

North Summit Church
Faithful Because He Is
December 28, 2025

Introduction

- It's that time of year again. January 1st. Fresh starts. New planners. Gym memberships. Promises to ourselves that *this* year will be different.
- **And there's nothing wrong with that.**
 - Setting goals, pursuing growth, developing discipline
 - These are good things.
 - But here's what I want to propose to you this morning...
 - What we need most for this coming year isn't primarily better habits, stronger willpower, or clearer goals.
- **What we need most is a deeper grasp of who God is and what He's already done.**
- We need to remember that the God we serve is *faithful*—utterly, completely, perfectly faithful.
 - And more than that, we need to understand that this faithful God doesn't just make promises to us from a distance.
 - He dwells *within* us through His Spirit.
 - Until we understand this reality, if our will isn't connected to His will for our lives...all our goals, and planning, and pursuing is simply vanity.
- So this morning let me take us on a journey through Scripture—from the garden of Eden to the upper room—to show you the stunning faithfulness of God and what it means that this same God now makes His home in us, as His temple, empowered by His spirit.
- Next week we will jump back into the book of Hebrews, and this will set us up to better understand the theological arguments the author of Hebrews is making as He points to Christ as the interpretive key to understanding the whole narrative of Old Testament Scripture.

The Thread of God's Faithfulness

- The Bible is not a random collection of stories. It's one unified story inspired by the Holy Spirit, of God's promise-keeping love.

The First Promise

- It starts in Genesis 3, right after humanity's catastrophic rebellion. God could have ended the story there. He would have been perfectly just to do so. But instead, He spoke a promise—the very first gospel promise in all of Scripture.

Genesis 3:15

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

- This is called the *protoevangelium*—the first gospel. God promised a champion who would be born of woman and would crush the serpent's head, even at great personal cost. From that moment forward, the entire biblical narrative became a story of God keeping His word.

The Promise to Abraham

- Move forward to Genesis 12 and 17. God calls Abraham and makes him three everlasting promises:
 - **First, seed:** "I will make you a father of many nations. I will greatly multiply you."

Genesis 17:5-6

"I will make you a father of many nations. I will greatly multiply you."

- **Second, land:** "I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings."

Genesis 17:8

"I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings."

- **Third, blessing:** "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 12:3

"In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

- And here's what's crucial—God calls this an *everlasting covenant*. These aren't temporary promises. These are forever promises.

The Promise to David

- Centuries later, God makes another unconditional promise, this time to King David: "Your throne will be established forever" (2 Samuel 7:12-16).

2 Samuel 7:12-16

"Your throne will be established forever."

- Generation after generation, kings came and went. Some were faithful, most weren't. Eventually the throne itself disappeared when Jerusalem fell to Babylon. But God's promise remained.

The Prophetic Vision

- And then the prophets began to speak. Isaiah saw a child who would bear the government on His shoulders.
- Ezekiel saw a valley of dry bones coming to life—God's Spirit giving life to the dead. He prophesied that God would give His people a new heart, a new spirit, cleansing, and that God's presence would dwell with them forever.
- Every prophetic word was pointing forward: "He is coming. Watch for Him. Hope in Him."

The Danger of Predetermined Expectations

- Now here's where we need to pause and learn a sobering lesson from history.
- By the time Jesus arrived, the religious leaders of Israel had been studying these promises for centuries. They knew the Scriptures. They could quote the prophecies. They were waiting for the Messiah.
- **But they missed Him.**

- Why? Because they had already decided how God was going to fulfill His promises.
- They expected a military deliverer who would overthrow Rome. They expected a political kingdom established by force. They expected God to work in ways that matched their expectations, their comfort, and their understanding.
- And when God showed up as a baby born in Bethlehem, when He came as a humble carpenter who ate with sinners, when He talked about a kingdom "not of this world," when He redefined power as laying down His life—they rejected Him.

They were so confident in their interpretation of God's promises that they missed the fulfillment standing right in front of them.

Think about that. The most biblically literate people of their generation missed the Messiah because they had predetermined how God should work.

- This raises an uncomfortable question for us: **Are we making the same mistake?**
- Have we decided how God should work in our lives, in our church, in our world? Have we created boxes that God must fit into? Are there ways that God might be working that we're completely missing because it doesn't match our expectations?
- The religious leaders of Jesus' day teach us a critical principle: **We must interpret the Old Testament promises in light of the New Testament revelation, not the other way around.**
- We don't get to decide ahead of time what the fulfillment should look like. We have to let God show us what He meant all along.

How God Fulfilled His Promises

So how did God fulfill all these promises? Let's trace it through the New Testament.

The Abrahamic Promises Fulfilled in Christ

Remember the three promises to Abraham? Watch how Paul interprets them in light of Christ:

- **The promise of seed:** Paul tells us in Galatians 3:16 that the ultimate "Seed" is singular—it's Christ Himself. And through Jesus, Abraham's family explodes beyond ethnic boundaries to include every tribe and nation. If you're in Christ, you're part of Abraham's family. This isn't metaphorical—it's your actual spiritual genealogy.

Galatians 3:16

"Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ."

- **The promise of land:** Paul says in Romans 4:13 that the promise to Abraham wasn't just about Canaan—it was about inheriting *the world*. The new heavens and new earth—that's the promised land fully realized.

Romans 4:13

"For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith."

- **The promise of blessing:** Through Christ, the blessing of Abraham has come to the Gentiles (Galatians 3:14). God's mercy isn't hoarded by one ethnic group—it overflows to every nation.

Galatians 3:14

"So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith."

The Davidic Promise Fulfilled

- The angel tells Mary that her son will be "great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

Luke 1:32-33

"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

- Jesus is David's greater Son. But His kingdom isn't established by military conquest—it's established by sacrificial love. His throne isn't in Jerusalem—it's at the right hand of the Father. His reign isn't political—it's spiritual and cosmic.

The Prophetic Promises Fulfilled

- **Isaiah 9:6 - The government on His shoulders:** Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matthew 28:18). Paul says that at Jesus' name, every knee will bow (Philippians 2:9-11). The government is indeed on His shoulders—but it's far greater than any earthly government.

Matthew 28:18

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Philippians 2:9-11

"Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

- **Ezekiel 37 - The valley of dry bones:** Jesus said, "An hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live" (John 5:25). He's not just talking about physical resurrection at the end of time—He's talking about spiritual resurrection happening *right now*. Paul says it plainly: "You were dead in your trespasses and sins... but God made us alive together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:1-5).

John 5:25

"Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

Ephesians 2:1-5

"And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love

with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved."

- Ezekiel 36 - New heart, new spirit, cleansing:

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

- The author of Hebrews actually quotes Ezekiel 36 as being fulfilled in Christ.

Hebrews 8:10

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

John 7:37-39

"On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, "Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Paul's Summary

Paul sums up the entire story with these words:

2 Corinthians 1:20

"For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory."

- Every promise—from Genesis to Malachi—finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Not just partial fulfillment. Not just symbolic fulfillment. Complete fulfillment. But often in ways that exploded beyond what anyone expected.

Living Faithfully, Indwelt by the Faithful God

So what does this mean for us as we enter a new year?

1. The Faithful God Dwells Within You

Here's the transformative reality: The same God who kept every promise from Genesis 3:15 forward, the same God who was faithful to Abraham, David, and the prophets, the same God who sent His Son in the fullness of time—that God now dwells within you by His Spirit.

John 14:23

"Jesus answered him, 'If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.'"

1 Corinthians 3:16

"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"

This isn't abstract theology. This is the lived reality of every believer. The faithful, promise-keeping God has taken up residence in your heart.

2. Your Faithfulness Flows from His Faithfulness

We often approach a new year thinking, "I need to be more faithful to God." And that's true. But it's not primarily about mustering up more willpower or trying harder.

Your faithfulness flows from His faithfulness indwelling you.

Romans 8:11

"If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you."

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets, who came upon Mary, who descended at Pentecost—that Spirit is in you.

3. Don't Predetermine How God Will Work

Remember the lesson from the religious leaders: **Don't decide ahead of time how God must work in your life this year.**

Maybe you've been praying for something specific. Maybe you have clear expectations about how God should answer. Be careful. God may be answering your prayer in ways you never imagined, but you'll miss it if you've already decided what the answer should look like.

God's ways are higher than our ways. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. His fulfillment always exceeds our expectations—but often in unexpected ways. Stay flexible. Stay humble. Stay open to how God might work.

4. Interpret Your Life Through Scripture, Not Vice Versa

- The religious leaders interpreted Scripture through their circumstances and expectations. We must do the opposite—interpret our circumstances through Scripture.
- When things don't go the way you planned this year, don't question God's faithfulness.
- Remember the promises. Remember what God has already done. Remember that He dwells within you.
- Your feelings are real, but they're not always reliable interpreters of reality. The Word of God is.

5. Live with Confident Hope

- The same faithfulness that brought Jesus from heaven to earth the first time guarantees He's coming back.

1 Thessalonians 5:24

"He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it."

- Whatever you're facing this year—uncertainty, challenge, transition, loss, opportunity—you can face it with confident hope because the faithful God dwells within you.

Conclusion - The New Year Invitation

As we step into this new year, I'm not going to ask you to make New Year's resolutions.

Instead, I'm going to invite you to do three things:

- **First, remember:** Remember the faithfulness of God. From Genesis 3:15 to the incarnation to the resurrection to right now—God keeps His promises.

- **Second, receive:** Receive the reality that the faithful God dwells within you. Not as a concept, but as a living reality. The Spirit of the living God lives in you.
- **Third, remain:** Remain flexible to how God will work in your life this year. Don't predetermine His methods. Don't miss His blessing because it doesn't look like what you expected.

The religious leaders missed Jesus because they had already decided how God would work.

- The faithful God has come.
- The faithful God dwells within you.
- The faithful God will complete what He has begun.

Philippians 1:6

"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

Live faithfully this year, not in your own strength, but in the power of the faithful God who dwells within you through His Spirit.

[Communion] - New Covenant in His blood. Not abolished...fulfilled. Now we live in light of this reality.

Small Group Discussion Questions

- Reflect on the past year: **Where have you seen God's faithfulness in your life, even if His answers or actions didn't look the way you expected?** Share one specific example with the group.
- Many missed Jesus because they had already decided how God should fulfill His promises. **In what area of your life right now might you be doing the same thing—telling God how He should work rather than remaining open to how He actually wants to work?** (This could be regarding a prayer, a relationship, a career decision, health situation, etc.)

- The sermon emphasized that "your faithfulness flows from His faithfulness indwelling you." **How does this understanding change the way you should approach this new year? What specific situation or challenge does this help you approach differently?**
- The sermon called us to "interpret our circumstances through Scripture, not Scripture through our circumstances." **What's one circumstance in your life right now where you need to let God's Word reframe your perspective? How might you be misinterpreting God's faithfulness because of how things currently look or feel?**