

THE CONTINGENT PROMISES OF GOD

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today we are going to talk about the promises of God. It's kind of a Part 2 to last week's sermon "Fear Not!"

First let me say that God is always faithful and He proves Himself faithful in all things, especially His promises.

However, in order to be able to rely on some of God's promises, there are certain guidelines and parameters that God has set forth in His word that while they are not necessarily absolute, they are absolutely necessary.

First, let's illuminate some of the promises that He has made to all of us who are created in His Image.

Psalm 145:8-9 NIV

**The Lord is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.**

**The Lord is good to all;
He has compassion on all He has made.**

As this scripture indicates, God's compassion and mercy are a given and He is always patient with all of us.

That said, His ways are higher than our ways and so we must understand that very often His compassion takes the form of correction and discipline to conform us to His purpose... into His idea, of who He made us to be.

...also, we must consider that we live in a world whose very nature was corrupted by our rebellion in the Garden and the rebellious nature of mankind that we inherited.

While we cannot earn nor do we need to earn God's grace, some of the promises of God do go hand in hand with our cooperation.

Look at this scripture as an example

Isaiah 26:3

**You will keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.**

Perfect peace is something everyone in the world wants but worldly people find it impossible to have in the world.

As this scripture illuminates, it takes a desire to trust God, (when your mind is STAYED on Him) in order to have the ability to trust in Him when trouble comes even though He is in all ways trustworthy.

That concept may be a little hard for you to understand so let me give you another example from scripture to illustrate it...

In the book of Deuteronomy God spoke through Moses and told the Israelites that IF the people chose to obey Him, one of them would put 1000 of their enemies to flight.

But He also told them that IF they rejected Him that one of the enemy would put 1000 of them to flight.

Remember that the Israelites were God's chosen people.

The entire Bible makes it clear that being chosen by God does not guarantee all of his benefits.

After all, the first generation of Israelites did not get to see the Promised Land.

Having the desire to obey God is key to having the ability to enjoy some of His benefits that are reserved for those who choose Him back.

This applies to wanting a relationship with Him on His own terms more than it applies to following religious rules and regulations.

Carl read from Psalm One last week when he gave Communion.

Here is a promise of God that He reserves for those who desire to have a relationship with Him.

Hear the Word of the Lord. This is from the God's Word translation...

Psalm 1 GW

**Blessed is the person who does not
follow the advice of wicked people,
take the path of sinners,
or join the company of mockers.**

**2 Rather, he delights in the teachings of the Lord
and reflects on his teachings day and night.**

3 He is like a tree planted beside streams—

**a tree that produces fruit in season
and whose leaves do not wither.**

He succeeds in everything he does

Beloved, this is one of the reasons that I always encourage you to spend time alone with God in prayer and to steep yourselves in His word, His teachings.

Everybody wants stuff from God and to be successful in all that they do,

but not everybody will be able to enjoy the promises of God that are only offered to those who desire to have a relationship with Him and to pay attention to what He says.

I hope that makes sense and does not seem too manipulative to you, but God is not a manipulator.

God is God.

For example... One of the promises of God that is extended to all mankind and is freely given is one that not everyone will receive.

Salvation.

Jesus died once for all.

John 3:16 assures us of this.

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

However, we also know that it is only those who choose to believe in Him as Messiah and the power of His Resurrection who will be saved, as evidenced by this scripture that we read last week.

Romans 10:9-10

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

So... all this to say that while God promises rain on the just and the unjust alike,

it is only those who accept the gift of salvation, by believing and confessing Jesus as risen Lord who will be saved and sanctified.

It is only followers of Christ to whom righteousness has been imputed, who can rest in the full promises of God.

Now here is the good part...

Here are some of the promises of God that are assured to those who do believe and choose to walk in faith with Him.

Settle back because I'm going to read you all of this Psalm.

Psalms 91

**1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

**2 I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust.”**

**3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.**

**4 He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth shall be your shield and buckler.**

**5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow that flies by day,**

**6 Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.**

**7 A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.**

**8 Only with your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.**

**9 Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place,**

**10 No evil shall befall you,
Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;**

**11 For He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you in all your ways.**

**12 In their hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.**

13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra,

The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

14 “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;

I will set him on high, because he has known My name.

15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble;

I will deliver him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him,

And show him My salvation.”

If you look at your handouts you will see that I have printed all of Psalm 91 there so if you would,

please reference what I'm about to say from there so that we don't wear Leo out on the projector... (he worked hard at Serve Day yesterday)

Let's start with the 1st verse of Psalm 91.

**1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

I want to draw your attention to the word dwells and the word abide.

When you dwell somewhere that is where you live.

It's not a place you go when you need something.

It's not some place you stumble upon occasionally.

It's where you stay and the place you call home base. It is your DWELLING place.

The other word that I want to draw your attention to is abide.

We see that word most notably in one of my favorite chapters of the Bible, John 15.

Here Jesus declares that He is the vine and we are His branches.

Then He says this...

John 15:4

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

Jesus uses the word abide THREE times in this one verse.

In the original Greek that John used to quote His Master, the word abide is Meno.

In ancient Hebrew, the word that David uses in Psalm 91 is “yitlonan”. The meaning of both is to abide it means to “remain in”.

As you can see from the words dwell and abide in the very 1st verse of Psalm 91 the Psalmist establishes that he is speaking specifically to those who choose to live and remain in close relationship with God.

This verse is key to understanding what it takes to be a recipient of God's promises reliably. You who are true followers of Jesus will understand what I mean.

Let's look at the first two verses together...

**1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

**2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust."**

It is worth noting that David uses FOUR different Names of God in these two verses.

They are ...

Elyon meaning Most High.

Shaddai meaning Almighty

Jehovah meaning Lord

And Elohim meaning My God

In verse Two, David now identifies himself with the one who "dwells in the secret place of the Most High" and "abides in the shadow of the almighty".

He says that he will say of the Lord he is MY refuge and MY fortress, My God, in HIM I will trust.

David is declaring that all people who choose to have and maintain an intentionally intimate relationship with God will trust in Him as their source of protection and peace.

Now note Verse three which begins the promises.

The first words are SURELY HE WILL DELIVER YOU...

The list of troubles and the confidence that David has that the Lord will protect him from and in all of them is comprehensive.

The first two are hidden traps of the enemy and disease.

If you find it hard to believe that the Lord is actively delivering you or will actively deliver you from things like disease this may be the reason why...

Because we live in a world that is full of diseases with new health dangers being discovered and uncovered every day...

Because the world itself denies the reality of God.

Because the world itself does not believe because it will not believe that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son...

Because the world's voice is very loud and the enemy is very persistent...

it may be easy for you to doubt God and his desire and even His ability to be with you in times of trouble.

But as we discussed last week, we must use our will to “fear not” knowing that God is our defender because His Word says so and His Spirit confirms it in our hearts.

Remember that God Himself gave David these words because he was a “man after God’s own heart”.

If you are a follower of Jesus, you are also a person after God's own heart.

Let's focus on the last few verses of this amazing list of promises as God Himself now speaks and reiterates the how and why He has made these promises and to whom...

Please look at verses 14-16 with me...

Psalm 91:14-16

“Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;

I will set him on high, because he has known My name.

15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble;

I will deliver him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him,

And show him My salvation.”

Remember that God's chosen people the Israelites chose idols of the world over and over again and they paid a great price for their arrogance, pride and godlessness.

Even so, every time they came back and cried out to the Lord He delivered them.

There is only one question that you need to ask yourself in regards to your ability to trust in these powerful promises of protection that are here in Psalm 91.

Have you truly set your love upon God?

Or is He still competing for your love, your trust, your allegiance with the idols of the world?

1 John 2:15-16

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

Take time this week to meditate on Psalm 91.

Ask yourself if you are making God the center of your life like David did.

Ask yourself if you are putting your relationship with Jesus ahead of your ambition, your income, your hobbies, your pride, your worries, your fear?

Because he was dwelling in the secret place of the Most High and because he was abiding in the Shadow of the Almighty...

David was absolutely convinced of God's desire and ability to protect him from all these troubles and strengthen him when trouble came.

We should be convinced as well.

Let's pray.

THE CONTINGENT PROMISES OF GOD Scriptures

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world.

SUNDAY MAY 4TH 2025

“THE CONTINGENT PROMISES OF GOD”

PASTOR JOHN RASKIN

Today’s sermon discusses the contingent nature of some of God's promises, emphasizing that while God is always faithful, gracious and compassionate, certain conditions must be met for believers to experience some of these promises to the full.

- **God's Faithfulness:** God is inherently faithful and compassionate, as highlighted in Psalm 145:8-9, which emphasizes His mercy and patience.
- **Conditional Promises:** Many of God's promises require human cooperation and a desire to trust Him, as illustrated in Isaiah 26:3, where perfect peace is promised to those who focus on God and trust in His faithfulness.
- **Obedience and Consequences:** The sermon references Deuteronomy, showing that in the Bible, obedience to God leads to blessings, while disobedience results in consequences, even for His chosen people, the Israelites.
- **Desire for Relationship:** A genuine desire for a relationship with God is crucial for us to receive His promises, as emphasized in Psalm 1, which blesses those who delight in God's teachings.
- **Salvation as a Gift:** Salvation is presented as a free gift for all, but only those who believe and confess Jesus will receive it, as stated in John 3:16 and Romans 10:9-10.
- **Psalms 91 Promises:** The sermon highlights the promises found in Psalm 91, which assures protection and deliverance for those who choose to dwell in God's presence and abide under His protection.
- **Intimate Relationship with God:** The importance of maintaining an intimate relationship with God is emphasized, as true followers are assured of His protection and peace.
- **Self-Reflection:** The sermon concludes by encouraging self-reflection on our relationship with God and prioritizing Him above worldly distractions.