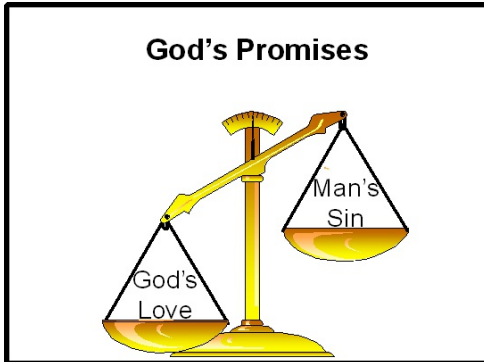


Security and Choices

It has been God's plan and intent to give man eternal life even before the creation of the heavens and the earth and the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden, and the wickedness of the vast majority of mankind has done nothing the change that.

In hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began" Titus 1:2-3

God has made it abundantly clear that He is going to do everything in His power to keep that promise to as many as possible even though no one deserves it in any way. There are some very important truths revealed in the following Scripture. Our "hope" of eternal life is not going to be an empty or forlorn hope. Because the love of God has been placed on one side of the scale, and our own weaknesses, folly, rebellion and ungodliness is not going to tip the scale.



Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. 6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. 10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. Rom 5:5-11

God cannot lie! Once He makes a promise, He will always keep it. Sin has placed a great strain on His promise because our sins are so great and the price is so high. Yet, God paid the price and made the provisions. The point of this passage is that God did these things before we were worthy. Back in eternity, God sized it all up, weighed it in the balance and made the decision that His love was great enough to give the promise, even though He knew how great our sin would become. He knew we would be without strength, He knew that we would be His enemies, He knew there would be people like Saul of Tarsus who would be among the chief of sinners. Yet He still demonstrated the depth and magnitude of His love. The plans for salvation required God tolerate a wicked and sinful majority. He would have to be longsuffering toward the multitudes in the nation of Israel who would be terrible sinners. He knew He would have to tolerate the treachery and inconstancy of His people who would promise great things then deliver nothing, or worse than nothing. Yet the promise was made, the oaths sworn and the commitments made.

This leads to Paul's point above. If God was willing to tolerate all of this to bring as many as possible to salvation, how will He respond to them? With all their weaknesses and lapses in faithfulness, can God really offer salvation to anyone? Yet He has promised that all who obey the gospel and live faithful until death will be saved. Even if they have to repent seven times a day, every day of their lives, He has made the promises and now, when we confess our sins, not only is He merciful and compassionate, but he is also faithful and just!

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1Jn. 1:9-10

God has given great assurance to us that once we truly obey the gospel and no longer follow the traditions of men, He will protect and help us in every possible way. God has made some great offers of assurance and since it is impossible for God to lie, we can have strong assurance.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30 I and My Father are one." Jn. 10:27-30

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? Rom. 8:31-34

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 8:37-39

What we see in these Scriptures is the common theme throughout the Scriptures when we

look at God's side of the covenant. It is immutable, fixed, steadfast and sure. God promised, paid the price, gave the assurances, and awaits our response.

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, Heb. 6:17-19

Along the same line is the promise that He will never fail or forsake us.

For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" Heb 13:5-6

Since God can never fail us, no one can snatch us out of His hand, we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us, and with God for us, who can be against us, we have only one focus. We know God never changes and has never changed from the moment when in eternity He made the promise of eternal life and throughout all the history of mankind.

While multitudes have taken all these Scriptures and made them into a doctrine where man's efforts are no longer important. Once we made even the feeblest admission that we love God and want to be saved, God takes over and there is nothing more we need to do, it could not be further from the truth. God wants us to have great boldness when we look at His promises and great fear and concern when we assess our responses.

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. Heb 4:1-2

Israel is a classic example of why such reasoning is false. They all promised to keep God's commands when they entered into the covenant. They did exactly what we do and ended with the loss of their souls.

Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 1 Cor 10:1-5

Paul followed that up with that fact that we must now lust after evil things as they also lusted, become idolaters, commit sexual immorality, nor tempt Christ, nor complain, because these are things that are our examples and written for our admonition.

Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 1Cor 10:6-11

This establishes the truth that we must fear lest any one of us should come short of it. That our concerns must be with our thoughts, conduct, plans and memories. We must understand that it is what we are doing in the present moment that God is most concerned with. Love must be consistent and unchanging. If we change our loyalties or friendship it can end in disaster.

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Jas. 4:4-5

The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray. Pr 12:26

After the promises of commitment and devotion must come the doing. We must be faithful until death, we must love God with a devotion and reverence that leads us to do everything He has asked us to do. His part of our salvation is fixed, but ours must be worked out and developed.

But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1 Cor 9:27

In this way we show our affinity to those who lived before us.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. Heb 11:13-16