April 22, 2018 a.m.

GOD’S PROMISES

Reading: **Hebrews 6:13-20**

Trust is the foundation of any meaningful relationship – when we make promises, we keep them to the very best of our ability. It is possible that some unforeseen circumstances can interfere with our keeping some promises. But these would be the exception rather than the rule. It would be unfair in such cases to not consider this person to be trustworthy.

* See **2 Cor. 1:15-22** Because Paul did not get to Corinth when he planned, some of the Corinthians questioned his trustworthiness. He assured them that the word of the Lord that he had given them was to be trusted because God is faithful – He keeps His promises. This is the basis of our faith – He has always kept His promises so we can expect that He will always continue to do the same.

*"Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps*

*covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love*

*Him and keep His commandments”*(**Deut. 7:9**)

**GOD KEPT THE COVENANTS HE MADE WITH ABRAHAM AND WITH DAVID**

* **The promise to Abraham: Genesis 12:1-3; 17:19 (~2000 BC)**
* God remembered this promise ~400 years later when Israel was in Egypt. (**Ex. 2:24**)
* *“For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant.”* (**Ps. 105:42**)
* God promised, even when most of them would forsake Him, that He would keep this promise. (**Lev. 26:42**)
* At the dedication of the temple, Solomon said that *“There has not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised through His servant Moses.”* (**1 Kings 8:56**) (The law, including Genesis, was given to Israel through Moses.) (~950 BC)
* The Lord did not utterly destroy Israel in the days of the kings because of the promise He had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (**2 Kings 13:23**) (~800 BC)
* **The promise to David: 2 Samuel 7:11-16 (~1000 BC)**
* The reason God did not completely destroy Judah was because of this promise. (**2 Chr. 21:7**) (~850 BC)
* **Isaiah 55:3 –** The sure mercies of David were given to the faithful servant. (~720 BC)
* The land promise was conditional – it was taken from them when they were not faithful. But even then, He kept the promise of the blessing that would come to all nations through Abraham and David’s seed in spite of their idolatry.
* The Old Testament is a story of God’s providence – He kept His predetermined plans, even though His people, by and large, were not obedient to Him.

**REFERENCES TO THESE PROMISES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

* **Acts 3:25; 13:23, 32-33; 26:6-8**
* **Romans 4:13-16; 15:8**
* **Galatians 3:14-16**
* **Hebrews 6:13-20**

**God kept His promises! We can trust Him! We can believe Him!**

**THE BETTER PROMISES (Hebrews 8:6)**

* We have been given *“exceedingly great and precious promises.”*(**2 Peter 1:4**)
* Salvation, forgiveness, redemption, adoption, hope, fellowship, and eternal life.
* Above all else, He has promised us eternal life – the one thing that is needful – knowing the Lord and being saved according to His promise to Abraham – being blessed through his seed and that seed is Jesus Christ.
* **2 Timothy 1:1 –** *“…the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus.”*
* **Titus 1:2 –** *“In hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before ….”*
* **Hebrews 9:15 –** *“the promise of eternal inheritance”*

**DISILLUSIONED WITH HIS PROMISES**

* Much of our disillusionment with life and God may be caused by our failure to know what He had promised us and what He has not. Our faith grows weak. We question God.
* When we do understand and appreciate what He has promised us, we might not be so disappointed when we don’t get the things we thought He had promised.
* “In fact, it’s probably true that our foolish fascination with certain unanswered questions is the result of our failure to be nourished by the truths that have been revealed.”

 (Reaching Forward, April 11, When Our Questions Are Not Answered, Gary Henry)

**HE HAS NOT PROMISED… (even if we are faithful and make good choices)**

* …that we would live a life without persecution. In fact, he has said just the opposite. If we are godly, we can expect to be persecuted. We are not promised that our own families will support our decision to obey Jesus. That we will be the most popular church on Charlotte.
* …that we will have a life without pain and disappointments. Again, He had promised that through much tribulation we will enter the kingdom of God and that the problems are necessary in order for us to become the people He wants us to be.
* …that we will be spared from the consequences of our sins. In fact, He has told us that we will reap what we sow.
* …that we will get everything we want. (marriage, financially, politically, socially) He has, though, told us when it seems we have everything we want, we may be missing the most important thing – a saved relationship with Him. (see the man who built the bigger barns with a life of ease in retirement as his ultimate goal in mind)

***“And this is the promise that He has promised us – eternal life.”***

**(1 John 2:25)**