

God's Promises

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God didn't wait for New Year's Day to make His resolutions. Pat Rampy tells about a promise he claimed and received.

This week on **The Word With Us** we are examining some of God's promises, so we are going to begin our broadcast with the high school students of Fountainview Academy performing "Standing on the Promises" from their DVD *Help in Daily Living*.

"Filmed in the natural beauty of Kauai, Hawaii, *Help in Daily Living* is a DVD package based on the book *Help in Daily Living*. Its purpose is to lead viewers to a practical experience with Christ through music and personal testimonies."¹

The students not only performed the music, they filmed, edited, and produced the DVD themselves. Fountainview Academy is a small boarding school in British Columbia for 10th through 12th grade students. If you are looking for a conservative Christian high school with a strong emphasis on music and evangelism, you might want to consider Fountainview.

Now, imagine yourself standing on a beach in Kauai, listening to the Fountainview chorus and orchestra as they are standing on the promises of God.

[music – Standing on the Promises]

Part 1

The beginning of a year is a natural time to reflect upon the past year and resolve to make the next year better. Some people put on weight in the month of December because of all the holiday baking and resolve to go on a diet in January. Others vow to give up drinking or smoking, or some other bad habit. It is good to make resolutions, and keep them; but we should not wait until the beginning of a year to do it if we realize a need to make changes at other times during the year. Today is the best day to repent, no matter what the calendar says.

While we think about the promises we make to ourselves and to God, it is appropriate to think also about the promises God makes to us. Sadly we can't always rely on the promises other people make to us; but Numbers 23:19 says,

**God is not a man, that he should lie,
nor a son of man, that he should change his mind.
Does he speak and then not act?
Does he promise and not fulfill?**

We can depend upon God's promises, and the Bible is full of promises. Granted, some don't apply directly to us because they were given to specific individuals. For example, Genesis 12: 1 – 6 says,

¹ <http://store.fountainview.ca/help-in-daily-living-dvd/>

The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you.

**“I will make you into a great nation
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”**

So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran. He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

We can’t claim this promise for ourselves and expect God to make us a great nation and give us property in the Middle East; but we can gain strength from it because Joshua 21, verses 43 through 45 say,

So the LORD gave Israel all the land he had sworn to give their forefathers, and they took possession of it and settled there. The LORD gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their forefathers. Not one of their enemies withstood them; the LORD handed all their enemies over to them. Not one of all the LORD’s good promises to the house of Israel failed; every one was fulfilled.

The fact that God fulfilled all of his promises to Abraham assures us that God will fulfill all the promises he gives to us. This promise also reminds us that God wants to give good things, not only to Abraham, but to us, too.

Yes, some of the promises in the Bible were made to specific people under specific circumstances. We can’t claim them. But the Bible is full of universal promises that we can claim. Here are a few examples. Let’s start with James 1:12.

Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

This promise applies to every person who perseveres under trial out of love for God. If you are undergoing trials right now, and love God, you can be assured that God will give you the strength to persevere now, and the crown of life in eternity.

Are you uncertain that God can give you the power to resist sin? Claim the promise given to us all in 2 Peter 1, verses 3 and 4.

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Peter says God's divine power has given us everything we need to escape corruption through knowledge of God. Peter calls this a "precious promise." So, let's claim it. Take the power God promises to give you.

We read in 1 John 2, verses 24 and 25,

See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us—even eternal life.

There is a condition to this promise. Specifically, what you have learned from the Bible has to remain in you. If it does, you will have eternal life.

James, Peter, and John all promised us victory over sin and eternal life. But they were simply repeating the words of the Master. Listen to what Jesus himself said in John chapter 14.

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

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.

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. (John 14:1 -3)

...

"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

"You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. (John 14:15-31)

If you love Jesus, and keep His commandments, He promises you eternal life and the companionship of the Holy Spirit. This is a universal promise. All you need to do to receive it is to love Jesus and keep God's commandments.

You may be wondering how this is possible, and why God would do this. The best explanation I've read comes from chapter 6 of the little book, Steps to Christ. Here is what it says.

You have confessed your sins, and in heart put them away. You have resolved to give yourself to God. Now go to Him, and ask that He will wash away your sins and give you a new heart. Then believe that He does this because He has promised. This is the lesson which Jesus taught while He was on earth, that the gift which God promises us, we must believe we do receive, and it is ours. Jesus healed the people of their diseases when they had faith in His power; He helped them in the things which they could see, thus inspiring them with confidence in Him concerning things which they could not see--leading them to believe in His power to forgive sins. This He plainly stated in the healing of the man sick with palsy: "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." Matthew 9:6. So also John the evangelist says, speaking of the miracles of Christ, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." John 20:31.

From the simple Bible account of how Jesus healed the sick, we may learn something about how to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins. Let us turn to the story of the paralytic at Bethesda. The poor sufferer was helpless; he had not used his limbs for thirty-eight years. Yet Jesus bade him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The sick man might have said, "Lord, if Thou wilt make me whole, I will obey Thy word." But, no, he believed Christ's word, believed that he was made whole, and he made the effort at once; he willed to walk, and he did walk. He acted on the word of Christ, and God gave the power. He was made whole.

In like manner you are a sinner. You cannot atone for your past sins; you cannot change your heart and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You believe that promise. You confess your sins and give yourself to God. You will to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise--believe that you are forgiven and cleansed--God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It is so if you believe it.

Do not wait to feel that you are made whole, but say, "I believe it; it is so, not because I feel it, but because God has promised."

Jesus says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark 11:24. There is a condition to this promise--that we pray according to the will of God. But it is the will of God to cleanse us from sin, to make us His children, and to enable us to live a holy life. So we may ask for these blessings, and believe that we receive them, and thank God that we have received them. It is our privilege to go to Jesus and be cleansed, and to stand before the law without shame or remorse. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:1.

Henceforth you are not your own; you are bought with a price. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold;... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19. Through this simple act of believing God, the Holy Spirit has begotten a new life in your heart. You are as a child born into the family of God, and He loves you as He loves His Son.

Now that you have given yourself to Jesus, do not draw back, do not take yourself away from Him, but day by day say, "I am Christ's; I have given myself to Him;" and ask Him to give you His Spirit and keep you by His grace. As it is by giving yourself to God, and believing Him, that you become His child, so you are to live in Him. The apostle says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Colossians 2:6.

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation, and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But they may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot resist evil. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are, sinful, helpless, dependent. We may come with all our weakness, our folly, our sinfulness, and fall at His feet in penitence. It is His glory to encircle us in the arms of His love and to bind up our wounds, to cleanse us from all impurity.

Here is where thousands fail; they do not believe that Jesus pardons them personally, individually. They do not take God at His word. It is the privilege of all who comply with the conditions to know for themselves that pardon is freely extended for every sin. Put away the suspicion that God's promises are not meant for you. They are for every repentant transgressor. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ to be brought by ministering angels to every believing soul. None are so sinful that they cannot find strength, purity, and righteousness in Jesus, who died for them. He is waiting to strip them of their garments stained and polluted with sin, and to put upon them the white robes of righteousness; He bids them live and not die.

God does not deal with us as finite men deal with one another. His thoughts are thoughts of mercy, love, and tenderest compassion. He says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." Isaiah 55:7; 44:22.

"I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." Ezekiel 18:32. Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say, "Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. I have a compassionate heavenly Father; and although I have abused His love, though the blessings He has given me have been squandered, I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, 'I have sinned against heaven, and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son: make me as one of Thy hired servants.'" The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Luke 15:18-20.

But even this parable, tender and touching as it is, comes short of expressing the infinite compassion of the heavenly Father. The Lord declares by His prophet, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jeremiah 31:3. While the sinner is yet far from the Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of His Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love.

With the rich promises of the Bible before you, can you give place to doubt? Can you believe that when the poor sinner longs to return, longs to forsake his sins, the Lord sternly withholds him from coming to His feet in repentance? Away with such thoughts! Nothing can hurt your own

soul more than to entertain such a conception of our heavenly Father. He hates sin, but He loves the sinner, and He gave Himself in the person of Christ, that all who would might be saved and have eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory. What stronger or more tender language could have been employed than He has chosen in which to express His love toward us? He declares, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isaiah 49:15.

Look up, you that are doubting and trembling; for Jesus lives to make intercession for us. Thank God for the gift of His dear Son and pray that He may not have died for you in vain. The Spirit invites you today. Come with your whole heart to Jesus, and you may claim His blessing.

As you read the promises, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. The great heart of Infinite Love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Ephesians 1:7. Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore His moral image in man. As you draw near to Him with confession and repentance, He will draw near to you with mercy and forgiveness.²

In a moment, we will talk with someone who has claimed Biblical promises for many years and not been disappointed. But first, let's listen to Riva and Erica Robinson, accompanied by JoAn Witzel, as they sing, *Day by Day*.

[music – Day by Day]

Part 2

[Pat Rampy's testimony]

Today we began our broadcast with a selection from the DVD *Help in Daily Living*, performed by the high school students at Fountainview Academy. To purchase the DVD, or find out more information about Fountainview, go to <http://fountainview.ca/>. JoAn Witzel read a selection from chapter 6 of Steps to Christ. You can download the entire book, for free, from <http://www.whiteestate.org/>. Finally, we talked to Pat Rampy, who maintains the website <http://prophecyhelps101.com/>.

² Ellen White, Steps to Christ, Chapter 6, "Faith and Acceptance", <http://www.whiteestate.org/books/sc/sc6.html>