Don't make promises that you can't keep!

2 Corinthians 1:20 "For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory.

Numbers 23:19 "God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a human being, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not make it happen?"

Covenant

1. The word "covenant," infrequently heard in conversation, is quite commonly used in legal, religious and theological contexts.
2. The Idea of Covenant. It is of Latin origin (con venire), meaning a coming together. It presupposes two or more parties who come together to make a contract, agreeing on promises, stipulations, privileges, and responsibilities.
3. There are two basic types of covenants: conditional and unconditional. A conditional or bilateral covenant is an agreement that is binding on both parties for its fulfillment. Both parties agree to fulfill certain conditions. If either party fails to meet their responsibilities, the covenant is broken and neither party has to fulfill the expectations of the covenant. An unconditional or unilateral covenant is an agreement between two parties, but only one of the two parties has to do something. Nothing is required of the other party.

Promise

In the biblical context, a promise is a declaration or assurance made by God to humanity. The concept of promise is central to the narrative of the Bible, reflecting God's faithfulness and the unfolding of His divine plan.

Oath

That which is solemnly promised, a vow.

Genesis 15:18 "On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram."

Hebrews 6:13 "For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself."

2 Peter 1:3-4 "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."

Hebrews 6:17-18 "So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie."

The Noahic Covenant

The Noahic Covenant, found in Genesis 9:8-17.

1. It is an unconditional covenant.
2. It was made to Noah and all his descendants.
3. It was sealed with a sign, the rainbow.

The Abrahamic Covenant

An unconditional covenant found in Genesis 12:1–3.

The ceremony recorded in Genesis 15 indicates the unconditional nature of the covenant. When a covenant was dependent upon both parties keeping commitments, then both parties would pass between the pieces of animals. In Genesis 15, God alone moves between the halves of the animals. Abraham was in a deep sleep. God's solitary action indicates that the covenant is principally His promise. He binds Himself to the covenant.

Hebrews 6:13-20 "For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

The Mosaic Covenant

The Mosaic Covenant is a crucial biblical agreement made between God and the Israelites at Mount Sinai. It is primarily characterized by the instruction given to Moses, including the Ten Commandments. This covenant plays a significant role in defining the relationship between God and His chosen people.

Key Features:

- Conditions and Promises
- Obedience and Blessings: The covenant outlines that Israel must obey God's laws to receive blessings.
- Disobedience and Consequences: Failure to adhere to these laws results in negative consequences.

The Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant refers to God's promises through Nathan the prophet and is found in 2 Samuel 7 This is an unconditional covenant made between God and David through which God promises David and Israel that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever. The Davidic Covenant is unconditional because God does not place any conditions of obedience upon its fulfillment. The surety of the promises made rests solely on God's faithfulness and does not depend at all on David or Israel's obedience.

The New Covenant

The New Covenant is the promise that God will forgive sin and restore fellowship with those whose hearts are turned toward Him. Jesus Christ is the mediator of the New Covenant, and His death on the cross is the basis of the promise (Luke 22:20). The New Covenant was predicted while the Old Covenant was still in effect—the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel all make prophetic declarations to the New Covenant.

Deuteronomy 30:1–6 "And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the Lord your God has driven you, and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there the Lord your God

> will gather you, and from there he will take you. And the Lord your God will bring you into the land that your fathers possessed, that you may possess it. And he will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.
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> The New Covenant involves a total change of heart, through the process of sanctification, so that God's people are naturally pleasing to Him.

Isaiah 59:20-21 "And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression," declares the Lord. "And as for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord: "My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children's offspring," says the Lord, "from this time forth and forevermore."

Ezekiel 36:24-29 "I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will deliver you from all your uncleanness."

Jeremiah 31:31-34 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

- Remember all God's promises are yes and amen!

Acts 1:9-11 "And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Matthew 24:29-31 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

2 Thessalonians 2:2-4 "Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God."

2 Peter 3:1-4, 8-9 "I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."
[verse 8-9] "But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance."

- Something historic has been taking place in our nation. Two Supreme Court decisions which have occurred in my lifetime have signaled a significant change, not only in our culture, but in our laws. Roe v. Wade (1973) legalized the killing of the innocent and defenseless unborn. In Obergefell v. Hodges (June 26, 2015) same sex marriage was

declared to be legal in every state of the union. People have much to say on the subject, Sadly Christians among them. A great deal of Christian reaction is sub-par when compared to the Scriptures. This is a time when Christians need to think, act, and speak biblically. Christians need to have this mindset and lifestyle because God requires it of His people, particularly in times of opposition and persecution. Our focus on the Lord's words to His disciples shortly before His death, could not be more relevant to Christians today. Let us listen well to our Lord and to His inspired and inerrant words, so that we may "gird up the loins of our minds" 1 Peter 1:13, and manifest God's holiness to a godless world 1 Peter 1:14-16.

1 Peter 1:13-16 "Therefore, gird up the loins of your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

Titus 2:11-14 "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."

- Jesus' return should motivate the believer to live godly in an ungodly world. The word "waiting "means that we live each day looking forward to that blessed day. That hope becomes a transforming reality in this life, resulting in God being glorified through us (1 Corinthians 10:31). The blessed hope brings us joy and cheers us through the trials of this world. It should also cause us to stop and evaluate our thinking, words, and actions.

1 Corinthians 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."

1 Peter 1:13-16 "Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."