

EIGHTH ANNUAL
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"
LECTURESHIP, 2000

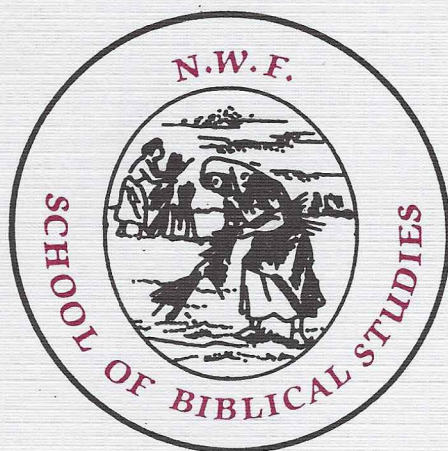
THE PROMISES OF GOD

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THE HARVEST

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

(Luke 10:2)



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**EIGHTH ANNUAL
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"
LECTURESHIP**

September 17-21, 2000

THEME:
THE PROMISES OF GOD

Editor:
Kenneth Burleson

This book is FREE
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FORWARD

This book contains 28 lesson outlines of the seventh annual "Labourers Together With God" lectureship which was held at the Ensley church of Christ, home of Northwest Florida School Of Biblical Studies in Pensacola, Florida.

In view of the immorality, heartache, pain, and suffering in the world today, the elders and I thought it was needful to provide some lessons of encouragement in a time when there is so much discouragement.

The theme of the lectureship "The Promises Of God," provides hope for mankind. The promises of God are sure.

Each writer did an excellent job in the preparation of his lesson.

It is our desire for these lessons to serve the purpose for which they are intended. Members of the Lord's church need to be encouraged in their Christian life. We pray that those who may become discouraged will take the time to read and study these lessons. We believe the lessons will help those who will make use of them.

You may purchase audio and/or video tapes.

*Kenneth Burleson
September, 2000*

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The Meaning And Nature Of A Promise

Alan Adams

1. Promise

a. English

1) Definition

- a) Noun: A declaration assuring that one will or will not do something; a vow.
- b) Verb (transitive):
 - To commit oneself by a promise to do or give; pledge
 - To afford a basis for expecting.
- c) Verb (intransitive):
 - To make a declaration assuring that something will or will not be done.
 - To afford a basis for expectation.

2) Synonyms

- a) Promise, covenant, engage, pledge, plight, swear, vow.
- b) The central meaning shared by these verbs is "to declare solemnly that one will perform or refrain from a particular course of action" — *The American Heritage Dictionary*.

b. Greek [*evpaggeli*]

- 1) Originally an announcement, a declaration;
- 2) In later Greek, an agreement, promise, assurance (Acts 23:21);
- 3) Predominantly used of God's pronouncements that provide assurance of what he intends to do (Eph. 6:2);
- 4) By metonymy, used of the thing promised, what was promised (Acts 1:4). — *Friberg*

c. Hebrew: To speak, declare, converse, command, promise, warn, threaten, sing, etc. — *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

2. A broad topic

- a. Broad in scope: Rightly understood, the whole Bible constitutes a "promise."
- b. Broad in actual usage [*NOTE: This does not include a count of the synonymous terms as per below].

- 1) Hebrew: 1049 verses; eighty variations; 4.5% of content of Old Testament.
 - 2) Greek: 58 verses; twelve variations; .73% of content of New Testament.
 - 3) English: 112 verses; five variations; .36% of the whole Bible – *Bible Works*
- c. 2 Peter 1:4
- d. Broad in variety of terminology.
- 1) Adjure, agree, assure, avouch, betroth, bind, bond, charge, commit, confess, covenant, determine; espouse, foreordain, foreswear, oath, pledge, profess, secure, surety, swear, vow, word.
 - 2) Say, said, speech.
 - a) No significant difference between God "saying" something, and his "promising" something; nor should there be for man (cf. Matt. 5:37).
 - b) Romans 4:18-21
 - c) Though the word "promise" is not used before Exodus 12:25, yet in the New Testament "promise" is used countless times in reference to things God "said" or "spoke" to Abraham prior to Exodus 12:25.
3. Both Divine and Human topic.
- a. Titus 1:2, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal;
 - b. Deut. 23:23, That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.
4. A serious topic. James 5:12; Matt. 5:37; Eccl. 5:4-5; 2 Cor. 1:16-18
5. An inspiring topic. 2 Cor. 1:17-20

DISCUSSION:

I. PARTIES OF A PROMISE.

A. Technical

1. Promisor, Promisee
2. Party of the first part; party of the second part.

B. Biblical

1. Deut. 26:17-18
2. Way too often, we have a one-way view of promises.

- a. Deut. 9:28 [*note the absolute irony here]
- b. Brother Jang Dai-jye: "I don't won't to make a promise that I won't keep." Me: "You already have."
- c. Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 28:20; 1 Thess. 5:27

II. PRINCIPLES OF A PROMISE.

A. Faculty: powers or capacity of the mind.

1. Intent

- a. For a contract or agreement to be valid, there must be, especially on the part of the promisor, *the capacity to form intent*.
- b. God: Eph. 1:11; 3:11; Job 42:2; Isa. 14:24
- c. Man: Acts 11:23; 2 Cor. 9:7

2. Motive

- a. Rational promises are made for a reason.
- b. God
 - 1) Benevolence ("let there be...good" Gen. 1; "good tidings").
 - 2) Love (John 3:16; Rom 5:8).
 - 3) Wrath (Psa. 95:11; Heb. 3:11; 4:3).
 - 4) Pleasure (Eph. 1:5,9).
 - 5) Grace (Eph. 1:6,7).
- c. Man
 - 1) Salvation (Rom. 10:9-10).
 - 2) Fear (Josh. 9:20).
 - 3) Conscience (1 Peter 3:21).

3. Communication

- a. God (Rom. 18:18-20; Eph. 3:1-5; 1 Cor. 2:6-13; Acts 17:30-31).
- b. Man (Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Tim. 6:12-13; cf. Prov. 10:19; Eccl. 5:3).

B. Integrity

- 1. Not inherent in the formulation of the promise.
 - a. God (2 Cor. 1:19).
 - b. Man
 - 1) Our little word games (Matt. 5:33-37).
 - 2) James 5:12
- 2. Rooted in nature and performance of promisee.
 - a. God
 - 1) Mal. 3:6; 1 Kings 8:56; Psa. 77:8

2) Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Joshua, children of Israel, etc.

3) Heb. 6:17-18

b. Man

1) Capable of being trustworthy, but overall with a checkered record at best.

2) Laban; divorcee[s]; unfaithful Christians; etc.

C. Ability

1. That which is *doable*, God can do (Num. 23:19).

a. Physical realm: Amos 4:7-13; Job 38:1ff.

b. Spiritual realm: Rom. 5:1.

2. The acceptability, or reasonableness of any promise exists or varies on the basis of the ability of the promisor to do what he says he will; and on the ability of the promisee to meet any conditions stipulated by the promise.

III. PARTICULARS OF A PROMISE.

A. Conditions [*This is a separate lecture].

B. Claims, or declarations (Gen. 8:22; 2 Peter 3:3-13).

C. Certain ethical assumptions.

1. Just as baptism, in the true sense of the word, cannot happen in the absence of certain biblical presuppositions, neither can a promise, in the true sense of the word, happen absent certain ethical presuppositions.

2. In other words, a promise, though perhaps "called" one (cf. 1 Cor. 8:5), is not a promise if it entails the promisee vowing to do that which is immoral or sinful.

IV. PRODUCT OF A PROMISE.

A. Faith on the part of the promisee.

B. Promise and Faith: Closely connected concepts.

1. Faith is predicated on God's say so (Rom. 10.16-17).

2. Consider the entirety of Romans 4 and James 2:21-23.

C. There being no doubt as to the faculty, integrity, and ability of the promisor (God); thus, the promisee (man) has "assurance" and "conviction" even as to things "not seen" (Heb. 11:1ff; esp. v.6).

V. PURVIEW OF PROMISES IN THE BIBLE.

A. Human

1. Children of Israel (Exodus 19:8).
2. Hannah (1 Sam. 1).
3. Jephthah (Judges 11).

B. Divine

1. Old Testament.

- a. Gen. 3:15, The *proto-evangelium*.
- b. Gen. 8:21–9:17, Noah.
- c. Gen. 12:2, Joshua 21:45, Abraham.
- d. 2 Sam. 7; 1 Kings 2, David.
- e. Great expectations of Israel (e.g. Isa. 2; Joel 2; Dan. 2; Jer. 31; Ezek. 36).
 - 1) Restoration of Israel.
 - 2) Coming of a Messiah.
 - 3) A new and everlasting kingdom.
 - 4) A new covenant.
 - 5) An outpouring of God's Spirit.

2. New Testament fulfillment.

- a. All summed up in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20; Eph. 3:6).
- b. Various promises.
 - 1) The Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4).
 - 2) A Savior from David (Acts 13:32; 26:6; Rom. 1:1-3).
 - 3) Abrahamic inheritance (Rom. 4:13-16; Gal. 3:16ff).
- c. Spiritual fulfillment of type/antitype promises (Heb. 4:1; 6:17; 11:9).

3. New Testament promises.

- a. Life, eternal life (1 Tim. 4:8; 6:19; 2 Tim. 1:1).
- b. Crown (James 1:12).
- c. Kingdom (James 2:5).
- d. Christ's coming (2 Peter 3:9).
- e. New heavens and new earth (2 Peter 3:13).

CONCLUSION:

1. These are cynical times full of doubt about everybody and everything.
 - a. Baby-boomers doubt government's "promise" to provide social security.

- b. People enter marriage with niggling doubt that either party saying "I do" really will.
 - 2. These are times when one's word is not necessarily his bond.
 - a. Thus, we are such a litigious society.
 - b. People come to Jesus, "confess him as Lord," go on to live their lives as they please.
 - c. Many who ostensibly promised to "observe all that [Jesus has] commanded" are now doing as they please.
 - 3. 2 Cor. 1:7; Eph. 1:13; Heb. 4:1
-

The Conditional Nature Of Divine Promises

Guy Hester

- 1. There are two kinds of promises that God has made:
 - a. Conditional and non-conditional.
 - b. There are certain promises that God has made that have no stipulated conditions attached.
 - c. God will keep these promises regardless of what man does or does not do.
- 2. Non-conditional promises:
 - a. Seasons, seedtime and harvest (Gen. 8:22).
 - 1) Many people are concerned that we are going into a stage of global heating that will completely destroy crop productivity and will ultimately bring civilization to an end.
 - 2) Environmentalist would have us believe that industrial pollution and the general carelessness of man is on the verge of destroying the world because of ozone damage and global warming.
 - 3) We should all be good stewards of the earth on which we live, it is yet an undeniable fact that God has promised "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."
 - b. Earth never to be destroyed again by flood (Gen. 9:11-16).
 - 1) Certain blessings for the good and the evil (Matt. 5:45).

DISCUSSION:

I. THE CONDITIONAL NATURE OF GOD'S PROMISES.

A. Adam and Eve.

1. Gen. 3:1-6; 2:15
2. Devil told them that God did not mean what he said, or that they would not die, as God had said they would.
3. When Adam and Eve heeded the devil, and thus disobeyed God, they were punished by being driven from the garden, and physical death was pronounced upon the human family because of their disobedience.

B. God promised Noah salvation from the flood but not unconditionally.

1. Look at the conditions recorded in Genesis 6:14-22.
2. "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (v.22).

C. Look at the case of Naaman the leper.

1. God, through His prophet Elisha, promised him that he would be cleansed of his leprosy but upon the condition that he would "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (2 Kings 5:10).
2. At first Naaman refused to comply with this condition of cleansing.
3. Finally, at the urging of a servant he met the condition and was clean.

D. Salvation by God's grace is conditional.

1. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).
 - a. Because the Bible says we are saved by grace, some have jumped to the unwarranted conclusion that the sinner cannot do anything to be saved.
 - b. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - c. This very text makes it conditional on man's part by saying it is "through faith."

2. Just as sure as we are saved by grace and through faith, then the faith must be there in order to be saved through it.
 - a. The water cannot flow into your house through a pipe unless the pipe is there. God's grace then cannot flow unto us to save us unless we have the faith through which to be saved (Mark 16:16; John 8:24; Rom. 4:16).
3. In order to avoid the fact that salvation is conditional on man's part, some have taken the position that faith is not an act of man.
 - a. Paul said, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness."
 - b. It is man who does the believing.
 - c. Faith is not for God but for man.
4. When the Jailer said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas did not tell him that he could not do anything, or that God would have to do everything for him.
 - a. They told him to, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."
 - b. Then they spake unto him the word of the Lord and baptized him the same hour of the night (midnight, Acts 16:30-34).
 - c. Jesus told His apostles how all men are "saved by grace through faith" in Mark 16:15-16.
 - d. Surely, no one would deny that Peter was telling them how to be "saved by grace through faith" when he said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).
- E. Salvation by "grace through faith" does not exclude baptism.
 1. Baptism is a condition of God's promise of salvation.
 - a. The Scriptures prove that baptism, the same as faith and repentance, is unto salvation or the remission of sins.
 2. No one is saved by grace until he gets into Christ. 2 Tim. 2:1; Rom. 3:24; Acts 4:12

3. Now how may the sinner get into Christ where salvation by grace is to be had?
 - a. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3)
4. Here we are plainly told that we are "baptized into Jesus Christ." This is the way to be saved "by grace through faith."
 - a. God, by grace, provided salvation in Christ, and we, by faith, were moved to be baptized into Christ where we are partakers of His grace.
 - b. Paul said plainly, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27).
- F. Salvation by God's grace does not exclude righteous living.
 1. Look again at Titus 2:11-12.
 - a. These are the do's and don'ts of Christianity.
 2. The promise of salvation is conditional upon our denying "ungodliness and worldly lusts" in our lives.
 - a. One of the great problems in the church today is that too many people are not willing to put self on the cross and Christ on the throne in their lives.
 3. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24).
 - a. Many are just not willing to make that kind of a sacrifice.
 - b. That is the reason we have so many church members engaging in immorality, living in unscriptural marriages, etc.
 4. Living "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," means much more than morality.
 - a. It means we must obey everything that the word of God demands of us.
 - b. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).
 - c. 1 John 2:4, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

- d. Matt. 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

CONCLUSION:

1. Christ is the author of eternal salvation but only to those that obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9).
 2. The promises of God are conditional in nature.
 3. He has promised all spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph. 1:3).
 4. They cannot be had out of Christ.
 5. They are promised to all on the condition that we get into Christ.
-

The Lord Is Not Slack Concerning His Promises

2 Peter 3:9

Victor M. Eskew

1. Jesus warned His disciples about false teachers while He sojourned on the earth (Matt. 7:15-16a).
2. The apostles certainly faced their fair share of false teachers. Thus, they warned the early church about them (1 John 4:1).
3. When Peter wrote his second epistle, he was warning of scoffers who would walk after their own lusts, and inquire, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:3-4)
4. Peter assures his readers that the promise will come to fruition (2 Peter 3:10). He stated this with confidence because "the Lord is not slack concerning his promise" (2 Peter 3:9).

DISCUSSION:

I. THE FACT: God is a God of promises.

A. Acts 26:6-7

B. God has made promises to many in the past:

1. Abraham (Heb. 6:13-14).
2. David (1 Kings 2:24).
3. The apostles (Acts 1:4-5).

- 4. Christians (Heb. 8:6; 2 Peter 1:4).
- C. One of those great promises concerns the Lord's return (Matt. 24:36-39; 25:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 1:7).

II. THE FAITHFULNESS: God is not slack concerning His promise.

- A. The Scriptures constantly teach that one aspect of God's character is that He is faithful to His word (Num. 23:19; Deut. 7:9; Psalm 119:89-90,160; Isa. 46:11; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:20).
- B. God's faithfulness is based upon four pillars:
 - 1. His omnipotence.
 - a. Genesis 17:1
 - b. He has the power to fulfill all of His promises.
 - 2. His omniscience.
 - a. Psalm 139:1-6
 - b. Being all-knowing, He does not forget His promises.
 - 3. His omnibenevolence.
 - a. Matt. 7:7-11
 - b. He will not disappoint us.
 - 4. His trustworthiness.
 - a. Titus 1:2; Heb. 10:23
 - b. He cannot misrepresent the truth.
- C. When one doubts the promises of God, he inappropriately reflects upon one of these aspects of God.

III. THE FICTION: The passage of time negates God's promises.

- A. The scoffers of Peter's day, and the doubters of modern time make the mistake of comparing God to man.
 - 1. Men are slack on their promises (i.e., a contract to cut grass for \$20.00).
 - 2. Man is not like God whom we described above.
 - a. Man doesn't always have the resources to fulfill promises.
 - b. Man sometimes forgets the promises he makes.
 - c. Man can and does disappoint us.
 - d. Man isn't always trustworthy.

B. What about the passage of time? It has been many, many years since the promise of His coming was made.

1. The passage of time and the fulfillment of God's promises are not related to one another (2 Peter 3:8).

2. Chart: Time Is of No Essence.

TIME IS OF NO ESSENCE			
THE PERSON	THE PROMISE	FULFILLED	TIME LAPSE
The centurion	Servant healed	Matt. 8:13	Selfsame hour
Elijah	Rain (1 Kings 18:1)	1 Kings 18:45	A few hours
Abraham	Isaac (Gen. 17:16)	Gen. 21:1-2	One year
Israel	Canaan (Num 13:1-2)	Josh. 21:43-45	47 years
Noah	Flood (Gen. 6:17)	Gen. 7:17	120 years
Amos	Tyre's destruction	History	325 years
Satan	Jesus' death	Acts 2:23-24	4000 years

IV. THE FAVOR: God's delay is for man's good.

A. It gives man time to repent of sins (2 Peter 3:9).

B. It tests the strength of man's faith (Rom. 4:17-21).

C. It develops character (Isa. 40:31).

CONCLUSION:

1. The day of the Lord will come (2 Peter 3:10).

2. Let us exhibit the faith of Abraham until then (Heb. 6:9-15).

Divine Promises Of Negative Consequences Are No Less Sure Than Those Of Reward

James W. Boyd

1. What is a promise?

a. A declaration that one will do or refrain from doing something specified.

1) Men make promises.

2) Promises are no better than the word of the one making it.

- 3) Sometimes men cannot keep a promise they have made.
- 4) We speak of DIVINE promises.
- 5) God is able to keep whatever He promises.
- b. Usually considered regarding favorable matters to be anticipated with joy.
 - 1) Forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38.
 - 2) Eternal life, John 3:16.
 - 3) Providence of God, Matt. 6:33.
 - 4) Many similar promises for which we are thankful.
- c. There is another kind of promise.
 - 1) Warnings, with attending circumstances and results that may follow.
 - 2) Threats, with negative results if ignored.
 - 3) About things we may wish would never occur.
- 2. Involves giving and keeping your word; credibility.
 - a. Will God keep His Word in both kinds of promises? Deut. 7:9,10
 - b. The Lord will keep His Word; true and faithful.
 - c. 2 Peter 3:9; Heb. 10:23; discussed more fully in another lecture
- 3. Some glad to believe God will do them good; kind, gentle; loving, etc.
 - a. Too kind, gentle, loving, etc. to do anything else.
 - b. "He would never do that," when speaking of hard things to come.
 - c. Some talk like they are more compassionate and understanding than God.
 - d. But such a view invalidates the credibility of God.
- 4. We have three major points to sustain in this lesson:
 - a. God has made promises with both positive and negative consequences.
 - b. God keeps His promises regardless of the nature of the promise.
 - c. Shall cite several instances that make the matter beyond question regarding God keeping His promises that have negative consequences.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT DID GOD PROMISE ADAM AND EVE IF THEY DISOBEYED HIM?

- A. "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Gen. 3:3
 - 1. They disobeyed. What happened? Expelled from the Garden.
 - 2. Spiritual death; separated from God.
 - 3. Physical death on all men, Rom. 5:12.
- B. Is there any doubt that God kept His Word even though the consequences were negative? Answers our question.

II. ANOTHER EXAMPLE: NOAH AND THE FLOOD.

- A. Condition of the world, Gen. 6:5,6.
- B. Gave His Word, Gen. 6:7.
- C. Can anybody doubt that He kept His promise even though there were negative consequences?

III. ONE MORE EXAMPLE: DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

- A. Would destroy the cities and told why; Gen. 18:20.
- B. Gave Lot and family opportunity to escape.
- C. Some did; some did not.
- D. Gen. 19:24-25; The Lord kept His Word.

IV. GOD SOMETIMES MADE NEGATIVE PROMISES THROUGH HIS SERVANTS.

- A. Rebellion led by Korah and others, Num. 16.
 - 1. Actually a rebellion against the authority of God, Num. 16:11.
 - 2. "You take too much upon you..." Num. 16:3.
 - 3. Matter put to the test.
- B. Notice of God's intentions given to Moses; Num. 16:21, 28-30.
- C. Did God keep His Word? Num. 16:32,33.

V. MANY SIMILAR EXAMPLES IN OLD AND NEW TEST-AMENTS.

- A. Gathering of manna; warned it would spoil except on 6th day; Exo. 16:26-28.

- B. Violation of the Sabbath; Exo. 31:14,15; Num. 15:32-36.
- C. Would prolong their days in the land if obedient, but they lost it; Deut. 11.
- D. In the New Testament; warning to seven churches of Asia; were they just idle words without genuine meaning?

VI. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE TIME GOD WENT BACK ON HIS WORD REGARDING THE DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH?

- A. Obviously was a conditional matter; Did not "go back" on His Word.
- B. Lord changed His mind.
 - 1. Because the people changed their minds.
 - 2. Met the conditions necessary for their preservation.
- C. If God did not change His mind when He makes a conditional promise, and the conditions are met, He would, indeed, be untrue to His Word.

VII. SOME OF THE SAME KIND OF NEGATIVE PROMISES BEFORE US NOW.

- A. Mark 16:16; *"he that believeth not shall be damned;"* just a maybe so?
- B. Matt. 25:46; do you suppose He will be unfaithful to His Word?
- C. Luke 13:3-5; Do we have reason to think Jesus really did not mean it?
- D. Rev. 21:8; How many of this kind will escape punishment?
- E. 1 Cor. 6:9,10; We can be assured this promise will be kept
- F. Psalm 1; Prov. 14:34; Gal. 6:7,8
- G. Ezek. 33:11-16
 - 1. That principle has always existed in God-man relationship.
 - 2. Why should anyone today think that God will violate His own will?

VIII. IT IS ALL TOO OBVIOUS THAT MANY DO NOT TAKE THE WORD OF GOD SERIOUSLY.

- A. Some teach baptism is necessary for salvation, but...
- B. ...Maybe God will find a way to save them anyway
- C. We dare not limit God.

1. Not a question of limiting God.
 2. God can do whatever God wishes to do.
 3. But what has God said He will do?
 4. To suggest something different is to question His credibility.
- D. When God draws the line, who is man to ignore it?
1. Attitude should be, "Let God be true..." Rom. 3:4.
 2. "Thy word is truth." John 8:32
 3. Psa. 19:7; "...the testimony of the Lord is sure..."

IX. NEITHER KIND OF PROMISES CAN BE BROKEN.

- A. We rejoice in the good promises.
 - B. Should be sobered by those with negative consequences.
 - C. Since God has provided the way of salvation, why should anyone think He will forbid entrance into heaven of those who are obedient and faithful?
 - D. For the same reason, why should we think those who disobey or not remain faithful will receive their reward as much as those who were true to Him?
 - E. His terms of salvation are: hear, believe, repent, confess Christ, be baptized, and be faithful unto death.
 - F. Who has the right to set these aside, present other terms, give a false hope?
-

The Promises of God Do Not Fail

Mike Hogan

1. What we are defining in this lesson is, the reliability of God to fulfill the promises made to His creation.
2. The establishment of the reliability of God is a must to those searching for the truth. Facts contained in the Word of God will produce enough faith to obey the commands of God with confidence and boldness.
 - a. If it can be established by the scriptures that "God is unable to fulfill His promises," then as a result, we as His people will be unable to stand upon a foundation of unfulfilled promises

made from a "weak" God. (Meaning: if God is unable to perform His will as was promised, therefore He is weak).

- b. **ON THE OTHER HAND**, If it can be established by the scriptures, "God is able and willing to perform His will" and has been faithful from creation to this day to make good on all of His promises, then we have a solid foundation on which to stand and must obey His will using His terms and conditions, because He is **ABLE**. James 1:21; Heb 7:25; 11:19; 2 Tim. 1:12; Rom. 4:19-22; John 14:15; Heb 5:8-9.
 - c. Heb. 11:1,6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
 - 1) The word for "evidence" is the same Greek word found in 2 Timothy 3:16 for reproof (*elegmos*).
 - 2) We will be proving, in this lesson, God's reliability using His Holy Bible, it is my hope that this study will furnish us with enough confidence to stand in defense of the church of Christ and the doctrine of God! Acts 28:31; Eph. 3:10-12.
 - d. The apostle John wrote by inspiration, John 20:34. "*But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*"
3. Webster defines promise as,
- a. To bring about, legally binding declaration that gives the person to whom it is made a right to expect or to claim the performance or forbearance of a specified act.
 - b. How faithful is God to perform His promises?

DISCUSSION:

I. HOW FAITHFUL IS GOD OUR CREATOR TO FULFILL HIS PROMISES?

- A. Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, look at the evidence.
 - 1. God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of GOOD and EVIL.
 - a. God clearly revealed the consequences of their rejection of this command ... "*For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*"
 - 2. This was a clear and specific command and yet it was broken, Gen. 3:1-7.

- a. Outside influences helped this transgression, but they followed their hearts and rejected the commands of God, Gen. 3:1-6; 1 Tim. 2:14; Luke 8:11-15.
 - b. God cast them out of the garden as the result of their choice, Gen. 3:8-18.
 - c. Separation from the tree of life started the process of physical death, Gen. 3:22-24.
 - d. God had to provide a means of fellowship between man and God through the sacrificing of animals, Gen. 4:3-4; Heb. 11:4.
- B. God deemed it necessary to destroy the earth by a flood, because the world was wicked and evil, Gen. 6:5-7
- 1. Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord, because he kept the commandments of God, Gen. 6:8-9
 - a. God promised to deliver anyone who by faith would enter into the ark and be saved from the wrath of God, Gen. 6:13,18
 - 1) Noah by faith built this ark using the promises of God as his foundation, Heb. 11:7
 - 2) Noah must have thought God was able to perform His will, Gen. 6:22
 - 2. The Bible declares the flood as a fact.
 - a. Moses declares it, Gen. 10:1.
 - b. Joshua declares it, Josh-24:2-3.
 - c. Job declares it, Job 14:11.
 - d. David declares it, Psalms 66:6; 74:15.
 - e. Isaiah declares it, Isa. 28:2.
 - f. Christ declares it, Matt. 24:38-39.
 - g. Peter declares it, 2 Peter 2:5.
 - h. True science with supportive evidence of a global flood is a reality, therefore God's reliability is believable.
- C. Promises made to Abraham, is it fact or fiction?
- 1. Gen. 12:1-3, God promised to make Abraham, through his seed, a great nation and all the families of the earth would be blessed. Jesus Christ is the seed (Gal. 3:16).
 - a. The nation of Israel can be seen progressing into this great nation as was foretold by God, hundreds of years before, Acts 7:3-19; Heb. 11:8; Gal. 3:6-9.

2. Moses was called to deliver the nation of Israel to the land of promise, Acts 7:20-41.
3. God fulfilled all the land promises made to the nation of Israel, Josh. 21:43-45.
- D. Captivity of Israel for seventy years, Jer. 25:11-12, 29:10; Dan. 9:2.
 1. History records this captivity and Daniel establishes it as a fact many years later during the captivity.
 - a. God made good on this promise.
 2. Isaiah gives the name of the man who will release the nation of Israel, Isa. 44:28; 45:1.
 - a. Ezra 1:1-3, Cyrus king of Persia, released the children of Israel from captivity after seventy years.
 3. It has been established, God can and does fulfill all that He has promised.

II. WHAT ABOUT THE KINGDOM AND THE THRONE OF DAVID THAT WAS TO COME THROUGH PROMISE?

- A. According to the vision of Nathan, 2 Sam. 7:17.
 1. There would be a Kingdom established forever and ever after the seed of David, 2 Sam. 7:12-16.
 2. Psalms 45:6, *"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre."*
 3. Psalm 145:13, *"Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."*
 4. Ezekiel 37:21-28 speaks of David's throne being established in the future.
 5. Isaiah 2:2-3 says it will be established in the last days and all nations shall flow unto it.
 6. Isaiah 9:6-7, Christ will sit upon the throne of David, forever.
 7. Daniel 2:44 identifies the time in which it would be established and that it shall stand forever.
- B. There would be a man sent from God to prepare the way for Christ and His kingdom.
 1. The Last book of the Old Testament closes proclaiming the promise of the ushering in of this kingdom, Isa. 40:3-5; Mal. 3:1, 4:5-6.

2. The New Testament begins with the revealing of the promise, Matt. 3:3-4; Mark 1:3; Luke 1:17; 3:4; John 1:33. *In the spirit and power of Elijah – John the Baptist.*
 - a. Preaching Christ and the kingdom of God is at hand, Matt. 3:2.
3. Mary was told Jesus would be king over the throne of David, Luke 1:32-33.
 - a. Jesus began to preach the kingdom of heaven was at hand, Matt. 4:17.
4. Jesus declared the kingdom and the church were one and the same, Matt. 16:18-19.
 - a. It was not of this world, John 18:36.
 - b. Mark 9:1, *"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."* (It would come in their life time)
 - c. The apostles asked of the kingdom (Acts 1:6) which shows it was not yet established.
- C. Establishment of the Kingdom, Acts 2.
 1. Acts 1:11, Christ went up into heaven.
 2. Acts 2:30, To sit upon His throne, the throne of David, Psa. 110:1ff.
 3. Acts 2:34, David is not your king, but Christ for he has beaten the pains of death through the resurrection.
 4. We have a king setting on the throne at the right hand of God, ruling over His kingdom, the church NOW, Acts 2:33; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12; 1 Tim. 3:15,
 5. All power has been given unto Him, Matt. 28:18; Heb. 1:1-2; 1 Peter 3:22.
 6. We have been translated into this Kingdom, the church of Christ, Col. 1:13-14.
 7. The fullness of Christ, Eph. 1:22-23.

III. IF THE PROMISES OF OLD ARE FULFILLED, THEN SALVATION MUST BE A FACT, BY MEANS OF HIS CHURCH AND HIS SHED BLOOD:

- A. Spiritual blessings are in heavenly places, Eph. 1:3.
 1. Luke 24:47, Repentance and forgiveness of sins would be preached starting in Jerusalem.

- a. The message, repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, Acts 2:38.
- b. Those that did such were added to the church, the Kingdom of God, Acts 2:47.
- 2. Forgiveness of sins, Eph. 1 :7; Col. 1:14.
- B. The gospel is the power of God to save them that believe, 1 Cor. 1:18,21.
 - 1. Rom. 1:16, The power of God, His message, Acts 11:14; James 1:21.
- C. The resurrection of Christ is true, 1 Cor. 15:1-4.
 - 1. If not, your faith is vain and you are yet in your sins, 1 Cor. 15:17.
- D. The church or kingdom will be delivered up to the Father, 1 Cor. 15:24.
 - 1. The saved are in the church, Eph. 5:23.
 - 2. Christ gave Himself for the church, Eph. 5:21,25,29.
 - 3. The body of Christ the church is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, Eph. 1:22-23.
 - 4. There is one body, Eph. 4:4, and we are all baptized into that one body, 1 Cor. 12:13.
- E. Therefore shouldn't we as God's creation believe in the church and salvation found therein? *"THE PROMISES OF GOD, DO NOT FAIL."*

IV. DOCTRINES THAT TEAR DOWN THE FULFILLED PROMISES OF GOD.

- A. Premillennial doctrine seeks to dethrone the power of God and the ability that belongs to God to fulfill the promise of the kingdom.
 - 1. Teaching an earthy throne, placing His Heavenly body on the earth, His footstool, Psa. 110:1; Isa. 66:1; 5:35; Acts 7:49.
 - 2. The church is just an after-thought until Christ comes again to try and setup His kingdom.
 - 3. It gives man more power than God, man's influence was greater than the ability of God to perform His will.
- B. The doctrine, there is no Hell, but there is a Heaven.
 - 1. Because God is love, judgement will not be rendered to all of mankind, John 3:16.
 - a. Ecc. 12:13-14; John 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 5:10

- C. God can change His will anytime based upon His own discretion.
 - 1. Able to go back upon His word, Heb. 6:18.
 - 2. Jesus said, the word will judge men in the judgement, John 12:48.
- D. Looking at God as a man and not God.
 - 1. This view gives God all of our weaknesses, Acts 17:28, Rom. 1:23,25.
 - a. Think of things man has made with his own hands, are they perfect, reliable, faithful?
 - b. No, they are imperfect and we are, we may not keep our word, BUT GOD IS ABLE.
 - 2. Makes it possible for God to be a liar, Heb. 6:18. *"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie."*
 - 3. When man makes promises, you need to ask, will he make good on his word?
 - 4. What is his track record, has he been faithful?
 - 5. One must never compare the God of Heaven to man because He has proven Himself to be who He says He is, faithful and just, Isa. 55:8-9; 1 John 1:9.
- E. Therefore if God is as man, then it is up to man to define God, what He will do and not do.
 - 1. On the other hand, if He has fulfilled all His promises but one, we better take heed and obey His will before it is too late.

V. ONE PROMISE YET TO BE FULFILLED, THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

- A. To raise the dead, John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; John 12:48.
- B. To judge the world, Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 14:10-12; Matt. 25:31-46.
- C. Reward the righteous, Rev. 22:12.
- D. Sentence the wicked, 2 Thess. 1:7-9.
- E. Deliver up the kingdom, 1 Cor. 15:24.
- F. Therefore, because God has fulfilled all His promises, we all should watch and be ready!
 - 1. Matt. 13:49; 24:44; Mark 13:33,37; 1 John 3:2-3; Matt. 25:1-13; 2 Peter 3:9-12

2. There will always be those who will reject the coming of Christ, 2 Peter 3:3-7.
 - a. They fight and contort the Scriptures to their own destruction, 2 Peter 3:14-18.
3. Therefore we cannot be ignorant of God's ability to perform His Will, 2 Peter 3:8-10.

CONCLUSION:

1. The evidence supports the conclusion, God is ABLE, 2 Tim.
 - a. Christ said, God is able, 3:9; 10:28.
 - b. Abraham said, God is able, Rom. 4:21.
 - c. Paul said, God is able, Rom. 11:23; 2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 3:20.
 - d. If He is able, then His record will produce faith and that faith will produce obedience.
 - e. Man's rejection to God's word will not change one thing about what God has said regarding judgement, His church, the Gospel's power to save or the identity of the redeemed.
 - f. All be performed as God revealed, John 12:48.
2. Our faith stands upon God and His ability to make good on His promises, John 20:30-31; Eph. 3:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17.
 - a. God's covenant is of promise, Eph. 2:12-14.
 - b. 1 Tim. 4:8, *"having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."*
 - c. Gal. 3:14-29, The blessings of Abraham are through his seed which is Christ, fulfilled in promise.
 - d. 1 Peter 1:3-4, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."*
 - e. Where would this promise of hope be without God being able to deliver what He has promised?
3. There remains a rest for the people of God, Heb. 4:1-6.
 - a. We must believe the record of promise, the people of God could not enter in because of unbelief and today we shall not as well, unless we gain an unwavering faith and belief of the truth, Heb. 3:19.
 - b. And depart not from the living God, Heb. 3:12,19,35-36.
4. Heb. 13:5, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

- a. Heb. 13:8, "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*"
 - b. Is your name written in the lamb's book of life, Rev. 21:27?
 - c. I pray that you will be baptized into the body of Christ, the church of Christ, before it is to late, and take part in the life that is to come in promise, by the resurrection, Gal. 3:26-29.
5. Knowing God's promises "NEVER FAIL," we will be able to stand and reveal His will to mankind, no matter what the tribulation might be, Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3; 12:12; Rev. 1:9.
- a. 2 Thess. 1:6-10, God will make good on His last promise, Have you obeyed the Gospel? Are you a member of the body of Christ, if not, WHY?
 - b. Heb. 13:5, "*For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*"
-

Whosoever Shall Confess Me Before Men, Him Will I Also Confess Before My Father Which Is In Heaven

Matthew 10:32

Jeff Bates

- 1. Imagine how wonderful it must have been to sit at the feet of Jesus Christ, to hear his teachings, to see his power, and to witness his great love for mankind.
- 2. Knowing who I am now, had I lived during the time of Christ, how would I have responded to him?
 - a. Would I have sought to take his life and end his ministry?
 - b. Would I have merely ignored him, his power, and his teachings?
 - c. Would I have considered him as simply entertaining, and left him to find someone or something more entertaining?
 - d. Would I have fought, and even died, for the Savior of the world and his teachings?

- e. Would I have confessed Jesus before my family, friends, coworkers, and others?
- 3. Let us read Matthew 9:35–10:32. This account is also found in Luke 12:1-12.

DISCUSSION:

I. LET US NOTICE THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE FIND THE STATEMENT OF OUR LESSON.

- A. Jesus preached the "good news" of salvation in his spiritual kingdom, and confirmed his authority with power (9:35).
 - 1. He was moved by the spiritual condition of the multitudes that were lost without a spiritual shepherd (9:36).
 - 2. He urged his disciples to pray that there would be individuals who would labor for the saving of lost souls (9:37,38).
- B. Christ then sent out his twelve apostles to be some of those laborers for whom they prayed (10:5-7).
 - 1. He gave them the ability to confirm with power that their authority was from God (10:1,8; Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3,4).
 - 2. Their concern was to be for spiritual things. The physical necessities would be provided them (10:9-11).
 - 3. They were responsible for teaching, and the hearers were responsible for hearing and obeying (10:12-15; 1 Cor. 3:6).
 - 4. They were to demonstrate the attitude of Jesus by being humble, yet wise (10:16).
- C. Jesus warned his apostles they would be persecuted because of their labors for the cause of Christ ("beware of men," 10:17).
 - 1. Indeed, the promise is that all Christians will suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - 2. They would be hated of all men for Christ's sake (10:22).
 - 3. They would be brought before the Jewish courts and punished (10:17).
 - 4. They would also be brought before the Roman courts and punished, even to their deaths (10:18,21).
- D. The apostles' salvation depended upon their not being deterred from obeying God by the persecutions (10:22).

1. The servants of Christ should expect the same reaction from the world that Jesus received (10:24,25).
 2. They were not even to consider what they would say in their defense, because they would be inspired of God (10:19,20).
- E. Jesus encouraged the apostles to contrast the consequences of obeying God with the consequences of disobeying God.
1. The consequences of obeying God would be the persecutions of men.
 - a. Men could only harm the physical body. They had no power over the souls of the apostles (10:28).
 - b. The pain and suffering men can bring is only temporal.
 2. The consequences of disobeying God would be everlasting pain and suffering in hell (10:28; Luke 16:23,24).
- F. There is certainly fear in physical pain and suffering, but God promises his love and concern for his faithful servants, and an everlasting reward in heaven (10:29-31).

II. HOW WERE THE APOSTLES TO CONFESS JESUS BEFORE MEN?

- A. To confess is from a Greek word which means literally "to speak the same thing, to assent, accord, agree with..." (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words).
1. In this text it denotes "to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such confession being the effect of deep conviction of facts" (Vines).
 2. This passage "conveys the thought of 'confessing' allegiance to Christ as one's Master and Lord, and, on the other hand, of acknowledgment, on His (the Lord's, JWB) part, of the faithful one as being His worshipper and servant, His loyal follower" (Vine).
- B. The apostles were to confess Christ before men by faithfully preaching to men the same message that Jesus had preached, a message that would be brought to their remembrance by the Holy Spirit (10:27; John 16:13).
1. They were not to compromise their preaching just to please men (John 12:42,43; Acts 5:25-29).

2. They were not to withhold that which the people needed to hear just to keep from hurting the feelings of family or friends (Acts 20:18-21).
3. They were not to refrain from preaching certain subjects just to keep from being criticized or rejected by their audience and forced to move on (Acts 20:25-27).
- C. By confessing Christ before men, Jesus would acknowledge before God the apostles as faithful servants in the judgment (Matt. 25:21,34).

III. HOW MAY AN INDIVIDUAL CONFESS JESUS BEFORE MEN TODAY?

- A. "Whosoever" includes every individual from the time Jesus spoke these words until the end of time (Matt. 10:32).
- B. One must confess Christ in order to become a Christian and be saved eternally (Rom. 10:8-10).
 1. This involves a public, verbal confession, or acknowledgment, of one's faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Savior of the world (Acts 8:35-39).
 2. When one makes the verbal confession "I believe that God, for Christ's sake, hath pardoned my sins," before he/she is baptized, that individual is not confessing Christ, but rather is denying him.
 - a. To make this statement before one is baptized is to claim the forgiveness of sins before being baptized.
 - b. The Bible very clearly declares that baptism is the means through which one's sins are representatively cleansed, or washed away, by the blood of Christ after one has, through his/her faith in God, repented of sins and verbally confessed Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:5; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:1-6).
 - c. Therefore, to claim the forgiveness of sins before one is baptized is to claim the forgiveness of sins without the blood of Jesus Christ. How can an individual be confessing Christ by claiming such?
- C. Gospel preachers have the same responsibility to confess Christ today, as the apostles had during the first century.
- D. All Christians have the responsibility to confess Jesus in their speech.

1. This involves teaching the truth, but it goes far beyond that.
 2. How many individuals call themselves Christians, yet they put forth no effort to control their tongues (James 1:26; 3:5-13)?
- E. All Christians have the responsibility to confess Jesus in their manner of life.
1. Acts 19:18
 2. In 1 Tim. 6:11-14, "profess" is the same Greek word that is translated "confess" in Matt. 10:32.
 3. Multitudes of religious people "confess" Jesus with their mouths and deny him in their living (Titus 1:15:16).
- F. All Christians have the responsibility to confess Jesus by overcoming the temptations and trials of life (Rev. 3:5).

CONCLUSION:

1. Though the majority of people fail to confess Christ in this life, we all will one day bow before him and confess him (Rom. 14:7-12; Phil. 2:9-11).
 2. The reward of being confessed by Christ before the Father only applies to those who confess him in this life.
 3. Have you repented of sin, verbally confessed your faith in Jesus before others, and put on your Lord in baptism in order to receive the remission of sins?
 - a. If not, what is it that you are allowing to cause you to deny Jesus? Is it a desire for convenience? Is it a desire to be popular with family and friends? Is it a desire for worldly things?
 - b. Will it be worth it in judgment when Jesus denies you before the Father, and throughout eternity being separated from God and from all the righteous?
 4. As a Christian, are you confessing Christ with your mouth and with your life (Gal. 6:7-9)?
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Whosoever Shall Deny Me Before Men, Him Will I Also Deny Before My Father Which Is In Heaven

Matthew 10:33

Jimmy W. Bates

1. God's promises involve both blessings and punishments.
 - a. Deut. 30:19, "life and death, blessing and cursing"
 - b. Rom. 11:22, "goodness and severity of God"
 - c. God has always promised **blessings** to those who **confess** faith in Him through obedient submission to His will, and **punishment** to those who **deny** Him through unbelief, rejection, and disobedience to His will.
2. Bible warnings against denying the Lord: Josh. 24:26,27; Prov. 30:4-9; 1 John 2:21-25
3. The Lord **promises** to **deny** those who **deny** Him.
 - a. Matt. 10:33; Compare Luke 12:9; 2 Tim. 2:12
 - b. There is no more sobering thought than to be **denied** by the Lord in Judgment.
 - c. Therefore, let us seriously consider the Lord's promise that we may avoid being on the receiving end of that **promise!**

DISCUSSION:

I. A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE CONTEXT OF Matt. 10:33:

- A. Jesus **calls** His twelve Apostles (Matt. 10:1-4).
- B. Jesus **commissions** the Apostles (Matt. 10:5-42).
 1. Limited commission – "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (vs. 5-6).
 2. Preach – "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (v.7; compare Matt. 3:2; 4:17).
 3. Their preaching would be confirmed by miracles (v.1,8; Heb. 2:3,4).
 4. They were to take no provisions, "for the workman is worthy of his meat" (vs.9-10; compare Luke 10:7; 1 Cor. 9:7; Gal. 6:6).

5. The city, town, and house that received them and their teaching would be blessed and those who did not receive them would be punished (vs.11-15).
 6. Jesus warns them of the enemy and the trials and persecutions they will face (vs.16-25).
 7. Don't fear these enemies, but fear God, for God knows His servants and will provide for their needs (vs.26-31).
 8. If they **confess** Jesus before men (that is, if they are true and faithful in the proclamation of the Lord's message and in their conduct in the face of these persecutions) then the Lord will **confess** them before the Father in heaven (v.32). This promise applies to "**whosoever**," all faithful servants of God.
 9. But on the other hand, if they **deny** Him before men (that is, if they give in to the enemy and fail to be true and faithful in the proclamation of the Lord's message and in their conduct in the face of these persecutions) then the Lord will **deny** them before the Father in heaven (v.33). This promise also applies to "**whosoever**," all who are unfaithful to God and His word.
 10. Jesus further emphasizes the cost of discipleship and its rewards (vs.34-42).
- C. The Scriptures teach that in obedience to the Gospel we must **confess by mouth** our faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:37) in order to become a Christian. And then, as Christians we must continually **confess him before men** by being loyal to His word and faithful to Him in conduct even in the face of severe persecution (Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8). To fail to do either of these is to **DENY HIM** (John 12:42,43; Matt. 10:33; Luke 12:9).

II. THINGS INVOLVED IN DENYING THE LORD:

A. Definition of Terms:

1. **DENY** from *arneomai*:

- a. "Signifies (a) to say...not, to contradict, e.g., Mark 14:70; John 1:20; 18:25, 27; I John 2:22; (b) to deny by way of disowning a person, as, e.g., the Lord Jesus as Master, e.g., Matt. 10:33; Luke 12:9; John 13:38 (in the best mss.); II Tim. 2:12; or, on the other hand, of Christ Himself, denying that a person is His follower,

Matt. 10:33; II Tim. 2:12; or to deny the Father and the Son, by apostatizing and by disseminating pernicious teachings, to deny Jesus Christ as Master and Lord by immorality under a cloak of religion, II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4..." (*Vines*, p.292).

- b. "To deny, disclaim, disown, Matt. 10:33, et al.; to renounce, Tit. 2:12, et al.; to decline, refuse, Heb. 11:24; absol. to deny, contradict, Lk. 8:15, et al." (*The Analytical Greek Lexicon*, p.51).

2. **To deny the Lord** is to contradict, disown, disregard, abrogate, forsake, renounce, reject, refuse, decline, disclaim the Lord and His word, or through neglect or rebellion fail to confess Him!

B. Who are those who deny the Lord?

1. **All who deny the existence of God:** Heb. 11:6; Atheistic Humanism, Psalm 14:1; Rom. 1:20-22

2. All who reject the deity of Christ:

- a. Acts 3:13,14, The Jews.
- b. 1 John 2:22,23, To deny Christ is to deny the Father also.
- c. John 8:24; Luke 12:9; Compare Mark 8:38
- d. To reject his eternal nature, virgin birth, miracles, teaching, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, establishment of his kingdom, his reign over his kingdom, his will – the New Testament, his second coming, resurrection of the dead, judgment, and eternal destinies is to **deny Him!**

3. All who refuse or disregard the Authority of Christ and His word.

- a. Matt. 17:5; 28:18; Acts 3:22,23; Heb. 1:1,2; Col. 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 Peter 4:11
- b. Thus, all false teachers (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:28-32; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1; Compare Titus 1:9-16):
 - 1) Who teach and act without divine authority.
 - 2) Who add to or subtract from God's word (Rev. 22:18,19; Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6).
 - 3) Who pervert the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).
 - 4) Who twist the scriptures (2 Peter 3:16).

- c. Denominationalism denies Christ for it exists without His authority and contrary to His word (Matt. 16:18; 15:9,13; John 17:20,21; 1 Cor. 1:10-13).
 - d. Liberalism denies Christ for it disregards the authority of Christ by going beyond His word.
 - e. Anti-ism denies Christ for it contradicts the authority of Christ by assuming unlawful authority to bind where the Lord has not bound.
4. **All who refuse Christ by refusing to obey His Gospel:**
- a. Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 2 Thess. 1:7-9
 - b. Hear, Rom. 10:17
 - c. Believe, John 8:24; 20:30,31
 - d. Repent, Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30,31; 2 Peter 3:9
 - e. Confess faith in Christ, Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:37
 - f. Baptized for remission of sins, Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-5; Gal. 3:26,27; 1 Peter 3:21.
 - g. To receive not His word in obedience is to reject Christ (Acts 2:41; John 12:48).
5. **All Christians who renounce Christ and go back into the world:**
- a. Must be faithful through death (Rev. 2:10).
 - 1) Even in the face of trials and persecution (Matt. 10:33).
 - 2) Faithful in spiritual growth (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:5-11; 3:18).
 - 3) Faithful in worship (John 4:24; Heb. 10:24,25).
 - 4) Faithful in supporting the work and mission of the church (Matt. 6:33; 1 Cor. 15:58; Titus 3:1; James 1:27; Gal. 6:10; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15, 16; 2 Tim. 2:2).
 - 5) Faithful in defense of the Faith (Jude 3; Phil. 1:7,17).
 - b. Must remain separate from the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Matt. 6:24; 12:30; Rom. 12:1,2; 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4; 2 Tim. 4:10; 2 Peter 2:20-22).
6. **All who fail or decline to live in accordance with the Lord's moral standard.**
- a. Must live pure lives (Eph. 5:25-27; 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Tim. 2:22; Titus 1:15,16; 2:11-14).

- b. Works of the flesh condemned (Gal. 5:19-21; Compare Rom. 1:18-32; 13:9,10; 1 Cor. 6:9,10; Eph. 4:25-32; Col. 3:5-10; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 Peter 2:1). Therefore, to engage in these activities is to deny Christ:
 - 1) Murder, Abortion
 - 2) Filthy, corrupt speech (Eph. 4:29; Matt. 12:34-37).
 - 3) Nudity, immodest dress (1 Tim. 2:8-10).
 - 4) Homosexuality, Lesbianism, etc.
 - 5) Adultery, fornication before and after marriage (Heb. 13:4).
 - 6) Dancing, Alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.
 - 7) Dishonesty, stealing, lying, cheating, malice.
 - c. The Lord demands we treat others with love, respect, and integrity (Matt. 22:37-40; 7:12; Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8; Psalm 25:21; Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:3). To fail to do so is to deny the Lord.
7. **All who neglect and forsake God-given responsibilities in the home deny the Lord!** (Gen. 2:21-24; Matt. 19:4-9; 1 Cor. 7:1-5; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21).

III. THE LORD'S PROMISE TO THOSE WHO DENY HIM:

- A. "...Him will I also DENY..." (Matt. 10:33). "...Shall be DENIED..." (Luke 9:12).
- 1. Luke uses the Greek word *aparneomai*, "a strengthened form of ...*arneomai*...with *apo*, from, prefixed...means (a) to deny utterly, to abjure, ...The strengthened form is the verb used in the Lord's warning as to being "denied" in the presence of the angels, Luke 12:9, in the preceding clause, "he that denieth Me," the simple verb *arneomai* is used; the rendering therefore should be "he that denieth Me in the presence of men, shall be utterly denied in the presence of the angels of God" (Vines, p.292).
 - 2. Not just denial, but utter (complete, total, absolute) denial—No ray of hope!
- B. "...Before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:33). "...Before the angels of God" (Luke 12:9). At the **Judgment!**
- 1. All (those who **confess** Him and those who **deny** Him) will stand before Him in Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 17:30,31; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 20:11-15).

2. Those who faithfully confessed the Lord before men will be confessed by the Lord before the Father and the angels.
 - a. "...Well done, thou good and faithful servant..." (Matt. 25:21,23).
 - b. "...Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world..." (Matt. 25:34).
 - c. To him that overcometh (Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21).
3. Those who denied the Lord before men will be utterly denied by the Lord before the Father and the angels.
 - a. "...I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:23).
 - b. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 25:30).
 - c. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).
 - d. Utterly, completely, and eternally banished from the presence of the Lord (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - e. This is the Lord's promise!

CONCLUSION:

1. Are you denying the Lord before men?
 - a. Peter denied the Lord, but he repented (Matt. 26:34-75; Mark 14:30-72; Luke 22:34-61).
 - b. Are you willing to repent?
 2. Are you becoming discouraged as a Christian in the face of trial and persecution or heavy burdens? Are you considering giving up the fight? Then, consider the Lord's promise — **"Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven"** (Matt. 10:33).
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I Will Build My Church

Matthew 16:18

Lenard Hogan

1. Time A.D. 32
 - a. Promise was made after John the Baptist was dead.
 - b. This eliminates John building the church.
2. The promise was made to the disciples. Mark 8:27-32; Luke 9:18-22
 - a. Asked them whom do men say I am.
 - b. Not anything said about the church by Mark or Luke.
3. Jesus and the disciples were near Caesarea Philippi.
 - a. The place had been known as Panium.
 - b. Improvements made by Philip the Tetrarch of Trachonitis.
 - c. Renamed Caesarea Philippi to honor Caesar and himself.
 - d. It was a strongly fortified place.
 - e. It was located near the foot of Mr. Hermon.
 - f. The northernmost point of Jesus' travels recorded.

DISCUSSION:

I. JESUS QUESTIONS THE DISCIPLES ABOUT HIS IDENTITY.

- A. Who do men say that I am?
 1. They answered, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.
- B. Whom do you say that I am?
 1. This is the first recorded time that Jesus had asked them this question.
 2. Peter was the one that answered.
 - a. Thou art the Christ the Son of God.
 - b. Jesus acknowledged that Peter had spoken the truth.
 - c. Christ stated that God had revealed this truth to Peter.

II. JESUS PROMISED TO BUILD HIS CHURCH.

- A. The building of the church was in the future.
- B. He promises to build his church.
 1. Singular, therefore not two or more, but one. The church would include those called to serve God by the word.

2. Jesus' promise eliminated all other religious bodies.
 - a. The strait gate and narrow way is the only way. Matt. 7:13-14
 - b. Possible to worship God in vain. Matt. 15:9
- C. Jesus said the gates of *hades* would not prevail against it. Whatever happened, there would not be anything that would prevail against the building of His church.
- D. The church promised by Jesus will stand forever. Dan. 2:44
- E. With his promise we have the assurance his church was not established by Abraham, John the Baptist or any other.
- F. Physical death was imminent.
 1. His physical death would not keep him from building his church.
 2. He was crucified and buried.
 3. He arose from the dead on the third day.
 4. He did not build his church while he was on earth.
 5. He met with the apostles after his resurrection. Met with part of the apostles the night after his resurrection that morning.
 6. The apostles told to remain in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Luke 24:49
 - a. Apostles were not to leave Jerusalem. Acts 1:4
 - b. Apostles promised the baptism of the Holy Spirit in a short time. Acts 1:5
 7. While talking with the apostles he had not fulfilled the promise of building his church, he ascended into heaven. Acts 1:6-11
 - a. Being instructed to remain in Jerusalem until the Spirit came they did as Jesus had commanded.
 - b. When the church was established they were to preach in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world.
 8. After this, Matthias was selected to replace Judas Iscariot who had fallen by transgression.
 9. Apostles remained in Jerusalem until Pentecost as Christ commanded.
 10. The twelve were together when they were filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - a. They begin to speak as the Spirit directed them.
 - b. Accused of being drunk.

- c. Peter standing with the eleven said not so. This is that spoken by Joel the prophet. Joel 2:28
 - 11. The crowd interrupted the sermon.
 - a. They were convinced they needed to do more than hear the word.
 - b. Asked what shall we do? Acts 2:37
 - 12. They were told to repent and be baptized in order to have their sins forgiven. Acts 22:16 informs us that in baptism our sins are forgiven.
- III. THE PROMISE FULFILLED ON THE FIRST PENTECOST AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.**
- A. He promised to build his church before his death.
 - B. The promise was fulfilled ten days after his return to heaven to be at God's right hand until he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
 - C. We still have the privilege of being a part of His church.
 - 1. All who will obey him can be a part of His church. Heb. 5:8-9
 - 2. We have the plan of salvation in language easy to understand.
 - 3. In our obedience, we are added to the church that Christ promised to build and did build, therefore becoming a member of the Church of Christ. Acts 2:47
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The Promise Of Eternal Life

1 John 2:25

Kenneth Burleson

- 1. Many in the religious world confuse salvation from past sins with eternal life. Mark 16:16 is salvation from past sins.
- 2. Being saved from past sins is not eternal life.
- 3. One can be saved from past sins, but in the future so sin as to be eternally lost.
- 4. An individual saved from past sins must live a faithful life on earth to receive eternal life in the world to come.
- 5. Eternal life is promised to those saved from alien sins and live faithful Christian lives until death or until Jesus comes.

DISCUSSION:**I. SOME IN DENOMINATIONALISM TEACH THAT ETERNAL LIFE IS A PRESENT POSSESSION.**

A. The false doctrine "impossibility of Apostasy" comes out of this false theory.

1. Sam Morris's tract, (*Does a Christian's Sin Damn His Soul?*). "We take the position that a Christian's sins do not damn his soul. The way one lives, his character, what he says, his conduct or his attitude toward other people have nothing to do with the salvation of his soul... All the prayers a man may pray, all the Bibles he may read, all the churches he may belong to, all the services he may attend, all the sermons he may practice, all the debts he may pay, all the ordinances he may observe, all the laws he may keep, all the benevolent acts he may perform will not make his soul one whit safer; and all the sins he may commit, from idolatry to murder, will not make his soul in any danger ... The way a man lives has nothing whatever to do with the salvation of his soul."
2. Gen. 3:3-4, "...shall not surely die." He must have believed they could or he would not have preached to them. The issue is not will he sin, but can he sin so as to be lost. Man is a free agent before and after conversion. Ezek. 18:20. If turn shall live, if not, he shall die. It is that simple.

B. They use the following passages as proof text.

1. John 3:36, "...hath everlasting life...." That is, hath a right to it, and is as sure of obtaining it as if he had it already in possession. More on this in our discussion of John 5:24.
2. John 5:24, "...hath everlasting...." "Neither Jesus, nor the Bible anywhere says that a believer has everlasting life right now, in this life. The verb 'hath' here translates the word *echei* in the phrase *echeizoen aionion*, third person singular of the present indicative of *echoo*. This is an instance of the futuristio present which Danta and Mantey say denotes an event which has not as yet occurred but which is regarded as so certain that in thought it may be contemplated as already coming to

pass." (*A commentary on The Gospel According to John* by Guy N. Woods. p.105)

Eternal life is not an actual realization in this life, yet, because it is so certain in thought, one may speak of it as if it had already come to pass. If one has eternal life, he cannot lose it. Because eternal life cannot be taken away once it is received. Therefore, one does not have eternal life in this life, it is in the life to come after death.

3. They also use John 6:47 and John 10:27-28.

II. ETERNAL LIFE IS NOT A PRESENT POSSESSION; BUT PROMISE.

A. The Promise. 1 John 2:25.

1. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."
2. "...I have given into thine hand Jericho...." (Josh. 6:1-3; Josh. 2:9; Neh. 9:24-27).
3. "For unto us a child is born..." (Isa. 9:6).

B. In hope of eternal life.

1. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2).
2. We hope for that which we do not have (Rom. 8:24,25).
3. "...Lay hold on eternal life...." (1 Tim. 6:12).

C. Eternal life is in the world to come.

1. "...And in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29,30).
2. The distinction is made between "...now in this time and in the world to come" (Mark 10:29,30).

D. Sowing comes first and then the reaping.

1. "...Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).
2. "...He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:8).

E. One must continue in well doing to receive eternal life.

1. Rom. 2:7
2. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

F. After this life, then eternal life.

1. "...Shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25).
2. "...Having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8).

G. Eternal life is after the judgment. So is eternal damnation.

1. "...Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34).
2. "...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).
3. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46).

H. Look at the following.

1. "...Everlasting kingdom..." (2 Peter 1:5-11).
2. "...Receive the crown of life..." (James 1:12).
3. "...And I will give thee the crown of life..." (Rev. 2:10).
4. "...Which is laid up for you in heaven..." (Col. 1:5).
5. "...There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness..." (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

CONCLUSION:

1. To whom are the promises made?
2. Those who have obeyed the Gospel and remain faithful till death.
3. Jesus refers to them as "my sheep" (John 10:27-29).

Those Who Hunger And Thirst After Righteousness Shall Be Filled

Matthew 5:6

Mike Kiser

1. Our Lord used two methods of speech in what we call the beatitudes:
 - a. Anaphora — The repetition of the same word at the beginning of successive sentences... thus adding weight and emphasis to the statements and arguments by calling special attention to them.
 - b. Hyperbation — The placing of a word out of its usual order in a sentence... for the purpose of attracting attention and expressing emphasis. So it is with the use of the word

"blessed." It is a participle placed first in the sentence to call attention to the emphasis placed upon it.

2. Men desire happiness. "Happiness is ____."
- a. Philosophers of old wearied in vain to find out what was man's chief good. Is it pleasure? Wealth? Knowledge? Power? All is indeed vanity!
- b. Happiness does not come from without, but from within. It does not depend on position but on disposition; not on condition but character. It does not depend on what you have, but what you are.
- c. Jesus was telling folks that His kingdom would not be built out of folks who were weak, selfish, and miserable people; but rather that true happiness, complete fulfillment in life, is found in holiness. What we are within. The condition of our heart.
3. Christ possessed not only infinite knowledge of man, but also personal holiness and all truth. He lived out every precept that he taught. No fault or failure to be found in him. (Unlike Moses, Elijah, or David.) 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22
4. Now we come to study this beatitude.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHO ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST?

- A. Understand the object being sought—"righteousness."
 1. It is the opposite of sin. Psalms 19:7 (1 John 3:4; 5:17)
 2. It is not self-righteousness. Luke 18:9, "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous..." Romans 10:3
 3. It is revealed in the Gospel. Romans 1:16,17; 2 Timothy 3:16, "instruction in righteousness..."
 4. It is obtained by obedience to God's will. Matthew 7:21; Acts 10:34, 35; Psalm 119:172; Romans 6:16-18, "obedience unto... servants of..."
 5. A synonym for salvation. Romans 10:9,10
- B. Therefore, we are considering a craving to know and to do God's will. A strong desire to be saved.
 1. Physical appetite is one of the strongest desires. We cannot forget we are hungry. The pleadings of a small child, "Mommy, I'm hungry;" or even a healthy husband's "What's for supper."

2. Man should have a spiritual appetite. 1 Peter 2:2; Matt. 4:4
3. We must want to be saved (righteous before God). Matt. 6:33
- C. That appetite can be stifled, or lost all together. Luke 8:14; 1 Thess. 5:19; Rev. 3:17
 1. There is no spiritual appetite when the heart is choked with worldliness.
 2. This condition is self-induced.

II. HOW ARE WE FILLED?

- A. We truly become righteous. Matt. 11:28-30, "I will give you...ye shall find." (Salvation from past sins)
 1. Not in a negative way. Righteousness is not merely abstinence from open sin and the discharge of eternal duties.
 2. But actually cleansed from sin. Thus, holiness will permeate the heart. Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5
 3. Our disposition toward God and man will be changed.
- B. Progressively righteous. (Presently in a saved state)
 1. Spiritual completeness is not gained all at once. 2 Peter 3:18
 2. From infancy to maturity is a gradual work. Psalms 138:8; Prov. 1:6 (No one expects a babe to act with maturity!)
 3. As we walk in the light we are continually cleansed from sin. 1 John 1:7-9
- C. Perfectly righteous. (Eternal salvation in heaven) 2 Peter 3:13
 1. Not in this life, but in the after-a-while. Rev. 19:8, "...for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."
 2. One day we will bid farewell to sorrow, suffering, and sin, and take our place among the righteous of all ages. Rev. 22:11, "let him be righteous still..."
 3. Over there, no mistakes will be made. We shall be like HIM, and see HIM as HE is. 1 John 3:3; Heb. 4:15

III. WHY THE EMPHASIS ON THIS BLESSING?

- A. Some may view the blessing of righteousness with disappointment.
 1. They think only of the failures they have experienced.

2. Sin is not our way of life. 1 John 3:9
3. That does not mean we are sinless. 1 John 1:7-9
- B. Some may view the blessing of righteousness with too much contentment.
 1. The outward to them is all that really matters. "I've been baptized!"
 2. Jesus warns us by the example of the scribes and the Pharisees. Matt. 5:20; 23:28, "outwardly appear righteous...full of hypocrisy and iniquity."
 3. "All things" must become new. 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:3-4; "Newness of life."
- C. Some may view the blessing of righteousness with ridicule.
 1. The whole concept of sin and salvation is a matter of little or no importance.
 2. Will you treat it this way on the day of judgement?
 3. You cannot say of your worldly aspirations what the Lord says about righteousness! You are not satisfied... and never will be with the things of the world. Are men who hunger and thirst after wealth, power, etc. ever satisfied!
- D. All should view the blessing of righteousness, as the greatest need they have.
 1. For we need to be in God's house to be saved. 1 Peter 4:18
 2. For we need the power of prayer. James 5:16; 1 Peter 3:12
 3. For we need the spiritual protection. 2 Cor. 6:7; Eph. 6:14
 4. For we want life eternal. Matt. 25:46

CONCLUSION:

1. Do you want to be filled with righteousness today? It begins by obeying the Gospel of Christ.
 - a. Believe unto righteousness. Rom. 10:9
 - b. Repent of sins. Luke 15:7; 2 Tim. 2:19, "depart from iniquity."
 - c. Be baptized. Acts 2:38; Matt. 3:15, "fulfill all..."
2. "He that does righteousness (obeys God's will) is righteous." 1 John 3:7
3. May we never forget that righteousness (God's will) will be the standard of judgement. Acts 17:30,31; John 12:48

4. There is a pathetic story of a man who in declining health came south in search of renewed vigor. Every letter written back home said, "There is a wonderful abundance of good food, if I only had the appetite to eat." He died amid plenty! Not for the lack of food, but the lack of appetite.
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Covenants Of Promise

Ephesians 2:12

Charles Leonard

1. Some form of the word "covenant" is found in 280 verses of the Bible.
2. A covenant is an agreement or contract between two or more parties.
3. There are many covenants or agreements found in the Bible, but we generally think of the Old Testament and the New Testament as the two great covenants.
4. The two covenants are referred to in Hebrews 8:7-9.
5. Both covenants were the outgrowth of two promises made to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:18; 26:4).
6. The covenants of promise referred to in Ephesians 2:12 are primarily the Old and New Testaments.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE OLD COVENANT.

- A. The old covenant was given by God through Moses (Exodus 20:1-17).
- B. This covenant was made only to the Jews (Deut. 5:2-3).
- C. It was to be an everlasting covenant until it was fulfilled by Christ (Matt. 5:17,18; Gal. 3:19).
- D. The old covenant was designed to be a schoolmaster to bring man to Christ (Gal. 3:24).
- E. After the system of faith came, man was no longer under the schoolmaster (Gal. 3:25).
- F. The old covenant was taken away to make place for the new (Heb. 10:9).
- G. There was a change of covenants when Christ died on the cross (Rom. 7:6; Col. 2:14; Heb. 7:12).

II. THE NEW COVENANT.

- A. The new covenant was given by Christ (John 1:17).
- B. Unlike the old covenant, it is world wide in scope (Mark 16:15).
- C. The new covenant is to be everlasting (Matt. 24:35; 1 Peter 1:23,25).
- D. This covenant is a better covenant with better promises (Heb. 8:6).
- E. The new covenant went into effect after the death of Christ (Heb. 9:16-17).
- F. The terms of the new covenant were first announced on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem.

III. COVENANTS CONTRASTED.

THE LAW OF MOSES	THE LAW OF CHRIST
The first (Heb. 10:9)	The second (Heb. 10:9).
Given to one nation (Deut. 5:3)	All nations (Matt.28:19)
Was temporary (Gal. 3:19)	Permanent (Gal. 3:24-25)
Moses mediator (Exo. 20:19)	Christ (Heb. 12:24)
Faulty (Heb. 8:7-8)	Perfect (James 1:25)
Old taken away (Heb. 10:9)	New given (Heb. 10:9)
Glorious (2 Cor. 3:9-10)	More glorious (Same)
Animal sacrifices (Heb.9:18-20)	Blood of Christ (Heb.9:12)
Many sacrifices (Heb. 10:11)	One sacrifice (Heb. 9:28)
Sins remembered (Heb. 10:3)	Not so (Heb. 10:17)
Priest had sin (Heb. 7:27)	Christ had no sin (Heb.7:26)
Changeable priesthood (Heb. 7:23)	Unchangeable (Heb. 7:24)
Written on tables of stone (Exo. 24:12)	Written in heart (Heb. 8:10)
Yoke of bondage (Gal. 5:1)	Freedom (Gal. 5:1)
No justification (Gal. 3:11)	Justified (Gal. 3:24)
Only a shadow (Heb. 10:1)	The image (Heb. 10:1)
Were veiled (2 Cor. 3:13-16)	Veil taken away (2 Cor. 3:13-16)
Temporal inheritance (Psa. 105:11)	Eternal inheritance (1 Pet. 1:4)
Kept Sabbath (Exo 20:8)	First day (Acts 20:7)
Born natural birth	New Birth (John 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23)

IV. COVENANTS OF PROMISE.

- A. Both covenants had promises connected with them.
- B. The Gentiles did not have access to either of the covenants of promise until the household of Cornelius.
- C. Under both covenants God expected his people to keep the covenant (Deut. 5:1; Rev. 22:14).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. All covenants have promises that are available.
 - 2. Covenants must be kept in order to receive the promises (Deut. 5:1; Rev. 22:14).
 - 3. Our covenant is a better covenant with better promises.
 - 4. Are we prepared to receive the promises?
-

**But Seek Ye First The Kingdom
Of God, And His Righteousness;
And All These Things Shall
Be Added Unto You**

Matthew 6:33

Stephen Fikes

- 1. Matthew 6:33 is among the most memorized, most quoted verses in Scripture.
- 2. Matthew 6:33 is one of the most doubted and least practiced verses in Scripture.

DISCUSSION:

I. SEEKING REQUIRES EFFORT.

- A. Compare with Matthew 13:45,46.
 - 1. The merchant **SEEKING** pearls **FOUND ONE** pearl.
 - 2. The merchant sold **ALL** that he had to obtain the Pearl.
- B. Compare with Matthew 7:14.
 - 1. The way is "narrow", "tight", "difficult".
 - 2. Few will **FIND** the way.

II. FIRST MEANS FIRST.

- A. First doesn't mean "in place of" or "instead of."
 - 1. We are instructed to work that we might eat (2 Thess. 3:10,12).
 - 2. We are to provide for our own families (1 Tim. 5:8).
 - 3. Husbands and wives have responsibilities to one another (1 Cor. 7:32,33), etc.
- B. First means "higher in priority" — "first in line."

III. THE KINGDOM AND RIGHTEOUSNESS MUST BE GIVEN TOP PRIORITY IN OUR LIVES.

- A. Our duty to God outweighs our duty to others.
 - 1. We must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29).
 - 2. We must be willing to choose God over family (Matt. 10:37, Luke 14:26).
- B. Our duty to God outweighs our concern with fleshly things.
 - 1. Our duty to God must outweigh concern for food and clothing (Matt. 6:25-32).
 - 2. Labor for treasure in heaven must exceed our labor for treasures on earth (Matt. 6:19-21).
 - 3. We must be on guard to avoid the choke-hold of worries, riches, and desires of the world (Mark 4:19 NASB).
- C. "Beliefs have consequences."
 - 1. We must be more concerned about pleasing God than impressing "the boss."
 - 2. We must be more interested in assembling with the saints than in assembling with the Sunday crowd at the ball park.
 - 3. We must place more emphasis on giving to God than giving to General Motors, Microsoft, or Sears and Roebuck.
- D. Righteous is NOT just what we are ON SUNDAY.
 - 1. Jesus did not say "let your light shine" "on Sunday" (Matt. 5:16).
 - 2. We were not "created in Christ Jesus unto good works" "on Sunday" (Eph. 2:10).
 - 3. The Hebrew writer did not say "consider one another to provoke unto love and good works" "on Sunday" (Heb. 10:24).

IV. AND IS CONDITIONAL.

- A. God cares for the righteous (Psalm 37:25).
- B. When we slight God, we can expect little in return (2 Cor. 9:6; Deut. 11:13-17)

V. GOD PROVIDES FOR OUR NEEDS, NOT NECESSARILY OUR WANTS.

- A. What food and clothing doesn't mean —
 - 1. Food and Clothing (Matt. 6:25-32) does not mean Levi Strauss, Neiman Marcus, The GAP, pink salmon, filet mignon, and caviar.
 - 2. Food and Clothing does not mean "four bedroom, two bath" or Ferrari.
- B. Food and clothing does mean "food and clothing."
 - 1. God provides what we need (Psalm 37:25).
 - 2. God provides when we need (Matt. 6:10).
 - 3. We must learn to be content (Titus 6:8; Heb. 13:5; Phil. 4:11).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. When we are ready to obey God, he will begin to bless us.
 - 2. God OFTEN compounds interest (Malachi 3:10; Lev. 25:8-22).
-

Having Therefore The Promise Of The Life That Now Is

1 Timothy 4:8

Windell Fikes

- 1. The Scriptures (1 Tim. 4:8) emphasize the promise of God to His people.
- 2. Blessings from God are promised to us NOW, i.e. in THIS life.

DISCUSSION:

- I. WHO ARE GOD'S CHILDREN AS IDENTIFIED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?
 - A. God's children are those who are saved (Acts 2:47).

- B. God's children are those who are in God's family, the church (1 Tim. 3:15; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26-27), the one body (Eph. 1:22-23).
- C. God's children are those who have obeyed the Gospel (Rom. 6:17-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - 1. One must **hear** (John 6:45; Rom. 10:13-17).
 - 2. One must **believe** (Mark 16:16; John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30-31; Heb. 11:1,6; James 2:17-26).
 - 3. One must **repent** (Matt. 4:17; Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 17:30; 19:19; 2 Peter 3:9; Rev. 2:5).
 - 4. One must **confess** (Matt. 10:32; Acts 19:18; Rom. 10:9-10).
 - 5. One must be **baptized** (immersed in water) to be saved (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; John 3:3,5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26-27; Eph. 4:5; 1 Peter 3:21).
 - 6. After one enters the kingdom or church he or she must remain faithful and exercise godliness (Rev. 2:10).
 - 7. One can be very religious, yet not be a Christian as identified in the New Testament, and, hence, be lost.
 - a. Jesus identified "vain" worshippers (Matt. 15:9; 7:21).
 - b. Paul speaks of ignorant worshippers (Acts 17:23; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- D. Exercise in godliness is profitable.
 - 1. The Greeks placed great emphasis on "bodily exercise" (1 Cor. 9:24-25; 2 Tim. 2:5).
 - 2. The Greek word for exercise is *gymnasia*, used only in 1 Tim. 4:8 in the New Testament (A. T. Roberston).
 - 3. Bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Tim. 6:6).

II. GOD PROMISES BLESSINGS IN THIS LIFE — NOW (2 Peter 1:4)!

- A. "...I am with you always [Grk. 'all the days'], even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20).
- B. God promises "...manifold more [blessings] in this time..." (Luke 18:30; Matt. 19:29).
- C. "...the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:9).
- D. "God...hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness..." (2 Peter 1:3).

- E. "...all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).
- F. James affirms of God "...with whom there can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning" (James 1:17).
- G. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise..." (2 Peter 3:9),

III. CHRISTIANITY HOLDS PROMISE OF LIFE (THINGS) WE HAVE NOW!

- A. Salvation is now — remission of sins (Acts 2:38-39).
 - 1. Salvation is only in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12).
 - 2. Take the helmet of salvation (Eph. 6:17).
 - 3. Work out your salvation (Phil. 2:12).
 - 4. One can obtain salvation (2 Tim. 2:10).
 - 5. Salvation is available to all men (Titus 2:11).
- B. God blesses with a great spiritual family (Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 18:29-30).
 - 1. Fathers
 - 2. Mothers
 - 3. Brothers
 - 4. Sisters
 - 5. Children
- C. God blesses us with food and clothing (Matt. 6:25-26; 1 Tim. 6:8; Psalm 37:25; Mal. 3:10).
- D. God blesses us with lands and houses (Matt. 19:29; 6:33).
 - 1. Consider Job (Job 1:1-4; 42:10-13).
 - 2. Consider Abraham (Gen. 13:2).
- E. God blesses us with prosperity and health through his providence (3 John 2).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Examples are abundant in both the Old Testament and the New Testament of God's spiritual and material blessings to his children who will exercise godliness in their lives NOW.
 - 2. God's promises are true. They will surely come to pass.
 - 3. God gives us the things we need in THIS LIFE and eternal life to come.
 - 4. Surely heaven will be worth it all.
-

The Effectual Fervent Prayer Of A Righteous Man Availeth Much

James 5:16

Walter W. Pigg

1. Though all Bible subjects are important, some are of greater importance than others.
2. Prayer is definitely a subject of paramount importance.
 - a. Prayer is an integral part of the acceptable Christian life.
 - b. Whereas God has communicated with us through His word, we communicate with Him through prayer.
 - c. In spite of the importance of prayer, it is often overlooked to one degree or another.
3. Our subject, "The Effectual Fervent Prayer Of A Righteous Man Availeth Much," sets forth a highly important aspect of prayer.
4. To gain the most from a study of this subject, it is important to understand the terms used.

DISCUSSION:

I. TERMS OF THE SUBJECT DEFINED.

- A. The ASV renders the subject as follows: "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much."
- B. "Effectual fervent prayer."
 1. The word "effectual" is not in the ASV.
 - a. *Vine's* says there is nothing in the original corresponding to "effectual" (p.431).
 2. "Effectual fervent prayer" is translated by "supplication" in the ASV.
- C. "Prayer" in this case is from the Greek *deesis*, which means supplication, an approach to God in prayer.
- D. "Righteous man."
 1. A righteous man (*dikaïos*) is one who does right, who keeps God's commandments.
 2. Thayer defines *dikaïos*: "upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God" (p. 148).
- E. "Availeth much."
 1. The idea here is that of great force.
 2. "Much" is a term of degree, which means more than "a little."

II. CONDITIONS OF PRAYER THAT AVAILS.

A. "A righteous man" is required.

1. This is the just man who keeps God's commandments.
 - a. John says, "...he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (1 John 5:7).
2. "A righteous man" rules out a particular group of people, such as: priests, preachers, elders, teachers, etc.
 - a. The promise, "availeth much" applies to the righteous man whoever he may be.
 - b. Many seem to think a preacher's prayer is more efficacious than that of some other righteous man. I've wondered about the preacher who prays his own prayer before preaching, when someone has already offered a prayer.
3. "A righteous man" excludes those who are unfaithful in doing God's will.
 - a. Yet, sometimes, unfaithful brethren are called upon to lead in public prayer.
 - 1) Some say that if unfaithful brethren are used in the services, that will encourage them to be faithful. By whose authority is such done?
 - b. What of those who are now accepting denominational religion, will their prayers "avail much?"
4. "A righteous man" rules out the alien sinner.
 - a. Peter says, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto his prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Peter 3:12).
 - b. The blind man who was healed said, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31). Though the blind man was not inspired, he spoke according to his understanding, and there was nothing said to refute it.
 - c. Cornelius is not an example of a sinner's prayer being heard.
 - 1) He was obviously worshipping God under the patriarchal law.
 - 2) Until Peter brought the Gospel to him, he could not have obeyed it.

- 3) It was only when Peter brought him the Gospel that he needed to obey it to be saved.

III. SOME THINGS WHICH MAY HINDER ACCEPTABLE PRAYER.

A. Lack of faith in prayer.

1. In asking God for wisdom, James says, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (James 1:5-6).
 - a. James goes on to say that the wavering man should not think "he shall receive anything of the Lord" (v.7).
2. Somewhere I heard the story of the lady who lived on the west side of a high mountain. The sun did not shine upon her house until very late in the morning. Having heard that prayer could move mountains, she prayed one night that the mountain obstructing her view be removed. Awaking early in the morning, she looked out the window facing the mountain. She then exclaimed, "Just as I thought!" The mountain was still there.
 - a. Are we sometimes as guilty when it comes to faith in prayer?

B. Asking for things to satisfy our lusts [pleasures].

1. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts [pleasures]" (James 4:3).
 - a. It is easy to ask God for things which would in no way contribute to our spiritual well-being, but to our hurt. God will not answer such prayers.

C. Asking for that which is contrary to God's will.

1. John said: "And this is the confidence we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:4).
 - a. This rules out praying for God to save people who will not obey his Gospel (Rom. 1:16).
 - b. This disallows asking God to bless people in their practice of error.

D. Asking God to bless us materially when we are able to work but will not.

1. "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thess. 3:10).

- E. Failure to forgive a brother who is deserving of forgiveness (Matt. 6:12-15).
 - 1. Grudges may prevent repentance when the other party has repented.
- F. Insincerity in our requests and thanksgiving.
 - 1. Jesus forbids prayers such as characterized the "hypocrites" when they prayed to be "seen of men," and wanted to be heard for their "much speaking" (Matt. 6:5-7).
- G. Women leading prayer before a mixed audience.
 - 1. Paul makes it clear that men are to lead in prayer. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim. 2:8).
 - a. The word "men" used in the above (*aner*) means men, not women.
 - b. Yet, women leading in prayer is becoming a common thing in some places.

IV. THINGS WHICH MAY DETRACT FROM ACCEPTABLE PUBLIC PRAYER.

- A. Addressing the audience rather than God to whom we should address prayer.
 - 1. It is not all that unusual to hear the one leading prayer refer to God in the third person. This shows that the leader's mind is on those in the audience rather than on God.
 - 2. It is sometimes evident that an effort is being made to teach the audience rather than speaking to the Father.
 - 3. Prayer should be addressed to the Father (Matt. 6:9; Eph. 5:20).
 - a. Denominational people often advocate praying to Jesus for salvation. The only instance of prayer to Jesus in the New Testament is by Stephen (Acts 7:59).
- B. Long, drawn-out prayers.
 - 1. Jesus said, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7).

- a. Have you ever heard someone mention in prayer:
"The preacher, the elders, the deacons, the teachers,
and every member?"
 - 1) Inasmuch as the Father knows our needs (Matt. 6:8), this is not needful.
 - 2) I've known of teenagers debating among themselves, as to how long a certain brother would pray. They were not impressed by a very long prayer.
- C. A sanctimonious or "preacher's voice" should be avoided.
 - 1. A prayer should not be designed to impress people, but to pour out our hearts to God.
 - a. I've heard people lead in prayer, whose voice was so unnatural that they could hardly be recognized by those who knew them well.
 - 2. Closely related to the above is the use of a vocabulary which is so unlike that commonly used by the leader of the prayer. This can make prayer appear artificial, insincere.
- D. A voice which is so low that it cannot be understood by those in the audience.
 - 1. If those who hear the prayer leader wish to make the prayer their own, they cannot say A-men if they did not understand what was said.
 - 2. In most instances when a group meets there are those who cannot hear well.

V. THE PROMISES OF GOD RELATIVE TO PRAYER.

- A. The example of Elias as given by James.
 - 1. "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (James 5:17-18).
 - 2. The example of Elias is that of "a righteous man."
 - a. Though Elias was an unusual person, a prophet, yet of "like passions" as we are.
 - b. This is significant in that it shows God will answer prayer by people like us.

- c. A "righteous man" is indeed a man of prayer, and God will hear him if his prayer is in harmony with God's will.
- 3. Will God answer our prayers (as righteous men) just like he answered Elijah's prayer?
 - a. If the circumstances were the same and the Lord's will the same, there is every reason to believe that God would answer such a prayer.
- 4. Did God perform a miracle in answering Elijah's prayer?
 - a. There is no proof that He did so, but that he worked through the laws of nature to bring about the answer to that prayer is evident.
 - b. It is not necessary for us to understand God's providential means of bringing about answers to our prayers. The important thing is that He does answer prayer.
- B. Other assurances that God will answer acceptable prayers.
 - 1. Jesus teaches us to pray, and taught his disciples to pray (Matt. 6:9-13).
 - a. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7). Why a command to pray if there is no answer?
 - b. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John 16:23).
 - c. "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). This would be subject to the Lord's will, of course.
 - d. Christ engaged in prayer (Matt. 26:39,42,44; John 17).
 - 2. Paul taught us to pray. He also prayed for others and requested their prayers.
 - a. Paul enjoined, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).
 - b. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).
 - c. He exhorted the Colossians: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving, Withal praying also for us..." (Col. 4:2-3).
 - d. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God" (Acts 16:25).

3. John taught us to pray, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22).
 - a. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14).

CONCLUSION:

1. The above and other passages teach us that God will hear the prayers of a righteous man.
 2. How God, through His providence, answers prayers is not always clear, but is clearly evident.
 3. By personal experience, my faith has been emboldened that God answers prayers.
 - a. About three and a half years ago, I became seriously ill in Manila in the Philippines due to a bleeding ulcer. I passed out on the plane when we landed about 9:00 p.m. After being examined by a doctor I went to a place of stay for overnight. During the night I became very ill, vomiting blood and passing blood and in terrible pain. I prayed that God would not let me die in the Philippines. After a frantic call for help, I was taken to a dump of a hospital where they called my wife. She got in touch with brother Ted Lingren, who called brother Felix Garlitos during the half hour he was home for lunch. Brother Garlitos came to my bedside and was there for many hours. He began to encourage me to go to another hospital. He asked the hospital to release me but they said they would have to have some relative do so. He responded, "I am his brother." He was in Christ. I was taken to a responsible hospital where six doctors attended me. I was near death, but my prayer was answered. I did not die in the Philippines.
 - b. Don't tell me that God doesn't answer prayer through His providential means.
 - c. Was it a miracle? No. Through my brethren and a team of doctors, he answered my prayer.
 - d. I thank my God that He answered my prayer! I stand before you as living proof.
-

Having Therefore These Promises

2 Corinthians 7:1

Garland Robinson

1. Thousands of promises are made every day and thousands of promises are broken.
 - a. Many are good at making promises and not very good at keeping them.
 - b. Sadly, many never intend to keep their promises.
2. On the other hand, when God makes a promise, you can rest assured He will keep it.
 - a. Titus 1:2, *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."*
 - b. Josh. 23:14, *"...ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that **not one thing hath failed** of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; **all are come to pass** unto you, and **not one thing hath failed** thereof."*
3. The text of our lesson speaks of some of God's promises.

2 Cor. 7:1, *"**Having therefore these promises**, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."*

 - a. This verse needs to be read as a part of chapter six.
 - b. 6:14-18, *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ¹⁵And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? ¹⁶And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹⁷Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ¹⁸And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."*
4. We, Christians, saints, the church, are God's people, God's temple, God's family.
 - a. God promises:
 - 1) To dwell in us.
 - 2) To walk in us.

- 3) To be our God.
- 4) We will be His people.
- 5) He will receive us.
- 6) To be a Father to us.
- 7) We will be his sons and daughters.
- b. God makes good on His promises, the question is, will we live so as to receive these blessings?

DISCUSSION:

I. GOD HAS PROMISED TO DWELL IN US, WALK IN US, BE OUR GOD, AND TO BE A FATHER TO US.

A. What wonderful, incredible promises these are!

- 1) We are created beings (Psa. 100:3). We are nothing. We have no life on our own (Acts 17:24-28; Job 10:8-12). We cannot compare to the God of the universe (Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6).
- 2) Yet, Jehovah (Psa. 83:18), the great I Am (Exodus 3:14), the first and the last (Isa. 44:6; 48:12), desires to dwell with us, be a Father to us? Amazing!
- 3) We have to be humbled by God making such promises.
 - a) God demands we be humble (Matt. 18:4; 23:12; 1 Peter 5:6; James 4:6,10).
 - b) Pride is opposed to God (Psa. 10:4; Prov. 16:18; Mark 7:20-23).

B. God promises to **dwell in us.**

- 1) He does not dwell in inanimate objects (Acts 7:48; 17:24).
- 2) He dwells in people (Rom. 8:9,11; 1 Cor. 3:16).
- 3) He does not dwell in those who do not obey Him (Matt. 7:21; 1 John 3:24).
- 4) As His Word abides in us, He abides in us and we in Him (1 John 2:24; 3:14; 2 John 9).

C. God promises to **walk in us—with us.**

- 1) Lev. 26:12, *"And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."*
- 2) We walk with those with whom we have agreement (Amos 3:3; cf. Gen. 5:22 Enoch; 6:9 Noah).
- 3) The Lord has promised to be with us always (Matt. 28:20).
- 4) *"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 'But if we walk in*

the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. ... ⁶He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 John 1:6-7; 2:6).

D. God promises to be a **father** to us.

- 1) Do you know what it's like to be an orphan? Fatherless? Homeless? Many do in this world.
- 2) A child growing up without a father is at a great disadvantage.
 - a) He does not have that much needed role-model, example. He does not have that manly influence to guide and direct. He does not have the strength, shelter and protection he needs.
 - b) At a time you need a father the most, to talk to, listen to, receive advice and counsel — imagine him not being there. Many times there is a feeling of hopelessness, helplessness.
- 3) Those who have been washed, sanctified, justified (1 Cor. 6:11), have a loving, heavenly father.
 - a) He cares (1 Peter 5:7).
 - b) He loves (1 John 3:1).
 - c) He gives life (Job 10:12).
 - d) He protects (1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Peter 1:5).
 - e) He provides for (2 Peter 1:3).
 - f) He forgives (Acts 5:31; 13:38; 26:18; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).
 - g) He provides an inheritance of eternal life with Him (Matt. 25:46; 1 John 5:11,13).
 - h) Without a father, these things would not be possible.

E. God promises we will be his **sons and daughters**.

1 Peter 2:9-12, *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: ¹⁰Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. ¹¹Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; ¹²Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas*

they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

F. Consider these divine promises.

1. They are *many*. They are both physical and spiritual (Eph. 1:3; James 1:17; Prov. 28:20; Acts 17:25).
2. They are *varied*. God richly blesses his children in all circumstances, whether in sickness or in health, in riches or poverty, youth or aged, weakness or strength.
3. They are *needed*. They are our rod and staff. They help, support and comfort in every way. 1 Tim. 4:8
4. They are *precious*. There is no comparison. If we forfeit them we lose all. 2 Tim. 1:1; James 1:12; 2 Peter 1:4
5. They are *faithful*. They are reliable. They are sure. Rom. 4:21; Titus 1:2; Heb. 10:23; 11:11; 2 Peter 3:9
6. They are *obtainable*. Heb. 11:33

II. RECEIVING THE PROMISES OF GOD ARE CONDITIONED UPON US DOING WHAT GOD HAS COMMANDED.

A. 2 Cor. 6:14-18

1. To do these things is cleansing ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh.
2. The Lord's way is a separate way from the world.

B. The condition God has given is to be "*separate, touch not the unclean thing.*"

1. Paul includes himself when he says, "*let us cleanse ourselves*" (v.1).
 - a. Those who preach the Gospel must also live the Gospel.
 - b. There was a time when Peter, Barnabas and others did not walk "uprightly according to the Gospel" and Paul rebuked them (Gal. 2:14).
 - c. We must be examples to all (1 Tim. 4:12).
2. Since the command is given, it is within our power to perform it.
 - a. God has never commanded men to do what they cannot do.
 - b. 1 Cor. 10:13

C. To inherit the promises, we must live a holy life.

1 Peter 2:11-12, *"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; ¹²Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."*

D. To inherit the promises, we must be patient.

Heb. 6:12, *"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."*

Heb. 10:36, *"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."*

E. Obedience to the Gospel requires repentance.

1. Repentance means to change the mind, affections, attitude.
2. Old associations and alliances must be separated from.
3. Previous habits and customs must be terminated.
4. *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing..."*
(2 Cor. 6:17).

CONCLUSION:

1. What great and grand promises God has given.
2. Christians are the children of God.
 - a. The one and only true God of all the universe.
 - b. The creator, sustainer, provider, savior.
3. These precious promises prompt us to live soberly, righteously and godly in this world, Titus 2:11-12.
4. Will you do so?
5. Are you doing so?

Repent Of Perish

Luke 13:3,5

Gilbert Gough

1. In preparing the way for Jesus, John the baptizer was "...preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2).

2. Repentance was the thrust of John's preaching, but repentance was the emphasis of New Testament preaching and required of all men.

a. Jesus taught repentance:

- 1) Matt. 4:17, "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
- 2) Mark 1:15, "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."
- 3) Luke 13:3, 5, "I tell you nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
- 4) Luke 24:46, 47, "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

b. Jesus' Apostles, Peter and Paul, taught repentance:

- 1) Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you..."
- 2) Acts 3:19, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (cf. 3:26).
- 3) Acts 17:30, "And at the times of ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."
- 4) Acts 26:20, "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

DISCUSSION:

I. THE BIBLE TEACHES GOD GRANTS REPENTANCE.

- A. First to the Jews: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:30,31).
- B. Next to the Gentiles: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

- C. How does God grant man repentance? By giving motives, incentives to cause them to repent.
1. Rom. 2:4, "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 2. Jesus is an encouragement to repent. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here" (Matt. 12:41).
- D. Why does He grant repentance? He wants all men to be saved!
1. 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 2. 1 Tim. 2:4, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (cf. Rom. 1:16, 17).

II. REPENTANCE IS NOT...

- A. Godly sorrow. "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:9, 10).
1. Worldly sorrow is opposed to godly sorrow. e.g. Jails and penitentiaries are full of people who are sorry they were caught, but Christians are sorrowful for the guilt of sin and are "pricked in their heart."
 2. Recognizing our sins, and God sending His Son to die for us should cause godly sorrow and lead us to repentance.
- B. Despair, remorse, or regret. e.g. "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself..." (Matt. 27:3).
- C. Just quitting sin. Penitent people make restitution where possible. "Bring forth therefore fruit meet for repentance" (Matt. 3:8).

- D. Covering up sin. e.g. David (2 Samuel 11) tried to cover his sins, but remember Numbers 32:23, "...behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out."
- E. Time passing by and people forgetting your sin. God has not forgotten your sin.
 - 1. Prov. 15:3, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
 - 2. Exodus 34:7, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." (Ezek. 18:20-24)
- F. Mere public confession of sin.
 - 1. King Saul to Samuel said, "I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and thy words..." but his life showed he did not repent (1 Sam. 15:24).
 - 2. Sometimes a brother may need to seek forgiveness from a brother personally, but thinks public confession will make it all right, but it may take both (Matt. 18:15-17).
- G. Doing good works and abstaining from some evils. e.g. the praying Pharisee who prayed, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:11,12).
- H. Self-justification by comparison to others. "I'm just as good as they are." (cf. 2 Cor. 10:12).
- I. Blaming others for your sin.
 - 1. Adam blamed Eve; Eve blamed the serpent (Gen. 3:9-13).
 - 2. Aaron blamed the Israelites (Exodus 32:19-24).
 - 3. Saul blamed the people (1 Sam. 15:15-24).
- J. Practical Observation: Some come down the aisle supposedly to repent; however, they say, "If I have offended anyone..." But this is not repentance; it is a display of godly sorrow or show for hiding real sin (like Judas).
 - 1. Public sin needs to be specifically repented of publicly and private sins needs to be repented of privately.

2. Private sins only come before the church when the necessary steps have been taken (Matt. 18:15-17).

III. REPENTANCE IS...

A. It is an act of man.

1. Man must obey God (Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9).
2. Jesus upbraided the cities because they would not repent (Matt. 11:2-24).
3. When the disciples were sent on their limited commission, they were told to preach repentance. "And they went out, and preached that men should repent" (Mark 6:12).

B. It is an act of man having a change of mind and will.

1. The greatest obstacle to the salvation of men is the obstinacy and pride of the human will to sin and cease from sin.
2. The word "repentance" is found over 100 times in the Bible and 34 times in the New Testament.
3. It is a compound Greek word: *meta*- with; *nous*- the mind.

C. It is an act of man turning from sin; saying no to sin.

1. Nineveh turned from sin (Jonah 3:4-6,10).
2. Two sons; one turned from sin (Matt. 21:28,29). "He repented and went..."
3. Luke 15:11ff, The Prodigal Son came home.
4. Acts 16:33, The jailor washed the stripes of Paul and Silas instead of beating them.
5. Acts 19:19, The Ephesians burned their books.

D. It is an act of men whereby the attitude of abhorrence of past life of sin.

1. "To change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence for one's past sins."
2. Psalm 119:104, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."
3. Amos 5:15, "Hate the evil, and love the good..."

IV. WHY SHOULD MEN REPENT?

A. God requires it! (2 Peter 3:9).

B. It is commanded by God (Acts 17:30).

C. Jesus said "Repent or Perish" (Luke 13:3).

D. It is a part of the saving Gospel (Acts 2:38).

V. WHO MUST REPENT?

- A. Erring Christians, "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22, Simon). "Confess your faults one to another..." (James 5:16).
- B. Alien sinners (Acts 2:38).

VI. WHAT ARE THE MOTIVES OF REPENTANCE?

- A. Judgment is coming (Acts 17:30,31; John 5:28,29).
- B. Fear of punishment (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- C. Hope of reward in heaven (1 Peter 1:4).
- D. Love of God.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Is repentance enough? Is it enough to save an individual? No! Repentance is simply saying "no" to sin.
 - 2. After you say no to sin, you must say "yes" to God by confession of your faith in Christ and be baptized for the remission of sins.
 - 3. How long will it take you to repent of your sins?
 - a. Just as long as it takes for you to change your mind and turn from sin.
 - b. On Pentecost it took about 3,000 souls just one sermon to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:14-47).
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We Are Children Of The Promise

Romans 9:8; Galatians 4:28

Bill Crossno

1. Introduction.

- a. The children of Ishmael and Isaac were both offspring of Abraham. But, of these, God chose only the children of Isaac to be peculiar people, and rejected the other. What then if He should do likewise now? Would this imply failure of His promises? No more than it did then. Therefore He may accept those who believe in Christ, as He chose the children of Isaac;

and He may reject those who reject Christ, as He rejected the children of Ishmael, and it will all work no failure of His Word.

- b. The children of the flesh only, which includes all that are at present called Israel, are not children of God, that is, they are not children of Christ because they are children of the flesh. To be born of the flesh, no matter whose flesh it is, is now no grounds of acceptance with God. A whole different birth is necessary.

- 1) But the children of promise are counted for children, that is, are counted for God's Children as it was in the past, so is it now. The children of Isaac alone were Children of promise: and they alone were chosen. In like manner, those only who now believe in Christ are Children of promise, for they who are of belief, the same are the children of Abraham, and his children alone are they.

- 2) Therefore, those only who now believe in Christ will be accepted, all others no matter from whom descended, will be rejected.

- c. "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed" (Rom. 9:8).

- 1) Not through Ishmael, but through Isaac. Only the children of promise are Children of God.

- d. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28).

- 1) In either case, Paul means that Christians (Jews and/or Gentiles) are Children of the promise as Isaac was.

2. Promise.

- a. As a noun, is primarily a low term, denoting a summons, also meant "an understanding to do something, a promise." It frequently stands for the thing promised. Galatians 3:14 "The promise of the Spirit." Hebrews 9:15 "the promise of the eternal inheritance is the promised eternal inheritance." (Vine's Expository Dictionary Of New Testament Words)

- b. The promise as made to Abraham was made to the son of Sarah, born at the time appointed. In verse 6 the unbelieving Israelites are supposed to claim the blessings of the covenant on the ground that these things were promised to Abraham's children, and to say if they are excluded from the kingdom of

God, the word of God will fall to the ground. The unbelieving Israelites is precisely the same as that of Ishmael; but believers have a position similar to that of Isaac. The Gospel being true. God is only acting in reference to Israel's son as He acted of old in reference to the son of Abraham; for the Gospel announces that only believers are heirs of promise, for "they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7), "and if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, heir's according to promise" (Gal. 3:29). (Gospel Advocate, David Lipscomb, J. W. Sheppard, Romans, pp.70-71)

- c. Christians, as Isaac, are the children of promise. The Jews are the children of Abraham according to the flesh. They are the children of Hagar, not of Sarah. The Galatians being Gentiles, could claim none of them. But Paul knew that neither did his natural descendant confer and advantage upon him, nor did they disqualify them. He, though a Jew he was, must be justified by faith, not by works of the Law; or on account of his fleshly relationship to Abraham. They, Gentiles though they were, could be justified by faith, impossible by the Judaizers. (Gospel Advocate, David Lipscomb, J. W. Sheppard, Galatians pp 254-255).

DISCUSSION:

I. CHRISTIANIZES PROMISES TO MAN.

- A. Hear. Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Peter 3:18
- B. Believe. Heb. 11:1,6; Mark 16:16
- C. Repent. Luke 13:3,5
- D. Confess. Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10
- E. Death unto sin but alive unto God. Rom. 6:1-11.
 - 1. Baptism is Essential. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37-38
 - 2. Baptism Demonstrated. Acts 8:26-40
 - 3. Some opposed Baptism. Luke 7:24-35
 - 4. Urgency of Baptism. Acts 16:16-34
 - 5. Baptism and Salvation. 1 Peter 3:19-22
 - 6. Christ's Baptism. Matt. 3:13-17

II. WE ARE "BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST."

- A. In so doing. we are "baptized into death."
 - 1. Baptized into his death.

- a. That is, into the benefits of it and into the likeness of it (Gal. 3:26-29).
- 2. Baptized into a death of our own, "unto sin our old man being crucified with him."
- 3. "We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?"
 - a. Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that we should no longer be in bondage to sin, for he that hath died is justified from sin. Margin says "or released." Mark 10:11-12
- B. The thought is!
 - 1. When Christ died, the Law of Moses no longer had dominion over him.
 - a. By the same taken, when we died with Christ, the Law likewise had no more dominion over us.
- C. Death to sin implies a constant conflict against evil.
 - 1. Col. 3:1-4. Read verses 5-17. Observe the word "therefore" in verses 5 and 12.
 - 2. Phil. 3:12-4:1
- D. Children of promise is not related to Abraham in the flesh, not through the promise as was Isaac. John 1:12; 1 Cor. 4:15; James 1:18; John 3:5

III. A CHRISTIAN'S PROMISES, 2 Peter 1:5-8.

- A. The Christian at work seeking the promise of God. Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-47; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; James 1:22-27
- B. Promise is for the Christian's warfare.
- C. Promises are like the clothes we wear; if there is life in the body they warm us, but not otherwise. When there is living faith, the promise will afford warm comfort, but on a dead, unbelieving heart, it lies cold and ineffectual. It has no more effect than pouring a cordial down the throat of a corpse. William Gurnell. (Spurgeon's Sermons Notes, p.259)
- D. If thou lean upon the promises of God themselves, and not upon Jesus Christ in them, all will come to nothing ...Whence is it that so many souls bring a promise to the throne of grace, and carry so little away from it? They lean upon the promises without leaning on Christ in the promise. Faithful Teate. Ibid

- E. It is when these promises are reduced to experience, when they are seen cleansing us from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, making us partakers of the divine nature, leading us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, filling us with kindness and benevolence, supporting us cheerfully under all our trials. It is then they glorify God "by us." William Jay. Ibid
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Blessed Are The Pure In Heart For They Shall See God

Matthew 5:8

Dewey Medlin

1. Blessed (Happy).
2. In this beatitude is set forth the fulfillment of the deepest longings man has, that has not been granted to him in the fullest sense. (Seeing Him face to face.)
3. But in order to have this longing satisfied, there are some requirements that must be met.
4. This passage says, "There must be a pure heart."

DISCUSSION:

1. WHAT IS THE HEART OF MAN THAT GOD DEALS WITH?

- A. It is the entirety of the spiritual man.
 1. It deals with man's intellect.
 2. It also deals with man's emotions.
 3. It also deals with man's will.
- B. Note what the heart does.
 1. It loves, Matt. 22:37.
 2. It reasons, Luke 5:22, "What reason ye in your hearts?"
 3. It understands, Matt. 13:15.
 4. It obeys, Rom. 6:17-18.
 5. It plans or purposes, 2 Cor. 9:7.
 6. It trusts, Prov. 3:5.
 7. It believes, Rom. 10:9-10.

II. WHAT IS PURITY OF HEART?

- A. A pure heart is one free from evil.
 - 1. Pure gold is gold that is free from dross.
 - 2. Pure water is water free of contamination.
 - 3. A pure heart then is one that is free of evil.
- B. To be pure in heart one must:
 - 1. Think the right things. Phil. 4:8, "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, *think* on these things."
- C. The heart purposes the right things. Phil. 3:13-14, "Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
- D. A pure heart is one that is single in motive.
 - 1. A heart that is single in motive is one that is attuned to God, who will follow him, please him, and do his will without reservation.
 - 2. A substance is called pure when it is without admixture, when it is one thing and not two or more.
 - 3. Matt. 6:24, "No man can serve two masters...."
- E. A pure heart is a God-enthroned heart.
 - 1. The presence of God in any heart is the very negation of everything — evil and insincere.
 - 2. E. L. Hill wrote, "There is no purity of heart apart from absolute enthronement of God in the affections."

III. WHAT IS THE PROMISE ATTACHED TO THE PURE HEART?

- A. No greater privilege can be enjoined on any being than to come into the presence of God.
- B. To the people of old, to see the king's face stood for a great and coveted honor.
 - 1. Absalom, after residing in the capitol for two years without being received at his father's palace, made the petition, "Now therefore let me see the King's face; and

- if there be any iniquity in me let him kill me" (2 Sam. 14:32).
2. The Queen of Sheba said to Solomon, "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom" (1 Kings 10:8).
- C. But however great was their desire to see the earthly king, their desire to see God was even greater.
1. Moses pleaded, "Show me, I pray thee, thy glory."
 2. The Psalmist said, "AS for we, I shall behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake beholding thy form" (Psalm 17:15).
 3. Job said, "Even today is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!" (Job 23:2-3).
- D. This beatitude affirms that the pure in heart shall enjoy the great blessing of seeing God in this life as well as in the next.
1. We cannot see Him with the physical eye. God said to Moses, "There shall no man see me and live" (Exodus 33:20).
 2. John 1:18 declares, "No man hath seen God at any time."
- E. How does the pure in heart see God now?
1. With the eyes of the heart. Yes, the heart has eyes.
 2. Paul speaks of "Having the eyes of your heart enlightened" (Eph. 1:18).
 3. The heart has the capacity to see that which the physical cannot see.
- F. A man in this life sees not only what is in front of his eyes but also what is in his heart.
1. A man who has no interest in astronomy may look into the heavens and see the stars but he sees only a mass of lights.
 2. A man who is deeply interested can call the constellations by name.
 3. A doctor can see in a sick person what one who is not medically informed cannot possibly see.
- G. So it is with the heart. It's knowledge and interests, determines what it sees.

1. Paul said, "To the pure, all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure but both their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:15-16).
 2. John said, "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him" (1 John 3:6).
- H. Notice some ways in which the pure in heart see God.
1. They see him in the physical creation.
 2. They see him in his manifold blessings (Eph. 1:3).
 3. They see him when they know Christ who dwells in them. Jesus said to Phillip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the father" (John 14:9).

CONCLUSION:

1. The pure in heart shall see him in all of these, but the greatest of all is that when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, we shall see the father perfectly when we behold him face to face.
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Ask And It Shall Be Given You, Seek And Ye Shall Find, Knock And It Shall Be Opened Unto You

Matthew 7:7

Paul Curless

1. Matt. 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:"
 - a. This verse makes crystal clear that God desires to provide good things for his children—those who are members of the Lord's church (Matt. 7:11).
 - b. Just as parents love to give their children good gifts, so our heavenly Father desires to give Christians good things.

- c. Of course one must not leave out the fact that ACTION on the part of the Christian is a must, in order to enjoy the blessings of the Father-Son relationship (Matt. 7:9).
2. The verbs "ask," "seek," and "knock" are in the present tense showing that a continuous action is required.
 - a. The use of the imperative mood stresses the necessity of the action given by our Lord as absolutely essential to the act of Prayer.
 - b. It goes without saying that prayer is granted by God "according to his will" (1 John 5:14).
3. Let us look at some examples of those who ASK for answers.

DISCUSSION:

I. ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU (Matt. 7:7).

- A. Christ said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).
 1. Several things need to be pointed out in this verse.
 - a. One must abide in Christ as a faithful Christian and Christ's teachings (words) must abide in him or there is no need to ask!
 - 1) After all, didn't Jesus say, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48)?
 - 2) When one does ask, it must be according to God's will, not ours (1 John 5:14).
- B. On the day of Pentecost, after hearing Peter preach that first gospel sermon in which he informed the Jews, "...that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36), What did they ask?
 1. "What Shall We Do?" (Acts 2:37)
 - a. Did Peter inform them of the "Sinners Prayer" and tell them to believe and accept Jesus as their personal Saviour and join the church of their choice; as Mr. Billy Graham no doubt did at the Nashville Adelphia Coliseum, June 1-4, 2000?
 - 1) Rubel Shelly (Woodmont Hills, Nashville, TN), along with approximately six other so-called

churches of Christ evidently wholeheartedly agreed. Such partnership makes them guilty by Association (2 John 9-11).

2) Rubel Shelly stated in his bulletin dated June 7, 2000, "Billy Graham preached the 'core' message of the gospel for four nights."

3) He went on to inform his congregation to, "please partner with Christ to help any of these new 'believers' whom you know to exercise their 'right' to grow, bear fruit, and experience the abundant life to which he has summoned them."

b. Peter emphatically informed those Jews to "...Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). (During one of Mr. Graham's 'core' sermons, he quoted Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:15,16, but intentionally left out the term "baptism" from Peter's words and Christ's words)!

1) Of Peter we read, "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation..." (Acts 2:40-41).

2) They Asked the right question, "What Shall We Do?" Peter gave them the right answer, "Repent and be baptized." All who obeyed these simple commands, the Lord added to his church (Acts 2:47).

C. Some religious denominational people know not what they Ask!

1. Some ask for the Baptism of Fire (Matt. 3:11,12).

a. This particular baptism has not yet been fulfilled. John says that Jesus, who is to come after him will, "...baptise you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire."

1) Verse 12 explains the fire, "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

2) The Bible makes it plain that this baptism is only for the wicked and all those outside the body of Christ, the church. The baptism of fire is speaking of judgment upon the wicked.

- a) The book of Revelation records, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15).
 - b) If ever a person should try to miss something, it's the baptism of fire; which is the second death (Rev. 20:14; 21:8).
2. We must continue encouraging everyone to "...Ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein..." (Jer. 6:16).
- a. All those who 'ask' and obey God's commands, "...shall find rest for your (their) souls..."
 - b. But, unfortunately as the hard-hearted Jews were in the days of Jeremiah, so are the majority today. Most are saying by their actions, "...we will not walk therein."
 - c. We are told in John 15:7 that all must abide in Christ and obey his will or there is no need to 'ask' anything!

II. SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND (Matt. 7:7).

- A. The passage informs us that one must be seeking in order to find.
- 1. For what is one to 'seek' – spiritually speaking?
 - a. One must seek the truth (John 8:32).
 - b. In order for one to seek the truth, one must honestly be willing to examine all the evidence of God's written Word. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).
 - 1) "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).
 - 2) Why should one examine God's written Word? Because it is complete and will provide man with all he needs to know to get right with God (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- B. The reason why many are confused about religion and do not understand the truth is because they are not asking, seeking, or knocking.
- 1. The majority are claiming to be a part of some sort of religious affiliation. However, they wish to continue their own life-style (lusts and desires) without having to comply with God's Word.

- a. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day refused to examine his claims and proofs (Matt. 26:57-68; also see Jer. 6:10-17 and Acts 7:51ff).
 - b. Multitudes are doing the same today: liberals, anti's, agnostics, atheists, and all false teachers. But brethren, they have no excuse (Rom. 1:18-20).
 - c. Therefore, we have an awesome responsibility to awake people out of their sleep (1 Thess. 5:6); and seek the truth (John 8:32), rather than continuing in a 'make believe' religious setting which offers no hope of heaven (Eph. 2:12).
- C. Those seeking must be willing and able to distinguish between truth and error.
1. Both exist! Truth (John 17:17) and Error (Matt. 13:25; John 8:44; Gal. 5:19-21).
 2. A great many refuse or fail to see the difference. Isaiah 5:20 records, *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"*
 3. How does one distinguish truth from error?
 - a. First, one must cast aside all preconceived doctrines/teachings of men (Matt. 15:9).
 - b. Study God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 John 4:1).
 - c. Do as the Bereans did, in that *"...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"* (Acts 17:11).
 - d. Finally, one must obey God's plan — Father's will (Matt. 7:21).
 4. We have a Bible example of one who was seeking.
 - a. The Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39).
 - 1) He actively sought the truth by traveling a thousand miles to Jerusalem to worship God (v.27).
 - 2) He studied God's Word (v.28).
 - 3) He welcomed help in understanding God's truth (v.31).
 - 4) After being taught God's plan for salvation he obeyed (vs. 37,38).
 - 5) Having become a Christian, he went on his way rejoicing (v.39).

III. KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED UNTO YOU (Matt. 7:7).

- A. A number of years ago a close relative agreed to a Bible study. We lived in different states so I assured him that I would contact a congregation near him who would call and set up a time convenient for him to come and study the Bible with him and his family.
 - 1. A few weeks later I called to see how the study was progressing.
 - 2. To my surprise, he informed me that no one had even called him let alone come to his house!
 - 3. So another call was made to another congregation and they responded immediately; taught the family and five people obeyed the Gospel of Christ.
- B. The point is this, when people are knocking we must understand the urgency and open the door!
 - 1. Two reasons why:
 - a. Our time to do the Lord's work is short (John 9:4; James 4:14).
 - b. People are dying daily and going into eternity lost. As the Hebrew writer said, "*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*" (Heb. 9:27). Also see Matthew 25:46.
 - 2. Brethren, we must be ready when people are knocking. Remember, Jesus left heaven and came to this earth to, "...seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). He has done his part (Phil. 2:6-8). We must do ours (Matt. 28:19,20).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. There are those who are asking, seeking, and knocking.
- 2. Let us make sure we are prepared to teach them the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4).
- 3. After obedience, let us teach them to be " ...stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord..." (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - a. If we are not able to teach them, let us prepare others to do that by supporting men to attend the "Best School Of Preaching In The Brotherhood—Northwest Florida School Of Biblical Studies."

- b. You can rest assured that these men, having been trained at this school, will go out and "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the Saints" (Jude 3).
-

And The Peace Of God Which Passeth All Understanding Shall Keep Your Hearts And Minds Through Christ Jesus

Philippians 4:7

Tom W. Snyder

1. Promises are important to us, especially promises of God.
2. In Phil. 4:7, we have a promise of peace.
3. It comes within a portion of Scripture dealing with our Christian living.
4. Consider briefly the context of our promise:
 - a. We live rejoicing in the Lord. v.4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.
 - b. We live reflecting the glory of Christ. v.5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.
 - c. We live relying on the Lord. v.6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.
 - d. We live in a refuge in Christ. v.7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
5. Let us now consider this last verse, concerning the precious promise of peace—

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE SUBJECT OF THE PROMISE—"and the peace of God."**
 - A. Peace, defined according to Thayer's:
 1. "...A state of national tranquillity, exemption from the rage and havoc of war;

2. Peace between individuals, that is, harmony, concord;
 3. Security, safety, prosperity, felicity, (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous);
 4. Used of the Messiah's peace, the way that leads to peace (salvation);
 5. Used of Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is;
 6. The blessed state of devout and upright men after death."
- B. While the definition of peace is essentially the same between man and man, and between God and man, two things set it apart:
1. The degree of peace, and—
 2. The actuality of peace.
 3. Man often falls short in these areas.
- C. This peace of God was the object of prophecy.
1. Many of the prophets spoke of this peace but none as much as Isaiah.
 2. Notice the prophecies of peace according to Isaiah:
 - a. Prince of Peace, 9:6,7
 - b. Perfect peace, 26:1
 - c. Peaceable habitation, 32:17,18
 - d. Publisher of peace, 52:7
 - e. Chastisement of peace, 53:5
 - f. Covenant of peace, 54:10
 - g. Great peace, 54:13
 - h. Comforting peace, 66:12,13
- D. This peace has been demonstrated:
1. Job, Job 1:21
 2. David, Psalms 4:8
 3. Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego, Daniel 3:16-18
 4. Esther, Esther 4:16
 5. Stephen, Acts 7:60
 6. Peter, Acts 12:6
 7. Paul, Philippians 4:11

II. THE DEPTH OF THE PROMISE- "which passeth all understanding."

- A. There are limitations of man's ability to know.
- B. Why some things of God passeth all understanding:
 - 1. Because of the glory and grandeur of a thing, Rom. 11:33-36, Psa. 40:5; 131:1; Deut. 29:29; Rom. 11:34.
 - 2. Because of the limitations of the flesh, 1 Kings 3:7; 2 Cor. 12:2-4.
 - 3. Because of sin that indwells, Isa. 44:18; 56:11; Matt. 13:14-15.
 - 4. Because of hard hearts.
 - 5. Because of spiritual immaturity, Luke 22:32.
- C. There have been many vain and worthless attempts at peace with God and fellow man. This is demonstrated by man's attempts at peace according to his own wisdom.
 - 1. Humanism removes God and puts the prospect of peace totally within himself. Man seeks peace only on his own merits.
 - 2. Materialism seeks peace only in things of this world—the more we have, the more at peace we are with self, spouse, children, job, etc.
 - 3. Premillennialism looks to a time of worldwide peace with Christ sitting on His throne in Jerusalem, reigning.
 - 4. Denominationalism says, "Just believe," "Just love," "Just trust," "Just pray."
 - 5. "Once saved, always saved," denies any disruption of peace regardless how one lives his life.
 - 6. "Unity in diversity" denies the possibility of peace with fellow man and affirms "Peace, peace when there is no peace."
- D. Man aptly shows the truth of Isaiah's statement of long ago: Isa. 59:8, "The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace."
- E. Can we know peace and the way of peace?
 - 1. We might not comprehend all there is of this great blessing of peace, but we can know peace with God.
 - 2. Jesus came to give this way of peace, Luke 1:79.
 - 3. His is a unique peace, John 14:27.
 - 4. His is a single peace, Matt. 10:34.

F. Evidences of peace:

1. Jesus brought peace to one with an unclean spirit, Mark 1:25.
2. Jesus brought peace to a sea, Mark 4:39.
3. Jesus brought peace to a woman with an issue of blood, Mark 5:34.
4. Jesus brought peace to a sinner, Luke 7:50.

G. Statements of peace from the "King of peace":

1. Matt. 11:28, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
2. John 14:1, Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
3. John 14:27, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.
4. John 16:33, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

H. Affirmations of peace:

1. Rom. 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."
2. Eph. 2:14, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."
3. Eph. 6:15, "And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace."
4. Col. 1:20, "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."
5. 2 Thess. 3:16, "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all."

III. THE OBJECTIVE OF THE PROMISE—"shall keep your hearts and minds."

A. What is meant by "shall keep?"

1. "...to guard, to protect by a military guard, either to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight."

2. Metaphorically: "to protect by guarding, to keep; by watching and guarding to preserve one for the attainment of something."
- B. Things the Lord has not promised to keep:
 1. Health
 2. Physical life
 3. Freedom from personal problems
 4. Global or even national or community peace
 5. Freedom from temptations
 6. Power over our personal choice to depart
- C. God desires the mind and heart of man, but man has been given power over his own mind, to do with it as he pleases. This is well demonstrated in the promise God made to Solomon, 1 Chron. 28:9.
- D. Hence, the Bible says a lot concerning the state of our minds. It speaks of minds being:
 1. Evil affected, Acts 14:2
 2. Changed, Acts 28:6
 3. Blinded, 2 Cor 3:14
 4. Corrupted, 2 Cor. 11:3
 5. Wearied and fainting, Heb. 12:3
 6. Pure, 2 Peter 3:1
 7. Of a mind to work, Neh. 4:6
 8. Wicked, Prov. 21:27
 9. Forgetful, Jer. 3:16
 10. Hardened with pride, Dan. 5:20
 11. Doubtful, Luke 12:29
 12. Ready, Acts 17:11
 13. Humble, Acts 20:19
 14. Reprobate, Rom. 1: 28
 15. Persuaded, Rom. 14:5.
- E. Herein is protection for the mind, that it may be as God desires it to be.

IV. THE EXECUTOR OF THE PROMISE—"through Christ Jesus."

- A. Christ is the agency of this peace.
- B. What is necessary to procure peace?
 1. Desire, Jesus has this desire.
 2. Power, man falls short—God does not, Rom, 8:39.

3. Wherewithal, He has all it takes—starting with His blood.
- C. How do we obtain this peace?
 1. Through obedience to the Gospel. Rom. 5:1; Eph. 6:15; Acts 22:16
 2. By applying principles of peace, James 4:1-4.
 3. By trusting in the Lord, Psa. 18:2; 56:11.
 4. Work, James 1:22.
 5. Remembering the world to come, 1 Tim. 6:17.

CONCLUSION:

1. Many promises are made to us as we go through this world.
 2. Here is a promise that will not fail.
 3. It is, however, a conditional promise.
 4. We must be willing to accept the terms of this peace that He has provided.
-

**All Things Work Together
For Good To Them That Love
God, To Them Who Are Called
According To His Promise**

Romans 8:28

Charles Blair

1. Christians are perplexed at times because they do not understand why things are happening to them in their lives.
2. We live under a system in which God does not speak to us directly but speaks through His divine Word. 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 1 Cor. 2:13
3. We must then come to the Word of God in order to find the answers for those questions, which arise because of the difficulties of life. 2 Peter 1:3
4. The answers lie so often in learning to trust the promises of God.
5. The passage in Romans 8:28 is such a place for Christians to go to find peace in troubling times.

DISCUSSION:**I. LET US SEARCH THE WILL OF GOD ON THIS PASSAGE BY CONSIDERING THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT IS GIVEN:**

- A. We start by looking at the hardness of the way for the Christian as stated in Romans 8:26.
 - 1. Here in this verse we see the word, "infirmities."
 - 2. It is defined as weakness, indicating inability to produce results (Vines).
 - 3. Hence, something was taking place which was flooding the soul of the Christian.
 - 4. Are we left with no help?
 - 5. Here, Paul shows us the activity of the Spirit of God.
- B. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities.
 - 1. In the KJV version the idea of "helpeth" is that He, the Spirit, continues to help the Christian who is being flooded by the things of life itself.
 - 2. The problem is that under such circumstances we are so perplexed that we do not know what we should pray for at that time.
 - 3. We are groaning in our spirit.
 - a. We would have a very dim view of deity if we believe that one member of the godhead (the Spirit) groaned to another member of deity (the Father).
 - b. We are the ones groaning.
 - c. Why? Because we do not know what to pray for under the present circumstance.
 - d. The Spirit then takes our groaning and He makes intercession for us through the Son to the Father.
 - 4. Under such dire circumstances we find the promise from God that the Spirit of God is always there even when our hearts are so heavy that words cannot come from our lips.
 - a. Song, "Does Jesus Care" fourth stanza. "Does Jesus care when I've said goodbye to the dearest on earth to me, and my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks—is it aught to Him? Does He see? O yes, He cares; I know He cares, His heart is touched with my grief; When the days are weary, the long nights dreary, I know my Savior cares."

- C. The context is of the suffering saint who needs the Holy Spirit to make intercession for him.

II. THE CONTEXT PAST VERSE 28 SPEAKS ABOUT THE IDEA OF PREDESTINATION:

- A. Who are those who are predestinated?
 - 1. The ones who are called (Rom. 8:30).
 - 2. How are we called? By the Gospel (Rom. 10:13,14; 2 Thess. 2:14).
 - 3. When we respond to the call, God therefore justifies us through our obedience (Rom. 5:1; 1 Cor. 6:11).
 - 4. When we are justified, we can therefore bring glory to God through His Son, Jesus Christ through the church (Eph. 3:21).
- B. God therefore did not predestine individuals but rather predestined the kind of individuals who would be saved through His Son, Jesus.
- C. Those who understand that being a child of God is a life long proposition will remain faithful and be saved at the end of the way (Rev. 2:10; Col. 1:23; Heb. 11:6).

III. NOW WE LOOK AT VERSE 28 IN THIS ESTABLISHED CONTEXT:

- A. We know certain things.
 - 1. This knowledge arises from the revealed will of God in the Bible.
 - 2. We observe life and the scriptures shows us certain things about the nature and promises of God.
- B. We know that all things work together for our good.
 - 1. The word "good" here is *agathos* (Greek).
 - a. Strong's renders it benefit, good, well.
 - b. Vines describes it as that which being good in its character is beneficial in its effect.
 - 2. "We are not to think this passage means that everything that happens is good." (James Boyd's commentary on Romans—"A System of Salvation")
 - 3. Consider the examples of the death of James (Acts 12) and Paul and Silas in jail (Acts 16).

C. What it means is, that if we remain faithful to God and die in Christ then whatever happened to us was for our ultimate benefit, that is eternity with God.

1. The called according to His purpose (that is conformed to the image of His Son).
2. Those that love Him.

IV. WE ALL HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE IN OUR EARTHLY JOURNEY:

A. We can choose to be conformed to the image of God's Son.

1. Allowing no one or nothing to separate us from the love which we have for God (Rom. 8:38,39).
2. If that love stays strong, then no matter what happens we know God is there and He will see us through it.
3. Heaven will be our home.

B. We can choose to reject the call of God through the Gospel.

1. A question which we should ask then is the one raised by our Lord, what will a man give in exchange for his soul.

C. The joy and peace we have as faithful Christians is in knowing that when this life is finished, heaven will be our home (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

I Will Come Again

John 14:1-3

Terry Joe Kee

1. There are many false doctrines concerning the second coming of our Lord.
2. There are those who believe there will be no second coming of Jesus.
3. There are those who believe the second coming of the Lord has already passed (Max King and his followers).
4. Many hold to various doctrines concerning the thousand years of Revelation 20 (amillennialism, postmillennialism, premillennialism, and all their various doctrinal diversions).

5. Then there are the atheist, agnostic, and infidel who deny that Jesus is the Christ or that anyone will enjoy life after death (At best these are simply not sure what may come).
6. The Bible is inerrant, infallible, accurate, enduring and trustworthy.
 - a. All of this can be proven but is not the subject of this discussion.
 - b. These things are accepted as we begin this study.
7. These chapters (14-16) of John's Gospel are addressed to the apostles.
8. These are words of comfort and encouragement to these who are troubled.
 - a. To be troubled is to *agitate, to trouble the mind, to terrify, to perplex with doubt.*
 - b. In the midst of supper, Jesus has told them that one of them would betray Him; that one would deny Him three times; and that He would die. All these things would be very troubling to the apostles.
 - c. In comforting the apostles, Jesus promises them that although He must leave them, He will come again.
9. What does this mean? What is expressed in the words, "I will come again?"

DISCUSSION:

I. JESUS SAID, "I."

- A. Who is coming is important.
 1. Samuel came back once to confront Saul, but Samuel is not coming this time.
 2. Moses and Elijah were transfigured with Jesus, but they are not returning.
 3. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have gone before us and one day we can sit with them, but they are not returning.
 4. David, nor any other worthy of old, will bring any comfort to troubled hearts.
- B. It does not bring comfort to any soul to think that Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, Mohammed, John Calvin, Martin Luther, or any other man would be coming back.
- C. The power of these words begins with who is coming—"I will come again."
- D. Who is this Jesus that is coming?

1. The Last Adam. 1 Cor. 15:45
2. Our Advocate. 1 John 2:1
3. The Almighty. Rev. 1:8
4. Alpha and Omega. Rev. 1:8
5. Amen. Rev. 3:14
6. The Anointed. Psalm 2:2
7. The Apostle. Heb. 3:1
8. The Author and Finisher of our faith. Heb. 12:2
9. The Beginning and the End. Rev. 22:13
10. The Blessed and only Potentate. 1 Tim. 6:15
11. The Branch. Jer. 23:5
12. The Bread of Life. John 6:48
13. The Bridegroom. Matt. 9:15
14. The Bright and Morning Star. Rev. 22:16
15. The Captain of our salvation. Heb. 2:10
16. The Chief Shepherd. 1 Peter 5:4
17. The Chief Cornerstone. 1 Peter 2:6
18. Christ Jesus our Lord. 1 Tim. 1:12
19. The First Begotten of the dead. Rev. 1:5
20. God's dear Son. Col. 1:13
21. The Head of the church. Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18,24
22. Our High Priest. Heb. 4:14
23. The Great "I Am." John 8:58
24. The Jehovah of the Old Testament. Isa. 40:3
25. The Judge of all the earth. Acts 10:42
26. The King of kings. Matt. 21:5; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14
27. The Lamb of God. John 1:29
28. The Lord of lords. 1 Tim. 6:15
29. The Only Mediator. 1 Tim. 2:5
30. The Only Begotten of the Father. John 3:16; 1:14
31. The Great Physician. Matt. 9:12
32. The Propitiation for our sins. 1 John 2:2
33. The Resurrection and the Life. John 11:25
34. He is Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. 1 Cor. 1:30
35. The Savior of the World. 1 John 4:14
36. The Chief, Good and Great Shepherd. 1 Peter 5:4; John 10:11; Heb. 13:20
37. The Unspeakable Gift of God. 2 Cor. 9:15
38. The Vine. John 15:1

- 39. The Way the Truth and the Life. John 14:6
- 40. The Word of Life. 1 John 1:1
- E. This is the One who is coming. There is no greater.

II. JESUS SAID, "I WILL."

- A. Jesus did not say I may come; or I might come; or I could come; or if you are good I will come; or if you are bad I will come—He said, "I will come again."
- B. This is an absolute declaration of fact!
- C. Jesus never said, "I will" do anything that He has not done.
 - 1. Jesus said, "I will build my church" and He did. Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:1-47
 - 2. Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men" and He did. Matt. 4:19; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 5:42; Col. 1:23
 - 3. Jesus said concerning the Holy Spirit, "I will send him unto you" and He did. John 16:7; Acts 2:1-4
 - 4. Jesus said, "I will rise again" and He did. Matt. 27:63; 1 Cor. 15:1-8
 - 5. Jesus said, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come" and he did. Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11; Acts 20:7
 - 6. Jesus said of Saul, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" and He did. Acts 9:16; 2 Cor. 11:23-28
 - 7. Repeatedly to the seven churches of Asia Jesus said, "I will" and with every declaration there is the assurance of its fulfillment. (cf. Rev. 2:5,7,10,16; 3:3,5,9,12,16, 20,21).
- D. Every time Jesus has ever said, "I will" do anything, He has always kept His Word and done exactly what he has said he "will" do without one exception!
- E. When Jesus ever says, "I will" we ought to read carefully to see what is being promised, because we can be assured it "will" come to pass.
- F. The power of this statement is in the word of Jesus when He says, "I will come again."

III. JESUS SAID, "I WILL COME."

- A. Whatever Jesus has willed has always come to pass.
- B. Jesus is not referring to His going, but His coming.

1. Jesus had told them repeatedly He would "go." John 13:36; 14:2,3,4,28; 16:5,7,16,17
2. Jesus had to go to receive the kingdom. Dan. 7:13,14
3. Jesus first had to go from them before He could come again to receive them unto Himself.
- C. Jesus is not coming to usher in a coming kingdom.
 1. He has already established the kingdom. Mark 9:1; Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-4; 2:38-47; Col. 1:13,14; Rev. 1:10
 2. Jesus is coming back—this should be sobering to everyone.

IV. JESUS SAID, "I WILL COME AGAIN."

- A. Jesus is not coming to redeem man from his sins—He did that the first time he came. Heb. 9:27,28; 10:9,10
- B. Jesus is coming back to destroy the last enemy—death. 1 Cor. 15:25,26
- C. Jesus is coming to judge the world in righteousness. Acts 17:30,31; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12; Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9
- D. Jesus is coming back to claim his own.
 1. The Lord knows those who are His. 2 Tim. 2:19
 2. All who are His shall be given to the Father. 1 Cor. 15:24
- E. He is coming back in order that every eye should see Him, every knee should bow to Him and every tongue should confess to Him. Rev. 1:9; Phil. 2:5-11

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus is coming back one day.
 2. We do not know the day nor the hour when He shall come.
 3. We must be ready every hour, so that when He comes again it will be a glorious day and not a terrible, dark and troubling one.
-

He That Believeth And Is Baptized Shall Be Saved

Mark 16:16

Randy McQuade

1. God has promised, in his Word, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*" (Mark 16:16).
2. God does not lie.
 - a. He has no need or reason to lie (Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29).
 - b. It is an impossibility (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).
 - c. His Word is truth (John 17:17).
 - d. Therefore, we can rely upon God to deliver on his promises.
3. However, promises are not without condition.
 - a. Deut. 28
 - 1) "If..." (v.1)
 - 2) "But..." (v.15)
 - b. Joshua 23:14-16
 - c. 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1
 - d. Mark 16:16

DISCUSSION:

I. BELIEF + BAPTISM = SALVATION.

- A. Belief is necessary for salvation (Heb. 11:6).
 1. Believe the gospel (Mark 16:15-16).
 - a. It is God's saving power (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:21).
 2. Belief is not the only requirement for salvation.
 - a. James 2:14-26
 - b. Are the devils saved (James 2:19)?
 - c. Were these saved (John 12:42-43)?
 - d. What about Agrippa (Acts 26:27-28)?
 - e. Why do you suppose Felix trembled (Acts 24:25)? Did that mean he was saved?
- B. Baptism is also necessary for salvation.
 1. Baptism saves (1 Peter 3:21; Mark 16:16).
 2. Baptism removes sin (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
 - a. Sin is what separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Ezra 9:15).
 - b. The separation being removed, we are reconciled through Christ (through baptism) (Gal. 3:26-29).

3. Baptism puts one into Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3).
 - a. In whom we receive the promises (Gal. 3:29).
 - b. In whom redemption is found (Eph. 1:7).
 - c. In whom all spiritual blessings are found (Eph. 1:3).
4. Baptism puts one into the Body of Christ, the church (1 Cor. 12:13), where the saved are added (Acts 2:47).
5. Baptism allows one to contact the blood of Christ.
 - a. The blood is what saves (1 Peter 1:18-19; Eph. 1:7).
 - b. The blood is contacted in baptism.
 - 1) His blood was shed "for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28) just as baptism is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).
 - 2) Jesus shed his blood in his death (John 19:34) and we are baptized into his death (Rom. 6:3).
6. Through baptism, one is born again (John 3:3-5).
 - a. Denominationalists would have you believe that being "born of water" refers to the physical birth while "and of the Spirit" refers to the spiritual birth. The fact that Jesus uses the word "again" in the passage clearly shows that the physical birth is not even under consideration. Also, notice how the word "and" links water and Spirit together (the second "of" being provided by the translators).
7. All of these things (being put into Christ, having sins washed away, being cleansed by his blood, being born again etc.) amount to the same thing: BEING SAVED!
- C. Converts to Christianity in the first century practiced belief *and* baptism.
 1. Acts 2:36-41,47; 8:12-13,36-38; 9:5-6,17-18
 2. Acts 22:10-16; 10:47-48; 16:14-15; 16:31-34
- D. If people in the 1st century could understand this, why can't people in the 21st century understand it?
 1. There were no denominations in the first century to cloud the waters on such a simple matter!
 2. The Word of God has long been obscured by the doctrines of men.
 3. If we wish to be like the 1st century church, we must get back to the blueprint that the 1st century church followed: The Word of God.

II. ONE CANNOT SEPARATE "BELIEF" AND "BAPTISM" IN MARK 16:16.

- A. The word "and" is a coordinating conjunction.
 - 1. Coordinating conjunctions connect two words, two phrases, or two clauses of equal rank. (Walsh, J. Martyn and Kathleen. Plain English Book 1 Ninth edition p.77)
 - 2. Both conditions (belief and baptism) must be met in order for the subject (he that) to receive the benefit of the action (salvation).
 - a. If the boss told you to dig a ditch and move the dirt, would you just dig the ditch and expect to be paid?
- B. In order to be consistent, the one who separates belief and baptism in Mark 16:16 must also do so in the following:
 - 1. "Repent and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1:15).
 - 2. "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).
 - 3. "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36).
 - 4. "Lord and saviour" (2 Peter 2:20).
 - 5. "His glory is above the earth and heaven" (Psa. 148:13).
 - 6. "God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).
 - 7. God made "heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is" (Exodus 20:11).
- C. Objection: "But it only says, 'He that believeth not shall be damned,' not 'He that is baptized not shall be damned'."
 - 1. Answer: There is no need to say, "He that is baptized not shall be damned."
 - a. He that believeth not is condemned already (John 3:18)!
 - b. Have you ever heard of an unbeliever being baptized?
 - c. One must believe in the first place before he can be expected to be baptized (Acts 16:31-33).

III. FROM WHAT SHALL THE BAPTIZED BELIEVER BE SAVED?

- A. Past sins
 - 1. Baptism washes them away (Acts 22:16).
 - 2. Baptism cannot take away sin not yet committed.
- B. The Christian (baptized believer) can become lost again.
 - 1. Simon the sorcerer is an example (Acts 8:13, 21-22).
 - 2. Romans 6 (the entire chapter).
 - 3. 1 John 1:5-2:2

- C. Sometimes people get the idea that baptism saves eternally.
 1. They believe (if even subconsciously) that since they've been baptized, their ticket to heaven is punched.
 2. This is not a biblical attitude. 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 15:58; James 1:22

CONCLUSION:

1. One of God's "exceeding great and precious promises" is, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."
 2. If we believe and are baptized, we will be saved from our past sins.
 3. If we sin again after this, we will be lost again.
 4. If we continue in obedient faith unto the end, we will have eternal life.
-

Come Unto Me, All Ye That Labour...And I Will Give You Rest

Matthew 11:28

Clint Harper

1. The need for this study.
 - a. Many people simply do not know the truth regarding the subject contained here. Rom. 10:1-3, "*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. ²For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*"
 - b. Many people do know the truth and are teaching error on the subject. Luke 6:39, "*And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?*"
2. The context of Matthew 11:28.

DISCUSSION:

I. COME — AN INVITATION.

- A. There are many invitations that we receive in this life.
 - 1. United States says, "Bring us your poor and huddled masses...."
 - 2. Other countries say, "Bring us your industry, cheap labor."
 - 3. States say, "Bring us your factory, we'll make you a deal."
 - 4. Politicians say, "Bring your votes and money, so we can implement our agenda."
 - 5. Schools say, "Come, we'll help you make lots of money."
 - 6. Denominations say, "Come and find what you desire to have." Prov. 16:25, *"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."*
 - 7. Humanism says, "Help us teach people, they are no more than animals." Gen. 1:1, *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* Gen. 1:27, *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."*
 - 8. Satan says, "Come unto me. Eat, drink and be merry."
- B. The most important invitation comes from God.
 - 1. Jer. 7:23, *"But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you."*
 - 2. Ezekiel 11:20, *"That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."*
 - 3. Matt. 11:28, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*
 - 4. The invitation is extended because God has done His part.
 - a. God Created, Gave the Law, Governs, Blesses, Made the Sacrifice.
 - b. God has done everything He can do and still allow us the freedom of choice.
 - 5. We are the ones that have to do the moving now.
 - a. God is unchanging and has given His will.

2 Tim. 3:16-17, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*

- b. We must accept the call and obey His commands.
John 14:15, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."*
 - c. Abram was called – obeyed.
 - d. Moses was called – obeyed.
 - e. Apostles were called – obeyed.
 - f. There is not a single person recorded in scripture that was blessed of God while they were disobedient to God.
6. The question is, will we (individually) accept the invitation?
- C. Inherent in an invitation is the ability to make a choice.
- 1. If we did not have the ability to make a choice (as some teach), then it is not really an invitation.
 - 2. If that were true, we would all be robots.
 - 3. Even common sense tells us there is more glory given God by the fact that people "willfully" follow Him.
 - 4. Joshua 24:15, *"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*

II. COME UNTO ME – THE DESTINATION.

- A. Sometimes invitations are extended and the destination is a little vague. Example: Free Caribbean Vacation. You get there and all is not included.
- B. Jesus spelled out the destination.
 - 1. "Come unto me." When our Lord spoke these words, he was physically here on earth. Now, he is in Heaven.
 - 2. How is it that we are going to "come unto" Christ who is now in Heaven? The obvious answer is to go to Heaven. But, in order do to that, we must "come unto" Christ while we are here on earth.
- C. How do we "come unto" Christ.

1. We must draw near with a true heart. Matt. 15:8, *"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."* Heb. 10:22, *"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."*
2. We must draw near with complete trust. John 14:1, *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."*
3. We must draw near by being obedient to the will of God. Heb. 5:8-9, *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ⁹And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."*

D. When we obey, we "come unto" that destination.

1. Gal. 3:27, *"For as many of you as have been baptized **into Christ** have put on Christ."*
2. When we are baptized ***into Christ***, we are also baptized into the body of Christ. 1 Cor. 12:13, *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*
3. When we are baptized ***into Christ*** and ***into the body of Christ***, we are also made a member of the church that Jesus built. Col. 1:18, *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*

III. COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN – THE INVITED.

A. To whom is the invitation extended?

1. "All that labor and are heavy laden."

John 3:16, *"For God so loved **the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

Luke 19:10, *"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

1 Tim. 1:15, *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."*

B. We do not have a right to narrow that invitation.

1. Some say that only the "Elect" can be saved. Sounds like Nazism (superior race idea).

2. Some say that only a certain number can go to heaven. Therefore, they invent a new doctrine of living for eternity on earth.

3. We are warned not to be prejudiced against any.

a. Peter had to be given a vision before he would preach to Gentiles.

Acts 10:28, "And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

b. James 2:1-7

C. Therefore, "the invited" is anyone who is under the bondage of sin.

IV. COME UNTO ME, ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST – THE PURPOSE.

A. There is a couple of ideas within this.

1. He will give us rest from our sins.

a. Matt. 11:29-30, *"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

b. Heb. 12:1-2, *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ²Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

- c. It is only with the help of God that we can lay that sin aside.
- 2. Also, He will give us rest in the end.
2 Thess. 1:7, "*And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.*" cf. Heb. 4:1-11
- B. The rest is a gift from God to those who choose to be His children.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The "Invitation" is extended.
 - 2. The "Destination" is described.
 - 3. The "Invited" is everyone.
 - 4. The "Purpose" is *rest unto your souls*.
-

I Will Never Leave Thee, Nor Forsake Thee

Hebrews 13:5

Tom House

- 1. The promises of God incite a wide range of emotions.
- 2. While many view God's promises as exclusively comforting, and many of those revealed in the Bible are indeed full of comfort and hope, there are other promises which offer nothing but destruction and despair.
- 3. It is certainly the hope of every sober-minded individual that he be a worthy recipient of every promise which offers hope.
- 4. It is therefore of paramount importance that we recognize the results of God's promises to us, whether positive or negative, will be contingent upon how we respond to His will.
- 5. The promise under consideration in our present study relates this very truth.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE FOUNDATION OF THE PROMISE.

- A. The Hebrew writer initiates the promise in this passage with the words, "for he hath said...."

- B. The writer employs this phrase to remind his readers of the promise and its significance.
- C. In doing so, it becomes obvious that the promise has a distinctive history.
 - 1. Consider the promise made to Jacob regarding the land to be given to him and his descendants (Gen. 28:15).
 - 2. As the people of Israel stand on the brink of possession of the land, Moses emboldens the people with this same promise (Deut. 31:6,8).
 - 3. After Moses' death, God repeats this promise to Joshua (Josh. 1:5).
 - 4. However, note the circumstances surrounding this promise:
 - a. Were not the Israelites the descendants of Jacob? Yes!
 - b. Had not the same land promise which was made to Jacob, made to his descendants? Yes!
 - c. Yet consider the Lord's statement in Num. 32:11,12.
 - d. Why did not all Israel realize the promise? Because they had not "wholly followed" God.
 - e. Consequently, God alters His promise as confirmed by David, and later by Paul (Psa. 95:8-11; Heb. 3:8-11).

II. THE PROMISE IS CONDITIONAL.

- A. God made a number of promises, but changed some of them. Why?
- B. To some, good had been promised, yet evil befell them.
 - 1. Israel had been promised a land, prosperity, and power.
 - 2. Yet, because of their sin, the nation of Israel will lose the comforts which the promise afforded them (Isa. 59:1,2).
 - a. Sin represents and manifests our turn from God, and thereby estranges us from Him.
 - b. This is nowhere better illustrated than the occasion of the cross (Matt. 27:46), when Jesus cries to the Father, "why hast thou forsaken me?"
 - c. However, the fact that man sins, does not mean God's promise has failed; for indeed, He has never failed us.
 - d. We suffer the ill-effects of having failed the Father, when we depart from Him and His will.

- e. We must understand, if we wish for God to remain with us, we must remain with Him.
- 3. We too, have been promised an eternal home with God, yet not without condition.
- 4. If we fail to repent and obey, we are promised destruction (Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- C. To others, evil had been promised; yet a change was rendered because of the change in the lives of those unto whom the promise was made.
 - 1. It was told to Nineveh that they would be destroyed in forty days (Jonah 3:4).
 - 2. However, after the preaching of Jonah, the people repented unto God, and God changed His promise regarding the Ninevites (Jonah 3:10).
- D. Likewise, God's promises may only be favorably anticipated or realized if we abide by His will, and thereby be made righteous (Psa. 37:25).
 - 1. If we abide in Him, He abides in us (John 15:4,6,7).
 - 2. If we draw nigh to Him, he draws nigh to us (James 4:8).
 - 3. If we turn from Him, we become His enemy (Matt. 12:30; James 4:4; Rom. 9:7).

III. THE PROMISE IN THE CONTEXT OF HEBREWS 13.

- A. Paul takes opportunity in this text to warn about the sin of covetousness, which in fact will estrange one from God.
- B. The link to this subject and the promise, is again found in the phrase: "for he hath said..."
- C. The point is, if we wish to remain in God's favor, then we must avoid that which would endanger our relationship.
- D. Remember, if God does not fail or leave us, and He doesn't, then any breach in our relationship is based upon our failure.
- E. To be covetous minded, is to replace the affection of God in our hearts with the things of the world (1 John 2:15-17), and thereby would separate us from that which this promise is intended to entitle.

IV. TO ENJOIN THE PROMISE, AVOID THE COVETOUSNESS (Heb. 13:5).

- A. The term "covetousness" in this passage, comes from the Greek word *aphilarguros* which here contains the negative prefix, and translates the word to mean, "free from the love of money."
- B. Although the term specifically designates 'money' as the object of the inordinate affection, the context does not establish 'money' exclusively.
 1. The text also will include those 'things' which the 'money' may purchase.
 2. So, in order to off-set this unlawful practice, Paul will tell the Hebrews to "be content with such *things* which you have..." (Heb. 13:5).
- C. The dictionary defines the word 'covet' to mean:
 1. "To long for, especially for something belonging to another," and;
 2. "Excessively desirous," and "greedy."
- D. Therefore, understanding the meaning of the word, it should be obvious why God condemns it.
 1. God's law of condemnation on this matter was clearly established at Sinai (Exodus 20:17).
 2. Incidentally, the condemnation of this sin was not relaxed in indifference with God through the change of covenants, for it is again condemned in Col. 3:5.
- E. Covetousness has usually manifested itself in ways which are civically and spiritually unlawful.
 1. Covetousness caused Eve to believe a lie (Gen. 3:6).
 2. Covetousness caused Achan to sin (Josh. 7:21).
 3. Covetousness was the cause of David's sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:2-5).
 4. Covetousness was one of the reasons Ezekiel condemns Israel (Ezek. 22:12,13).
- F. What ill effects result from the deeds connected with covetousness?
 1. Eve's sin brought death into the world.
 2. Achan's sin resulted in Israelites' defeat at Ai.
 3. The results of David's sin was specified in various aspects (2 Sam. 12:1-14).

- a. "The sword shall never depart from thine house..." (v.10).
- b. His wives were taken from him (v.11).
- c. His shame and reproach would be known by all (v.12).
- d. Bathsheba's child would die (v.14).
- 4. Israel would be led away into captivity.
- G. Greed is considered a symptom of covetousness, and is as well, condemned (Prov. 15:27; 21:25,26; Eccl. 5:10,11).
- H. What is the condition of those whose affection is based upon worldly possessions?
 - 1. Consider the rich young ruler of Mark 10.
 - a. Why was it so difficult for the young man to enjoy the promise of God's presence?
 - b. Because he was not willing to set aside that which interfered with his relationship to God.
 - 2. Consider the rich farmer of Luke 12.
 - a. In this example, what does the Lord teach is the most important aspect of man's life?
 - b. The Lord would answer by noting that of which life does not consist (v.15).
 - c. He then concludes the parable by pointing out the folly of laying up treasure for oneself, and not being rich toward God (v.21).
- I. Note Paul's comments in Colossians 3: 2,5,6.

V. THE COMFORT OF THE PROMISE.

- A. Paul makes us mindful of the one whom he quotes.
- B. God is referred to as one who is "faithful."
 - 1. He is "the faithful God" (Deut. 7:9).
 - 2. "God is faithful" (1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13).
 - 3. "Faithful is He that calleth you" (1 Thess. 5:24).
 - 4. "The Lord is faithful..." (2 Thess. 3:3).
 - 5. "For he is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:23; 11:11).
 - 6. "He is faithful to forgive us" (1 John 1:9).
- C. God is always there for the righteous to bless with...
 - 1. The physical necessities of life (Matt. 6:25-34; James 1:17).
 - 2. The spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3; 2 Peter 1:3).

- D. If He never leaves us, then we are comforted by the fact that He provides us refuge.
 - 1. He is our refuge in times of trial and persecution.
 - 2. He is our refuge in time of temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).
- E. Since He is ever with us, He is our strength.
 - 1. He is our strength to live (Psa. 31:24; 41:3),
 - 2. He is our ever-present hope in death (2 Tim. 4:6,16-17).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. There is no greater comfort man can experience, than to know that God is with him.
 - 2. John has stated that "we can know that we know him if we keep his commandments."
 - 3. Keeping the Lord's will insures us of His presence, as He promises; even when facing death (Psa. 23: 4), "for thou art with me...."
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Promise Of The Holy Spirit To The Apostles

John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:8

Jeffery L. Orr

- 1. The subject of the Holy Spirit and His work is a much misunderstood one.
 - a. This is not due to any lack of explanation on God's part through His Word.
 - b. As in the case of all error, false teaching concerning the Holy Spirit is due to man's perverting the Word to his own end (cf. 2 Peter 3:16).
- 2. False concepts concerning the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The Calvinistic doctrine of Irresistible Grace teaches that the Holy Spirit is one who forces himself on one who is part of the elect (arbitrarily chosen by God) whether welcomed or not by the individual under question.
 - b. Those of the charismatic persuasion believe that the promise of the Holy Spirit is actually for all believers and that those

who have not attained to such simply are not as spiritual as they should be.

- c. It is implied by some, even in the Lord's church, that in addition to revealing the Word of God the Holy Spirit acts as a nudge or impulse to follow that Word.
3. The Bible presents the Holy Spirit as part of the Godhead (Deity) and is very specific as to the work that He was to accomplish.
4. In this lesson, we will consider the promise of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles in light of John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:8.

DISCUSSION:

In this lesson, let us note the promise of the Holy Spirit in—

I. JOHN 14:26.

A. The Context:

1. Jesus informs the 12 that He would soon be going away (vs.1-4).
2. Jesus responds to the concerns of...
 - a. Thomas (vs.5-7)
 - b. Philip (vs.8-21) and
 - c. Judas (not Iscariot, vs.22-24).
3. In contrast to the statement made in verse 25 concerning the fact that he was now present with them...
 - a. Jesus emphasized the Comforter as being a separate or distinct person from Himself.
 - b. The Spirit would be sent by the Father in His name.
 - c. He would teach them all things and bring to their remembrance what Jesus had said unto them.

B. The Holy Spirit in John 14.

1. In verse 16, He is described as "*another Comforter.*"
 - a. Christ was going away. He would no longer be there to comfort them.
 - b. The Greek words *allos* (meaning another of the same sort) and *parakletos* (meaning one called to the side of another) are used by Jesus.
2. In verse 17, He is called the "*Spirit of truth*" (*to pneuma tes aletheias*, meaning literally, the breath or wind of the truth).
 - a. The Holy Spirit would reveal the truth.

- b. This is synonymous with the idea of inspiration, God breathed (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - 3. The combination of the work of the Spirit as "the Comforter" and "the Spirit of truth" is repeated in verse 26.
 - a. The work of the Spirit was to be one of an intellectual informant, a revealer and confirmer of the Word of God (cf. Heb. 2:1-4).
 - b. This would bring comfort to these men as they embark on the work of spreading the Gospel without the physical presence of Jesus.
- C. Having considered the promise of the Holy Spirit in John 14:26, let us note

II. JOHN 15:26.

- A. The Context:
 - 1. Discourse concerning the vine and the branches (vs.1-8).
 - 2. Further exhortation to be fruitful (vs.9-17).
 - 3. The world will hate you (vs.18-25).
- B. In contrast to the fact that the world would be hateful toward these men, Jesus again mentions the Holy Spirit...
 - 1. As both one who would be "the Comforter" whom he would send from the Father and "the Spirit of truth" which would proceed from the Father.
 - 2. In addition to the idea expressed in John 14, Jesus states that the Spirit would "*testify of me*" (*marturia*, meaning he would witness or give evidence of Christ; cf. John 5:39).
- C. Verse 27 continues the idea of John 14:26 ("*bring to your remembrance*") as Jesus points out that the apostles would also "bear witness" of him in light of their close association with him (cf. Acts 4:13; 1 Cor. 15:5ff).
- D. In John 15, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would comfort the apostles in the face of the hatefulness of the world and as the Spirit of truth would give evidence of Him as they proclaimed the Word.
- E. Having considered the promise of the Holy Spirit in John 14:26 and 15:26, let us continue by considering...

III. JOHN 16:13.

- A. The Context:

1. The purpose of mentioning of the Comforter – that they may not be offended in the face of physical persecution and death (vs.1-6).
 2. What the Holy Spirit would accomplish (vs.7-15).
 3. Jesus prophesies of his death, burial, resurrection and ascension (vs.16-33).
- B. Jesus intensifies their need for the Comforter as this discourse continues.
1. He was going back to the Father (John 14);
 2. The world was going to hate them (John 15); and
 3. This hatred would lead to their persecution and death (John 16:2).
 - a. Those who would persecute them will do so because they have not known the Father or Jesus. The Jews were the main instigators of much of the persecution (cf. Acts 8:14; Rom. 10:1-3).
 - b. Jesus did not reveal these things earlier because He was with them, but that would soon change and they needed this encouragement. Also, Jesus was now the target of persecution (cf. Matt. 12:14; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:2; John 7:30,44), but they soon would be.
 - c. They knew Jesus was going, but did not have the knowledge to ask where. They were in denial (vs.5-6).
- C. Jesus again designates the Holy Spirit as "the Comforter" (v.7) and "the Spirit of truth" (v.13).
1. However, Jesus here goes into some detail as to what the Spirit would accomplish through His work.
 2. He would...
 - a. Reprove (*elencho*, meaning convict or rebuke) the world of sin, because the world believed not on Jesus (vs.1-9; cf. Acts 2:36-37).
 - b. Reprove the world of righteousness, because Jesus was going to the Father, which would involve the death of this sinless man (vs.8,10; cf. 1 Peter 2:22-25; 2 Cor. 5:20-21).
 - c. Reprove the world of judgment because the prince of this world is judged. The head of Satan would be bruised in the resurrection of Christ (vs.8,11; cf. Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14).

- D. They were unable to bear (*bastazo*, handle or support) further teaching; however the "Spirit of truth" would come and guide (*hodegeo*, to lead the way) them into all truth (vs.12-13).
1. This passage reiterates the authority of the Father and the Son behind the work of the Holy Spirit – "*he shall not speak of himself but whatsoever he will hear, that shall he speak*" (cf. 1 Cor. 2:10-11).
 2. The "all truth" would also include things in addition to what Jesus had taught them previously – "*things also to come.*"
 3. Verses 14-15 indicate the authority that Jesus would soon be given (cf. Matt. 28:18).
- E. Having considered the promise of the Holy Spirit in John's inspired Gospel account, let us conclude by noticing this promise in...

IV. ACTS 1:8.

A. The Context:

1. Luke's summary of events leading up to the ascension (vs.1-5).
2. Their continued ignorance of the spiritual nature of the kingdom (vs.6-7).
3. A renewal of the promise of the Holy Spirit, the power it would entail and Jesus' ascension (vs.8-11).
4. The apostles meet with the 120 disciples and Matthias is chosen to replace Judas Iscariot (vs.12-26).

B. Luke's account in Acts chapter one is a somewhat overlapping continuation of the inspired account of events mentioned in Luke 24.

1. While meeting with the 11, Jesus opened their understanding as to the prophecies fulfilled in his death, burial and resurrection, and events which had yet to take place (vs.44-48).
2. He renewed the promise of the Father and told them to tarry in Jerusalem (v.49).
3. Jesus led the 11 out of Jerusalem toward Bethany and ascended back to the Father. The apostles returned to Jerusalem (vs.50-52).

C. The Promise of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1.

1. Jesus referred back to the statement of John the Immerser in Matthew 3:11 (v.5).
 - a. John mentioned that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
 - b. Verse 5 specifies that this baptism of the Holy Spirit was narrowed in its scope to refer to this promise of the Father.
 - c. The apostles asked a question regarding the restoration of the kingdom back to Israel; Jesus replied by stating that it was not for them *"to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power"* (vs.6-7; cf. 1 Thess. 5:1).
 - d. The power they needed to concern themselves with had to do with the promise of the Holy Spirit and what that power would enable them to do — be witnesses unto Christ (v.8; cf. John 15:26-27).
- D. The fulfillment of that promise (Acts 2).
 1. Ten days after the ascension, the promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.
 2. The 12 were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (v.4).
 3. The multitudes (gathered from 19 nations) who witnessed these events referred to these men as Galileans, indicating indeed that only the 12 were under consideration (v.7; cf. Acts 1:11).
 4. Peter, standing with the eleven, states that the events being witnessed are in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32, quelling the accusation that the apostles were intoxicated (vs.15ff).

CONCLUSION:

1. In this lesson, we have considered the Promise of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles in light of John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13 and Acts 1:8.
2. In doing so, we have especially noted the context of each of these verses to better understand the need for such a promise to these men who were, no doubt, frightened and upset at the prospect of Jesus' return to the Father.
3. This promise was intended to allay their fears in one sense, but also served to bring about the revealing of that great mystery of

Christ which Paul, the apostle, born out of due season, refers to in Ephesians 3:1-6.

4. We have also considered this great promise in view of its limited scope as is demanded by the Scriptures.
 5. Those who would teach a broader view in regard to the recipients of this promise do so without biblical authority.
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It Is Appointed Unto Men Once To Die, And After This The Judgment

Hebrews 9:27,28

Max R. Miller

1. Context: Just as men die but once, and then the judgment, so Christ, the Redeemer and Savior, our High Priest, was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.
2. As Jesus Christ died once and for all, man likewise dies only once.
3. After death (at some time) he faces the judgment.
4. Consider the passage word by word.

DISCUSSION:

I. "AND AS IT IS APPOINTED."

A. Unwilled appointment by God. Gen. 2:16,17

1. God had only good intentions for man, created him to live forever.
2. Made all provisions for his everlasting life (access to the tree of life).
3. God has no pleasure in the death of him that dies. Ezek. 18:31,32; Gen. 6:6
4. Proof of this is in His arrangements for man to live again in Christ Jesus.

B. Sin is the cause for the appointment.

1. Man in violation of God's command. Gen. 2:15-27; Rom. 3:10,23
2. In sin, man betrays God's purpose in creating him in His own image. Gen. 1:26,27
3. Rejection of God's grace, goodness. Contrast with Jesus. cf. John 4:34; 6:38

II. "UNTO MEN."

- A. Exceptions: Enoch, Elijah, those alive at Christ's second coming.
- B. Youth, age, beauty, blood, talent, virtue, rank or station in life does not exempt.
- C. Sin is the transgression of God's law. 1 John 3:4; 1:8,10
 1. An individual's sinful act, either of omission or commission.
 2. One is not guilty of another's sins. Ezek. 18:4,20
- D. Man, before God, has followed in the likeness of Adam, his federal head. Rom. 5:12

III. "ONCE."

- A. A comfort to the godly. Death passed over forever. Never again submit to pains of death.
- B. Terror to the wicked who die in their sins.
- C. That which occurs once in an eternity of our existence is immensely important.
- D. Death must be done well. Make proper preparation for it.
 1. Can't return to make preparation, to repent, to say I'm sorry to someone, to God.
 2. The whole of life is to prepare for death and for eternity which follows.

IV. "TO DIE." Gen. 3:19

- A. Die, death is separation (Death is the opposite of life. It never means non-existence).
 1. Socially: from friends, family, affairs of this world.
 2. Physically: Spirit from the body. James 2:26
 3. Spiritually: Man's conscious existence is separated from God. Isa. 59:1,2; Eph. 2:1,5
- B. Death closes on all intentions for good or evil. A barricade sealing the return journey.

- C. Death should be a constant reminder of our guilt for sins before a Holy God.
- D. There should be a fear of death for those not prepared for it.
 - 1. Cain afraid he would be killed. He knew the justice of such an act. Gen. 4:14
 - 2. Belshazzar paralyzed, loses control of his body functions. Dan. 5:6
 - 3. Terrified of just condemnation, "dying the death." Matt. 15:4 (cf. Exo. 21:17)
- E. Jesus frees the redeemed from fear of death, a sweet release. Heb. 2:14,15
 - 1. Paul sought release, separation from the distress of this life. Phil. 1:21; 2 Tim. 4:6-8
 - 2. Better is the day of death than the day of one's birth. Eccl. 7:1
- F. Sin drove Adam from tree of life. Gen. 3:22-24; Christ restores right to it. Rev. 22:1,2, 14
 - 1. What is lost in Adam, is gained in Christ. cf. Rom. 5:15-21
 - 2. Adam's sin (a figure) contrasted with Christ and His gift of salvation. Rom. 5:15-21

ADAM	VS.	CHRIST
The offense and consequences	15	Free gift and consequences of it
By Adam's offense many died	15	Gift of grace by one abounds to many
Judgment to condemnation	16	Free gift unto justification
Death reigned	17	Those who receive grace, reign in life
Justification to condemnation	18	Justification of life
Many made sinners	19	Many made righteous
Sin reigned unto death	21	Grace reigned unto eternal life

V. "AND AFTER THIS."

- A. There is always something next! Something beyond death. 2 Cor. 4:18-5:1-4
- B. Once alive in this world, always alive, a living being in time and in eternity.

1. Some who suffer hardship in this life erroneously think death will end their miseries.
2. Continued presence of mind, conditions, feelings.
cf. Luke 16:19-31; 24:43
- C. At death the body returns to the earth, the spirit returns to face God. Eccl. 12:7
 1. "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." Eccl. 12:5
 2. God makes disposition of the soul of man, and there he awaits the judgment.

VI. "THE JUDGMENT."

- A. The righteousness and justice of God demands a judgment of all souls.
 1. His righteousness demands the righteous be rewarded.
 2. His justice demands the wicked be punished.
- B. Acts 17:31 suggests the following things about the judgment day.
 1. Certainty of the Judgment. A day appointed. Rom. 14:11,12
 2. Persons who are to be judged. The world. All men everywhere.
 3. Basis of the Judgment. Deeds done in the body. 2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 12:31,32
 4. Judge who will preside. Jesus Christ. cf. John 5:22,27; 1 Tim. 4:1
 5. Issues of the Judgment. Final and irrevocable. Matt. 25:46
- C. Purpose of God's judgment.
 1. That man may abandon all sense of carnal security and be watchful for his soul.
 2. For the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity.
 3. For the manifestation of the glory of his mercy in the eternal salvation of the elect.
 4. Justice in damnation of reprobates, "who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ...." 2 Thess. 1:8,9
 5. That man may ever be prepared to say "come Lord Jesus, come quickly."
- D. Doom Day, or Day of Glory. Matt. 25:46

1. The day of judgment is unknown.
2. For the unsaved a day of doom and eternal suffering.
3. For the redeemed in Christ to share in His glory forever.

CONCLUSION:

1. A sure and certain appointment that we all will keep.
2. How shall we escape the judgment?
 - a. The answer is obvious—obedience to the Gospel of Christ. Rom. 1:16
 - b. We challenge each one who has not obeyed the Gospel with this question: "Will you obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ now?"
 - c. Hell is too awful to risk it for a year, a month, a week, a day, an hour, or even a minute.

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God Has Promised There Is A Heaven And Hell

Clifford Dixon

1. Heaven is the Greek *ouranos* meaning the sky, the air.
2. Hell in the King James Version is the rendering of four different words.
 - a. The Hebrew *sheol* meaning the realm of the dead and which corresponds with the Greek *hades* as can be seen by comparing Psalms 16:8-11 with Acts 2:26-32.
 - b. The Greek *gehenna* which is used about a dozen times by Christ to refer to the eternal punishment of the wicked.

DISCUSSION:

I. HEAVEN.

- A. Heaven is the place where God is. Matt. 5:16,34; 6:9; 7:21
- B. The place from which Christ came. John 3:13,31
- C. Christ ascended back to heaven to prepare a place for faithful disciples. John 14:1-6
- D. Christ will descend from heaven one day. 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:16
- E. There is an inheritance reserved in heaven for those begotten again. 1 Peter 1:3,4

- F. To go to heaven is to go into the presence of God and enjoy close fellowship with Him. Rev. 21:4,5
- G. Christ speaks of heaven as many mansions. John 14:1-6
- H. Christ's coming is to take those in Christ to heaven. 1 Thess. 4:16,17
- I. Christ's coming is spoken of as delivering up the kingdom to God. 1 Cor. 15:24-28
- J. By keeping his commandments we have a right to enter into heaven. Rev. 22:14

II. HELL — GEHENNA.

- A. For people who go around calling others fools. Matt. 5:22
- B. Where people will go if they do not get rid of that which offends. Matt. 5:29,30
- C. Where the body and soul is destroyed. Matt. 10:28
- D. It is hell fire. Matt. 18:9
- E. Those proselyted into a false system are twice-fold subjects of hell. Matt. 23:15
- F. Jesus asked the corrupt Jewish leaders how they could expect to escape hell. Matt. 23:33
- G. The evil speaking tongue is set on fire by hell. James 3:6
- H. Hell otherwise described:
 - 1. Outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matt. 25:30
 - 2. Everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. 25:41
 - 3. Everlasting destruction for those who know not God and obey not the Gospel. 2 Thess. 1:7-9
 - 4. Away from the presence of God and the glory of His power. 2 Thess. 1:8,9
 - 5. Lake of fire and brimstone. Rev. 21:8

III. HEAVEN AND HELL COMPARED.

- A. Both are eternal. Matt. 25:46
- B. Hell is a place of fire while heaven is a place of comfort.
- C. Hell is a place of punishment while heaven is a blessed reward.
- D. Hell is a place of pain while heaven is a place where there is no pain.

- E. Hell and heaven are places of consciousness; but in hell there are regrets, while in heaven there is happiness.
- F. Hell is a place where there is no hope, but heaven is a place of fulfilled hope.
- G. Hell and heaven are places where men will retain their mental faculties, but in hell there will be bad memories, while in heaven there will be good thoughts.
- H. Hell is a place of separation while heaven is a place of reunion.
- I. Hell is the place of the worst kind of company while heaven is the best of company.

IV. FORMULA FOR GOING TO HELL.

- A. Either add to or take away from the word of God. Rev. 22:18,19
- B. Do nothing, just depend on your good morality.
- C. Reject the church that Jesus died for.
- D. Live like you want to and don't take God into consideration.

V. FORMULA FOR GOING TO HEAVEN.

- A. Study your Bible, finding the plan of salvation and obey the Gospel.
- B. Be added to the Lord's church and be a faithful member of a faithful local congregation.
- C. Worship and serve the Lord regularly.
- D. Labor for the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. You will have to make the choice for yourself. No one can make it for you and no one can keep you from it.
- 2. God and Jesus have done all they could with the exception that they have not taken away our free will. It is up to us as to where we will spend eternity.



