

The Promises of God

Text: 2 Peter 1:1-4

Introduction

1. Promises are an important part of our everyday activities.
 - a. Work. Employees promise to be on and do their jobs while an employer promises to pay.
 - b. Finances. Promissory notes and credit cards are both ways of making promises.
 - c. Life in general. "New Year's resolutions" are promises made to ourselves and others.
2. To promise is "to give one's word to do or not to do something; to give cause for expectation; to agree to give; to assure by a promise; to give grounds for hope" (*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*).
3. Promises also are an important part of the religion of Christ. (2 Peter 1:1-4)
4. The value or worth of a promise is determined by three factors.
 - a. The value of that which is promised.
 - b. The character of the one making the promise.
 - c. The conditions or nature of the promise.
5. This lesson will apply these factors to the promises of God to determine their worth.

I. The Value of That Which Is Promised

- A. God's promises are "exceedingly great and precious." (2 Peter 1:4)
- B. The value of God's promises is great because they:
 1. Come from God and no one else can grant them.
 2. Deal with man's most valuable possession—his soul. (Matthew 16:26)
 3. Include forgiveness, peace, joy and eternal life.
 4. Never fail. Not one promise from God has ever failed. (Joshua 23:14; 2 Peter 3:9)
 5. Cannot be purchased even by all the wealth of the universe. (Mark 10:17-22)
 6. Have stood the test of time.
 - a. God's promises were not devised in a fleeting moment of liberality.
 - b. From the earliest period of human history, even before time began, God's promises were given. (Titus 1:1-2; Eph. 3:11; Genesis 3:15)

7. Relate to eternal salvation.
 - a. All of God's promises can be summed up in one grand theme: salvation.
 - b. Salvation is the gift God has made available through His Son. (1 John 2:23-25)
 - 1) The cost of this gift makes it great and precious. (1 Peter 1:18-19)
 - 2) The greatness of the Son is seen in Philippians 2:9-11.

II. The Character of the One Making the Promise

- A. The promises of men often fail because of a lack of character.
 1. Thousands of traditional marriage promises are made daily but thousands break those promises because they lack the integrity to keep them.
 2. People make promises which we allow to "go in one ear and out the other" because they have shown they are not dependable.
- B. The promises of God will stand because of His character.
 1. His character is above reproach. (1 Peter 1:15-16)
 2. It is impossible for God to lie. (Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2)
 3. He is not "slack" concerning His promises. (2 Peter 3:9)
 4. He is faithful to His promises. (Hebrews 10:23; 11:11-12)
 5. His character does not change. (Malachi 3:6)
- C. God's omnipotence gives Him the ability to fulfill His promises. (Romans 4:18-21; Matthew 19:26)

III. The Nature of God's Promises

- A. All of God's promises fall into two categories: unconditional or conditional.
 1. Unconditional promises. There is no limitation; fulfilled without the recipient doing anything.
 - a. Seedtime and harvest. (Genesis 8:22; Matthew 5:45)
 - b. No more world destruction by flood. (Genesis 9:11)
 - c. The future destruction of the world. (2 Peter 3:10)
 - d. The second coming of Christ. (Acts 1:9-11)
 - e. The resurrection of the dead. (John 5:28-29)
 - f. Judgment. (Romans 14:11-12)
 2. Conditional promises. Fulfilled provided conditions are met.
 - a. The remission of sins. (Acts 2:38-39)
 - b. The answer to prayers. (1 John 3:22)

- c. All spiritual blessings. (Ephesians 1:3; Galatians 3:27)
 - d. Eternal salvation. (Hebrews 5:9; Matthew 7:21)
- B. God's promises never fail.
 - 1. Unconditional promises never fail. (Numbers 23:19)
 - 2. Conditional promises are contingent upon man's obedience but they never fail when their conditions are met.

Conclusion

- 1. We can understand and appreciate the value, character and nature of the promises of God.
- 2. The value of His promises should move us to obedience.
- 3. God has not promised:
 - a. Another day to live.
 - b. Another chance after death.
 - c. To save the disobedient.
- 4. Obey the gospel and become an "heir according to the promise." (Galatians 3:26-29)