



First Baptist Church At The Villages

COMPANION STUDY TO MESSAGE: CONFIDENCE *IN UNCERTAINTY* (4/26) •
STUDY TITLE: WAITING ON GOD'S PROMISES • 2 CORINTHIANS 1:20-22 •
FOR USE 4/26 THROUGH 5/02/2020

MAIN POINT

We can wait confidently for God to keep His Word because the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus ensure that He will keep His promises to us.

INTRODUCTION

As your study time begins, use this section to focus your mind and heart on the lesson.

What is the hardest promise you have ever had to keep? Why was keeping it so challenging? What about our personalities makes promise-keeping difficult for us?

Before we read our text for today, what are some of the promises of God that come to mind?

How would your relationship with God be different if you couldn't trust Him to keep His promises?

Can we really trust God to keep His promises? The answer from Scripture is a resounding "yes." We know that God will keep His promises to us because He has proven Himself trustworthy through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because God keeps His promises, we can wait confidently for all of them to be fulfilled.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| READ 2 CORINTHIANS 1:20-22.

What does it mean that Jesus is the "Yes" of God's promises to us?

According to verses 21-22, what two gifts has God given us in our salvation? How do these gifts serve as reminders of God's faithfulness?

Having affirmed his truthfulness, Paul reminded the people in Corinth that every one of God's promises in Scripture is fulfilled directly or indirectly in Christ. God had sealed them, indicating security. Furthermore, God gives believers the Holy Spirit as a pledge, or down payment, a guarantee that one day we will enjoy the fullness of God's blessings in heaven (1 Pet. 1:3-5). In verses 21-22, Paul testified of his confidence and hope in the triune God.

How do the gifts of security in Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit impact your day-to-day life?

Read 1 Peter 3:18; Hebrews 2:9; and Romans 8:34. How do these verses let us know God will be faithful to fulfill His promises?

Paul goes into more detail about the promises of God and what they mean for the believer in his letter to the church at Ephesus. Ephesians 1:3-14 is a sequence of phrases about the marvelous spiritual blessings that belong to the church in Jesus Christ.

| READ EPHESIANS 1:3-6.

What is God's eternal plan for you, according to these verses?

What do you see as the relationship between being adopted into God's family and becoming holy and blameless?

Spiritual blessings are those blessings that pertain to the life of the Spirit, those benefits from God that enable us to experience salvation and to live as His children to the praise of His glorious grace (v. 6). Our ability to be holy is made possible by God's grace. As a part of His eternal plan, God has blessed us by choosing us for holy living and adopting us as His children.

| READ EPHESIANS 1:7-12

What else does Paul reveal about God's eternal plan for you in these verses? What is His eternal plan for Himself? What is His plan for creation?

Paul asserted that redemption is available in Christ Jesus and is accomplished through His blood. God's plan is more inclusive than the salvation of individuals. He will bring everything together in the Messiah. Everything will be recognized as submitting to the authority of Jesus

Christ. One day every part of the universe will be renewed and brought into subjection to its true Lord (Rom. 8:20-21; Phil. 4:10-11).

How aware are you of your redemption on a day-to-day basis? How does your redemption shape the way you deal with your sin and your struggles?

According to these verses, what is our inheritance through Christ? What aspect of this inheritance is most exciting for you and why?

| READ EPHESIANS 1:13-14

What did Paul say was the Holy Spirit's function in salvation? How does the Spirit enable you to live a holy and blameless life?

If the Holy Spirit is the down payment, what are the remaining promises of our inheritance in God through Christ?

Once we repent of our sins and trust Jesus to save us, the Holy Spirit seals our salvation and guarantees we'll always be God's children. This echoes Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 1:22. We can live confidently, knowing our salvation is secure in Christ for all eternity because of the Spirit. God's sanctifying work in our lives isn't complete until we're in the presence of His glory in heaven, but the Holy Spirit is His promise to us that He'll be faithful to complete it.

CONTEMPLATION & APPLICATION

Identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to your life.

Which of the spiritual blessings in Christ from this passage do you have the hardest time believing is true for you? Why?

In this time when we are isolated from friends, family, and church... why is it more important than ever to focus on, and hold tight to God's word and His promises?

In what ways will you praise God for His promises this week?

Is there an area in your life that isn't holy and blameless? What does God want you to do in that area?

PRAYER

Close in a time of praise, praying for your church leaders and church family group members, either silently or aloud. Begin the prayer time with your own statement of praise, such as "I praise You, God, that I am in Christ, that I am blessed, that I am redeemed, and that I am sealed."

COMMENTARY (additional background and/or explanation of the verses to help in understanding the biblical text)

2 Corinthians 1:20-22

1:20. Every one of God's promises in Scripture is fulfilled directly or indirectly in Him (Rom. 1:2; Eph. 2:12). Amen means "so be it" or "this is true." God's glory is displayed in Christ as well as in believers' confession of Him.

1:21-22. This is a Trinitarian text. God the Father confirms believers as His own. He initiates the anointing of believers in His Son, Christ. He also has sealed us with the Spirit, guaranteeing our heavenly inheritance (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30). The word translated pledge was a legal term signifying the first installment of a payment as a guarantee that the remainder would be paid (down payment).

| EPHESIANS 1:3-14

1:3. The verb blessed as applied to God points first to His kindness extended to others. Its meaning also includes praises returned to Him by those whom He has blessed. The Heavenly Father is the Source of our every spiritual blessing—and for that matter of our material blessings. Here, however, Paul focused on benefits that exist in the heavens, that is, the supernatural realm invisible to natural sight.

1:4. The Old Testament Israelites were often referred to as God's chosen people. Now, however, it is us (Christians) whom Paul called the chosen people. God decided on this plan before the foundation of the world, before the creation of the physical universe. In the mind of God, before all eternity we existed, and before Christ died for sinners, God chose us to be in Him. This teaching, often called the doctrine of election, is difficult to fully understand. The mystery of God's sovereign choice in salvation will not be resolved this side of heaven. Yet Paul emphasized the result God intends for His chosen ones: to be holy (morally pure, a positive term) and blameless (free from guilt, a negative term).

1:5. Predestined persons are the same as those God has chosen. The source of God's saving plan is His favor and will. He was pleased to make this plan, and His determination to accomplish His pleasure cannot be thwarted. The Agent of God's plan is Jesus Christ, His unique Son, who achieved the plan through His death (1:7). The Father's plan called for undeserving

sinner to be adopted as His son and daughter, giving His Son a family of siblings. Adoption was a well-known Roman custom, in which adopted children received the same rights—including inheritance—as biological children.

1:6. Paul moved from the benefits we receive through God's plan of salvation to the benefit God receives: the praise of His glorious grace. When we realize how magnificently God has displayed His grace, we can't help but praise Him. Our inclusion in God's gracious plan occurs only in living union with Christ, God's Son. Because of His grace, the Father's love for His Son Jesus has overflowed toward us ("in love," 1:4).

1:7. Redemption is one of several important biblical terms to describe salvation. It referred to the payment of a price in order to set slaves free. Paul taught that the death of Christ was the price paid to free sinners from their bondage to sin. Jews understood this concept because of the story of their release from Egyptian slavery through the death of the Passover lambs. The basis of redemption is the riches of His grace, God's limitless mercy. One result of redemption is forgiveness. Punishment is no longer due to we who deserve it, because Another was punished in our place.

1:8. The term lavish means more than enough. God's rich grace toward undeserving sinners has overflowed like a mighty waterfall. Thus redemption brings to us who receive it the wisdom and understanding we need to live rightly. Wisdom means seeing things as they really are, from an eternal perspective. Understanding suggests the ability to solve problems and make good life choices.

1:9-10. In Scripture, a mystery is a spiritual truth that previously had been obscure or hidden but is now made known. Paul rooted this new revelation in God's good pleasure (in eternity past), which as God's will certainly will be accomplished. The apostle also looked ahead to the days of fulfillment.

1:11. The phrase we were ... made His inheritance translates a single Greek verb. Through redemption and adoption into God's family, Christians have become His special possession, like the Israelites of old (Deut. 32:9). Paul repeated terms he had already used (predestined, 1:5; and God's will, 1:1,5,9) to stress the settled nature of God's plan.

1:12. As we have seen, God's choice of persons for adoption brings Him praise (1:5). In the same way, His redemption of sinners and making them His inheritance brings praise to His glory. Who are those who had already put their hope in the Messiah? They are either Israelites of Old Testament times who looked forward to the coming Messiah or else Jewish Christians who believed in Jesus after His first coming.

1:13. In addition to all the other spiritual blessings Paul noted, he now mentioned that believers are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Beginning at Pentecost (Acts 2), this promise had become a reality. Each believer in Christ now receives the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). His presence proves we are truly His children and under His protection.

1:14. The term down payment referred to a portion of a sales price paid in advance to secure someone's legal claim to an item. The very Spirit of God in the lives of believers is only the beginning of what we receive in salvation. Paul looked to our future inheritance, the full enjoyment of eternity, when our redemption will be complete. Again the apostle noted the benefit to God from His wonderful plan. Throughout all eternity, salvation will result in the praise of His glory (1:6,12).