looked at the incarnation and going right through the Kingdom Age.

Today, in Luke 24, we are going to move to a time when Jesus has resurrected from the dead. He has been crucified, resurrected, and there are many people who have begun to see Him. They are beginning to wonder about what's going on, and we come to a very confused couple of disciples of Christ who are walking on the road to Emmaus. These two disciples are very confused. They know that Christ has been crucified. They know of the rumors that He has been resurrected, but they're not really buying it and are not sure what to think. Then, Jesus shows up on that road to accompany these two people. We don't know who they are. One of them is named Cleopas, but the other one we don't know his or her name. Some think this might be a married couple, but we don't know that for sure. Think about this for a moment. At one of the most pivotal times in history, the Lord of the universe takes the time to walk alongside two virtual no-names in Christian history. What a love He has for us. Whether we are well known, famous, or inconsequential to most people, the Lord loves us. So, he comes alongside this couple and begins to talk to them about Himself.

We pick up this story in Luke 24:25-27, "And He said to them, 'O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?' Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures." We start with that. First, He admonishes these folks telling them that they don't know some of this stuff. They should, but they don't. It says that beginning with Moses and going all the way through He began to unpack what the Old Testament said about Himself. He isn't saying that every incident, individual, or everything in the Old Testament spoke directly about Himself, but a lot of pieces did.

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So, He says they should have known some of this and seen in their own Old Testament Scriptures the things that are happening now, and they missed them. So, the Lord begins to talk to them about these things and demonstrate from the Old Testament Scriptures these things that have been fulfilled in Him.

Then a little later, the Lord talks to them a bit longer and they go to visit the apostles. We drop down to 24:44-45 where we see some of the promise that we are looking at today. "Now He said to them, 'These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.' Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." Here's the promise. There were promises in the Old Testament about Himself. They are found in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and throughout the Psalms. Throughout the Old Testament, scattered here and there, were these prophecies, these promises, having to do with Jesus Christ. Just like the two disciples on Emmaus Road, the disciples themselves, even after spending up to three years with Jesus, were still not connecting the dots. They were still not really understanding who He was. So, He is taking them back to the Old Testament and He tells them here are the promises in the Old Testament about me. They are found in all three of the major sections of the Old Testament, and they must be fulfilled. So, the promises of men may or may not come about, but the promises of God always do. He had made promises. He has kept those promises. These things must be fulfilled.

I love verse 45 where it says, "Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." There was a spiritual blindness. They had read the Bible, or they heard the Bible read. They had heard sermons and so forth. They had sat at the feet of Jesus for a long time, but they were not comprehending the essence of what was being taught for some reason. So, He opens their minds to the Scriptures and when He does, they now see something they had not seen before. They saw the very promises of the Old Testament being fulfilled right before their eyes in the person of Jesus Christ. How exciting that must have been. How wonderful that would have been to have been there that day, right?

But, we have something perhaps even greater. We have the Word of God to go to time and time again to unpack these promises that the Lord has fulfilled

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for us. What a treasure. What a great set of promises. Let's look at another one about Jesus next time. I hope you can join us.

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September 21, 2022

Thank you for joining us again on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We just began a series on the promises found in the Bible for you and me. We have looked at a couple about Jesus and we are looking at a third one today in the book of Luke in chapter 1. This is a familiar passage to most of us starting at verse 30 when the angel Gabriel comes to Mary and brings some promises to her that are applicable to you and me as well.

It says in Luke 1:30-31, "The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.' And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus." Mary is probably fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen years old at the oldest. She's just a young gal by our standards and this angel shows up and says this miraculous thing is going to happen in her and that she has found favor with God, and she is going to have a child and His name will be Jesus.

Then he talks about the promise. Who is this Jesus that she is going to give birth to? This Jesus, he says, will be great. We look at Luke 1:32, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High." He is going to be great by any standard. Ultimately, He is the greatest who has ever walked the earth and who has ever lived. It says, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High." As Mary contemplates all of this and begins to think about this, the angel is not saying she is going to have a wonderful world leader, some brilliant person, some rich person or anything like that. He says that He is going to be the Son of the Most High. He is going to be the Son of God. This is the promise being given to her that is of course applicable to you and me. "And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David." I want you to note as we read through these verses how this is the very fulfillment of the promise in Isaiah 9:6-7 that we looked at a couple days ago. It's almost like Gabriel is quoting from Isaiah saying here is what was promised hundreds of years ago and is now being fulfilled in you, Mary, at this time. So, notice the similarities. He is going to be called the Most High. In Isaiah, He is the "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace." "And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David." Remember in Isaiah, He would sit on David's throne ruling over the earth. Now we look at Luke 1:33, "and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end," just as Isaiah had prophesied

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and promised. He will reign over the house of Jacob. He will reign over the house of Israel and His Kingdom will be perpetual and have no end. So, biblically speaking, the Kingdom Age—when Jesus will reign over the earth—comes to an end on earth, it rolls straight over to the eternal kingdom which will last forever and ever. So, in a sense, the Kingdom Age is two parts. One part where Jesus is on the earth ruling over a world that is not yet fully regenerated. Sin still exists. People still die. People still must choose to be for or against Christ. At the end of that age, all those who know Him will be taken into the Kingdom Age. So, His Kingdom will be forever and ever. That's His promise here.

Luke 1:34 says, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin.'" This blew Mary away, and it would you and me as well. How could this possibly take place since she is not married, she doesn't have a man. How could this happen? Luke 1:35 says, "The angel answered and said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.'" There's the promise of God: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you." What a set of promises that Mary is being given here that will change the world. It will change everything because God is becoming man and He is coming to the earth. First, as a baby. He grows up without sin. He goes to the cross. He dies for us, and it's for all these reasons that this child that she is going to give birth to will be called the Son of God. He is not simply *called* the Son of God; He *is* the Son of God. What a glorious thought that is, isn't it? To realize this promise given hundreds and hundreds of years ago, almost 2,000 years ago now, maybe even longer, was given to Mary to say that this One was coming who would ultimately be the Savior of all of humanity.

That is a promise about Christ that we ought to love and appreciate and embrace.



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Today we are continuing our look into some of the promises found in Scripture concerning Christ. There are so many promises and so many different prophecies given to God's people throughout time concerning Christ, and we are going to look at an overlap of two of them today: the crucifixion and the resurrection.

We're going back to Isaiah for just a moment and look at the promises found concerning the death of Christ for us. He says in Isaiah 53:4-6, "Surely our griefs he Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." He is talking here about the death of Christ for us. He died in our place. This is the set of promises that God gives us concerning what Christ would do to save us from our sins. Now, the crucifixion itself is not mentioned here. That form of execution was not yet invented. It would come later, but His death is definitely here. It tells us, and these are promises of God, that He carries away our sorrows in Isaiah 53:4. It says, "He is pierced through for our transgressions." That speaks of the piercing of His side for our transgressions. "He was crushed for our iniquities." He was "chastened for our well-being." "By His scourging we are healed." These are the promises of what Christ would endure for us and that He would go through all this sacrificial death for us because we are, "like sheep that have gone astray," as it says in Isaiah 53:6. Our problem is that, like sheep, we don't know what's good for us. We wander about. We chase after this, that and the other. We get lost. We're in trouble and have no means of protecting ourselves. "All of us like sheep have gone astray. Each of us has turned to his own way." So, there is a stubbornness, a rebelliousness, in the heart of humanity. Much like the sheep who just want to do their own thing. Now we go to the promise, "But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." There's the great promise. He took our sins upon Himself to die for us. The promise of God.

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There's an overlapping promise and that has to do with the resurrection. In Luke 18:31-32, Jesus is speaking to His disciples, and it says, "Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things which are written through the prophets about the Son of Man will be accomplished. For he will be handed over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked and mistreated and spit upon.'" Let's stop there for just a moment. So far, we are talking about what's going to happen to Jesus and He is telling this to the disciples because they were not grasping this. Even as Jesus comes right next to the cross itself, right at the eve of the cross, they were not getting the crucifixion. Even though Isaiah made the promises, they were not understanding that Christ would actually die in their place. So, Jesus tells them that this is going to happen, and it is just around the corner, and they should get ready for it.

Then in Luke 18:33, it says, "and after they have scourged Him, they will kill Him." Now we are getting right up to the time of the cross. He will be scourged. He will be whipped for us, and then they are going to kill Him. The Old Testament didn't tell us the means of the death. Jesus doesn't even mention it here, but the means as we know very soon would be the crucifixion. So, He would die for us. Here is the secondary promise as it says here, "and the third day He will rise again."

We have the promise of not only the crucifixion, which was mentioned in Isaiah, but the resurrection which Jesus gives His disciples here and of course by extension to us. The disciples don't understand this. They're not grasping that He would die for their sins. They're certainly not understanding that He would be resurrected for their sins. So, this is a real problem for them. We see later that they don't get the resurrection. They don't understand it. We've already looked at that a couple of days ago. They just didn't understand. It didn't compute for them. Yet, Jesus promised not only to die for our sins, but He promises to be resurrected so that He is declared the victor over sin, death, hell and be declared the very Son of God. What a set of promises concerning His death and resurrection. We're going to look at one more promise concerning Jesus Himself next time. I hope you can join us.

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We're going to complete our week of looking at promises concerning the life of Jesus by turning to John 14. Some of the promises we have seen about Jesus have to do with this incarnation, His ruling over the Kingdom, His death for us, and His resurrection for us. All of these are wonderful promises that have been given to us with many of them in the Old Testament that have now been fulfilled.

We are going to turn to a final promise today concerning His Second Coming. Here is a promise that has not yet been fulfilled. This is a promise about Jesus and something He is going to do for us but is yet to be fulfilled. We know it will be fulfilled because God keeps His promises, and because He has kept the promises that we have already looked at this week. This concerns His Second Coming.

John 14:1 says, "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me." So, we start with this. Believe in God. Believe also in Me and don't be troubled. The disciples now began to understand, in the upper room, that Jesus was going away and that apparently, He was going to die and be taken away from them. They are troubled. I can see why they would be troubled. Can you see as well? But He said don't do that though and believe in God and believe also in Me.

Here comes the promise, John 14:2, "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." Here is the first stage of that promise. God has dwelling places for us. Jesus says that He is going away to prepare a place for you. That is the first part. He says that He is not staying on this earth. He is going away to prepare a place for you. But we're not done, John 14:3 says, "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." Here is His promise of coming again for us and taking us to Himself to be with Him forever. This is a wonderful promise, of course. He is not simply taking us to a new home in heaven that is being prepared for us. That would be wonderful in and of itself, but He says, "I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." He is saying that He wants us to come to be with Him, and we are going to do so if we know Him. So, don't be troubled

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He says. Of course, they were troubled, and we saw that Thomas didn't get it. We see in John 14:4 Jesus says, "And you know the way where I am going." John 14:5 says, "Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?'" Jesus has given this promise that He is going to come again and take them to Himself, but Thomas, and Thomas is probably speaking for all the disciples, doesn't get it. He doesn't understand what Jesus really means. His question is, if Jesus is taken away, how are they going to get to Jesus? Thomas is saying that they don't even know where He is going, so how in the world are they going to find a pathway to get to Him? That is a legitimate question. Thomas gets the idea. People call him doubting Thomas sometimes because of things like this, but I don't know that you and I would do a whole lot better, would we? So, he asks a very legitimate question. I'm glad he did because Jesus gives a very powerful answer to that question in John 14:6, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.'" Jesus doesn't talk about some pathway to heaven, or some secret road that gets us there. He is saying, *I am the road*. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." So, Jesus is saying that He is the bridge to God. He is the bridge to the Father. He is the bridge to the eternal life. You get to eternal life, the home I'm building for you, to Me, through Me and an extension to the Father. This verse is such a wonderful verse that we should meditate upon and love. Jesus is the bridge to God. The way. The truth. The life. So, this is our last promise that we will look at together that pertains directly to what promises about Jesus are given to us by Jesus in this way, but it is a great one to end with, isn't it? He is the Son of God. The Savior of the universe and He has called us to be with Himself.

If you don't know Jesus Christ as your Savior and as your bridge to God, you need to turn to Him by faith alone. He is the way, the truth, and the life. All who believe in Him will have eternal life. If you don't know that bridge, that Savior, I hope you will turn to Him even as this broadcast ends right now.

This is our first week concerning the promises of God. We will start looking at some more next week. I hope this will give you a wonderful weekend in the Lord.

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September 26, 2022

We just started a new theme looking at the promises found in Scriptures. We are going to look at a lot of the promises these next few weeks together. We are looking at different promises concerning different subjects. Last time, we looked at some promises related to Christ. His coming, His Second Coming and so forth. This week we are going to look at promises related to the Bible. We see these great promises about the Scriptures themselves and we are going to spend all week doing that.

We are going to start with Psalm 19. I cannot think of a better place to start. In Psalm 19:7, the Lord begins here through the inspired writer of this passage of Scripture, who is probably David. He begins to tell us about the wonders of the Scriptures and how valuable they are, and he makes a statement about them. Then he gives us a promise related to each of these statements.

Psalm 19:7 says, "The law of the Lord is perfect." So, we know that you cannot take away from Scripture. You cannot add to Scripture. You cannot improve Scripture. It is perfect. It says, "restoring the soul." There is our first promise: the restoration of the soul. If we want to have our soul restored and a wholeness of our heart and mind and spirit, it is through the Word of God that we can do that. So, that's our first promise. Because of the perfection of the Scriptures, they are able (as we read them, meditate upon them, and apply them) to restore our broken spirits, our broken hearts, our broken minds, and to restore us to what God would have us be.

Secondly, "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." Notice that each of these statements gives a different "title" to the Word. The first one was the *law*. The second one was the *testimony*. This one says *it's sure*. So, it's reliable. One of the great things about Scripture is that it's not up for debate. It's reliable. It can be trusted. We can go to it under any circumstance and know that it's stable and reliable and when we do that, we find that it makes simple people wise. I really like that statement because it is saying to us that you don't have to be an intellectual, a scholar, and you don't have to have a long set of letters behind your name from all the degrees you have, and you don't have to have a great IQ to be wise. As a matter of fact, in my own experience, I've known many people that are simple, education-wise, and their IQ perhaps wasn't way up there, but they

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lived wise lives. Much wiser sometimes than people who had IQ's that doubled theirs because they were living according to biblical principles. That's a wonderful truth. So, you don't have to be brilliant to live wisely if you're following the Scriptures.

Thirdly, Psalm 19:8, "The precepts of the Lord are right." They are always correct and always right. They never lead us astray. It finishes saying, "rejoicing the heart." So, if you want joy, turn to the Word of God. It gives you a joy like nothing else can ever really give because it is right, and it is never wrong. It never leads us in any direction but the right direction. "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." The purity of the Scriptures, no flaws in it enlightens the eyes and opens up our spiritual minds and eyes to the truth of how to live life.

Psalm 19:9, "the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever." It's clean. Once again, the idea of purity. It is not mixed with something else. It is clean and it "endures forever." The Scriptures don't change. What was true 1,000 years ago is true now. What is true now will be true a million years from now. It does not change. It endures forever. "The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether." Because of the accuracy and the truthfulness of God's Word, they are righteous altogether. Everything we looked at in the Scriptures is leading us in the right direction. No wonder the Psalmist closes this section with these words in Psalm 19:10, "They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb." The sweetness of the Word of God is there for us to partake of because of all of these things that the Scriptures say about the Word and all the promises that we are given.

This is a good start for the week. As we think about these things, I hope it gives you a desire to dig into the Word even today. We'll see you next time.

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September 27, 2022

Thank you for joining us once again for our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're looking at the promises found in the Scriptures for you and me. This week we are looking at promises related to the Scriptures themselves. We looked at Psalm 19 yesterday, and I hope that was profitable to you.

I'm going to turn today to Hebrews 4:12-13, and it says in this verse, "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from his sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." As we look at this passage of Scripture, he talks about the Word of God. The Word of God can come in more than one form. There are the verbal words of God, and we find those throughout the Scriptures recorded for us. We wouldn't hear them if they weren't recorded, but for example, when Jesus was on earth everything He said could be described as the Word of God. The Godman spoke and everything He said would have been from the heart of God. So, in that sense, verbally, he could be speaking about the verbal Word of God. Also, in Psalm 19, the first several verses talk about the nature, the creation, the universe, and even our own conscience and the moral consciousness that God has given us as Romans 2 talks about is in a sense God speaking to us. So, He speaks to us in these natural, general ways. He has spoken throughout history verbally, but now, primarily, He speaks to us through the Word of Scripture written down for us. Even the verbal expressions of God while on earth, when Jesus was on earth and at other times, even those we would know nothing about if it wasn't written in the holy Scriptures themselves. So, when He speaks here of the Word of God, the primary thing he is talking about is the actual sacred writings of God.

He says that "the Word of God is living, and active and sharper than any two-edged sword." We often think of Scripture as this book, and it is a book, but we think of it as something old. This is an old book. It really is. The newest of the writings of Scripture are 1900 years old. The oldest ones go back to the time of Moses, so 1400 years before the time of Christ. This is an ancient book, so sometimes people wonder what relevance a book this

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old can have for us today. Yet, it says here that it is, "living, and active and sharper than any two-edged sword." Scripture is not like any other literature. It is alive. It's alive because the Holy Spirit has inspired it and speaks to us through it. It's active. It's involved. It changes us and does things in our lives and hearts that no other literature can do. It's sharp as well and penetrates to the very marrow of our being and the very heart of our souls. When it says here that it pierces as far as "the division of soul and spirit," I don't think he's talking about a division in the sense that there is a difference between the soul and the spirit. I think that man is made up of two compartments. The physical (material) and immaterial. So, I don't think he's saying the soul and spirit are different. I think he is simply saying that it goes right through the inner man, the inner person. Right through our hearts. Right through our minds. Right through everything that we are, and it pierces and gets to the very heart of where we are and penetrates to that level. It says that it is "able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Another translation of that is "able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart." We might think we are hiding our thoughts from God, and we can do that from others, and maybe even from ourselves. Sometimes we are able to deceive ourselves into what we're actually thinking, but we can't hide from the Scriptures. In Hebrews 4:13, we can't hide from the sight of God. God knows what our heart is saying, and He knows what we're thinking. He gets right down to the root—the heart—of who you and I are. I think, in this regard, of a song that Michael W. Smith wrote several years ago called *Ancient Words*. Let me read some of the lyrics of that song:

*Holy words long preserved,  
For our walk in this world.  
They resound with God's own heart,  
O let the ancient Words impart.  
Words of life words of hope,  
Give us strength help us cope.  
In this world where're we roam,  
Ancient words will guide us home.  
Ancient words ever true,  
Changing me and changing you.  
We have come with open hearts,  
O let the ancient words impart.*



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Those are some wise words. It's a great song. We love to sing it in our church, and we sing it often because these ancient words are alive and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and it pierces to the very center of our being, and it changes us when we allow it to do so by believing it and applying it to our lives.

I hope that's what you want to do today as we think about these ancient words. We will look a little further in the New Testament about Scriptures tomorrow. I hope you can join us.

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September 28, 2022

Once again, we are so grateful that you give us a few moments of your time in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast to hopefully start your day in the Word. Speaking of that, we are looking at promises found in the Word concerning the Word. The Scriptures are so wonderful and blessed. We are given a number of promises related to the Word in the Scriptures. We are going to look today at one of the passages that speaks to our heart.

In 1 Peter 2:1-3 it says, "Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." Do you want the Word of God to do what we saw yesterday in the book of Hebrews? Do you want it to penetrate to the very heart and soul of your being and change you to be what God wants you to be? This very simple and beautiful section of Scripture tells us how that works. It starts by telling us to "lay aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander." The idea is that God wants us to come before Him with purity. He doesn't want us to come before Him in hypocrisy or manipulative attitude. Sometimes Christians can go to the Lord, and they are struggling and they're hurting and they're promising God all sorts of things and they open the Bible, and they want Him to bless them and strengthen them, but they're really not sincere beyond the immediate moment of struggle that they're facing. The Lord is basically saying that we need to set that all aside and come to Him with a pure slate, so to speak, where we come before Him with honesty, integrity, and lay aside those things that trip us up spiritually speaking.

Then we are ready to move on to the second verse with a more positive instruction. "Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word." He's still talking to us about what we should do. The "newborn babies" – what do newborn babies want more than anything else? Unless a baby has some kind of physical problem it desires milk. You don't have to instruct a baby or lay out the plan and program of what to do. The baby knows instinctively, by God's grace, exactly what it needs to do to survive. So, the baby begins to drink of the milk and wants that milk. The baby is going for it and loves it and loves the taste, and because of that, the baby grows up and becomes stronger day by day. If the baby doesn't have that taste for the milk, for

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some reason refuses the milk, then we have health issues very quickly following. Like those babies who long for the milk, let us as Christians long for the pure milk of the Word. We need to have a taste for, a desire for, an appetite for the Word of God. That should be natural. If you are a Christian living for God, you should have a natural desire for the Word of God. If you don't, you have ruined your taste buds, spiritually speaking, by feasting on the junk food of life. You need to come back and develop and cultivate the taste for the pure milk of the Word.

Now, let's get to the promise in 1 Peter 2:2, "so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation." It's not simply that we enjoy the intake of the Word, the taste of the Word, and the study of the Word. We certainly should, but there's a practical application that comes from that and that's our promise. We grow in respect to salvation. It doesn't say that we become saved by reading the Word. That isn't necessarily direct. It is saying that once we are saved, if we want to grow into what God wants us to be, then the Word is the instrument that God uses. We have seen this earlier several weeks ago in our previous broadcast on the commandments of God. The Word of God is the primary instrument that God uses to help us grow in grace to be what He wants us to be. There are other instruments such as prayer, fellowship, and so forth, but the primary instrument in Scripture is Scripture. The Word of God is what He uses to change you and me.

Then he says, "if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." Tasting this kindness through the Scriptures and cultivating this taste for the Words of God is so valuable, so important, for the Christian life. Without that taste, without that intake of the Word of God, we will never grow to be what God wants us to be. It is His instrument to help us grow in respect to salvation.

I trust that if you are listening to this broadcast that it is your heart's desire to grow in Christ. If that is true, you need the input of the Word of God on a regular basis. You will find, I believe, that as you get into the Word, that the taste is sweet, and you desire it more and more. I trust that's true for you. I know it's true for myself as well.

## The Promises of God

September 29, 2022

We are looking at the promises of God given to us concerning the Scriptures this week. All week is dedicated to looking at some of these promises. We're looking at likely the most familiar of all the Scripture-related promises related to the Bible itself, and that is in 2 Timothy.

We look at 2 Timothy 3:15-17. Usually, we start with verse 16 that speaks of Scriptures, but we are going to back up to verse 15. What are the promises given to us concerning the Scriptures in this passage? We start off with salvation. It says in 2 Timothy 3:15—with Paul talking to Timothy— “and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” Paul says here that salvation comes through the understanding of the sacred writings. Timothy was saved as a younger person because of the sacred writings. He had known them all his life. His mother and grandmother were believers and they had taught him in the Scriptures. At some point, he came to Christ, perhaps later. There is some indication that Paul was the human instrument in Timothy's salvation. That could be, but nevertheless, it was through the teaching of the Word that he came to salvation. One of the promises related to Scripture has to do with salvation.

He moves on to 2 Timothy 3:16, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for,” here are the promises as he begins to lay them out for us, “teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.” We have looked at this in other broadcasts, but the Scriptures teach us what God wants us to know. It teaches us how to live life. It teaches us doctrines—the things about God. It teaches us who Jesus is, the gospel, and all the things that are vital for the life God wants us to have. So, it teaches.

It also reproveth. Reproving is to show us where we're going wrong. Sometimes we know when we're going wrong instinctively, but other times we do not. The Scriptures are very clear, and it points us in a direction to show us when we are off track and starting to veer off the way of God. It reproveth us to show us where we are wrong. It convicts us through the Scriptures and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit when we're wrong. But it does more than that.

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It also corrects us. I'm so glad the Word of God doesn't just show us when we're wrong. It shows us how to correct that wrong. It would be one thing to know we're driving the wrong direction. It's very important that we get back on the right path. So, it corrects us. I think of a young man or young woman trying to learn how to drive a car. At first, they have a little problem staying on the road. They tend to veer off and on, so they have to be, not only shown that they are going the wrong direction and that they are drifting, but they have to also be corrected so that they learn.

Then the Word of God is also training for righteousness. That's the next promise. It trains us in the way that God wants us to be. So, it's one thing to be taught, reprov'd, and corrected, but the training process is repetitive. Like anything that we learn, we have to continue to do it over and over and over again to train ourselves in how we should do something. If we want to be a basketball player, we have to work hard at training to be a basketball player and how to dribble, and how to shoot. If we want to learn how to quilt, we have to be taught how to do that and repetitive actions become normal habits for us. The same thing applies for living the Christian life. As we turn to the Word of God, it trains us repetitively over and over. It trains us to be what God wants us to be—a person who is living in righteousness.

Then it goes on with these promises in 2 Timothy 3:17, "so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." This is saying that the Word of God—this is the promise—equips us for every good work that God wants us to do. This word *equip* was used in other passages in the gospel concerning fishing nets that had holes in them. Those nets had very little value with holes in them. So, they were pulled aside and mended so that they could be productive and useful. That's the word *equipped*. These holes are mended so that the nets are of value. Our lives have holes in them. Holes in which we don't even recognize sometimes, but the Scriptures mend those things, and equip us. For what? For every good work.

That's the promise we are given here. The equipping for every good work through the Word of God. We're going to look at one more promise related to Scripture tomorrow. I hope you can join us.

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September 30, 2022

This week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast we have been looking at five promises related to Scripture. We've looked at four so far, and today we are looking at the fifth one.

We are in Romans 10:13. This verse is really a summary statement of what Paul's been talking about from verses 8-12 in relation to salvation. He is talking to us there about how a person becomes a Christian by believing in the Lord Jesus. He sums it up in Romans 10:13 saying, "for 'Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.'" With the context of the earlier verses, especially Romans 10:9-10, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation." Now he is summarizing that. If you call upon the name of the Lord in this way, and believing who Jesus is, and confessing your sins before Him, and by faith alone receiving Him—then you will be saved.

Then he moves on to Romans 10:14 and looks at the process of being saved and how the Word plays into that. It says, "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" So, you can call upon the Lord to be saved, but how can you call upon Him if you don't believe in Him? It goes back once again to faith in what we believe. He must push on. "How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard?" That's a very practical question. If you've never heard of Jesus Christ, how can you believe in Him, and how can you call upon Him? So, you have to have heard of Him. "How will they hear without a preacher?" The word preacher here is not talking about a technical preacher in a church or something. It's talking about a proclaimer. Someone who has proclaimed the Word of God and the truth, especially in relation to the gospel. Romans 10:15, "How will they preach unless they are sent?" It's not talking necessarily about a missionary call or a preacher call, but simply that the Lord has sent us out to tell others about Him. "Just as it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!'" He's speaking here of those that proclaim the gospel and tell other people about the gospel.

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Where do we get the gospel? We didn't create it or invent it. As Paul said in the book of Galatians, the Lord gave him the gospel and he proclaimed that gospel to others. He wrote it in the Scriptures so that we have it. Other apostles did the same, and so we have the content of the gospel, the good news about salvation on how we can be saved. Found where? In the Scriptures. That's where we find it today. It says in Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."

We have our promises here. How are we saved? How do we come to Christ? We come to Christ on the basis of the proclamation of the Word of Christ, in particular, the Word of the gospel. You cannot be saved without knowing the good news of salvation that is proclaimed in the Scriptures. So, we look at the Scriptures and see what it says about the gospel and the message of salvation, the good news, and we tell other people about that. We point them to the message of Scriptures. So, the Word of God does what? The Word of God promises to give us the words of Christ. The Words of life. The Words of salvation. As we read those words, proclaim those words, and hear those words, we then have the opportunity to turn to Him and call upon Him by faith alone and find salvation. Apart from Scriptures themselves, we would have no knowledge, or content of how to be saved. "The heavens declare the glory of God," Psalm 19. It tells us God exists. It tells us He is mighty and great, but it does not proclaim the actual gospel itself by which we can be saved. The Word in Scripture does that.

That is our final promise for the week concerning Scripture. God promises to show us how we can know Him through the Word of God itself. What a beautiful thing to end the week on—knowing that Scripture tells us how to find true life in Christ. I hope this gives you a wonderful week in the Lord and a wonderful weekend as well. We will look at some more promises next week.

## The Promises of God

October 3, 2022

We thank you again for joining us for the Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are talking about the promises of God, and aren't you so happy that God gives His promises? If you think about it, why should God promise us anything? Any promise that He gives us is pure grace. He doesn't owe us anything. He is not responsible to us for anything. Anything He promises to do for us is purely out of His love, kindness, and grace. When we look at the Scriptures and find numerous promises to His people, we are so grateful that God would even do these kinds of things for us. These promises give us stability. They give us direction. They help us in our hard times. They give us joy toward the future. They give us hope, and so we are looking at numerous promises found in the Word concerning things that God has given us. We're looking at some promises concerning the church for the next couple of days.

I'm going to direct your attention to Matthew 16:18. This is a very well-known, and sometimes controversial verse concerning the church. There are a couple of promises given there. It says, "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." Let's get the controversy out of the way. It wraps around Peter. Jesus was having a conversation with Peter and in the midst of that conversation, Jesus makes that statement that you're Peter and I will build my church on this rock. The debate has been ongoing for a long time about who the rock is. Is he saying that He would build His church on Peter whose name is a derivative of rock, or is He saying something else? Of course, some believe, especially the Roman Catholic church, that He was saying to Peter that he would be the foundation of the church and he would be the first pope. That has been their view throughout the years. Most Protestants do not take that view. They see this verse of Scripture as pointing to Peter and telling him that his name means rock, and perhaps He is bouncing off that, but He is saying that the foundation of the church is not Peter, but Christ, or perhaps the confession that Peter had just made concerning Christ. The foundation is not Peter. Aren't we glad that that is true? Peter was an exceptional man and a great apostle, and we appreciate him. We also like him in many ways because we know that he is a lot like us. He was a man who loved his Lord and wanted to do what was right before God, but at the same time he was a man who had a lot of flaws. So, we identify with Peter in a lot of ways. We know Peter denied Christ three times, but sometimes



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we forget that even much later in his life in Galatians 2, Paul calls him out because of his cowardliness and his hypocrisy. So, Peter was a man who struggled at times. He always got back on his feet, and we appreciate that, but he cannot possibly be the foundation of the church.

So, Christ and our confession of Christ is the foundation of the church. He says, "upon this rock," this rock of Christ and the gospel, "I will build My church." There's our promise, "I will build My church." He may not build *my* church, that is the local church that I pastor or am a member of my church may come or go. It may fade in time. It may turn apostate. That breaks my heart to even think about that. So, my church may not endure the test of time, but His church will. He will build His church. His people are always there. As we look throughout church history, we have to say that this has to be a promise of God because the church has gone through so many problems: false teachings, divisions, scandals, and so forth. Yet, His church stands. His promise stands. He will build His church, "and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." Hades was a picture of death. It's the abode of the dead. When He had said that he was saying that no matter how powerful the enemies are, they cannot prevail against the church—death is the last enemy that will be conquered as the Lord returns—so, it's a powerful enemy. Even the power of death cannot overwhelm the church. The church will survive. God will build His church. Christ will build His church, and the greatest powers of the universe, whether it is the world, the devil, or death itself, cannot prevail against His church. He will build His church. That's a marvelous promise and we thank the Lord for it.

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October 4, 2022

Today we are going to look at a second promise in the Scriptures concerning the church. We could probably find many more, but we are just looking at two this week. This one is found in Ephesians 5 where we have what we might call some *soft* promises, promises here that are not so direct, but they are definitely there concerning Christ and His relationship to the church. He is using the illustration of a marriage, a husband and wife relationship, to illustrate His relationship to His church. I'm going to read several verses and point out some of the beautiful, beloved promises that we find here.

Ephesians 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body." We have the promise that Christ is the head of His church. That's more valuable and important than we may think. What if somebody else was the head of the church? What if a man was the head of the church or a woman or a committee or whatever? If we had these different groups of humans who were the head of the church, there would always be these changes going on and a lack of authority. Christ claims to be the head of His church. He is the head. That's His promise to us. He leads His church. He is head. Every local church has a leadership structure, pastors, elders, and so forth, but that leadership structure is always under the headship of Christ, and He has promised to be our head.

Ephesians 5:24-25 says, "But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her." I see this as a second promise that Christ loves His church. Again, this is purely by His grace. He does not owe us anything and certainly He doesn't owe us love. Yet He does love His church. Why does He love this very flawed group of people? In the best of churches, it is made up of people who are flawed, fail, are inconsistent, sinners, and yet He proclaims His love to us in this way. It's a promise. I'm so glad it's a promise because if it was conditional, if His love was conditioned upon our behavior, obedience, and programs, then we would be in great trouble, wouldn't we? Yet we find that He loves us. He loves His church, and He tells the husband to love His wife like He loves the church in this very wonderful way.

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Ephesians 5:25-27, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless." We have the promise here that the Lord is going to bring His church to Himself, "holy and blameless." He is not saying that while we are in this life, on this planet, that we are holy and blameless in a sense of being flawless. We have been pronounced holy, and we are called to holiness, but we are certainly not blameless in the sense that we are sinless. But, the day comes, and this is a promise from Him, in which we will stand before Him holy and blameless, and all of our sins, all our blemishes will be gone. That's a great promise.

Then he goes further. He says concerning husband in Ephesians 5:28-29, "So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church." Now we have another set of what we might call *soft* promises. He nourishes and cherishes His church. Those are warm words. Those are words that kind of remind you of sitting around the fireplace where you're warmed and nourished. The word *cherish* is a special word too. Let's think about how we cherish our children or our grandchildren. We love these individuals. We cherish them. They're precious to us. So, we as the church of Christ are nourished by Him. He feeds us. He sustains us. He warms us with His love, and He cherishes us. We're precious to Him. His heart goes out to us. He cares for us in every conceivable and perfect way.

These are promises He gives us, and these are not things we deserve. These are not things where we win His favor and then He loves us and cherishes us and nourishes us. These are promises. He will nourish His people. He will nourish His church, and we are special to Him. We are cherished by Him. These are promises that ought to keep us going day by day and give us a wonderful day in the Lord. Please join us tomorrow as we look at a few more promises.

## The Promises of God

October 5, 2022

Today as we are continuing our look at promises that God has given His people, I want to spend the rest of the week talking about promises related to salvation. My favorite verse concerning salvation, I think, is found in Ephesians 2:8-9. In other places we have the clear gospel message in 1 Corinthians 15, Romans 10, John 3, and various places that articulate for us the good news of what Jesus Christ has done for us to save us. As a matter of fact, this whole chapter 2 of Ephesians is dealing with that as the earlier verses talk about the fact that we were lost and dead in our sins and God's grace reached out to us to rescue us and save us through Jesus Christ. So, this whole chapter is about salvation, but when it comes to verse 8 & 9 it begins to talk about the reception of salvation.

We know the good news regardless of what we do and how we respond, the message is the same. Christ came to this earth. He was incarnate as the God-man. He lived this perfect life on the planet for us. He offered salvation. It was rejected. He went to the cross and died for our sins taking our sins upon Himself. He was resurrected from the dead three days later making a declaration that He is God, and He is the Savior of humanity. Then we also know that He is coming again to rescue us from this place, this corrupt world, and taking us to be with Himself. All of that is clear in Scripture. That's the gospel good news message and it is true whether or not you and I believe it, receive it, or accept it. So, all of that is stable. The issue is, what do we do with that message? That is the great dividing line. The majority of humanity has sadly rejected the call to receive Christ as savior. They have resisted, for whatever reason. Of course, as chapter 2 tells us, they are dead in their sins, and therefore they simply do not recognize their need for salvation until the Holy Spirit works in their hearts to open their eyes to truth and draw us to Him. So, that's sadly where the majority of people are. On the other hand, for those who come to Christ and understand the message, by God's grace, and who turn to Him, we have these verses in Ephesians 2:8-9, that deliver the promise of salvation to such people.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." He is talking about the reception of the gospel message of salvation. He wants to remind us that it's by grace that we're saved. There

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is never anything we can do to earn salvation. We don't merit it; we don't earn it and we don't contribute to it. So, there's some who say that we are saved by grace *plus* our efforts, and that is not true biblically, as this passage says it is not true. Our salvation is based upon His grace alone. So, we are looking at the promise of grace here. He has promised to give us grace by which we are saved. That's a word that a lot of people don't like to use anymore. To be saved implies that we're lost, and people don't like the idea that they're lost, but until we recognize that we're lost in our trespasses and sins, we will never turn to Him for salvation.

So, we have the promise of salvation based upon the grace of God and the reception from our standpoint is purely by faith, "saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." We're saved on the basis of the grace of God who saves us, and we simply reach out and receive this gift that He has promised to give us. It's a promised gift to us that we have received by faith alone.

He says in Ephesians 2:9, making it clear, "not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." That's why I like these couple of verses so much. He simply takes out of the equation any merit of our own. There is just no way you get around the clarity of these verses that say you do not earn salvation. It's not your works. It's not your church membership or your baptism or the keeping of the commandments or any good work, because we all sin and fall short of the glory of God according to Romans 3:23. It's not our works. We lay aside our works and we lean completely on the promise of God who says He will save us by His grace as we simply reach out and receive the gift that He gives us by faith alone.

So, we receive a gift by faith. A gift promised to us, on the basis of what Christ has done for us, and this great promise brings us to the place of salvation. So, we have the promise of salvation based upon the grace of God received by faith alone. I hope you have done that, and I hope you have come to Christ on that basis. If not, please give us a call at church sometime. We would love to talk to you about Jesus Christ and His saving grace.

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October 6, 2022

Thank you for letting us join you today wherever you are for just a few minutes, about five minutes or so, to look into God's Word and to look at some promises that He gives us. We're looking at some promises related to salvation for the latter part of this week. Last time we looked at those great verses in Ephesians 2:8-9 in which we are promised salvation based upon the grace of God and the work of Christ as we receive it by faith alone. So, those are powerful verses and wonderful promises. I love them. Often, because of the greatness of those verses, they overshadow the very next verse that is also part of the promises that God has given us related to salvation. We don't want to skip over this verse. It's a wonderful verse with great truths and great promises.

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Salvation is not by works. He made that clear in Ephesians 2:8-9. It is purely by grace, received by faith. Then he turns right around and he says that, "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." Let's break that down a little bit. Even though we are saved by His grace, we are His workmanship. That is translated in some cases as *masterpiece*. The Lord has created us the way He wants us. He is our Savior, and He is at work in our life to create in us something that He wants to create. We are His workmanship. He is at work in every life. We know, as we look at our own life, our flaws, sins, and our failures, we can really get down about that sometimes, but we need to remember the promise given here. We are His workmanship. He is working in your life. He is working in my life. He is shaping us and forming us into what He wants us to be. His workmanship. His masterpiece that is created only as He can create us. He created us in Christ Jesus for good works. So, as He prepares us and works in us and shapes us in Christ, He is doing so for the purpose of good works. We must interpret this very carefully. He said earlier in Ephesians 2:8-9 that we are not saved by works. Your works mean nothing concerning your salvation, but once you are saved, the Lord is at work in our lives creating in us what He wants us to be for the purpose of good works. Therefore, he is saying that if Christ saved you, He's at work in you to create in you a person who does good works. He is not content to leave us the way we were. He is not content to leave us as we were in our unsaved state. He wants to change

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us. He wants to make us into what we ought to be for the purpose of doing that which He wants us to do in this world. Reaching out to others in love, telling others about Christ, living a life that models Christlikeness, and having the fruit of the Spirit that he talks about in Galatians 5. If we don't have this type of thing, either the Lord is not keeping the promise of creating us to be people who are His workmanship, or we have not truly come to Christ. I don't believe the Lord fails, so if we are saved, He is at work in us. If He is at work in us, then He is creating us in such a way that we are able to do good works. He says, "which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." There is nothing accidental here. The Lord knows exactly where He wants to take us and how He is shaping us and so forth. He prepared all of this long beforehand that we should walk in them. How do we know how we should walk in Christ? That's why we are given the Scriptures, especially the New Testament Scriptures, that tell us how we as church age believers should be walking and living for Him.

So, we need to be students of the Word so that we know the direction He is taking us and what He has prepared for us to do. The promise is that He is at work in us shaping us into the people that He wants us to be. Beautiful promise, is it not? I hope you can join us tomorrow.

## The Promises of God

October 7, 2022

This week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, we are looking at some of the promises that God gives His children in relation to salvation. We looked at the promise of salvation itself. We looked at the promise of His workmanship in those of us who are saved. I would like to close out the week by looking at the security we have in Christ as believers. How do we know that even though we are saved, we will persevere and make it to the end? How do we know that somewhere along the line we will not turn away and fall away and lose our salvation? This is a question that has plagued Christians forever. I think it's sad to think that, because as we will see today, the promises of God are very clear that those who know Christ will not fall away because He keeps us Himself. Our assurance of salvation is not based on our good works or our perfection or any such thing, our salvation is based upon His promise. His promise that He will keep us.

John 10:27-29 says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one." Let's look at this passage together. He is talking about His sheep. He is saying that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him. He is speaking of those that know Him and are His sheep, spiritually speaking, who want to follow Christ. He says, "I give," here's the promise, "I give eternal life to them." Not temporary life. Not life until they mess up or sin or stop believing or start doubting, eternal life. Christ says, "I" give that to them. That's His promise. "And they will never perish," this is not a temporary thing. They will never perish, it's eternal life. "And no one will snatch them out of My hand." Here's the picture. We have us in the hands of Christ. We're there and we are secure in Him because that's where we are. We're in His hands. We're in the hands of Christ. No one will snatch us out of the hands of Christ. Think about that for a moment. First, this is a promise. He is not going to let anyone snatch them out of His hands. He is not going to allow anyone to snatch you out of His hands. That's His promise. Think how secure that promise is. Who possibly could snatch us out of God's hands? Who has that power? Who has that strength? Satan doesn't, and he's the most powerful evil creature in the universe, but he doesn't have the power to do it. The world system doesn't have the power. False teachers



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don't have that power. Who could possibly snatch us out of the Father's hand?

I've heard some who don't understand this properly say that no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand, but they could jump out. I could get out myself and jump out. That's ridiculous, however, because we are held in the hands of God. Even we cannot snatch ourselves out of the powerful Almighty hands of God. What a beautiful promise that is! "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all;" including ourselves, "and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." Total security in Him.

I think of another verse of Scripture, there are so many in the Bible, concerning our security in Christ. A very simple and plain and clear one is found in Hebrews 13:5, and he is quoting here from the Old Testament. At the end of Hebrews 13:5, just the last part, it says, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." Again, this is the promise of God. I think there are a lot of Christians who are insecure. They lack assurance. They hope they are going to make it to heaven when they die. They hope they will make it to the end, but for whatever reason, they lack assurance that they are going to make it and that somehow, they are going to mess up so badly that they are going to lose it all. This straightforward, very clear promise is a precious one to us when he says to us in this verse that there is nothing that will take us out of His hand, and that also He will never desert you. He will never turn His back on you. He will never forsake you. He will never get tired of you and give up on you.

When we think about the times when we have done poorly and the times when we have messed up in such a way that we wonder why God would continue to love us at all, we can imagine in our own self that when we are down like that that He could forsake us and desert us and He has every right to do so, but we have a promise and a promise from God Himself, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you." We may seem to forsake Him at times, but He will never forsake us. Therefore, we have this eternal security and assurance that if we know Him as Savior and Lord, if we are one of His sheep, that we have no concern, ***ever***, of losing our salvation because He has given us the promise that we will not lose it.

That's a marvelous promise, isn't it? I trust it will give you a wonderful day in the Lord. See you next week.

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October 10, 2022

We are continuing in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast on the discussion about the promises that God gives us in His Word. The Scriptures are full of promises, and we are only going to touch on different ones, mainly wrapped around various topics. This week, we are going to spend our time looking at promises related to prayer. Prayer is one of the most precious gifts God gives us. Just to consider the privilege of speaking to Almighty God and to actually come to His throne of grace as we will see today and lay out our petitions before Him knowing that He loves us and cares for us is infinitely precious. Who could think that anybody could come before God and give our petitions to Him? Yet the Lord not only invites us to do so, but He gives us various promises related to prayer. We will look at the first one today in Hebrews.

Hebrews 4:14 tells us, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession." He lays the foundation by talking about the fact that Jesus Christ is our high priest. In the Old Testament, the high priest was the go-between between the people and God. Therefore, Jesus now is that mediator, that go-between, between us and the Father, but He has this role of our great high priest. So, we come to the Father through the Son as our high priest.

Hebrews 4:15, "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." Once again, he continues to talk about this ministry of Christ being our high priest. As we come to Him, we realize He is not hard. He is not indifferent. He is sympathetic. Part of that sympathy is because He had been there Himself. Our Savior never sinned, but we know He was tempted to the extreme to sin because the greatest temptation, and the greatest tempter that ever existed, poured all of his attention into Jesus Christ. Satan knew that if he could trip up Jesus, then redemption was off the table and the Lord could not save people. So, he put everything he had into tempting the Lord Jesus. Of course, Satan failed. He had no chance, but that didn't mean he didn't try. Jesus felt the full pressure and the full effect of temptation in ways that you and I could never imagine. That's how much He underwent, yet He succeeded, and He still sympathizes with us. He knows

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the pressure. He knows the hurt. He knows the draw of sin. All of that is the foundational aspect before he gets into the promise in the next verse.

Hebrews 4:16 says, "Therefore," so on the basis of the fact that Jesus Christ is our great high priest who never sinned, but is sympathetic to us, "let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace." Now we move to an invitation. Our Lord is inviting us to come before the throne of grace. This is the only place in the New Testament where this particular metaphor, picture, and wording is used to come before God in prayer as to come before His throne of grace. So, we have this picture coming right up to the foot of the Lord, right up to His throne. It's not just the normal throne. It's the throne of grace. So, there we find grace as we come before Him. That's the invitation given. Let's get to the promise, "so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." As we come to the Lord in prayer and as we come before His throne of grace, we are coming to find mercy. He promises us mercy and we find grace in our time of need. These two works; mercy and grace, are somewhat overlapping. They're virtually synonyms in many ways. If we distinguish between the two, it would be that grace is God giving us what we do not deserve, and mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve. Mercy is God coming to us and gifting us and gracing us at our weakest moments when we really are perhaps beside ourselves. We need such mercy from Him, and we don't deserve it. On the other hand, grace is God on a positive level pouring out His kindness and His love to us. He is going to give us this grace and mercy at our "time of need." So, when we really need Him. When we really have this great burden or temptation or whatever is on our hearts and we are struggling deeply and we come before Him, we come because of His invitation which is a throne of grace, and we pour out our hearts to Him and what happens? He gives us grace and mercy at our time of need.

That's His promise to us. It's a wonderful invitation and it's a wonderful promise. I hope that blessed your heart today.

## The Promises of God

October 11, 2022

Last time on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, we looked at prayer. We are looking at promises this week related to prayer. We looked in Hebrews 4 about God's invitation for us to come to Him in prayer and come before the throne of grace where we find grace and mercy. That's His promise.

We come to James 5:14-15 today and we have some very specific direction given to us regarding prayer here and also a promise or two. It says, "Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him." There are a number of promises in these two verses. That's not the main promise. I'm going to get to that in a moment. There are some promises here. He is talking about those who are sick in verse 14 and also those who are sick in verse 15. The interesting thing is that these are two different words. They are not words that always speak of physical illness. They can be used of that, but that is not how they are necessarily always used. One word speaks of weariness. The other word speaks of weakness. So, when we come before the Lord in weakness for example, if we are weak and struggling with life and having a difficult time, we are weak and don't have strength and stamina, we come before Him in prayer and we call upon others as it talks about here about the elders praying for us. The other word is weariness. When we are weary, tired, and just about to give up, we come before Him in prayer as well and we find that at that point, if we have committed sins, He is going to forgive our sins. So, we have the context here of this particular sickness and weariness that he talks about is probably in the context of sinfulness. So, this individual is perhaps sick—not necessarily physically, but perhaps—also weary and weak because of sin. Sin has a grasp on them. They come before the Lord and confess those sins. Maybe calling upon others to pray for them as well, and they find that they have been forgiven of their sins as they come before the Lord in confession. Those are already some wonderful promises, but that's not where I want to go entirely here.

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In James 5:16 he says, "Therefore, confess your sins to one another," he is not talking about going out and casting all your sins before the people. But, if you sinned against somebody, within the context of those who know our sin, confessing that sin is what he is talking about. He continues saying, "and pray for one another," so, as we confess, we pray for one another. Not just for ourselves, but for others as well. "That you may be healed." Healed of what? Physical sickness, spiritual sickness, spiritual weakness, spiritual weariness, all of those things are part of what we are praying for here. Then he says, "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." That's the promise I want to really lay out for you today. The promise that our prayers can have wonderful results. The word righteous here, in the New Testament, speaks of one who has been redeemed and justified. The Lord has saved this person. He is not talking about a perfect, sinless person. He is talking about a righteous person—someone who has been saved. Concerning that righteous person, he says, their prayer "can accomplish much." You may ask, since God is omniscient, knows all things, His purposes are sovereign, what can my prayers possibly accomplish? Yet, we have the promise of God that the prayers of the righteous person can accomplish much. We need to take that seriously. It's a promise from God.

Go to prayer and bring your petitions before Him. Our prayers can accomplish much! He gives an example in James 5:17-18, "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours." He was not a superhuman. He was a human being. He was a person like us. "And he prayed earnestly," this is a sincere prayer, "that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit." This is just an example. He is not calling for us to go out and pray for rain or pray against rain. He is giving us an example here of a righteous man who prayed for something sincerely, and God answered his prayer. So, what Elijah accomplished, by the will of God of course, and the direction of God, you and I have been given direction here to pray for one another, lift up our petitions for one another, have others pray for us, and the prayers of a righteous person can accomplish much.

That's our promise from God. Let's not minimize the effects of prayer. Let's not cease to pray because we have some idea that God does not need us to pray. He calls on us to pray and He says that our prayers can have great

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effect. That is a great promise that God gives us. I trust that will bless your heart today.

## The Promises of God

October 12, 2022

We are going to continue our study this week of the promises that God gives us in relation to prayer. Prayer is one of the most important things the Christian does. We can talk to God in prayer. We are able to communicate to Him in prayer. He communicates to us through His Word. We speak to Him through prayer. There are a lot of promises related to prayer in the New Testament as well as the Old.

We look at James 1:5 today and we have a promise related to wisdom. It says, "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." The promise today is the promise of wisdom. We often come to the limits of our understanding. The limits of our wisdom and knowledge and we very often simply need to know the wisdom of God, and we cry out. We ought to cry out. If we don't cry out for wisdom, I believe we are very arrogant and do not truly understand our limitations. So, there comes a time in our lives, many, many, many times when we call out to God for wisdom in certain circumstances in our lives. He says that when you do call to Him, He will give us wisdom. There are two things I want to point out here: the condition for answered prayer in regard to wisdom and the context for this particular verse.

Starting with the condition, what kind of prayer for wisdom will God answer? Well, the one that is given in faith. The one that prays to God believing that God will give wisdom and answer that prayer. James 1:6-8 says, "But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." So, the Lord wants us to be people who pray with faith. If you think about it logically, why go to God in prayer if we don't believe that He will answer or that He is capable of answering? Our prayers are always based in faith. I know sometimes we struggle. Sometimes we struggle with doubt, and yet He says that the one that comes to Him believing that God answers prayer and that He is able, capable and wants to, that's the prayer that God is going to answer. So, you lack wisdom and come to God and say you need wisdom and insight into this particular



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circumstance, go to Him with believing and faith that He can and will answer that prayer.

There's also a context for this verse. Often, we go to a wonderful verse of Scripture and out of context we apply it to our lives and so forth, and even though it has a general application, there is a particular context here in which this promise is given. That's the context of trials. So, let's back up to that context and look at James 1:2, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." Our context here is trials. That's why he goes immediately from this to say that if any of them lacks wisdom. Let's think about this for a moment. When do we need wisdom more than any other time? For the most part, probably when we are going through difficult times. When life is smooth and everything's coming up roses and we are just skipping along well, we probably don't think about the need for wisdom. We might need it, but we don't necessarily consider it and think about it too much.

When life seems to turn sour and things go wrong in our lives and when heartache pops up and disappointment attacks, when our health goes wrong, when some issue faces us that we really don't know how to deal with and we begin to come to the end of our resources and thinking about these things, at that point we ought to logically and obviously turn to the Lord for wisdom. Saying 'Father, we don't get this. We don't understand why we are going through this or what You want to accomplish. I'm at the end of my rope here.' Those are times that we would naturally, or we should naturally, turn to the Lord for wisdom and insight. He says in those circumstances, not that he is going to necessarily remove the trial, He doesn't say that at all, in fact He is using the trial here to mature us, but He promises to give us insight and wisdom into it. Not that He tells us exactly why we are going through this, but somehow, we will have the understanding of what God is doing in our lives to mature us to be more like Him. We may not know the exact reasons for our trials, but we can have insight into what He is doing in our lives through those times. So, the context here is trials and asking for wisdom in trials and the condition is faith in a God who will answer prayer.

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I think this is a wonderful promise that you and I want to apply to our lives. We will look at another promise next time.

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October 13, 2022

Once again, we thank you for giving a little bit of your time to us to go through the Scriptures together and taking these five minutes to focus on the Word of God. I trust this is simply a starter for you to do a deeper study and spend more time with the Lord on your own. But, these five minutes we thank you for giving us that time in your life. We are looking at promises this week in relation to prayer. Prayer is this great gift of God that He gives us, and it is accompanied by many promises. This is the fourth one we are looking at this week. We are looking at Philippians 4, this is a passage we have turned to for other occasions and reasons, but today we are going to look at the promises related to prayer in Philippians 4.

He says in Philippians 4:6, "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." First, he gives a command and we have looked at this earlier as we look at commands that God gives us. It's a commandment from God to be anxious for nothing. In other words, not to be worried about anything. We are worry warts. Some a lot worse than others, but we all tend to be burdened and worried and concerned about many things in life. Scripture addresses that on numerous occasions both in the Old and New Testament. So, he says not to be anxious for anything, "but in everything by prayer." So, the antidote to anxiety is prayer, "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving," so we have a particular kind of praying here. We are bringing our petitions to Him, and we are doing so with gratefulness, thanksgiving. It says, "let your requests be made known to God," so, what's on your heart? Remember God already knows what's on your heart so you're not going to surprise Him with anything you have to say, nor can you hide anything from Him. So, if you have something going on but don't want anybody to know and you don't even want God to know, that is just ridiculous, because God already knows what's in your heart. So, he says just bring it out. What is your request? What's on your heart? Where are you at? Bring it to Him. He calls for that in this time. Then he gives the promise, "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Peace is that fleeting commodity that everybody wants, and few people have. Yet, it's available for the child of God who is applying these promises that He gives us here.

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So, it says that when we come to the Lord in prayer in this way, God's peace will guard our hearts and minds. He says it's a peace that surpasses all comprehension. I've pondered on that many times over the years just to consider that this is a peace that comes when we should not have peace. We are going through, what is normally an anxious moment in life, a very difficult trial and struggle perhaps, yet we find peace that surpasses comprehension. It shouldn't be there. It's not logically something that should happen, but it does. So, we find that sometimes in our greatest heartaches and trials, a closeness with God, a peace with Him that is beyond all understanding on our part. He says, concerning this peace, that it will, "guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Here, we see a gatekeeper over our hearts and minds, that's our inner being. If we are distinguishing between our heart and mind here, the heart would be the whole package, the inner being of who we are. Whereas the mind is simply the intellect. So, what guard? What is the gatekeeper concerning our inner being and our minds? He says that "the peace of God" serves that purpose here and it will "guard our hearts and our minds." Anything that is happening in our lives. Any of these anxious moments and difficult times has to get through the guard of the peace of God. It has to be filtered through that guard. He will not let anything in that He does not want to be in there. So, our gatekeeper, our protector, becomes the peace of God that guards us against all these anxious thoughts, all these struggles that you and I face in life.

We have this great promise of the peace of God that surpasses all understanding for those of us who bring our petitions before Him in prayer and rest in those answers that God will give us. This is something that should give us a wonderful day in the Lord. I trust that it is giving you one today.

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October 14, 2022

We're going to close out our work concerning the promises given to us in relation to Prayer by going to the book of Matthew and looking at chapter 7 listening to some of the words coming from the lips of Jesus. Jesus was one who prayed often. He set the example of prayer, the model of prayer. He taught us to pray. We know of the Lord's Prayer where the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. So, we have that instruction from Him, and He gave us a number of other things about prayer. In Matthew 7 He talks about some promises, and remember we are talking about promises, in relation to prayer. He does so in a very beautiful way.

Matthew 7:7-8 says, "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." Here's the set of promises here. He calls on us to come before Him in prayer. As we do so, and He uses three different descriptions—ask, seek, and knock—I don't know if there is an intensity level building up here. I don't know if we want to push it that far, but obviously this is a true, sincere prayer. Someone is coming before the Lord and asking and seeking the answers and knocking at the door. This is all showing the earnestness of this prayer that is going forth. Those who ask, receive. Those who seek, find. Those who knock, will find the door open. The Lord is not resistant. I think sometimes we get the idea that the Lord really doesn't want to answer our prayers. He's kind of playing some kind of spiritual hide-and-seek from us. He wants us to be constantly bewildered and so forth, but we don't find that to be true biblically. We find Him anxious to answer our prayers. He wants us to come before Him and seek Him and knock at that door. He promises that we will find good reception from Him.

Then He goes on to give an illustration of what that would look like. He said in Matthew 7:9-11, "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!" This illustration is showing the kindness and the graciousness of a God who wants to answer our prayers. Once again, because of bad teaching or just natural sinful thinking, we sometimes get

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the idea that God is very, very harsh, and very, very hard, and He really doesn't want to answer prayers. He really doesn't want to be bothered by us. I've seen television shows where some person says, "Lord, I haven't bothered you in prayer in twenty years and I won't bother you again for twenty years if you'll do this for me." That person doesn't understand God. The Lord wants to hear our petitions. He wants us to come before Him. Giving this wonderful example that if a beloved son comes to you and they want a loaf of bread, they want something to eat, what kind of person gives them a rock? Only a hard-hearted person, right? If they ask for a fish, again something to eat, who gives them a snake that could turn on them and bite them? Only the meanest, cruelest of people. So, people don't do that unless they are very demented in some way. Most fathers and mothers are going to give the gracious gifts that they can. So, He applies it saying, "If you then, being evil," knowing that our nature, even the best of us, even the righteous still have that propensity for sin, "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!" If we can figure out what gifts are good and give them to the ones that we love and we do so because we want to, if we can do that, then think about the infinitely loving, righteous, perfect, holy God and what He wants to give those who are His children when they come and ask for those things.

So, He is saying don't be hesitant. Don't hold back. Don't pull back and be afraid. Come before Him asking, seeking, and knocking, and He has promised to give us those things that we petition. He is not saying He gives us every little whim that we want. Many things are not good for us. Just like our children might ask for things that are not good for them. A loving parent doesn't give that to them, but those things that are in His will, and those things that He sees and knows are good for us, He will answer in a positive way. If He says no, He only says no because it is not good for us to have those things. Come to Him in prayer.

He has many promises that we have looked at this week. I trust that these are helpful to you as you think about prayer. I hope it causes you and me to be greater warriors in prayer to come before Him with our petitions.

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October 17, 2022

Thank you for joining us once again on our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We have the privilege this particular round of looking at the promises that God gives us. His precious promises keep us in all sorts of circumstances, good or bad. We thank the Lord for those promises. We are looking at several of those together. We will look at some today concerning trials. Promises wrapped around trials. I'm reminded of a quote of a famous saint in the past, Samuel Rutherford who said this, "When I find myself in the cellars of affliction, I look about for the King's wine." That's a wonderful perspective. So, when he is in the dumps and down in the basement of troubles and afflictions, instead of moping and feeling sorry for himself, he looks around it says, "for the King's wine." In other words, he is looking for treasures that are down in the dumps of life. That's a wonderful perspective to have. It's a perspective the Scripture talks about as well.

We are looking quickly at the Psalms today. We will start with a familiar Psalm 119:11, "your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You." We're familiar with that particular verse. I might say that these are *soft* promises that we are looking at in this particular area. I'm looking at the area of affliction. Promises related to afflictions. He has treasured the Word of God in his heart so that he might not sin against the Lord.

Then in Psalm 119:67 & 71, it's kind of unusual. Remember that Psalm 119 is all about the Word of God and how the Word of God is precious to the psalmist and what it does for him. A couple verses concerning afflictions are found here. Psalm 119: 67 says, "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word." Psalm 119:71 says, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes." He is looking at the difficulties of life. The afflictions that he is going through, the troubles. He recognizes the value of going through these hard times in his life. These are good verses to remember because when we hit our times of difficulty, it's good to know these Scriptures are there. He says that before he was afflicted it went astray. So, when things were going smoothly for him, he wasn't doing so well spiritually, "But now I keep Your word." Again, a *soft* promise that as the Lord takes us through these difficult times, it focuses us back to the need to keep His Word and be obedient. "It is good for me that I was afflicted," he said, "That I may learn Your statutes." It's during those hard times that

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we find the wine in God's basement of life as Samuel Rutherford reminded us. It's during those times that we often see more than any other time the wonders of the Lord, the greatness of what He has given us and the things that He gives us in His Word. It's during those times that we have these *soft* promises.

Going to the New Testament, we find in Hebrews 12:6, "For those whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." There's a promise that most people don't necessarily want to claim. If the Lord loves us, He disciplines us. I have said before and even in this broadcast in earlier times of other topics that this word *discipline* is the idea of training. It's not necessarily the idea of flogging, as he mentions here, or bringing us under His discipline in a harsh way. That can happen, and sometimes that's what we need. Sometimes the Lord needs to really get our attention and He brings into our life some painful circumstances due to the fact that we have gone astray. He will do that if it is necessary in our lives, and this verse teaches that. But, it's broader than that as well I believe. I think it's also talking about the fact that often we need the discipline and training of the Lord so that when we face these difficult times we are prepared. We are like the athlete who is in shape because of the discipline that God has given us to enable us to handle the difficulties of life and to shape us and bring us into a place where we are trained to handle the difficulties of life. So, this is a promise. He brings those disciplines, those training sessions, into our lives because He loves us, and He knows that we need these things to live for Him as we should. So, we have these promises, some of them rather indirect or *soft*, related to the afflictions of life. As you and I face trouble, and we do all the time, as we do, these passages can be precious to us because they are promises coming from the loving heart of our Savior.

I trust these are a blessing to you today.



## The Promises of God

October 18, 2022

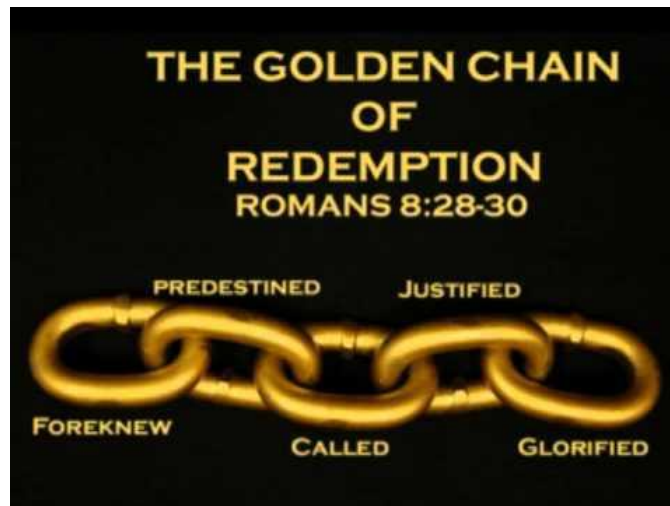
During the times of trouble and perplexity and confusion and heartache and whatever difficulties life throws our way, there is probably no better-known verse and no better treasured verse than Romans 8:28. It's broader than just our afflictions, and troubles, and trials, but it definitely is there during such times.

The verse says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Often this verse is taken just by itself. There is a broader context that I will mention in a moment, but it's a precious verse to know that whatever I am going through at the moment, whatever trial or things I am struggling with, that God has a purpose in those things, and He is not wasting anything in our lives. Nothing that seems painful at the moment or even heartbreaking at the moment is wasted when it comes to the Lord in our lives. "All things," he says, "for those who love Him," talking about the child of God who loves the Lord, "causes all things to work together for good to those who.... are called according to His purpose." This doesn't mean that everything that comes our way is good in the sense that we usually think of good, as being pleasant or enjoyable or delightful. Many things in life are very difficult and we know that. You have to be pretty naïve not to know that lots of things come our way that we wish would not. We have health issues, conflicts at work, struggles within families, and various things that come and hurt us. We know that, and the Lord doesn't say that those things are always going to be pleasant. He says that He is working these things for our good. So, He is taking whatever comes, whatever those trials might be, and like I said, this is a broader thing than just trials, it can be the good things, the successes as well as the failures, the heartaches as well as the joys of life, but He's taking all of these and packaging them for us for our good to those who are called according to His purpose. Remember that the good here is not necessarily the pleasant things, but it's His conforming us into the image of Christ.

Romans 8:29 says, "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren." So, He is using these things to conform us to the image of Christ. As Christians, we are already in the family of God. We

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already belong to Him. We're already new creatures in Christ. Those are great promises in and of themselves, but also, He is conforming us to the image of Christ. In other words, He is progressively making us look more and more like Christ. That's the purpose. That's the good that He is promising us here because as these things come along, He is bringing us to a place where we are looking more like Christ, and He is shaping us to be like Christ. He says in Romans 8:30, "and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom he justified, He also glorified." We have this very wonderful overlapping set of promises here that the Lord is working those that He Himself to bring ultimately, of we see what is called: The Redemption.



He has predestined or set us aside, called us to Himself, so that we might be justified. So, He has called us to Himself for righteousness, justification, at this time and those whom He justified, He also glorified. So, what's wonderful about the way He says this is that there is no break in the link. Those who are justified are also glorified. There's no break here. He's not going to lose any of us in the process. He's going to bring us to Himself. That's the ultimate shaping us into the image of Christ, but it is also a process going on. The Lord is in a process of shaping us and even in the difficult times, He is using these things for our good to bring us into conformity to Christ and ultimately glorification in Him.

## The Promises of God

This is a wonderful passage in Scripture and a wonderful set of promises that the Lord is loving us so much that He is conforming us to the very image of Christ and is working all these things for our good. I know Christians throughout the ages have claimed this promise. We have stood on it. We have cried out to the Lord during the deepest agonies of our souls trusting Him to do the very thing that He has promised to do right here.

We can trust Him with our lives to conform us to the image of Christ. That's a promise He has given us.

## The Promises of God

October 19, 2022

Have you ever been confused or disappointed? The Lord has brought things into your life that you were not expecting. You don't know how to process them. You don't know how to think it through and you're just troubled. I think we have all been there many times. One of the passages that we turn to during such times is John 14. I am sure that over the many broadcasts that we have done over the last couple of years that we have looked at this passage in different contexts several times. We are going to look at it today in the context of His promises given to us during times of trials and some of the great trials that we have are trials of disappointment and confusion. The context here is in the upper room with the disciples. Jesus is going to go to the cross the very next day and this is starting to dawn on the disciples that Jesus is leaving them. They do not know how to think that through. They don't know what to do with that. They're confused. They're disappointed. They expected Jesus to mount the throne of David and lead them in victory over the Romans and to set up the kingdom on earth where they would be ruling with Him in that kingdom. This was their expectation. Slowly but surely, Jesus has shown them that that is not going to happen right now. He's been rejected by His own people, the Jews. He is going to the cross for our salvation. They had not really understood most of that and they certainly didn't understand the resurrection that was yet to come. Here we are the night before the crucifixion a few days before the resurrection and they are totally confused theologically and personally at this time.

Jesus could have left them in that state. Things are going to start to come together after the resurrection, but He doesn't. He gives them words of comfort in the midst of this trial of confusion in John 14. Let's read a few verses. John 14:1-3 says, "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." Here's a set of promises and we will look at more verses in a moment. Here's a set of promises He is giving us here. We don't need to have our hearts troubled because if we believe in God, we can believe in Christ. He is setting the foundation here. He is laying the foundation saying that the promises He is going to give them in just a second are based upon the fact that He and His Father can be trusted.

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Promises are only as good as the source, right? Sometimes people give promises they cannot keep. They promise that everything is going to be alright or that someone is going to do well with some operation and they're not, or whatever. We give these promises that we can't keep, but we know when the Lord gives promises that He is going to keep those because He can. So, Jesus is saying they can trust Him and trust the Father and He is going to go away and prepare a place for them. He is saying that He is leaving them now, keep in mind this is the confusion and disappointment for the disciples that He says He is going to leave them for now, but they need not to be troubled because He is going away to prepare a place for them. What a promise! On top of that, He is going to go away and prepare this place and He will come again and receive them to Himself that where He is they may be also. So, He tells them He is coming back for them, and He will take them to be with Him. And they're not going to go to a place He's preparing for them, a physical mansion as the old song goes, or a dwelling place, but they are going to be with Him, and with Him forever. He continues into John 14:4, "And you know the way where I am going," and this is where the disciples run into some more disappointment and confusion. Remember that Thomas said in John 14:5, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" So, Jesus says to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." There's the great promise of eternal life. Thomas is confused. The disciples are confused. They know He is going away. Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for them and come for them. How do they get there is Thomas' question. Jesus responds that He is the way, the truth and the life.

What a set of promises. You believe in Me, and you come to Me, and you will come to the Father through Me. I am the bridge to eternal life. This is the promise that the Lord gives us in times of confusion and especially in times of confusion related to our own eternal destiny. I am the Way, the truth, and the life Jesus says, you come to the Father through Me. That's the greatest promise, perhaps, ever given.

## The Promises of God

October 20, 2022

As we are looking at the promises of God in relation to difficulties in life, the trials of life, we have looked at a number of circumstances so far. We are going to look now at one of the great trials that we face for ourselves and for others in our lives who have passed away. The trial of death. Death is the great enemy of us. The last enemy that will actually be abolished by the Lord according to 1 Corinthians 15. So, this great enemy that you and I face is death. Death is coming for all of us. We are appointed to die according to Hebrews, and we are going to pass away unless the Lord comes first to take us to Himself. So, death, we face. It's not always our own death that troubles us, it's the death of those that we love. So, of course, ever since Adam and Eve, people have been dying quite regularly. All of us have died except for two individuals, Elijah and Enoch. So, when we face the loss of a loved one, this is perhaps in many cases the greatest challenge of life. It's the greatest heartbreak that many of us ever face. As we see a loved one, a child, a spouse, parent, or a friend who has passed out of this life, that's troubling, isn't it? Our hearts are broken. What are we going to do with this circumstance that everybody faces in life? It's quite naïve to think that we somehow skirt through life and never face this particular trial. What promises does the Lord give us in the face of death? We could probably go to many passages to be comforted at this time, but one that I will turn to is the promise that Jesus gave Mary and Martha at the death of Lazarus.

We know the story. We know that the Lord is going to raise Lazarus from the dead, but he will return to the tomb one day. But, at this particular time when Jesus comes to them, they don't know what Jesus is going to do. They don't know that Jesus is going to raise Lazarus from the grave, so they are troubled with death, aren't they? Troubled just like all of us are troubled, and Jesus comes, and He begins to talk to Mary. We are going to pick up at John 11:22 when she says, "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." Martha has a real faith in Jesus and whatever Jesus would do, but whatever she is saying here, she doesn't seem to comprehend what Jesus is going to do in a few moments.

John 11:23-24 says, "Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.'" She understands what Daniel 12, in the Old Testament, had taught.

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That there would be a resurrection at the end of time and the righteous will rise to the reward and the wicked will come from the grave to be judged. She knew that, so she had her theology in shape here. So, she knows that is going to happen, but Jesus says to her in John 11:26, "and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" Now, that is an amazing thing, isn't it? Jesus says that if you believe in Him, you are not going to die. Now, Lazarus is in the grave, so this is a very troubling thing to be saying to Martha at this time. Did Lazarus not believe in Jesus? Is he doomed? What comfort is all of this that Jesus is giving at this point? Martha responds to Him in John 11:27, "She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world.'" John 11:28 continues, "When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.'" Here is an amazing thing. They are still troubled. They are facing death. They have lost their beloved brother. Jesus has come and He has been saying some things that really haven't been computed in the mind of Martha. She may have just gone off to Mary to see if Mary could understand what Jesus is saying better. She didn't know. So, she brings Mary to Him. And Jesus who has been teaching them is explaining, there is a resurrection of the dead. That's the promise of God. He's not promising here, though it seems like He is at first, that a Christian, a believer in Christ, will never die. Believers die. As a matter of fact, we go through the rest of the New Testament, and we see all the believers dying. 1 Thessalonians 4 talks about the dead in Christ, but He is talking about the eternal death that faces those that do not know Him. They will die physically if the Lord doesn't come back first, but they will be resurrected from the dead if they believe in Christ on to eternal life.

So, I want to say this, in light of His promises concerning death. Death faces all of us. We all die. All of those that we love will die. We go into the grave. We have this great hope, however, given by Christ Himself of eternal life, resurrection from the dead to eternal life forever to be with Him. This kind of matches what we talked about last time where Jesus tells us that He goes to prepare a place for us, and He comes for us, and He will take us to be with Himself. That also speaks of this resurrection from the dead.

So, one of the great trials, perhaps the greatest trial most of us will ever face will have to do with death. In the light of death, this can break our hearts.

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It can devastate us, but we have this wonderful promise that we do not remain in the grave. Now, here, Jesus is going to raise Lazarus from the dead and he has been dead for four days and Jesus raises him from the dead. It's an incredible miracle, and yet we know that Lazarus will return to the grave. This was not the end product. This was not what Jesus was promising. There is something far beyond this temporary resurrection that Jesus is promising Mary, Martha, and us. That is the eternal resurrection. The resurrection to eternal life to be with Him forever.

So, this is a promise given from the Lord only for those who believe in Him. I want to encourage you right at this moment to consider the Words of Jesus. Death is a great reminder. It reminds us that this life is not all there is. It's a reminder that this life is temporary. Death points us to the One who is the resurrection and the life—the Lord Jesus Christ. For those that believe in Him and have placed their trust in Him for eternal life, and for the forgiveness of sin, we have this great promise of resurrection from the dead. Not just to come back to a life like Lazarus came back, but to a life prepared for us to be with Him forever. An eternal life free from the struggles of this life. That's a great hope and promise that the Lord gives us in the face of the great trial of death. I hope that gives you a wonderful day in the Lord as you contemplate that.



## The Promises of God

October 21, 2022

We thank you for joining us once again in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We're looking at trials and the promises that the Lord gives us in relation to trials. We have looked at things such as death, one of the greatest trials of all. I want to look at the issue of fear today. Fear is a part of life. Sometimes it is a good thing. The Lord gives us the ability to be afraid of things that would harm us to keep us from doing things that would cause us harm. So, that's a good fear. A lot of our fears, however, are concerning things that we can do nothing about personally and about things that we shouldn't be afraid of. There are a lot of anxieties and a lot of fears in the lives of most people that the Lord does not want there. The promises of the Lord in relation to fear are very, very, helpful to us. These are the things that cancel out the issue of fear.

I want to go to Psalm 37 to look at a few verses there and then we will also look at Isaiah. In Psalm 37:1-5, "Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers. For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb. Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it." Psalm 37:7 says, "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way." He continues on to talk about that throughout the rest of the chapter talking about these things that we fret about, get anxious about, fearful over. Sometimes, in this context, he is talking about being afraid because of evildoers who are doing well. Sometimes sinful people seem to skirt through life without any problems at all. That causes us to fret. Why is that happening? Why are bad people doing so well and myself and maybe other good people aren't getting by so well? He says not to fret or be fearful about such things. Instead, trust in Him and do good.

Psalm 37:4 is a wonderful verse that people have turned to throughout the ages. "Delight yourself in the Lord." He says not to delight yourself in all these other things and get wrapped up in these other things that other people in this world are wrapped up in. Don't fret yourself about those things. Instead, turn your focus away from those things and onto the Lord and delight in Him. Whatever we delight in virtually controls our lives. The things

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that truly bring us joy and happiness and delight pretty much focus the way we live life. "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart." Some people have ripped this out of context and misapplied it. They say okay, I'll delight in the Lord and He is going to give me a new car, a new house or whatever material thing I think I want. Success, prosperity, etc. However, that would be just the opposite of the proper interpretation here. If you delight in something, He says, delight in me and I'll give you the desires of your heart, if you delight in something, that is what you ultimately desire, isn't it? So, if you are delighting in the Lord, what do you desire? You desire the Lord, and He gives you Himself. The more you delight in Him, the more of Him you understand, the more of Him you cherish, the more of Him you will appreciate, and your life becomes more and more wrapped up in Him and not in these things that cause us to fret, be anxious, and fearful.

The next verse is also helpful. Psalm 37:5, "Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it." Our commitment is not to our things around the world. Our trust is not in this or that. Our commitment is in Him, and we trust in Him, and then He brings it about, and He does it.

I think of another verse of Scripture that is directly related to fear, Isaiah 41:10, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely, I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." As all of Scripture, it's in a context, and He is talking in Isaiah, to Israel about some of the things they are facing. In Isaiah 40-48 He magnifies the greatness of the Lord over and over and over. Right in the middle of all that discussion, He gives us this verse that I think is applicable to all ages and all believers no matter what the circumstances of life. He is talking here about fear. "Do not fear." That is a commandment. Here is the promise, "For I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you." This goes back to Psalm 37 and anxiety and fretting. Don't do that. "For I am your God." Here's your promise! Do not look around you and fret because the promise is that He is ours. He will strengthen us, now here is a series of promises in the context of fretting, anxiety, and fear. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." No wonder this verse is so beloved. As the Lord said, He is the One who is ours. He says He is ours. He strengthens. He helps. He holds us up. He does this in the context of fearfulness, anxiety, and fretting.

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So many of us, all of us at times, are fretful and fearful and anxious and a verse like this comes to us with the promises of God. Maybe, in myself I should be fearful, fretting, and anxious, but when I look to Him and see that I have His promises to uphold me and strengthen me, that gives me the power to know that I can get through whatever comes my way because God is with me.

This is a great promise and the promise we will close our week with, and I trust this will truly bring you a wonderful day and wonderful weekend in the Lord. God bless you.

## The Promises of God

October 24, 2022

Thank you for joining us for another round of the Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcasts. We are looking at promises, the promises of God found in the Scriptures, and we are looking at various promises related to certain themes and topics. This week I want to spend all week talking about the promises of God when we have been wronged. You have all been wronged. I don't even need to ask that question. Have you been wronged by people? Yes, you have. Have people misused you in some way? You know they have. So, how do we deal with that in relation to the promises of God? There are a number of instructions that God gives us on how we are to deal with situations when we have been wronged and we will kind of interlace those in our discussion this week. But, I want to really focus on what God promises us at such times.

I'm going to start today in Romans 8 and look at the general promise of God. This is just a general feature of God's promises when it comes to being wronged. Then in the days ahead, we will look at some particulars. Let's start with Romans 8:31, it says, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" Backing up to the context here, the context is wider and broader than simply being wronged by people. We look at Romans 28-30 and we know that those wonderful promises there that God is going to work all things together for our good, and then He brings that into the issue of our redemption and talking about Him calling us to Himself, justifying us, glorifying us, and all of that set of promises, so that nothing can separate us from the love of God. That's how He ends the chapter. Nothing can separate us from Him. So, those are wonderful promises in and of themselves. Then as he starts to flesh out these promises concerning redemption, he goes to this verse in Romans 8:31 which says that if God is for us, who can be against us. He is now looking in generality. Who is against us in this life? One of the big individuals against us is Satan himself. We know that and this is partly what he is talking about perhaps, but there can be other people against us. Those that do not know Christ are against us. The people in this world system, period, can be against us. So, sometimes it feels a bit overwhelming when we realize that there are many people that can be against us and who challenge our faith, our life, and so forth and at such times, it is so wonderful to reach out and realize the promises of God. Even if all the world is against us, He is not, and with God, that becomes the

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majority. If God is for us, who can be against us?" What does it matter that people are against us? What does it matter if Satan is against us? What does it matter if inanimate objects such as trials and so forth are against us? If God is for us, it doesn't matter.

It says in Romans 8:32, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" He has already given us the best. That's his illustration and example here. He's given us the very best, His Son, so how could He not give us more in the things that are not as important as His Son? The everyday issues and situations of life.

In Romans 8:33, he goes on to say, "Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies." So now he seems to be thinking in a realm of redemption once again. Can anyone challenge our salvation? Can anyone bring a charge against us to challenge our salvation? Of course they can! I think we find that example in the Old Testament in Zechariah, for example, when we find a picture there of Satan accusing the leadership of Israel and bringing a condemnation against them. The Lord says in essence that those condemnations don't matter because of the Son, Jesus Christ. That's exactly what he's saying here. Someone can challenge your faith. As a matter of fact, someone can produce evidence that you do not really have any cause to believe in your salvation. Someone can condemn you and point to your sin and be absolutely right in that, but, here is the promise of God, God is the one who justifies. It doesn't matter who accuses us. It doesn't matter if they are in their accusations and condemnations. What matters is that the Lord justified us and the Lord keeps us. His promise is *what does it matter who is against us if He is for us.*

Beautiful promise in the generalities of life as far as someone condemning us and being against us. Next time we will pick up looking at some particulars. I hope you can join us tomorrow.

## The Promises of God

October 25, 2022

Last time, if you were with us on our broadcast, we began a short series on looking at the promises of God in relation to being wronged by people or the devil. We found in Romans 8 that, "If God is for us, who is against us?" It is He who justifies. It is He who keeps us. So, we have that great promise of God, that it doesn't matter who the opposition is in the general big picture of life. The Lord outweighs all the opponents that we might have. We are going to move on the next four days and look at more particular, specialized situations.

The first one we will pick up on is the issue of revenge. I think revenge is a very common, natural response to being wronged that is also part of our sinful nature. It is natural. It is sinful for us to want revenge when someone has harmed us and hurt us. I don't know what the movie industry would do without the motivation of revenge, especially those movies and so forth that are wrapped around action and adventure and so forth. You constantly find someone coming along and doing harm and then the good guy comes along and revenges himself or others and the movie takes on that plot. So, we are not in the movie industry. We are not of the world. How does God want us to react and relate to those who do us harm? Romans 12:17, "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men." There's the general principle. The Lord calls on us to never pay back evil for evil. Do not seek our own revenge. He says in Romans 12:18, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." That should be our natural default. How can I be at peace with people who want to harm me? That is often a very difficult thing to do. As a matter of fact, as we read further in the chapter, sometimes we cannot be at peace with all people. It even says in Romans 12:18, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace..." That isn't always easy to do. As much as we possibly can we are to be at peace with all people.

Then he says clearly in Romans 12:19, "Never take your own revenge, beloved..." We will move on to the next phrase in a second. Here is the command to us. "Never take your own revenge." It is not up to you to seek out someone to get even with. Not to say they harmed you, so they are going to pay for that. That's a natural response that our human flesh, our human sinfulness, wants to do. Normal, but sinful. Instead of that, the

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followers of God are not to take their own revenge. Here comes the promise, Romans 12:19, "...but leave room for the wrath of God," if vengeance needs to be taken, let God do it, "for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." There's our promise. If vengeance is needed. If someone has harmed us and something needs to be righted there as far as vengeance is concerned, it's not our task to do that. It's our task to take it to the Lord and recognize that He has given us a promise that, "Vengeance is Mine," here's His promise, "I will repay." That means that if something needs to happen, if some vengeance needs to take place, then God is just, righteous, perfect in His righteousness, and He will mete out that judgment as is needed according to His will. When we try to take our own revenge, we often overdo. We often make things worse than they were to begin with. We often don't understand the true situation or motives and different things like that. We often do that, and we know that. How much good is it to say that we are not going to seek revenge or payback. As far as we are concerned, we are going to try to be at peace with these people even if they have truly wronged me and even if something truly needs to be righted. There is nothing wrong with going to someone and trying to fix a situation, but there is something very wrong with payback. Instead, we go, and we cling to the promise of God where He says He will repay if it's necessary. That takes some burden off of us. That gets us out of the way of God's fire, so to speak, and lets Him do what He does perfectly, and we don't have to be involved with that.

So, when we have been wronged by somebody, what should we do? Lean on the promise of God that if vengeance is necessary, God says He will repay, and you get out of the way!

## The Promises of God

October 26, 2022

Thank you for joining us once again for our broadcast. We are looking at the promises of God in relation to being wronged. We all have been wronged and we have already looked at a couple situations this week. The general picture found in Romans 8 and then when someone has truly wronged us and we are tempted to get revenge and God has called us to not do that, but to step back and let Him take care of that situation and He promise He will repay if necessary, so we don't have to do that. So, these are really good teachings.

We are going to look at Psalm 55 today that is dealing with a situation in which the psalmist, most likely David, has been wronged by a friend. It's one thing to be wronged by a coworker, neighbor, or someone that doesn't matter too much in your life. It is something very different to be wronged by a friend because with any friendship, there is a level of trust. There is the idea that that person truly cares for you, and you truly care for them and enjoy each other's presence. So, if a friend wrongs you, and especially if that friend wrongs you purposely, it's very difficult, painful and harmful to us. So, how do we handle that? We have in Psalm 55 a situation very similar to that that we can relate to.

In Psalm 55:12-14, it says, "For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, then I could bear it; nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man my equal, my companion and my familiar friend; we who had sweet fellowship together walked in the house of God in the throng." We see this person has been very intimate, close, and a very good friendship. They have worshiped together. They have served the Lord together and they have enjoyed one another.

In Psalm 55:16-17 it says, "As for me, I shall call upon God, and the Lord will save me. Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, and He will hear my voice." We see these verses here and the next one as well, Psalm 55:18, "He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me, for they are many who strive against me." We see David here who has a friend, some believe this might even be a prophetic teaching concerning what Judas did to Jesus, but be that as it may, David apparently had a friend, some have guessed at who that friend is, but it was someone



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he had lived with, someone who he counted on and worshiped with, and that person has turned on him. So, what is David's response? This is where we need to go as well. David's response in Psalm 55:16 is, "I shall call upon God." So, instead of seeking revenge, he calls on the Lord and turns to the Lord. Why? Because he is banking on the promise of God. That promise is that, "...the Lord will save me." David did not necessarily know how He would do that. He didn't have it all mapped out. He didn't have God's battle plan in front of him, but He knew that God was a God who would not turn on him and who was His closest friend who would never ever deceive him and harm him on purpose. So, he believes that God will save him. That's the promise he is banking on.

He says in the next verse, all day long, "Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur." He is saying that he is hurt. He has been harmed by this individual and there is no question about it and so he is not going to just fluff it away and ignore it, it's true, but he's going to turn to God and believe that He will, Psalm 55:18, "He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me." He will save him from whatever harm could be there.

We go to Psalm 55:22 which says, "Cast your burden upon the Lord," perhaps now he is turning to us, and he is using his own experience to point us in a direction that we should go as well under the inspiration of the Spirit, "and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." He is telling us to follow the example that he is giving us. Let's call upon the Lord and cast that burden upon Him and He will sustain you. Earlier he said He will save you and redeem you. Now he uses another term and says, He will sustain you, He will uphold you and not let you stumble and fall. "He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." By this, he means that we are not going to crumble. We are not going to fall away. He is not going to allow that to happen. In and of ourselves we are often very weak and sometimes fragile. A broken friendship can really shake us, so he is not saying we couldn't be shaken in that way, but He is not going to allow us to be destroyed. He is not going to allow us to collapse.

Psalm 55:23, "But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction." Now, we are back at this point to what we looked at yesterday. If vengeance is needed, the Lord is going to bring. He will take care of it.

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That is not our job. Our job is to turn to Him. Cast our burden upon Him and believe in His promises. He will sustain us. He will redeem us. He will save us. He will not allow us to be destroyed by this situation. Those are wonderful promises folks because we know that in and of ourselves, we are weak and we can crumble and we can be shattered, but God will not allow us to be shattered. We can depend on Him, and we can count on Him and on His promises.

I hope this helps you in whatever circumstance you are in and especially if you ever face that circumstance when a good friend or friends have turned on you which is one of the most devastating encounters in life, but God will never do that. He is always with us and He will always sustain us.

## The Promises of God

October 27, 2022

Thank you for joining us once again in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. As we look at the promises of God, in our bigger theme that we have been looking at for several weeks. In particular, this week, we are looking at the promises of God related to times when we have been offended or harmed by other people, when people have wronged us. Unfortunately, in a world like ours, that happens. It happens in general. It happens at work. It happens in the family. It happens in church. It happens among our friendships, and we are looking at those together.

Looking at Psalm 56 today and we are looking at another situation given to us here when we have been wronged by enemies. This is when people who are against us, we could call them foes in this passage, actually want to harm us on purpose. Many times, we are offended and harmed by people who didn't necessarily mean to do that. At least, not intentionally, but did so anyway, and maybe they don't care. But there are people in our lives, unfortunately, who really don't care at all and who would like to harm us, overthrow us, for various reasons, and Psalm 56 addresses that. Let's look at a few verses.

Psalm 56:1-2, "Be gracious to me, O God, for man has trampled upon me; fighting all day long he oppresses me. My foes have trampled upon me all day long, for they are many who fight proudly against me." So, now we have a very mean-spirited person who really wants to do us harm. I have heard of people like that in a workplace where someone goes to work and there's an individual there who just simply wants to make your life miserable. We know that happens in schools for young people, for example, there's a bully there. Someone who just simply does not like you and they're going to make your life miserable. This can happen in our homes, our families, our friendships. Unfortunately, this happens. We have this antagonistic individual who is trampling, that's the way he says it here, trampling upon us. That's a pretty mean-spirited picture, isn't it? Someone really wanting to stomp us into the ground.

Psalm 56:5 he says, "All day long they distort my words;" here's the particular way they are doing it, "all their thoughts are against me for evil. They attack, they lurk, they watch my steps, as they have waited to take my

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life." So, in this situation, at least for the psalmist, this individual really wants to go to the ninth degree and actually take the life of this individual. You probably do not have that situation, but you might have the other where they are distorting your words. You've said something and somebody has taken that and distorted it and gone out and spread gossip or slander about you. That's harmful, isn't it? That's painful to know that you really have no defense and sometimes you don't even know that your words have been distorted to someone else. But, this is what is happening to this individual. "They attack, they lurk..." so they're looking for opportunities to hurt you and to take your words and distort them. That not only hurts other people, but you find out that other people don't like you because of what someone else says you said. When we find out about things like that, that's very painful, isn't it? So, we have a situation in which a foe, someone who really doesn't like you, is intentionally causing you harm.

We want to get to the promise of God in relation to that, and we go to Psalm 56:8, "You have taken account of my wanderings;" he is talking about God saying that He knows his wanderings and that he is stumbling around because of this circumstance. "Put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book?" This is a comforting set of promises. The Lord knows that you are hurting. The Lord knows somebody has trampled on you, distorted your words, and intentionally harmed you. He knows that. He knows that it has brought you great discomfort so that apparently, in this circumstance, there are tears. He says, God has taken his tears and put them in His bottle. What a beautiful way of saying that God has seen your agony, your tears, and how much this has hurt you and He treasures those things. He has put them in His bottle, so to speak, to see them and to know they're there and He has put them in His book. He is not oblivious to your pain. He is not looking the other way as people trample on you. He deeply, deeply cares about what you're going through.

Psalm 56:9 says, "Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call; this I know, that God is for me." So, his hope now is not in himself and maybe his ability to unravel all this ugliness that has gone on, but his hope is in the Lord. His hope is that he will be able to call upon the Lord in this day of trouble, and when he does, he knows that God is for him. Again, we are looking at the promises of God. God does not always promise to do away with enemies and fix every circumstance of life that has come against us,

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but He has promised to care, and He has promised to *be for us*. God is always for His children and never against them.

That should give us great comfort because at the ultimate doing and time, God is for us, and He will unravel these things. These things will not shake us as we saw yesterday because He cares. He puts our tears in His bottle. He writes our words in His book, and He is for us. That's the promise of God and that should give us a wonderful day in Him.

## The Promises of God

October 28, 2022

This week in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast we are looking at the promises of God in relation to being wronged by others. When someone has harmed us and hurt us, possibly intentionally, possibly not, but they have done so, what are the promises of God at such times? We are going to finish off the week by looking at Psalm 36.

If someone were to ask you what your favorite Psalm was, what would you tell them? Most of us would say Psalm 23, and if they didn't say Psalm 23, it's probably because they are trying to be creative and not say what everybody else says, because Psalm 23 is just so precious and so wonderful that we all love it. If I had to pick another Psalm, Psalm 36 might be my favorite. It's so beautiful, it's so full of the riches of Christ that He gives us, and I really love this Psalm. He is talking in the earlier verses of Psalm 36 about life in general, and he comes to Psalm 36:4 concerning someone who wants to harm him, "He plans wickedness upon his bed; he sets himself on a path that is not good; he does not despise evil." So, he is talking about an individual who is not walking God's way and he is devising wickedness and that wickedness has touched our lives. This person might be an individual who generally is bad and may be causing harm for a lot of people, but that harm has come our way as well, and we have been affected by it. So, there's the circumstance that he is dealing with.

Beginning with Psalm 36:5 he turns from the wicked person and the influences there and the harm that is there and he turns to a beautiful picture of God and he just layers on picture after picture after picture of the greatness of God and how he can be trusted because of that. So, he has turned from the affliction and the afflicted to the comfort found in God, in His nature, and who He is, and the promises that go with it.

So, enjoy this with me starting at Psalm 36:5, "Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens," so, he speaks of the lovingkindness of God, the Hebrew word *hesed*, which means mercy, kindness, love all wrapped up in one beautiful word. The lovingkindness of the Lord. That's a promise. God's lovingkindness never fades. It's for His people. Then he says, "Your faithfulness reaches to the skies." He is not only loving and kind and merciful, but He is ever faithful. The wicked are not. Those that choose to harm us,

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or others are not faithful, but God is and it reaches to the skies. There is no limit to the faithfulness of God. Think of stability. We live here in Illinois in the plains, we don't see any mountains here, so when you head out west or south, but especially out west and you go and you start to see the Rocky Mountains, immediately you think of strength and stability as well as beauty. Psalm 36:6, "Your righteousness is like the mountains of God." What strength is described here! There's beauty there, but there's strength as well. Your judgments are like a great deep." He goes the other way with judgments. Sometimes we think of judgements as something as condemnation, but there's also the idea of justice. God is fair. God never condemns us for what He shouldn't. God never puts us down in ways He shouldn't. God is always fair with us on the positive side and always deals with us on the negative side appropriately as it ought to be done. So, His judgments are deep. He doesn't look at the surface. He always digs down to the deep and we thank the Lord for that. "O Lord, You preserve man and beast." He is looking again at the promises of God based upon His lovingkindness and His faithfulness and His righteousness and His judgments, He says that He saves man and beast. We can depend on You Lord. We can trust Him because of who He is.

Psalm 36:7, "How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings." His metaphors are just so perfect here. Looking at who God is and the preciousness of His lovingkindness, we find that we can take refuge in the shadows of His wings. So, we have the picture here of the mother chicken, the hen, who takes her babies under her wings and protects them from all harms. God is like that, only infinitely better, of course. Nothing can break through His wings that protect us.

Psalm 36:8, "They drink their fill from the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights." Satisfaction, delights, all found in God. These are the promises of God. These are the things He gives us even in the midst of those who might harm us.

Then he finishes in Psalm 36:9, "For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light." What metaphors! The fountain of life is ours. That's a promise of God. The fountain of life and the light that He gives us leads us to the light of life and truth.

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I don't think you could improve on these promises in the light of life and especially in the light of the harm that may come our way in life. So, when we have been wronged, we turn to this great God described in so many beautiful ways in Psalm 36. If you haven't meditated on Psalm 36 lately, you might want to do that, because what a blessing this Psalm is. I hope you do that. I think you will get a great blessing if you do so.

These are our promises this week in relation to being wronged. I trust it has helped you and I trust it will give you a wonderful weekend in the Lord as you contemplate these promises.



## The Promises of God

October 31, 2022

Good morning! I'm so grateful that you let us come into your life for just a few moments as we go through our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcasts. We're looking at the promises that God gives us in His Word on various topics and subjects. We are looking at the spiritual life this week and some of the general promises that God gives us in that regard. There's a variety of things that we can look at. Today, we will start with the great commission and the Lord sending us forth to tell others about Him and to disciple people. There's a promise attached that I think we sometimes overlook because we are looking at the commandment and the commissioning that God has given us, but we may skip over the promise that is foundational to the commission. So, let's take a look at this very famous passage of Scripture.

Matthew 28:18, "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'" So, often, when we think about the great commission, we skip over verse 18 as well and we shouldn't do that because as Jesus is ready to send forth His apostles to tell the world about Him, He reminds them that all authority has been given to Him in heaven and on earth. So, He is sending them out with authority. He is not simply giving them a good idea or even signing them up for something. He says that the authority He is going to give them is His and He has been given that authority, all authority over heaven and earth. So, as He lays that down, He then gives them a commission. Matthew 28:19, "Go therefore," in the Greek, that is simply going, as we go. So, He is not necessarily saying that now you have to leave your home and go to a foreign field to minister for the Lord. You might do that, and we see many examples of that in the book of Acts and other places and throughout church history, but that's not primarily the meaning of the verb there *to go therefore*. He is saying that as you go forth, wherever you are going, as you go, therefore, make disciples. That's the controlling verb in this passage. Everything else are participles that kind of define what *make disciples* means. So, we are to make disciples. That is the great commission that I think Christ has given the church. We are to make followers of Jesus Christ. That begins with evangelism, so we often take it that way from this passage. But that is not the end all of end alls in this passage of Scripture. It's not simply just to go out and witness and evangelize and tell people about Christ. That is the beginning. That's where it begins. People have to come to Christ before they can become

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followers of Christ, but for the verb that is *make disciples*, it could mean follower or learner. So, we are developing people who know about Jesus Christ, who want to follow Jesus Christ, and we are helping them do that. That's what the church is about. That's what this commission, I believe, is about. He says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." So, He says to do that of all nations. So, throughout the world we are to make disciples.

Then He says, "...baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." Baptism does not save anyone, but it identifies us with Jesus Christ, so He wants us to identify these people. These are not just random Christians who prayed a prayer and are off doing their thing. They have identified with Jesus Christ. They are letting the world know they are followers of Him and disciples of the Lord Himself. Then, we move on to Matthew 28:20, "...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you," so part of this disciplining process is teaching. If we don't teach people the Word of God and the commandments the Lord has given us, then we cannot make disciples.

So, all that is part of the background that is here, and the commissioning is here, and the command is here, but we haven't gotten to the promise yet. Let's move to the promise. "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." This, again, I think we often just slide through this, but how important this is to understand the promise that Jesus gives us as we go forth to make disciples for Him. His promise is that He is with us, and He will be with us until He comes back and even beyond that, but that isn't part of what He is saying here. When He comes back, we're not going to be making disciples as this passage says. He'll be here on earth and ultimately in the eternal state, but right now, He is with us as He sends us forth to tell people about Christ and disciple them and teach them and baptize them. He is with us. That is a wonderful promise because this is not our own power or our own volition. This is Him who is guiding us and strengthening us. He is with us. So, every step of the way, all that we are doing in the disciple making process is with Him right at our side. He is with us. I think this is a beautiful promise because this is not our work, this is His work. He is sending us forth, but He is with us, and only because He is with us can we truly make disciples of Jesus Christ.

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Beautiful promise concerning our making disciples for the Lord Jesus Christ.

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November 1, 2022

Today in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast we are going to look at another promise the Lord has given us and this one has to do with our standing firm in Him in a wonderful passage in Ephesians 6:10. He is calling for you and me to stand firm in Christ. That's a command, and then he talks about the armor of God here and therefore the provisions He has given us to stand firm but interlaced between the armor that He makes as a way of provision and the command that He gives us to stand firm is also a promise. We want to look at all those things as they interrelate to Ephesians 6.

In Ephesians 6:10 it says, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might." So, we are talking about a command here. This is what He tells us to do. He also tells us in Ephesians 6:11, "Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil." Our only means of standing against all these schemes and attacks by Satan and his minions is to put on the full armor of God. Then we are able to stand firm. Then he says, Ephesians 6:12-13, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God." Because our true enemy is not flesh and blood and not the people or institutions around us, our great enemy is Satan himself, and therefore our only weapons we can use against him are spiritual weapons. So, he says to take up the full armor that God has given us, "so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm." Then he begins to talk about the armor of God. We could look at that. We have looked at it I'm sure in some of our other broadcasts recently, but there is something more that I want to go back to. I want to go back to the promise.

The command is to stand firm. Not only is this a command to stand firm, but there is a promise that we can stand firm when we meet the conditions that the Lord has given us. So, when he says, "Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm." That's a promise from God that you and I, even under the attack of the most powerful and spiritual enemy we can face, that we can stand firm. That's an important promise because we know in this life and this world that we do face a lot of temptations. We face a lot of enemies.

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We face a lot of evil schemes, and we battle our flesh which has that desire as is according to Galatians 5 to draw us away from the things of God. So, being a Christian is not always an easy thing. We have the resources that God gives us, but there is a lot of draw and a lot of enemies that we have to face in our spiritual life. So, we are so glad that the Lord has given us the promise of His armor to stand firm against the forces of evil.

We have this kind of a dual thing. We have a command to put on the armor of God, the command to stand firm, and at the same time it is His armor, and it is His promise that He has made provisions in order that we can stand firm. That's a promise. We think to ourselves that we don't know how we can stand firm and resist all these things. We do know that all of us fail in many ways. We all sin. We have the provisions of God for the forgiveness of sin when we fail, and we confess that sin and repent of that sin and He forgives us, and He never abandons us. These are all other wonderful promises. I think what He is saying here also though is that we are able to stand firm because of the provisions of God. His promises and His provisions enable us to live the life that He wants us to live. Never perfectly. No one wants to say that nor should they. Nor should we get some idealistic idea that there comes a place in our spiritual life when we no longer fail and no longer sin, or maybe are no longer even tempted in some of these things. That is not the biblical picture. According to the Scripture, we will battle with the flesh and the devil and the world until the Lord comes back. So, we have to face that. We have to face the fact that sometimes we don't do what we ought to do, and the Lord provides us the abilities in Him to stand firm against whatever schemes come against us. What a promise. I'm so glad for that. If it was my ability and my means of standing firm, I would fail very badly all the time, but He gives you and me the provisions and the promise that we can stand firm in Him.

Glory in the Lord over that today my friends. I trust it gives you a wonderful day in the Lord.

## The Promises of God

November 2, 2022

Thank you again for joining us for our wonderful day in the Lord broadcast as we are looking at some of the promises this week that the Lord gives us in relation to our spiritual life. Last time we looked at the armor of God that the Lord gives us so we can stand firm. We looked the day before that at what we call the Great Commission, to make disciples, but we are able to do that because He is with us always until the end of the age, so that's a great promise. Today we are going to the point of conversion, or salvation, the point at which we come to Him.

As we do that, we are looking at Matthew 11. When the Lord was on earth, He gave a lot of invitations to those who would listen to His messages and to those who wanted to follow Him. He often called us in very strong and very direct terms to follow Him, take up our cross daily to follow Him. Some of His invitations are very strong and demanding in some sense. Those are needed. Those are things the Lord has called us to be. He doesn't call us to follow Him at a distance. He doesn't call us to follow Him in some form of an anemic way where we are just going through the motions. He doesn't want apathetic followers. He wants people really desiring to be sold out to Him. So, He gives those kinds of commissions regularly and those invitations regularly.

When we come to Matthew 11, we are looking at perhaps the most gentle, sweet invitation that the Lord ever gives that is recorded in the gospels. Here He is talking to a group of Jewish people and in earlier verses He has been speaking very harshly about the Pharisees and their demands that were unbiblical and beyond the Scriptures, the hard burdens they had placed upon those who were listening to them. They were the primary religious teachers of the day, so if you wanted to go to hear how you are to follow God, the Pharisees would be the people you would listen to. Their burdens were overwhelming. The people couldn't keep them up and they lived in guilt and shame and just gave up. Then He talks about some of the cities in Israel who had very clearly rejected the message that Jesus had brought to save them. They didn't want Jesus to save them from sin. They wanted Jesus to be a conquering messiah who would bring them victory over the Romans and set up a kingdom that they could rule from, but they really didn't want a Savior and they weren't listening to Jesus' message. So, Jesus condemns

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some of those cities in very direct terms as He speaks out and says there is condemnation and judgment that will come upon people like that. Then He turns to those who are apparently listening to those very strong messages, and He offers this very sweet and kind and caring invitation that I want to give to you today as well. An invitation and a promise from Matthew 11.

As we are looking at these verses here, He says to His crowd that is listening in Matthew 11:28, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden." This is the invitation. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden." they are weary and heavy-laden by the commands given to them by the Pharisees that were not found in Scripture, not found in the Word of God. It was man made rules, and it was overwhelming. They were weary and heavy-laden because of the guilt of their own sin. The one thing the Pharisees did, though they did it poorly, was to draw attention to the fact that we are sinners and we do need a Savior. So, there was this guilt of sin on top of this legalistic stuff that the Pharisees were giving them.

Now, here comes the promise. "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." What a beautiful promise. "I will give you rest." Matthew 11:29-30, "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." Jesus talks to these people and looks at them and he recognizes the weariness, the guilt of their hearts, the burdens placed upon them by false teachers, and He says to them that He is not like that. Come to Him and He will give them rest. He will give them, and us, rest because He is gentle and humble in heart. He will give rest to the souls of those who are looking for forgiveness. He will give forgiveness. Those who do not know how to lay down their guilt burdens, He will take that burden from you and the guilt away. Those that need rest for their souls He will give them rest. I cannot think of a more wonderful, glorious, and beautiful invitation and promise that the Lord has given us.

If you are one of those and today, you recognize your great load of sin. You recognize your great burden in your soul, and you need relief from that, Jesus says, "Come to Me...and I will give you rest." That's His promise to you and He will give you eternal life as you come to Him. If you have not done that before, I encourage you to do that right now. If you need to talk to someone about that to have a clearer understanding of this invitation,

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please contact us at our church at Southern View Chapel at any time, we would love to talk to you about Jesus' great invitation and great promise.



## The Promises of God

November 3, 2022

I'm glad you are joining us today as we continue to look at promises the Lord gives us in the spiritual realm and life of living as a Christian. I'm looking at Hebrews 12 today at a promise that most of us have probably not ever considered as being a wonderful promise. Maybe one that we have even rebelled against or rejected or might even be repulsive to us. That is the promise of His discipline. As He talks about this in Hebrews starting in 12:5, He knows no one wants to be disciplined, and He is not necessarily—I want to explain this correctly and I've done this before, but—in discipline He is not necessarily talking about what we might think of as corporal punishment although that could be involved, but He is talking about training and putting us in His gymnasium of life. That might involve some very heavy-duty stuff and sometimes some negative stuff if we are rebelling against Him, but the overall picture is the Lord is disciplining us so that we might be what He wants us to be. So, as we look at this, we see once again the simple fact of what He is doing. There are some commands in here as well, but there are some wonderful promises in here that we want to pick up on.

Looking at Hebrews 12:5, "and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, 'My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him.'" This starts off by saying that we seem to have forgotten that if we are the child of God, He will discipline us. Don't take that lightly. Don't look down on that. Don't faint when He reprov'es you for doing something wrong.

Hebrews 12:6-7, "'For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.' It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?" That leads us into the promise. If we are His, then He loves us so much that He will not simply let us get away. He will not simply let us go down a pathway that simply leads us further and further away from Him. He loves us too much for that and He says that God does this because He loves us. This is His promise. He is not going to let us veer away so far that we simply walk away from Him. He is going to bring us back, discipline us, train us, and do what is necessary for us to be living as He wants us to live.

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It says here in Hebrews 12:7, "...for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?" I'm glad He said this in the first century because I think in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there's a lot of fathers and mothers who think it's cruel to discipline their children. They think that if children misbehave then we need to simply understand them and reason with them or whatever. In the first century, people didn't think that way and I don't think we should be thinking that way today. We certainly should understand our children and reason with them and talk through various things with them, but discipline is part of the process of raising children. The loving father and mother, if you go back to the book of Proverbs, discipline their children for their own good. Not because they don't love them or they want to be cruel or mean to them, but because discipline is part of the training of a child to raise them up for the Lord. So, it says that just as a father loves his children and disciplines them, so God loves us and disciplines us.

Going to Hebrews 12:10, "For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them." I think implied here is that father's as they raise children for eighteen years or whatever, we will discipline our children during that time, a short time. Eventually, they will grow up and move away, and we do as seem best to us and that implies that it is not with perfection. As I was raising our boys, there were times that I disciplined them wrongly. Maybe too harshly, maybe too leniently, maybe I didn't have all the facts, but I did the best I could and there were no doubt times that I didn't do it very well. But I did the best I could, and that's what a father does. So, verse 10 tells us, "they disciplined for a short time."

In Hebrews 12:11, he says, "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness." Again, part of the promise is here. Discipline from the hand of God may not seem very joyful. What child enjoys being disciplined by their parents? Yet, those that have been trained by it and have loving parents that have trained their children, and that includes discipline, those children look back and are grateful for the efforts their parents made that trained them to go the right way. The same thing with the Lord. As the Lord trains us, sometimes it's painful, sometimes it's difficult and we're not so excited about it, but as we look back on that and see what He did in order to train us to live in holiness, we are so grateful that the Lord loved us enough to do that. That's His promise here. His promise is that He

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loves us so much that He will do what is necessary to train us for holiness. Sometimes that can be hard. Sometimes it is gentler, but He does what is necessary and He does it unlike a human father or mother who may do so imperfectly, He does it perfectly so that He is disciplining us just the right amount for just the right occasion so that we may grow in holiness.

What a wonderful promise that God gives to those of us who follow Him. I'm grateful for it and I trust you are as well.

## The Promises of God

November 4, 2022

We're looking at promises this week that deal with the spiritual dimensions of our life and living for Christ. We have looked at several different topics under that umbrella. Today we are going to look at Matthew 6:31 dealing with anxiety and worry. All of us are anxious at times and the Lord knew that would be the case. Some are very much controlled by anxiety. Worry controls them to the extent that their whole life is one ball of anxiety. How sad such people are. All of us deal with it to some degree or the other and we have a lot of things to be worried about today. I don't think any of us would question that, because we live in a world with a lot of uncertainty from political, to national, to international, to financial, to health issues, to children issues, to conflicts, to work, there is just always something to be upset and worried about. So, we could easily live our whole lives in constant tension and constant anxiety to the point that life would be pretty miserable for us. Sadly, many, many people live like that and unfortunately some Christians do as well.

Jesus knew this and He was talking to His disciples in Matthew 6 in what we call the Sermon on the Mount. He recognizes a level of anxiety among these men over a lot of very natural things such as eating, drinking, living, and clothing and things that were very much part of their life and culture and He's concerned about that for them. So, He lays down eternal principles for them. These are principles and teachings that they needed and that we need, and we will always need them. Interlaced in those principles are going to be some very important and beautiful promises that sustain us in our time of grief or anxiety or worry. Let me look at these verses with you.

Starting with Matthew 6:31, "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?'" He says these are things that He knows they are anxious about. We live in a somewhat different world today. Most of us don't get too worried about our next meal or our next drink or our next set of clothing. Even the poorest of us in America have those things at our fingertips most of the time, but they lived in a world with very few safety nets. A bad harvest, a drought, oppression by Roman soldiers or whatever could put them in a situation where they really did not have meals and where they could not have clothing and so forth. So, it is very much part of their world. He says for them not to worry

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about those things. He says in Matthew 6:32, "For the Gentiles eagerly seek, all these things;" by Gentiles here He is speaking of unbelievers—those who do not follow Christ. He says, all the world seeks these same things. More than that though he says, "for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things." God is not oblivious to our needs. He is not saying that these things are unimportant. These are the very fundamentals of life, right? The staples of life. We need food. We need drink. We need shelter. We need clothing. These are the essentials of life, and He says that God knows that. He is not uncaring and not oblivious. He knows that. So, He is not dismissing these issues as such.

He says in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." He says that rather than seeking after clothing, food, and so forth and the things that are essential for human life, your priority should be seeking "His kingdom and His righteousness." That is a metaphor to a certain degree, I think, as well as direct teaching about what is important in life. Seek His kingdom. That should be your priority. That should be what is most important in your life. Even more important than food, drink, and clothing. Yes, we have to have those things to sustain human life, but it is possible that the Lord has decided in your life that this is it for you. That human life will no longer be sustained, but that does not mean that He doesn't love us and care for us in His way. It might be your time to go home to be with Him. We all have that time. The Lord doesn't abandon us. He is with us, and He goes on to say this wonderful promise, and when we seek His kingdom and His righteousness and that is the priority of our life, all these things will be added to us. He is promising that He will meet our needs as He sees fit. As I just said, there could come a time when the Lord sees that what we need is to be taken home to be with Him. That this life is no longer and that we will now enter into the next life, but He has not abandoned us. He knows that you need all these things, and all these things will be added to you as He sees fit.

I don't know what the Lord has for me tomorrow and I don't know what He has for you in the future. I don't know His plan on all of that, but I do know that He has called us to seek Him and His kingdom and His righteousness first of all, above all things, even the essentials of life. Then His promise as He says, "and all these things will be added to you." I think that is as He wills. As He chooses, He will add these things to our lives. We don't need to

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worry about these things. He is in charge of that. He knows our needs. He will supply our needs according to His resources and all eternity and according to His great love for us. Our job, our task, is to follow Him and to seek His kingdom. He promises to take care of us as He sees fit and His ways are always the best.

I hope this gives you a wonderful day in the Lord and we will pick this up again next week and look at a few more promises.

## The Promises of God

November 7, 2022

We begin another week of broadcasts for the Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast, and we are looking at promises. We are going to spend another couple of weeks on this and looking at the promises of God in Scripture. We are looking at a kind of general, scattered approach now as we begin to enter our termination of this particular topic and we are going to look at a number of things this week together. We're going to start in Lamentations 3. What is so impressive about this promise is that first, it has been cherished by Christians throughout the ages. It is right in the middle of one of the most depressing of all the books in Scripture. The people of Judah are under attack. They are being brought into exile. Jeremiah is writing about those incidences and most of the book is gloom and doom. Right in the middle, almost at the heart of the book, comes this unbelievable set of promises even in the midst of the terrible circumstances that the people of Israel were under at this time. I'm going to look at these with you and you will be familiar, I'm sure, with these promises.

Lamentations 3:21, "This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope." He has been in this doom and gloom mentality looking down at the circumstances of life and coming to the place of virtual despair, then he recalled something that gave him hope. That is the promises of God found in the next verses. They are kind of overlapping promises. Lamentations 3:22-23, "The Lord's loving kindness indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." He lumps together a number of wonderful promises that are related to the person of God Himself and who He is and what He is. So, we have the promise of His lovingkindness. This word we mention often, the Hebrew word, *hesed*, which simply means that God is faithful, merciful, loving and He reaches out to His people in that way. So, he has the promise of the lovingkindness of God. It never ceases. It's not something that comes and goes according to circumstances or even our behavior, but it is ever true because that is the nature of God. His compassion never fails, so His love never fails for us. His compassion for us never has an ending point or breaking point, it never fails and it says here, "They are new every morning; and great is Your faithfulness." We are familiar with several hymns and choruses concerning the faithfulness of God. Perhaps the best known is taken right from this verse, "Great is Thy Faithfulness." That is a promise of

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God based upon the character of God. All of these promises have to do with who God is. If God was not a lovingkindness kind of God, a compassionate kind of God, a faithful kind of God, then none of these promises would be real, but because that is who He is, we have these promises.

Even more in Lamentations 3:24 it says, "The Lord is my portion," says the soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him." So, we have the promise here that the Lord is our portion. Whenever I think of the word portion, I think of food. I have a portion of this food and a portion of that food and probably a little more meat than salad, knowing me, but I have these portions and we have this picture of the Lord being our portion. He is what we feed on. He is all we need, and as a result of that, he says, "I have hope in Him." So, his hope is based upon the promises of who God is. He is our portion.

Lamentations 3:25 says, "The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him." The Lord is good. So, now again, we have another promise based upon the nature of God because God is good, therefore, He does good for us and it says in the next verse, "It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord." As we wait for Him, it is good to do that because we are waiting for that which is good, which is the very nature of God Himself.

This passage of Scripture has been a set of promises that has uplifted and undergirded the Christian ever since they were written back in the Old Testament era. They strengthen us today. They strengthen the Old Testament believers. They strengthen the New Testament believers. Until the Lord returns, I believe we will be feeding on this passage of Scripture and the promises given there by God.

I hope this gives you a delightful, wonderful day in the Lord.



## The Promises of God

November 8, 2022

We are looking today at some of the promises of God, and we are going to look at one that is very different from what we looked at yesterday. Yesterday we looked at the book of Lamentations and the issue of God's faithfulness, character, goodness, His kindness, lovingkindness, compassion and all those things and those give us promises because God is that way, therefore we can enjoy Him living with us and benefiting us and blessing us according to His nature.

Today we are looking at 1 Thessalonians 4 at the promise of His return. The Scriptures speak, in the New Testament, on numerous occasions of the return of Christ. It's one of the great hopes that we have. We are even told in one place that it is the "blessed hope." The most blessed of all hopes is the return of Jesus Christ. Christians from different theological traditions have had some differences of opinion about some of the timing concerning the return of Christ. All Christians believe He is coming back, however, because that promise is clear. There is no place clearer than in 1 Thessalonians 4. I want to look at some of this promise with you and all the issues wrapped around it.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 says, "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope." So, there's some information we need here that will give us hope and will remove the grief that apparently some of these believers were undergoing because of misinformation. 1 Thessalonians 4:14-16 continues, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first." Let's stop there for just a moment as we have so much information here. We find this is Christ coming for us, His church, to rapture the church out of this world. The word rapture is the word *caught up* here and it comes from the Latin term for rapture. That's why we use that term often about the rapture. The Lord comes, apparently, not to earth at this point. He comes to our atmosphere, and He calls to Himself all the saints who have died. All

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the Christians who have died since the time of the formation of the church and He calls them from the grave. They have a bodily resurrection from the grave, and He takes them to be with Himself. That's His promise. He is not going to leave us in the grave.

When we receive Christ as Savior, He gives us eternal life. When we physically die, our soul goes to be with Him and we are with Him in our soul, but our body will also be resurrected at this point in time when the Lord returns. When He returns, He promises to take those believers who have received Him, from the ground and give them new and resurrected bodies and take them to be with Himself. More than that, 1 Thessalonians 4:17 says, "Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up," there's our word *rapture*, "caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord." So, not only do the saints who have already passed away get resurrected and are given new, glorified, and resurrected bodies, and not only are they taken up to be with Christ at this moment, but so are those who are still alive when He comes. We too will be changed. We too will be given glorified and resurrected bodies and taken to be with Him in the clouds at the same time. We will meet the Lord in the air, it says, "and so we shall always be with the Lord." It doesn't say, at this point, that He comes back to the earth. It says we will meet Him in the air and when we meet Him in the air, then we go to be with Him, and we will always be with Him. So, this is the return of Christ. No wonder he says, "Therefore comfort one another with these words." How comforting it is to know that we have an eternal destiny with the Lord. He is coming back for us. He is going to change our bodies. He is going to take us to be with Him forever, and this is His promise. The saints of God have looked forward to this day forever and until He comes back, we will still look forward to it, but one day our faith will be turned into sight, and we will see Him for who He is and we will know Him in a way that we don't even know Him today, and we will be with Him forever.

This is a wonderful promise. One of the great promises of all of Scripture. I trust it gives you a wonderful day in the Lord.

## The Promises of God

November 9, 2022

One of the great blessings we have as Christians and one of the great promises that the Lord fulfills when we come to Christ is the forgiveness of our sins. Many people don't realize the great value of forgiveness of sin. I think the average person thinks they're doing okay, but better than most around them, and if they do mess up, it's not a big deal and that sin is not that big of a deal. Sometimes, they get caught up in their sins and pay huge consequences. At that point, I guess, they take a stronger look at their sins and maybe even ask for someone's forgiveness or feel guilty for a while or whatever. It's because we don't recognize the magnitude of sin that often we are very confused about the nature of forgiveness. Scripture makes it very clear that we are guilty and we all "fall short of the glory of God." Our great issue is that we are separated from God. We need to be reconciled to God and we can only be reconciled to God if our sins have been forgiven and they can only be truly forgiven because of the Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for us on the cross.

One of the great promises is our forgiveness when we come to Him. We are going to look at that great promise today and tomorrow. We are going to look today at positional forgiveness. That is the forgiveness that we have at the moment of conversion and how that should relate to our lives. It's a promise from God that if we come to Him for forgiveness that He will give it to us. I'm going to first look at Ephesians 1:7, it says, "In Him we have redemption." Redemption is the idea of redeeming. It's that we have been in bondage to sin and we have been brought out of that. We have been redeemed from that. Redemption involves the payment of a price, so something or someone had to redeem us from sin and of course, that someone was Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross. So, it's in Him that we have redemption through His blood. That's a promise in itself, but he goes on to explain that redemption as, "the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." We have this forgiveness at the moment of conversion that is ours. When we are redeemed, we are bought out of the slave market of sin by the blood of Christ and that involves forgiveness. All of our sins in the past have been forgiven. They have been expunged and removed. All of our sins in the future. The ones we will commit from this moment on have also been dealt with by the blood of Christ. We will look tomorrow at how we are to deal with those present sins or the

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future sins, but right now we have this promise of God that our sins are forgiven, past, present, and future. We no longer have to worry or be concerned about whether or not our sins have been forgiven. We are no longer guilty before God because of what Christ has done.

Moving to Ephesians 4:32, we have a little more about this as well. He is talking about laying aside some of the sinful behavior that is ours in this passage. He is talking about replacing that sinful lifestyle and those sinful patterns with more positive things in our lives. One of the things he talks about here in Ephesians 4:31 he says, "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice." These are basically anger issues and he is talking about putting away all those types of anger and sinful issues and replacing them with something else. Look at Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." So, there is this command to us to lay aside these sinful behaviors, in this particular verse having to do with anger, and replacing them with three wonderful virtues: being kind to one another—an outward act of kindness, tenderhearted—that's more of an inward disposition of having compassion toward one another even when one is not doing right, and graciously forgiving each other—so there are many occasions when we have the opportunity, privilege, and necessity to forgive other people who have wronged us. So, he says graciously forgiving each other. Those are all things we are to do.

Now he moves to the end of the verse, and we see the promise once again, "just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." So, we have been forgiven. It's on the basis of our forgiveness that Jesus Christ has given us that we are called to forgive other people. So, it is because of what Christ has done for us that we in turn can forgive others.

The promise of the Lord is this. When we come to Him with our sinfulness in hand and we lay it before Him and we seek His forgiveness through faith in repentance, He forgives us and never holds those sins against us ever again. Our sins are gone forever and ever. That's a wonderful promise from the Lord.

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November 10, 2022

Yesterday we looked at a promise from God concerning our forgiveness at the moment of conversion. At the very moment of conversion, the moment we are saved, the Lord forgives us of our sins, past, present, and future. Those sins will never be held against us ever again. We will never stand before the Lord in judgment someday and those sins come up to haunt us. We are told in Romans 8:1, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Our sins will never be brought up again and this is a promise of God. It's a great promise because we know that our past sins that we sometimes cannot forget very well, we just keep dealing with them sometimes, but God doesn't deal with them, He has forgiven them. They're gone. So, we can let them go as well. Our present sins, the sins we will commit today perhaps, those too have been dealt with by the blood of Christ. Our sins in the future that we don't even know are coming up yet, He has already been there for us and already forgiven those. Those will never be held against us. That is the wonderful promise of the forgiveness of God.

What we will look at today is the practical aspect of forgiveness in our everyday life. What about those sins that we commit today and next week and next year that have been forgiven eternally by the Lord and will never be brought up against us ever again? What about those sins in our everyday life? How should we deal with them and what promises are we given by the Lord about those sins? That's what I want to talk about for just a moment with you.

Looking at 1 John 1:8 for Him to let us know that we do sin. It says, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us." In 1 John 1:10 it says, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us." So, I think it's being made very clear that even though we are Christians who have been forgiven by the Lord Jesus for our sins, that He has covered those sins and we will never be held accountable for those sins in the future and never condemned for those sins, nevertheless, we do sin still. He wants to make it very clear that if we don't think we sin and we delude ourselves, we make Him out to be a liar. I've known a few people who seem to think that they no longer sin and that theologically they have moved beyond that and practically they have moved beyond that. I think when people talk like that, they have to re-define sin for

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what they think it is. So, they have come up with this narrow understanding of sin and maybe it's the Ten Commandments or something like that and they don't do those things outwardly so they no longer sin, but when we look at the sins of the heart and go inside of us and look at those sins of our minds, eyes, and hearts, we really have no case. We are sinners. We do sin and if we don't think we do, we delude ourselves.

But, what are we to do when we sin? That's where 1 John 1:9 comes in. This is the everyday practical dealing with our sins. It says, "If we confess our sins," there's the condition. The word *confess* means *to say the same things about*. A lot of the time, we will acknowledge we have sinned and that it's not a good thing to do and minimize it and move on, but if we say the same things about sin that God says, we realize that it was sin that took Jesus Christ to the cross. Why did He die for us? Because of the magnitude and the ugliness and the awfulness of sin. So, if we recognize sin for what it is and confess it for what it is and come before the Lord and admit that and confess that saying it was wrong. It wasn't a mistake, it was rebelliousness, defiance, and sin. If we do that, then it says we have a promise from God. "He is faithful and righteous," as He always is to do what? "To forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Now he is not talking about the eternal nature of the forgiveness of sin which has already been dealt with at the moment of conversion. He is talking about the everyday cleaning us up so that we are living in holiness and righteousness of life. He is forgiving those sins on the spot when we confess them, so they are no longer those that hang over us and no longer things we have to deal with. We have been cleansed of those things and we walk now in holiness because of the promise of God.

What a promise! Eternally forgiven at the moment of conversion. Daily forgiven at the moment of confession. Beautiful promises concerning forgiveness.

## The Promises of God

November 11, 2022

Again, thank you for joining us in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. We are going to close out this week looking at some of the promises God gives us in Scripture by turning to the very end of the Bible to Revelation 21. In Revelation 21 and 22 we have the clearest picture, and most of the information, concerning our eternal state. That is, as believers, what will our life be like in eternity? How will we live? Where will we live, and so forth? So, we have a lot of wonderful promises concerning what it will be like and what our life will be like with Him in eternity.

So, we are looking at Revelation 21:1-2, it says, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." First, we have a promise of a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem. A holy city that we will occupy in eternity. We have a promise of a new home. We live, now, on the present earth which has been corrupted by sin. In heaven, there has even been—not the corruption, but the tainting of sin—in the sense that it was there that Satan rebelled against the Lord and Satan still has access to the Lord in heaven. But there is going to be a new heaven and new earth in which sin has never been, and none of the tainting or touch or corruption of sin has ever been. A new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem, which he goes on to talk about later and appears to be where we have our localized home in heaven. So, it has come to the earth, and we live on this new earth in the New Jerusalem. That will be our home. That's a promise.

In Revelation 21:3 it says, "And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them.'" The promise is that God will dwell on earth with us throughout the eternal state. What else do we know? Look at Revelation 21:4, "and he will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." The things that brought us sadness and grief in the past are gone. Those are no longer part of our life. That's the promise of God. So, you can sit down and think about all the things that trouble you and cause you grief

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and sadness, and they are gone! The promise of God is the new heaven, the new earth, the New Jerusalem, our new abode with Him and those sinful, ugly things that have caused us grief are gone forever.

Revelation 21:5 says, "And He who sits on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' And He said, 'Write for these words are faithful and true.'" The one who sits on the throne gives us these wonderful promises. All things are new. Things in the eternal state, I think, will have some similarities between this earth and the new earth and the heavens now and the new heavens. We will have bodies in eternity. We are told that. We saw that promise earlier, but our life there will be very different. All things will be new. They will be fresh. They will be clean and it's the one who sits on the throne that makes that great promise to us.

I love Revelation 21:6, "Then He said to me, 'It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.'" This is the great invitation of God that all who come to Him for the eternal water of life that cleanses us of sin will be given that water of life without cost. That is, that salvation is free. Eternal life is free. Our eternal abode with Him comes on the basis of His promise to give us that life.

What a beautiful promise that we have to look forward to if we know Christ. I trust this gives you a wonderful day and a wonderful weekend in the Lord.



## The Promises of God

November 14, 2022

We welcome you one again to our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. This week we are going to finalize our studies on the promises of God. We have been looking at the promises of God by category for the last several weeks, and we just scratched the surface as the Scriptures are full of God's promises, but I thought we would close by looking at Psalm 23 this week. We are going to look at the promises found in this Psalm, perhaps the most beloved Psalm of all, and perhaps the most beloved passage in all Scripture in some ways. If you have your Bibles, Psalm 23 will be our test for this week looking at the promises of God.

What I really like, and what most people like without really even thinking about it, about the Psalms and the wisdom literature of the Old Testament, as well as many other places throughout the Bible, is that rather than simply saying something in a very propositional way, we are given poems, word pictures, metaphors, parables, and different things like that that enhance the understanding of what God is saying. It takes us not only from the world of our intellect and knowledge, but also to our world of feeling and emotion. Think about that for a moment. The Lord could have said all He wanted to say in Psalm 23 in very straightforward sentences of prose, and we would get the message, but we wouldn't get the message in the same way that we are getting it from this type of literature. This word picture of the Shepherd and the sheep found in Psalm 23. It resonates with our hearts, minds, and souls. It speaks to us emotionally as well as intellectually and that is why we have gravitated toward this Psalm for all these years and why we love it so.

We are going to start with the first promise with Psalm 23. Right off the bat, Psalm 23:1 says, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." "The Lord," or *Yahweh*, "is my Shepherd, I shall not want." In Psalm 23 the Lord is taking us into a world that is very unknowable by most of us. Very few of us know anything about sheep or shepherding or any of those kinds of things. In ancient days, they did know these things because that was their world. Very few of us enter into that world, so we know very little. We have to unravel this a bit. We see a picture here of a shepherd and sheep. The sheep are very dependent upon the shepherd. We know that much. If you're a Christian who has been around the biblical literature, you might know more about shepherding and sheep than most people, but we do know that the

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sheep are dependent upon a shepherd. They are very incapable of taking care of themselves or defending themselves. They don't run very fast. They don't bite. They are relatively stupid. They will eat the wrong things. They will drink the wrong things. They are constantly battling parasites and so forth. Without someone leading them and taking care of them, they are in trouble, and they cannot survive on their own. Therefore, when we see this passage of Scripture, with the implication that we are the sheep here and we are these defenseless, needy, individuals who at times might think that we are very independent and self-sufficient—but we know better when the rubber meets the road, we realize that we, as God's people, have a Shepherd that is going to protect us and guide us and feed us and walk with us through every walk of life, this passage immediately begins to take on special meaning to us. We are transported from the world that we live in right now to a world in the countryside of ancient Israel where the sheep are there and the shepherds are there. It's a very different world. Our imagination grasps that. Our emotions begin to resonate with that, and we begin to look at what the Shepherd means to us as well as to understand something of what He does for us. We find here the very first is this: The Lord is our Shepherd. That's paramount to everything else he is going to say in the Psalm. We need a Shepherd, and we are promised a Shepherd. This is something the Psalmist is banking on and believing on and trusting in. He has the promise of God that He cares for us and loves us so much that He will Shepherd us, His sheep. That's our first promise.

Then he says, because the Lord is his Shepherd, "I shall not want." That means that he is in need of nothing. He doesn't need anything because the Shepherd takes care of all those needs. So, because of the promise that the Lord is our Shepherd, we also know that our needs are being met by Him. So, things we really need, the Lord is taking care of.

That's our first promise from Psalm 23. We will look at some more throughout the week. I hope you can join us.

## The Promises of God

November 15, 2022

We are looking at the promises found in Psalm 23 together. This is our last week on the promises found in Scripture and I thought Psalm 23 would be a good place for us to conclude our discussion. This Psalm everybody loves, not only because of the things it says here and the promises we are looking at together, but also because of the word picture we're given. We are transported from our life here on this earth now and whatever circumstances we are living, and we are transported in our minds and thoughts and emotions to a different world. In that world, we find that we are pictured as sheep and pictured as a sheep who needs a shepherd. In Psalm, the first promise goes back to verse 1 and that the Lord is our Shepherd and therefore He takes care of the needs that we have.

The second promise we will look at is in Psalm 23:2. It says, "He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters." There are two different things here, but they kind of overlap. We have the promise of God that He will, "make me like down in green pastures," so once again, let your mind flow to that idea with this wording. One thing we know about sheep, from what I have read, is that you have a very difficult time forcing sheep off its feet to push it down onto the ground and have it sit. But if you feed the sheep, if he becomes content because his belly is full and its content, they will lie down on their own. We have a picture here that He makes me lie down in green pastures. How is it that the Lord has us lie down in these green pastures? Well, by bringing us to the place of contentment and joy there. He does that by fulfilling the needs that we have. That's what he said in Psalm 23:1, "I shall not want." I have need of nothing. In other words, the Lord is going to take care of the needs that we have in this life and that's His promise. So, His promise goes over to Psalm 23:2, "He makes me lie down." Notice that word *makes*. He sometimes has to use some force to get us there, but to lie down in the green pastures. He does that primarily by bringing us to the place of contentment.

Then he says, "He leads me beside quiet waters." My understanding is that sheep are afraid of running water. They get into a stream that is running fast and their wool gets saturated, and they can't get out and they drown. So, sheep are very cautious around water that is moving very quickly. So, a shepherd, if he is going to take care of his sheep, has to take them to a place

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where there is water that is not running quickly. If he can't find that readily, then he will dam up a certain section of the stream with rocks or whatever and provide a quiet place for the sheep to step into the water or step inside the water and get a drink. So, the Lord gives this promise here as well. It's His promise that He leads us. A promise of leading us to a place of quiet waters. A place where we can find refreshment for our hearts, souls, and minds. A place where we can rest in Him and He promises to lead us there by these quiet waters. He is doing the leading. He is making the provisions. These are the promises that He gives us so that we can be content in Him and refreshed in Him.

As we look at this picture, it's again, a very beautiful picture. It touches our hearts as well as our minds to think about what the Lord has promised us and what He is giving us. I think one of the things that this particular verse has done for us in modern times is that as we read it, I think it's almost idyllic, we think of a place of rest, quiet, and refreshment. In our world, we are so busy, stressed at times with all the distractions and obligations and things we must and have to do and sometimes we are so busy we just don't have the time to just sit down and rest. So, this verse kind of says that to us. It's a promise that we can find a place of quiet rest. A place away from the crowds and distractions and struggles and anxieties of life. That is found in Him. In the Lord. That's His promise to us. We can go quietly with Him, and He will make provisions in such a way that you and I can rest and find rest for the soul and mind and find that rest in Him because of who He is and what He has promised for you and me.

So, this promise comes right off of verse 1 where it says, "I shall not want," and the reason we do not want is because of His provisions that He has promised us in verse 2. We will look at Psalm 23:3-4 tomorrow.

## The Promises of God

November 16, 2022

We are exploring some of the promises that God gives us in Psalm 23. Psalm 23 is this beautiful picture of a shepherd and the sheep and we have come to the third set of promises found in this book.

We are going to look at Psalm 23:3-4. "He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." This is a promise from God that He will restore our soul. To restore something presupposes that it needs restoration. That it is broken down, tattered, or whatever and needs to be restored. I think of old furniture that someone restores so it can be used as it was once used. Maybe a car. Maybe you are into auto repair or restoration of an old vehicle and you take that old vehicle that has been sitting in someone's barnyard for twenty years and you restore it. So, it's restored to the place of beauty and usefulness like it was at a time in the past. Here he speaks of the soul. This would be speaking of our inner nature. Not our physical nature and our bodies, although He does restore that at times as well in giving us good health, but he is speaking of the inner person. My soul is often restless. Sometimes it's tattered. Sometimes it's beaten up and I need restoration and you do too. So it says here, "He restores my soul." He comes and restores me to a place of usefulness and a place where I should be or perhaps once was. "He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." So, He not only promises to restore our souls, but He guides us and promises to guide us. The path that He is guiding us on is a path of righteousness which would imply that we are living as God wants us to live. It's the right path. It's the path that He says here, "for His name's sake." It honors Him. It's not just a correct pathway, it's the right pathway, it's the righteous pathway that always leads to the glory of God, so that's where He's guiding us. That's His promise. When we follow Him, we follow our Shepherd through the instruction and teaching of His Word, then we are being led in the right path. A pathway of righteousness that leads to the glory of God Himself, which is how we as Christians would want to live. This is happening because He restores our souls and because He guides us in this path of righteousness.

Psalm 23:4 talks about a very difficult pathway that He guides us through. It says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."

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There's a couple of different promises here, but we have the fact that the time comes when we go through dark valleys. It speaks of the valley of the shadow of death here, but it doesn't speak of death per se. It doesn't say when you come to the point of death that He will walk us through that valley, although that could very well fit in the form of application, but I think it's broader than that. I think he is talking about the fact that when we go through the darkest times of our lives, the difficult times, He is with us. He is there to walk us through those times and guide us through those times and so when we are at our lowest ebb, we are at our lowest point in life, we have the promise that we walk with Him through that valley. Because of that, "I fear no evil," here's the promise, "for You are with me." What a beautiful promise. When things are going well and we don't seem to have a need for help from anybody, we get pretty self-sufficient and we think we have it all put together, but when we hit one of those dark spots, when sorrow hits us, grief, heartache, struggles of various kinds, temptations, death. When those kinds of things approach us and hit us, we now realize our need and often, we are anxious, and we are fearful. He says here though, "I fear no evil." Not because the evil isn't present, but because the Lord has promised to be with us at that time. At that point in time, the Lord is with us in a very special and unique way. "I will fear no evil, for You are with me." Some have pointed out that he changes pronouns. In Psalm 23:1-3 it's kind of more impersonal. He talks about what God does. He says, *He* does this, and *He* does that. In Psalm 23:4 and we are in the valley of the shadow of death, the pronoun changes to second person personal, *You* are with me. *You* are with me now at this time. "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." If I have a need to be corrected, *You* will do it for me. If I have a need to be protected, *You* will do that as well. So, because He is with us in the darkest hours and most difficult times, because that is true and that promise is true, therefore we know that He is going to be walking through it with us through the valley of the shadow of death whatever that might look like in your life and mine.

What a joy. What a blessing. What a promise.

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If you have been with us so far this week, you know that we have been looking at some of the promises that God gives us in the beloved Psalm 23. We have looked at three so far and we are looking at the fourth one today found in Psalm 23:5 where we see a couple overlapping promises here.

“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows.” Let’s take a look at some of these promises in this verse. “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.” We’re looking at this metaphor, this picture of a shepherd and the sheep. He stays with that through Psalm 23:5. He actually changes his metaphor in Psalm 23:6, but he stays through it through Psalm 23:5. So, if we stay with that understanding and keep our picture that we are with the Lord in this imaginary picture of being with the shepherd on the hillsides going by the still waters and we are the sheep and he is with us, if we keep that picture and we come to Psalm 23:5 and he says that, “You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies.” He’s now talking about feeding and bringing sustenance to the sheep in the presence of their enemies. That was a very real deal back in ancient times because predators were everywhere the sheep were living. We’re talking about a wilderness here; this is not a zoo. The predators are not caged. They are out there. The wolves and other animals that wanted to get to the sheep at any opportunity they had they would take. So, sheep are not going to eat contentedly if they know they could be eaten themselves in a moment of time. So, the only way for them to be content and feeding is to know they are protected. The shepherd then prepares a table for them in the presence of the enemy. Often, the shepherd would have to go out to different fields and find weeds that are detrimental to the sheep and remove them. Sheep have no discernment. They will eat almost anything, so there is much vegetation that could make the animal sick or even kill it. The shepherd needs to know what those are, and he would go ahead of the sheep and prepare the field making sure it was free of those things that would harm his sheep. He might spend a great deal of time plucking out weeds and whatever may be harmful. When he was done, the table for the sheep was prepared. Their place of feeding was prepared, and they could come now and eat in that field, but they also had to be protected, so he threw in here, “in the presence of my enemies.” The Lord has prepared a table for us, He didn’t remove all the enemies. The

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enemy is still there. The enemy for us as Christians today is still there. The enemy of the devil and his minions who want to destroy us, the enemy of the world that is opposed to the things of God, and our own personal flesh that wars against the spirit. Yet we find He is preparing that table for us so we can gain sustenance from Him even when surrounded by all these other enemies that we face.

Then he goes on to say, "You have anointed my head with oil." The anointing here could have two different ideas. The prophets would often anoint a king, for example, like Saul or David, to the position of being a king. That was part of the process and that's how they were brought into their position, by anointing. So it could be speaking of that kind of thing, but if we stay with the shepherd and sheep metaphor, it's most likely he is talking about the fact that sheep are animals that battle a lot with parasites, flies, and different things. The only way to protect them from some of these parasites is to anoint their head with a particular oil that would keep those insects and parasites from harming them. So, I think that's what he is saying here. We have no power over many of the things that want to challenge us, and the many things that want to destroy us. So, the Lord is anointing our head with oil, this is a word picture of course, that would protect us from the irritations and the spiritual insects that would come against us to harm us. He ends Psalm 23:5 saying, "My cup overflows." Not only does He have this anointing that takes care of these things, but He has more than enough for what he needs to be protected from the things that would sidetrack him or maybe even destroy him. So we have this picture of how He has prepared for us this table that we can rest securely as we feed in Him and the anointing that He gives us to guard us against the irritations and struggles and frustrations and the enemies of life. So, these are the promises that the Lord gives us in Psalm 23:5.

We will finish up Psalm 23 tomorrow and look at verse 6 together. I hope you can join us.



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Thank you again for joining us in our Wonderful Day in the Lord broadcast. For several weeks we have been looking at the promises of God throughout Scripture and these various categories. We have come now to finish our discussions on promises by concluding Psalm 23 today. We have looked at four different sets of promises found in this beloved Psalm, and we come now to the final verse today and look at another set of promises in that verse.

Psalm 23:6 says, "Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." When we come to this verse, it should be noted that for the first five verses he has been talking about a shepherd and the sheep. We are the sheep, and the Lord is our Shepherd. He has been talking about all the promises and blessings that are ours as a result of us being the sheep of this beautiful, wonderful, glorious shepherd of ours. When it comes to verse 6 though, you will note that he changes his word picture. He changes his metaphors. We have gone now from a pasture as a sheep into the house of the Lord. So, it is a very different picture. Why the Lord decided to do that, I don't know, but it doesn't lose any of its meaning, it just changes the picture a little bit and perhaps it gives us some new thoughts. Let's look at what he's talking about as we go into the house of the Lord.

He looks at his life and he looks at what the Lord has done and is doing for him as his Shepherd, and he says, "Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life." Think of the promises there. He is content and he is convinced that God's goodness and His lovingkindness will pursue Him all the days of his life. So, he looks now at the character of God. God is good all the time. God is good when times are hard. God is good when times are easy. God is good through every walk of our life. So, he is banking on the goodness of God. He is also looking at the lovingkindness of God. Again, we have talked about the Hebrew word, *hesed*, many, many times throughout the course of our time together on these broadcasts. It's the word that combines love and mercy and faithfulness all in one special Hebrew word. So, he says again, going back to the character of God, God is loving. God is merciful and with us at the time of our greatest need. God is faithful, never abandoning or walking away from us. He is looking at the

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character of God once again and he says that because God is good and God is full of lovingkindness, these things will pursue me all the days of my life. So, there's our promise. These characteristics of God, God cannot deny Himself. He cannot be other than what He is. So, he is absolutely convinced that God's goodness and lovingkindness will follow and be with him throughout all the days of his life. For as long as he is on this earth and as long as he is living now in this field with this Shepherd, he knows that these things will be with him and will follow him. These are promises based on the character of God.

He's not quite done. He says, "And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Now we are looking, I think, beyond this present life where goodness and lovingkindness follow us, to the eternal life. He's looking at the time here when we go into the house of the Lord and we are with Him forever. Of course, he is looking at the thought of the Tabernacle here. When David wrote this the temple wasn't built until some years later after his death, but the Tabernacle was the special dwelling place of God in the Old Testament. It was the place of His special glory for the people. Therefore, He looks at the place of the dwelling of God. I think he moves beyond that. I think he starts with that, but he is moving forward to the eternal tabernacle of God. We find at the very end of the Bible that the Lord *tabernacles* among His people. There's no need for a temple in the eternal kingdom because He tabernacles among us. He is our temple. I think that is what he is pointing to here. So, we will dwell in that tabernacle, in that house of God, with Him forever. He is talking now about the promise of eternal life. Not only is the Lord with us day by day, moment by moment and fulfilling all the promises we have looked at in Psalm 23, but we have eternal life to look forward to and He will be with us forever and ever. Never to abandon us, never to kick us out of heaven, never to say "enough of this," always with us forever. So, what begins here with the shepherd and the sheep ends in the eternal home with the Lord forever.

What a way to end our study of promises together. I hope this has been a blessing to you and I hope it has given you a wonderful day and set of weeks and months in the Lord as you have studied these things with us together. We will be looking at some new things next time. I hope you can join us.