

## "PROMISE FULFILLED" - Life in chaos 1 (Acts 2)

### Intro – The Power and Beauty of a Promise – Fulfilled

#### Promises are a powerful thing.

*A promise broken: at the least can crush our hopes – at the most, it can destroy a life & create great chaos.*

- **Presidents Nixon, Clinton** promised they did not do what they were accused of. Both lied & at the least brought shame & crushed hopes – at the most they created chaos & destroyed many lives close to them.
- **Bernie Madoff: Ponzi Scheme:** He took over \$18 bill. from 3500 investors creating chaos and destroying lives.
- **Some of you** – are living under the crush of a promise broken. You know the chaos, hurt, and the destruction.
- "Broken vows are like broken mirrors. They leave those who held to them - bleeding and staring at fractured images of themselves." — Richard Paul Evans, "Promise Me" / But ...

*A promise fulfilled – at the least stirs us and moves us – at the most can give us life.*

- **Gen. McCarthy** promised he would return to the Philippines (WW II) 3 yrs after he was forced out – & did.
- **Joe Namath** promised the underdog Jets would win Super Bowl III against the mighty Colts – and they did.
- **Neil Armstrong** walking on moon. JFK promised to land a man on the moon by the end of the 60's- and did.
- **Steve Jobs** said he would change the way we communicate and live in this world – and he did.
- **Chris Medina and his fiancé Julianna** – were engaged when on Oct 2, 2009 she was in a horrible car accident where she suffered a traumatic brain injury. Julianna was in a coma for a month and a half. **In 2011**, with Julianna by his side, **Chris** auditioned on American Idol and made it to Hollywood only to have his dream end there. Shortly after he was let go, he released a song called "What Are Words" declaring a promise to his fiancé. Watch this ... (2:45)
- Chris Medina Video – "What Are Words" (3:15)

#### • The God who Fulfilled Promise (3:15)

This kind of promise lived out in front of us – moves us deeply. Listen to those words again ...

Anywhere you are, I am near / Anywhere you go, I'll be there / And I'm gonna be here forever more  
Every single promise I'll keep / 'Cause what kind of guy would I be / If I was to leave when you need me most

Why does a promise fulfilled move us like this? It **screams commitment and unconditional love** like nothing else can. In a world where promises come and go (*think about how many you have heard in the last two months of this election*) and commitment is optional - our souls long for this – **and more we were made for this**. One of the most beautiful and powerful things about Easter – about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, about Jesus rising from the dead - is that God is shouting the ultimate fulfilled promise - **I will be with you now and forever!**

### "PROMISE FULFILLED"

**The empty tomb is the fulfillment of God's ultimate promise – to bring us to Him.**

Jesus rising from the dead – is God fulfilling His promise to unite us, to join us to Him, now & forever.  
It is His promise: I will never leave, I will always accept you, I am pleased with you - I will not stop loving you.

**Some of you believe this** – you have rested your entire life and soul on this promise. **Others of you believe** – but aren't quite sure – how the empty tomb fulfills this promise. **Some of you struggle to follow God and some of you have little desire to follow Him** because you feel He has broken promises to you. Hear me: I'm so glad all of you, all of us are here today. No matter where you are in your journey with God here is my promise to you: if you are a guest or have been coming for a short time - the people in this place are just like you. We are all broken and messed up people who long for God to be with us. We don't play church here. We deal with real problems and seek real answers because we live in a world of chaos and we want life – real life. The crazy truth is, we are people who are at all different places in our journey with Christ – but we all believe he is our only hope of life in chaos.

We begin a new series today called: "Life in Chaos" in which we will see how broken promises create chaos in our life - but how living in the ultimate promise can give us life in chaos. Today – God wants us to hear the story of His ultimate Promise that proves He has kept and does keep all of his promises. This story is told all over the bible – but today we are going to hear this story of promise told from the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the book of Acts.

### The Story of Promise (10:00)

begins with a crazy moment. Many of Jesus' disciples – men and women are gathered in a room when God's Spirit comes upon them – to live in them. The first thing God's Spirit does is cause each one of them to start praising Him in a different known language. Because there was a great national festival going on – many travelers heard this great

noise and came and heard their own language being spoken to them by men who should not have known their language. Some were amazed and others accused them of being drunk.

• Acts 2:1-4, 11b-13 - (READ the passage) It was at this point, Peter stands up to tell the Promise Story.

• Peter begins by saying (14-21): this what you have witnessed is God fulfilling His ultimate Promise – in other words, you have walked into the tail end of the story – that has 4 chapters.

- 1-Creation - The story begins – there was a perfect creation by God, how things were meant to be.

- 2-Fall - Brokenness enters the story through rebellion and sin – our soul, our very lives and the whole world – how things were meant to be are shattered by sin.

- 3-Redemption - Rescuer is coming: Jesus in his life, death, & resurrection redeems our broken souls.

- 4-Restoration – God comes to live in us once again and restore us – to how we were meant to be. What you are witnessing now is God Spirit 's come to live in us and restore us and this world.

Some 600 years earlier – God had promised we would be united with God now and forever –

Ezekiel 36:37 (ESV) And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.

Not only would we be with Him, but we would join Him in his grand promise story on this earth.

Acts 2:17 (ESV) verses 17-21 are quoting this promise from 650 years earlier written in Joel 2:28-32 (ESV)

• He then goes backward into ch. 3 - Redemption – to tell of Jesus, the Rescuer. He begins with ...

- Jesus' Life – a sinless and miracle filled life that proved He was God.

22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, ...

The PROMISE of Jesus coming is proclaimed in over 50 unique passages in the OT. In Luke 4 – Jesus quotes an 800 yr old prophecy from Is 61 that tells of his coming and his life on earth.

Luke 4:18-19 (from Isaiah 61:1-2 - ESV) 18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

- Jesus' Death / Crucifixion – that was planned by God for our rescue.

22 ... as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

The promise of Jesus being crucified by God's plan was proclaimed 800 years before his death.

Isaiah 53:5 (NLT) But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

Crazier still - this promise of crucifixion for Jesus occurred some 450 yrs before the Persians invented this.

- Jesus' Resurrection – His coming back from the dead!

24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

The promise of Jesus being raised from the dead was proclaimed by King David. A simple boy who became the greatest king of Israel, a prophet of God, and a picture of God's grace (sinner & saint).

These promises were written 1000 years before Jesus - from Psalms 16:10, 49:15

25 For David says concerning him, "I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; 26 therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. 27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence."

29 "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, 800 yr old promise from Is 9:7 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

- The empty tomb is God fulfilling His ultimate promise to bring us to Him. (now and forever)

32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

Jesus lived a sinless – miracle filled life, but died just like everyone who has ever lived on this earth. However, he rose from the dead. People don't do that – *but God does*. Only God could come back from the dead. If he didn't – he would have been just like every politician who ever made a promise. He would have been a promise breaker – *not one who fulfilled His promises. But, he kept his promises all of them. Final evidence – God's Spirit came to live in men again.* Ch 4 is under way!  
34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, 35 until I make your enemies your footstool." ' 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

- **Why did he say that – "whom you crucified"?** None of these people are the Roman soldiers who nailed Jesus to the cross, I doubt any of these made that decision in the Roman or Jewish Councils and most of these men and women are from out of the country. Many would not have been there when Jesus was crucified. He says this because while they didn't drive the nails in Jesus hands – he is saying – they were responsible.

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

**They felt this to their core and responded with – what do we do?** Why did they feel this to their core? At this moment – they realized God was holy and the perfect keeper of all his promises and the one who fulfilled his greatest promise – to redeem our sinful and broken lives. At that moment – they realize they were sinful and broken. Unlike God – they were not holy or perfect keepers of all their promises. They were wrecked by what they heard – cut to the heart. So they asked - what should they do?

**What would you do?** *I believe this accusation could be leveled at all of us. For we are all sinful and broken – and unlike God – we are not holy or perfect keepers of all our promises. We didn't physically put the nails in Jesus' hands and feet – but we were responsible, our sin was responsible for his death.*

### **How do you respond to God's faithfulness and his declaration that we are not faithful?** (13:00)

*How do you respond to God saying all the chaos in your world is ultimately because of your sin – your rebellion? Our broken relationships, love, serving, working- is all ultimately due to our sin, my sin – your sin?*

- 1] **Maybe your first thought is - the way I get to enjoy God's promise to be with Him is to be a person of integrity and faithfulness - who keeps my promises like Chris Medina.**

**Remember, Chris Medina, the one who declared for all a promise to his fiancé in His song - "What Are Words"? He – broke His promise. In June of 2014, he broke up with Juliana. He left her. Chris is not our hero or are example of how we get to be a part of God's promise.**

*He can't keep his promises either. I'm not here to say that's ok. Not sure which wrecked me more – His video "What Are Words" the first time I saw it or when I heard he left her. Broken promises like this one – crush us. But I am also not here to judge Him – **Because I AM HIM**. I have broke many promises, told many lies, hurt many. You may have never left your wife, you have may have never broken any promise to any person – but I know this – you like I, have broken every promise we have ever made to God. Truth is we all break promises on this earth – and we break our promises to God. **We are all unfaithful – promise breakers.***

**We say, "God I will" ... and we do alright for a while and then – broken. What are words if you really don't mean them when you say them? They are just broken promises. The bad news of God's story of promise is this: You and I are promise breakers. And God should leave us and walk away from us bc of our unfaithfulness. When we see this is who we are – it wrecks us, it crushes us – it cuts to the very heart of who we are. **We are that broken. We break every promise – We are faithless. That is the bad news. But ... there is GOOD NEWS: In Jesus – and ...****

Proven by His empty tomb – God has fulfilled his ultimate promise – to bring us to Him.

- 2] **We don't need an example – we need a Rescuer, a Redeemer – Jesus.**

*We obviously don't need an example like Chris – for he is broken like us. But truth is – for our brokenness – we don't even need Jesus to just be an example – even a perfect example. For all a perfect example does is show us what we can never do. **Adam Wainwright could spend hours teaching you how to throw an Uncle Charlie – curve ball. But you couldn't do it like him. He would just frustrate you.***

We don't need an example – we need a Rescuer, a Redeemer - and this is who Jesus came to be.

***This is why he had to live, and suffer a brutal death, and be raised from the dead. Only through taking on all our guilt and shame of our broken promises – could we live in His promise.***

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized

1000 years earlier – **King David wrote how you and I would enter into God's promise rescue: Psalms 34:18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.**

Repentance – has always been the pathway to God's forgiveness. Repentance means to see our wrecked soul – and turn from all hopes we can fix it or anything else can fix it – and turn to Jesus.

*I was 16 when God wrecked by heart over my brokenness and sin. I saw I was the faithless one – and he was faithful. I cried out for a whole summer – Jesus forgive me, rescue me, save me. I believe he did.*

**The only way you will ever be right before God – so you can be with God, be united with God – forgiven, pleasing, accepted, loved – is to rest your whole soul on Jesus and His work.**

All of history – all of God's promises have pointed to Jesus coming, living, dying, and rising from the dead. In His work – all our works of get swallowed up.

**In His work alone – we find the forgiveness and acceptance we CANNOT find in our work.**

38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For *the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.*"

**The Promise is for you! *The empty tomb says God has done all the work to bring you back to Him.***

*God didn't wait for us to come apologize or get things right because we couldn't. So, God came to us and pulled off the greatest rescue ever by giving up the life of His son in our place.*

*He kept his promise to bring us back to Him by taking the punishment for every broken promise we have made. All the Chaos and death we created by our broken promises – he redeemed by keeping His promise. And because of that – we get His life – we get forgiveness and mercy but even more we GET GOD in us.*

Close:

#### **PRAYER of repentance**

***- I am broken, sinful: a promise breaker. / You God are holy, perfect – a promise fulfiller.***

***- I can't fix this – I have tried, no one can. / Jesus I turn to you and rest my soul on your life, death, and resurrection.***

***I believe you are the only way I can be with God – and your tomb proves this to me.***

- 1) Let us know if you have repented today and turned to Jesus.
- 2) One of the ways you can do that is to be baptized – and you can do that today. We have clothes and water ready.

***Baptism is a sign that we have entered into God's promise. It is not our promise. It is God's who is faithful. Like a wedding ring declares a promise, baptism declares what God has done in Christ to rescue us. Baptism does not rescue us but it is a powerful sign that we are living in God's fulfilled promise.***

**See Brian/Bam**

#### **Communion – another sign we are living in and under God's ultimate promise.**

1) Confess you are a promise breaker – but God you have fulfilled all your promises in Jesus and his empty tomb.

2) Don't come to this table and make promises; rather, come and here God make this promise over you

***"Because of Jesus' work – I will never leave, I will always accept you – you are with me now and forever."***