

"Jesus and His Promises"

If I could stand on the highest hill and speak with the loudest voice, I would say, "God keeps His promises!" Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're considering Jesus and His promises.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. A promise is only as good as the one who makes it and his ability to keep it.

We love it when someone keeps a promise; but we're unhappy when someone breaks a promise. You've probably suffered the heartache of a broken promise, or you may have made a promise to someone and found that you couldn't keep your word. Those things disappoint all of us. People may be well intentioned, but we're all weak and forgetful. God, however, isn't weak or forgetful; He keeps His promises. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

God is faithful, loyal, and trustworthy. You can count on Him. Moses explained in Numbers 23:19 that, "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" Moses went through lots of struggles in His life, but He never gave up on God to keep His promises.

In the New Testament we have the apostle Paul who faced afflictions, struggles, conflicts, and death; but he said about God in 1 Thessalonians 5 and verse 24 that, "He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it." He didn't doubt but said in 2 Corinthians 1:18 to 20, "But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no. For the Son of God, Christ Jesus, who was preached among you by us-- by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but is yes in Him. For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us."

If you want to know more about God's promises, we offer this study free. You can have a printed copy of our study. And if you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at www.searchtv.org.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Acts 2:36 to 41, and explore God's promises.

Our reading today comes from the book of Acts chapter 2 verses 36 to 39 and this is part of the sermon that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. And it talks about the promise of forgiveness. Verse 36:

Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

Oh I'm thankful that today that we have the promise of being able to be forgiven even this day and time because the promise was universal. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You love us that You watch over us, that You can forgive us. Help us Father to love You, to be obedient to Your will and to always turn away from sin. In Jesus name, Amen.

Joshua is one of my favorite characters in the Bible. The Scripture always speaks well of him, and he was a courageous and faithful leader in Israel. Joshua lived through the ten plagues, crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, led Israel into battle, ascended Mount Sinai with Moses, spied out the promised land and gave a good report with Caleb, stood beside Moses in all the wanderings, and led the people into the promised land. He crossed the Jordan River on dry ground too. He fought until Israel had conquered all the land promised to Abraham.

When he was an old man, he called all Israel together. He said in Joshua 23:14, “Now behold, today I am going the way of all the earth, and you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the LORD your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.” Now here is a man who saw God in action for many decades of his life, even when things seemed nearly impossible! Yet he never wavered in his faith that God would keep every promise!

We can trust God to keep His promises too. And we can do that for many reasons. First, God is all powerful; and nothing is impossible for Him. God can easily do things that you and I cannot do. Job said in Job 42:2, “I know that you [speaking of God] can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” Jeremiah 32:17 says, ““Ah, Lord GOD! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.” I am reminded of Ephesians 3:20 to 21, “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Yes, God can and will keep His promises.

Second, God loves us and provides for His people. We only need to look at the cross to know how much the Lord loves us. 1 John 4 and verse 10 says, “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation (that is the atoning sacrifice) for our sins.” God sacrificed His Son—this is no small or easy gift. Paul explained in Romans 8 verse 32 that, “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?” God is not stingy with His love and care for us!

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

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

When the guilty people at Pentecost asked what they needed to do, Peter said to them in Acts 2:38, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” Again Ananias told Saul of Tarsus in Acts 22:16, “And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling

on his name.” The atoning blood of Jesus Christ will wash away our sins when we repent and are baptized. God promised it and God will do it! When we meet God’s conditions, God keeps His promises.

The Christians sometimes finds themselves still committing sins and needing forgiveness. 1 John 1:7 says to the Christian, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” Now, cleansing come to Christians who walk in the light. John continues in 1 John 1 and verse 9 that, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Now we have to be honest with God about our sins and we need to confess them. God responds by cleansing us from all, all unrighteousness—every sin. Jesus also stands by us as Christians with the Father. Christ doesn’t want us to sin, but He knows our weaknesses. John wrote 1 John 2:1 to 2, “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.” Oh, I’m thankful the Lord Jesus “always lives to make intercession” for me.

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

Third, God promises to listen to our prayers. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:7 to 11, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!” God knows what we need even before we ask. He will indeed answer our prayers!

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

Third, God’s love will never leave us. Romans 8:35 to 39 says, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am

sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." No matter what has happened to you, there's never been one moment when the Lord God didn't love you. We can say with Peter, cast "all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5 verse 7).

Fourth, Jesus will not give us more than we can bear. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 11:28 to 30, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." The Lord gives us a livable faith and a bearable burden! Christianity is not an impossible religion. You can live the Christian life and you can go and be with God in heaven one day! Some people imagine God has no interest in saving them, but that's not true. God wants all men, every person, to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2 verses 3 to 4). God takes no delight in people losing their souls. No not at all.

Fifth, Jesus has prepared a place for you. Jesus knew that when He died, He would go to the Father who sent Him (that's from John 7:33; and chapter 16 verse 10). And He promised in John 14:1 to 3, "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." Oh, we have the hope of eternal life and of living with God in heaven forever.

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

Let's pray together. Father we are thankful that You give us Your promises and that You keep them. And Father we have hope that one day we can come and live with You forever and ever. And we're thankful that Jesus made that possible. It's in His name we pray, Amen.

God makes sure and firm promises to those who are called and love Him! We shouldn't imagine that God forgets or ignores His promises to His children. Paul, who went through many trials and struggles said in 2 Corinthians 1:19 to 20, "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory." Paul had confidence in Christ, and so can you!

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

God will forgive and redeem you only after you first place your faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God; second, you must repent of your sins and follow the Lord; third, confess your faith, let everyone

know; and fourth, be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Now being baptized into Christ takes place when we're immersed in water. And being baptized into Christ, we're also baptized into His death, and His blood washes us clean from sin and gives us newness of life.

We hope our study about Jesus and His promises has encouraged you. If you live in the United States and you want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: www.searchtv.org. And you can also watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Go to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches in your area on our website at searchtv.org. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not here to get your money. We're here to help you get to heaven.

Please get involved with a church of Christ. If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical home, we'll be happy to help you find one. As always we want to say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.