

Promises of God

In this lesson the goal is to try and come to a better understanding of God's promises to mankind. We will consider the difference between conditional and unconditional promises. We will look at some facts from the Bible about God and his willingness to follow through on promises. Also, we will look at things God has actually not promised but perhaps many people believe He has. Now let's look at what the Bible has to say about promises of God.

Facts about the promises of God

As we look at the Bible what are some characteristics about God and His promises that we can count on.

Romans 4:19-22 "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness." Because God is God, He is fully able to fulfill any promise He makes no matter how incredible or impossible it may seem to us.

Hebrews 6:18 "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:" Unlike mankind, God does not lie. If He says it, we can know it will happen. If He promises something we can know it is true and it will happen.

Hebrews 10:23 "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised" God is faithful to fulfill any and every promise He makes. No matter how much time may pass until a promise is fulfilled, we can rest assured He will keep His promises. This means of course if He says obedience to His Word will lead to eternity in Heaven for us, or disobedience to His Word will lead to eternity in Hell for us, God means what He tells us 100%.

2 Peter 1:4 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." A promise from God is a very special thing because we can always know it can be counted on. We can always know His promises will lead us to Heaven if we are obedient Christians.

2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God is not like mankind in that sometimes we keep our word and sometimes we do not. God will do what He says. Because He loves us and wants everyone to be saved God has promised us a way to Heaven if we are willing to take it.

Things God did not promise

It is very important we all take note of some things God did not promise us. Some people probably honestly believe some of the following things were promised by God, but they were

not. Remember, just as we can all count on God 100% to fulfill every promise He made, He is not going to fulfill promises He did not make.

Matthew 5:10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” God never promised an easy life to Christians. As a Christian you might have difficulties, enemies, or times that are hard. While an eternal home in Heaven is promised to all faithful Christians a stress-free, worry-free life on earth is not.

Matthew 7:21 “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” God did not promise to save the disobedient. Good well-meaning people, religious people that might be well meaning but are not obedient to God’s word are never told they will be saved. Only obedient Christians have the promise of salvation. Consider strongly for yourself, is my life in compliance with the New Testament? I hope you can say it is, but if it is not, please take the time to make it so before it is too late.

John 5:28-29 “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” God never promised anyone a second chance to become obedient to Him after death. We get one lifetime no matter how long or short that is to become faithful to Him and spend eternity in Heaven. When we die our chances are over, if we are not obedient to Him, we will miss Heaven for all eternity. (It should be noted anyone that is not capable of discerning right and wrong such as little children or seriously mentally ill individuals that cannot comprehend things like most adults do, they will be in Heaven **Matthew 19:14** “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” and **Matthew 18:3** “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”) Children and the severely mentally ill have an innocence that most adults do not have.

2 Timothy 3:12 “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” Christians are not promised they will not face persecution or difficult times on earth.

James 2:14-26 “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and

it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” God never promised to save anyone by faith only. In fact God did not promise to save anyone with anything **ONLY**. We need God’s grace in giving us a path to salvation, our faith in Him, and our works to demonstrate obedience to Him. Salvation is not with any one of these things **ONLY**.

James 4:13-15 “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.” God did not promise us another day on earth. We need to see today as the day of salvation and make everything right with God today because tomorrow may be too late.

Unconditional promises of God

God has made some promises to us that are unconditional. What that means is these are things God has promised will happen and we have no conditions to meet to obtain the promise. Thus these are some of God’s unconditional promises.

Genesis 9:8-17 “And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.” God promised mankind He would never destroy the earth again by flood. God even made the Rainbow as a reminder of this promise to us. Thus, God requires us to do nothing to get this promise as no conditions must be met by mankind to receive this promise.

Matthew 25:13 “Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” God has promised us that Jesus will come back some day though we do not know when this will happen. We know Christ will return but not when. This promise will be fulfilled regardless of what any of us do.

Matthew 25: 31-46 “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” God has promised us that when Jesus returns it will be Judgement Day. God has promised us that on Judgement Day all people will be divided in to two groups. God promised us one group will go to Heaven and one group will go into everlasting fire. (Notice there is no third group only two.) No matter what any person ever does there will be a Judgement Day. If today was Judgement Day ask yourself honestly, where would you be spending eternity?

John 5:28-29 “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” God has promised us that all the people that have passed away will one day be resurrected and go to either Heaven or Hell.

Conditional promises of God

God has also made promises to us that are conditional. This mean that if we meet the conditions God has given us in His Word, we will gain a certain promise. Everyone that meets God’s conditions will gain what God has promised us. However, everyone that does not meet God’s conditions will not gain what God has promised to those that do meet His conditions. This makes unconditional and conditional promises very different. Now let’s focus on some of God’s conditional promises.

Matthew 5: 10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” Jesus has promised a home in Heaven for those that suffer and are persecuted for Him. While no promise

is made of life on earth being easy, an eternal reward will be gained by Christians that suffer for Christ. The condition to gain eternal life here is being a Christian that was persecuted for their stand for Christ.

Matthew 6:31-34 “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” A Christian does not need to worry about their basic needs being met. This does not mean luxury items and it does not mean a miracle will happen to meet your needs out of the blue. It could be the Church simply steps in and helps a Christian in their time of need. We know that an obedient Christians basic needs will be met. The condition to meet here is putting Christ first.

Matthew 10:22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.” We are promised that no matter the strife people may put a Christian through on earth it will be overcome in eternity. If the Christian endures it to the end, they will have a home in Heaven waiting. Remember this promise’s condition is enduring to the end to gain it.

Matthew 11:28-30 “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” We are promised here if we labor for Christ according to His Word, we can have eternal rest in Heaven. The rest in Heaven is conditional on the labor for Christ.

Romans 5:1 “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:” If we meet the condition of an obedient life lived in faith, we can have the peace of not needing to worry about our eternal soul.

1 John 1:6-9 “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We are promised forgiveness of our sins if we have been baptized through water in Jesus’s cleaning blood. We may have forgiveness of our sins if we meet the condition only otherwise, we walk in darkness and are lost.

Revelation 2:10 “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” A Christian that is faithful unto death is promised a home in Heaven. The condition of being faithful unto death must be met to get the crown of life.

God’s promises will lead us to Heaven

God's promises will lead us to eternal salvation if we follow Him. God will deliver a home in Heaven to us if we are obedient.

Ephesians 2:4-9 "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." God loves us and by His grace will show us mercy if we are faithfully obedient to Him.

2 Peter 1:3-4 "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." God has the power to save us and has given us all the things we need through His word to obtain eternal salvation. We will be saved, if we follow the instructions He has left for us in the Bible.

2 Peter 1:10 "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If we make sure to be faithful obedient Christians the everlasting kingdom of God waits after this life ends.

Conclusion

Hopefully, now we all have a better understanding of what God has promised and what He has not. Hopefully, we also see the difference between conditional and unconditional promises and that a home in Heaven is only promised when we meet God's conditions.