“Why God Makes Promises”

May 17, 2015

A woman arrived at the airport and decided to purchase a Kit Kat candy bar to eat while she was waiting for her plane. In the waiting area she noticed an empty seat at the end of a row. She walks over to it and proceeds to prop her hang up bag against the end of the row. She sat down, and set her purse and some small items on the table that was between her a man seated nearby. She then turned back to straighten her hang up bag.

With everything finally in order, she was ready to eat her Kit Kat. But to her surprise, as she started to reach for it, she saw the man in the next seat unwrapping her Kit Kat candy bar. She stared in utter amazement as he broke off a section and devoured it.

She thought “Well, my goodness, I’ve never seen such gall.” She glared at him. He looked at her; but no words were exchanged. She was so furious at what he had done that she decided that if he was going to be that brazen, she could be brazen, too. So she reached over to him, broke off a piece and ate it herself. Then he broke off another piece and ate it.

It became almost a duel between the two of them to see who would get the most. Quickly the candy bar was gone, and she sat there just boiling that someone would be so rude and so presumptuous as to eat half of her candy bar.

Well, after a few minutes of silence, the man got up and left and then came back with another Kit Kat. He unwrapped it, broke off a piece and began eating. She thought, "Well, since he ate half of mine, I’m going to eat half of his." So she reached over, broke off another piece, and ate it. Once again the same scenario was repeated until the candy bar was gone.

She sat there thinking, “This is the most ridiculous thing that has happened to me in my whole life.” She continued to glare at him, and he looked at her, with neither one saying a word.

Just then, over the intercom came the announcement that her plane was ready for boarding. So she opened her purse to get her boarding pass and, to her utter embarrassment, there was her Kit Kat bar. She had eaten half of two of his candy bars, and her candy bar was still in her purse!

[Found on [www.sermoncentral.com](http://www.sermoncentral.com) “When You’re Down” by Pastor Melvin Newland].

Wouldn’t you say this woman hadn’t had her best day that day at the airport? And, as well, you’d probably agree that she needed some comfort that day as well.

I’m sure you’ve had some very difficult days in which you’ve needed comfort; especially the comfort of the LORD.

Today I want to say a word to you about the LORD’s promises. And I’d like to have you open your Bible with me to the Gospel of John chapter fourteen.

I’ve titled today’s sermon “Why God Makes Promises.” Shall we pray?

Why do you think God would make a promise? Here’s what I am learning.

First, He wants me to understand Him.

Second, He wants me to see His heart.

Third, He wants to remind me that He cannot lie.

Fourth, He wants me to live by the power of those promises.

Titus 1:2 *“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;…”*

Numbers 23:19 *“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”*

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:…”*

When the LORD makes a promise, He’s the only One Who can keep it. He can never go back on that promise. And He wants you to draw strength from Him as you trust that promise.

Now, you might be somewhat afraid to live by His promises, so, let me encourage you to day to think on the personal and practical value the LORD’s promises can be to you.

The first thing I want to encourage you with is this. Trust that Jesus is nearby.

Here we have the words of Jesus to His Apostles just a few days before He would go to Calvary. He would be crucified, die, be buried, rise again and then go back into Heaven.

And He wanted these men to know that He’d continue being with them even though He’d be gone into Heaven. Notice what He says to them in verse one.

John 14:1 *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”*

This fourteenth chapter of John is sometimes called “The LORD’s Farewell.” Now, usually when you read and study a passage, it’s best to step back and take a good, long look at the big picture. The Passover meal had just ended. Judas, as everyone can now see, is completely untrustworthy. The devil had just entered him. And Peter has just been told he would deny the LORD three times. Look back with me at John chapter thirteen.

John 13:2 *“And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;…”*

John 13:26 *“Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. (27) And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.”*

John 13:36 *“Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. (37) Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. (38) Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.”*

Would you agree with me that the Apostles were not having their best day? That’s what’s on the hearts of these eleven Apostles when Jesus says this “Let not your heart be troubled.

Don’t you find a lot of things that you feel really are worth being troubled over? Think with me, for just a moment, about all the things you were troubled about this past week. Are they all still troubling your soul? I wouldn’t be a bit surprised if most of them are not even bothering you today.

But some are. And yet, with the Apostles facing some very, very big things Jesus comes to them with this. “Let not your heart be troubled.”

I think most of us wish we could do what the old song told us to do that says “Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag and smile, smile, smile.” One of the lines of that old song goes like this. “What’s the use of worrying? It never was worthwhile, so pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and smile, smile, smile.” [Words by George Asaf].

Folks, when the LORD makes a promise, don’t you know that He’s speaking directly from His heart to your heat? You see, His promise is His commitment. The One Who can’t ever lie makes a commitment every time He speaks a promise. And if there’s a need in your life today for someone to keep a promise, look to the LORD. He’s made commitment after commitment and He can’t lie. He will do exactly what He says He will.

Look with me at the promises the LORD made that day. And notice how comforting they are to your heart.

He promises you an eternal dwelling place – one just for you; one with your name on it. John 14:2 *“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”*

Just like you live here in a home that you enjoy and are blessed by; so you are being promises a home in Heaven to enjoy and be blessed by.

He promises that He will return someday. John 14:3 *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again…”* You can even see God’s plans for your future in this promise. He will come again. That’s His promise.

He promises that He will personally receive you. John 14:3 *“…and receive you unto myself; …”* Haven’t you noticed how personal the LORD makes His promises? He’s concerned about you. He’s making a personal promise to you that, not only will He return; He will personally receive you into the Kingdom.

And He promises that where He is; there you will be as well. John 14:3 *“…that where I am, there ye may be also.”*

Folks, those are among the greatest promises you will ever hear and ever give your heart to. Believe them. They are true. And they are true because every promise of the LORD is designed to strengthen your confidence in Him.

Well, here’s what I want you to see regarding the LORD’s promises.

First, today you can trust that Jesus is nearby.

Of all the things you have to worry about today and this week, here’s the best way to remove worry from your heart. I think one of the greatest treasures that has helped me face things is this. The LORD is never far away.

Hebrews 13: 5 *“…for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*

Matthew 28:20 *“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*

Can you see why the LORD makes personal promises to you and me? It’s because He knows that we would let ourselves get filled with fear and worry and even discourage-ment and despair. Every time you neglect to bank on the fact that Jesus is nearby, you completely cancel out your joy and your peace.

I’m quite sure that the LORD is able to take care of any and every problem, trouble, trial, and situation you face; no matter how large or how small. He’s able to handle it. And yes, you need His presence.

Notice exactly what Jesus says in this passage; verse one. John 14:1 *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”*

It’s simply not enough to bank on the fact of God’s existence. I am thrilled to know that God is. And I’m also thrilled to know that God is everywhere present at the same moment. But, the best thing I can do today is to “believe also in Jesus.”

Now, you might be thinking “My problems are a whole lot bigger than the person sitting next to me.” But, folks, here’s what’s really going on. The LORD knows your heart. And He knows that those very things have a tendency to get you upset, worried, even fearful. Yet, if you believe in God, believe also in Jesus.

Do you think the LORD would ever not be present? Do you think He’d ever leave you alone? Is it possible that He lied when He said that “He’d be with you unto the end of the world?

There’s Not A Friend Like The Lowly Jesus by Johnson Oatman, JR.

1. There’s not a Friend like the lowly Jesus:  
     No, not one! no, not one!  
   None else could heal all our souls’ diseases:  
     No, not one! no, not one!

--- Jesus knows all about our struggles;  
  He will guide ’til the day is done:  
There’s not a Friend like the lowly Jesus:  
    No, not one! no, not one!

1. No friend like Him is so high and holy,  
     No, not one! no, not one!  
   And yet no friend is so meek and lowly,  
     No, not one! no, not one!
2. There’s not an hour that He is not near us,  
     No, not one! no, not one!  
   No night so dark, but His love can cheer us,  
     No, not one! no, not one!

--- Jesus knows all about our struggles;  
  He will guide ’til the day is done:  
There’s not a Friend like the lowly Jesus:  
    No, not one! no, not one!

Here’s the best antidote to worrying about your troubles. James 4:8 *“Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you….”*

The LORD Jesus is the nearest Person there is. No one can be nearer to you than He is.

So, first, trust that Jesus is nearby.

Second, trust His specific promises.

Don’t you think that some of us live a very vague Christian life? We guess or hope or just wish Jesus would make Himself known more. But that’s not how it works. Christianity is not vague in the least. It is very specific. What the LORD says is specific and He speaks specific things to you and to me.

So, practically speaking, what can you do to stay as close as possible to Jesus? My answer and my experience is this. Memorize His words and meditate on them. Say them over and over to yourself. Listen to Him speak to your heart each time you rehearse them.

Someone went through the Bible and looked for just one thing; the promises Jesus made. He found two hundred.

Matthew 5:8 *“The pure in heart shall see God.”*

John 4:14 *“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst well of water springing up into everlasting life.”*

Matthew 4:19 *“And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”*

Matthew 6:6 *“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”*

John 10:10 *“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

Matthew 16:18 *“…I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*

Matthew 17:20 *“If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”*

Job 5:7 *“Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.”*

Folks, you live in a troubled and troubling world. But so did the Apostles. And I think the greatest tool you have to help yourself in your personal life is the tool of Scripture; especially those promises; and especially those made by Jesus. Now, did He lie?

He has made promises that only He can keep. *“I will be with you even unto the end of the age.” “I will never leave you, nor forsake you.” “I will draw near to you if you will draw near to Me.”*

Really, what better thing can you do to warm and strengthen your heart than to review the things Jesus promised? Specific promises are the best things you can ever set your mind and heart upon.

First, trust that Jesus is nearby.

Second, trust His specific promises.

Third, trust Him no matter how things appear.

Imagine with me the hearts of the Apostles that day at the Last Supper. Judas? Peter? Jesus would be leaving them.

How did things appear to these men?

And how do things appear to you this week?

Has Jesus lost control of the world? Has He lost control of the people and things in your life?

You see; it’s a matter of why the LORD made promises. He made them because He intends to teach you how blessed it is to know Him and to walk with Him. You know Him best when you trust Him most. You know Him more and more as you believe His promises. He is “the way, the truth, and the life.”

Look again at the passage at verse two. John 14:2 *“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”*

Do you believe that that’s what the LORD is doing for you so that when you leave this world you will have your own mansion? A mansion, by the way, is an eternal dwelling place that is personally designed with you in mind.

You see, when you go about your day and your life with the confidence that Jesus is just exactly Who He says He is, that He will do exactly what He says He will, then you can live that life of victory He intends for you to live.

Now, sometimes you don’t recognize the LORD. He says things you don’t expect. He acts in way you don’t anticipate. Yet, He’s the same LORD He was on the day you became a Believer. He can’t even change.

Do you know what the character trait “resilience” is? It is personal elasticity. It is the trait that enables you to bounce back and recover from the difficult things in your life. You can easily see resilience in a rubber band. It’s always bounces back to its original shape.

About eight months ago I was faced with a very difficult situation; a very difficult person. I honestly didn’t know how to deal with him. And I still don’t understand how to deal with him. Yet, the LORD is my Resilience. He’s nearby. He’s made some very specific promises. And, no matter how things appear, I know that He is able to handle anything. I have found that no matter what happens the LORD enables me to handle things I initially don’t think I can handle.

He is that elasticity for your life. He’s your Resilience, folks. Whenever you have to face a huge day or a difficult person or a hard trouble, look at Jesus for Who He is. He’s the One with your spiritual resilience. He’s all you need because His promises are yours to trust on.

You might have heard the following story before. A young eight-year old Indian girl by the name of Sindu was sitting at the table before a bowl of curd rice, which she hated. Her mother spoke to her father, “Make her eat that rice.”

Sindu sat there crying and still not eating the rice.

“Sindu,” said Dad, “Why not take a few mouthfuls one at a time. That way you’ll get it all eaten.”

“Dad,” said Sindu, “I’ll eat the whole thing if you promise me something; and Mom has to make the same promise at the same time.”

Dad thought that maybe she wanted a new computer or something very expensive. He wondered out loud, “What could you possibly want that much that you’d eat the whole bowl of rice, especially rice that you totally despise?”

“No, Dad, I don’t want anything expensive.”

“OK,” said Dad. You Mom and I promise we will give you what you ask if you eat your rice.”

“I want my head shaved; all my hair; shaved off.”

“Never,” said her mother. “She watches too much television. She’s being spoiled by the American world around her.

“And I want it shaved off this coming Sunday.”

“Sindu,” said Dad. “Can’t we give you something else?”

“No! I want my entire head shaved. I’ve eaten the entire bowl of rice. You promised me. Once you told me the story of King Harishchandra and you told me the moral of the story was always honor your promises, no matter what.”

“Sindu, what we have promised we will do.”

That Sunday afternoon Sindu got her entire head shaved to the complete dismay of her mother.

The next day as Dad dropped Sindu off at school, he watched her as she walked towards the building. A young boy about the same age walked from his car towards her; his head was completely shaven as well.

The boy’s mother walked over to Dad’s car. “My son Harish has leukemia. He’s been on chemotherapy and wouldn’t come back to school because he was being teased about having a bald head. Sindu stopped by last Friday and promised him she’d shave her head too. You have a very noble daughter.”

Folks, God’s promises are even more meaningful than Sindu’s. Won’t you believe Him? Won’t you go out this week and live in light of a God Who cannot lie; Who has made promises that only He can keep?”

Now, you might be here and not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Maybe you’ve heard the Gospel story many times. Yet, you’ve never put your personal trust in Him. Why not?

He’s the Savior. But is He *your* Savior?

David said it like this. “The LORD is my Shepherd.” He knew Him personally as *his* Shepherd.”

Here’s the simple Gospel, the Good News of salvation in a nutshell.

Jesus came into this world be become the Substitute for your sins and take your penalty that you deserve for your sins. He went to the Cross. He shed His blood. He became the Superior Sacrifice for your sins.

And He offers you His free gift of eternal life.

Here’s the Bad News. You are a sinner and destined to Hell because of you sins. And here’s the Good News. Christ died in your place at Calvary.

He was crucified for our sins. I Corinthians 15:3 *“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;…”*

In closing, what is it that the LORD is speaking to you about? If He has spoken to you, do the one thing that is the best thing: submit your heart to Him. Let Him have His way.]

Here’s the Sinner’s Prayer. “LORD, I admit I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died in my place on the cross. I repent of my sins. I want to be completely forgiven today. I am trusting you right now to save me. Thank you. Amen”

And for you that you are already a Christian, here’s the Prayer of Surrender that the LORD is waiting for you to pray.

“LORD, I surrender everything that I am, and have, and ever will be. I take my hands off of my life and release every relationship to You--every habit, every goal, my health, my wealth, and everything that means anything. I surrender it all to You. And by faith I take my place at the Cross,

believing that when the Lord Jesus was crucified, according to Your Word, I was crucified with Him. And from this moment on I am trusting You to live Your life in me and through me that You might receive all the glory. I thank You now by faith for accepting me in the Lord Jesus.” Found on [www.gracenotebook.com](http://www.gracenotebook.com) in “The Selfer’s Prayer” by John Woodward].