

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
SERMON – The Promise of His Coming Again Part 1
Scripture: 2 Peter 3:1-9
03/05/2006

Quote of the day: If God said it, I believe it and that's good enough for me.

2 Peter 3:1-13 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. NKJV

Promise

Definition: **1 a :** a declaration that one will do or refrain from doing something specified **b :** a legally binding declaration (*a statement made by a party to a legal transaction usually not under oath*) that gives the person to whom it is made a right to expect or to claim the performance or forbearance of a specified act

2 : reason to expect something <little *promise* of relief>; *especially* : ground for expectation of success, improvement, or excellence <shows considerable *promise*>

I have heard children while playing say when confronted by their playmate that the other child did not do what they said they would do like sharing their treat, or giving them something. The offending child would remind them that I didn't promise.

Or most often one child would ask another or their parent the question, "do you promise." Parents even ask their children the same question. "Now promise me you won't do that again." The reply is "I promise" We know how long that last with a child.

We will spend the next few Sundays not on all the promises of God but on the promise that Christ is coming again.

What is a promise given by men? The way some people use the term, a promise is nothing more than a good intention--easily discarded if it gets in the way. They see a promise as something that is made to be broken. But when God makes a promise, He's doing more than just expressing wishful thinking. He is giving His absolutely trustworthy word!

A promise or a vow is not one unless I say it is, is the thinking of many people. With men in order to enhance the believability of what we say we will offer to make it a promise. In most cases because man has not only broken his word but his promises as well, we require the promise to be put into writing. But with God, what He say is as good as a promise
In the courtroom we all have heard, "do you promise to tell the truth...?"

Our word is not good enough. Men have diluted the value and truth of their word so much that they have to prop it up with a promise. They have diluted the truth of their promise that they have to prop that up in writing. They have diluted their promise so much that it has to be settled in court.

But I am so glad that God is not like man. One of the things I am very sensitive to is my word. I try as best I can to keep my word and do whatever I said I would do. If I find that I cannot I try to let that person know or do it as quickly as I can.

The biggest problem I have with that thinking is that I have the same expectation for everyone else, especially those who identify with Christ. God is giving me patience with this.

Now I am going somewhere with this. We all want to have a good name in the world, the community, and among our friends, family and acquaintances. Keeping one's word will give you a good name or a not so good name.

God gave a list of Ten Commandments and the second one on that list deal with the holiness of His name.

Ex 20:7 7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. NKJV

God placed a very high value on His name. In the commandments His name was second only to the worship of other gods before Him. But even above His name there is something else and that is His word.

His word is His promise.

Ps 138:2 For You have magnified Your word above all Your name. NKJV

In the whole Bible I have yet to find a passage where God has to prop up His word by designating it as a promise. I only found one occasion where Jesus used the word Promise but that was referring to the Holy Spirit. (Which was the promise of God without God having to say I promise it.)

Quote of the day: If God said it, I believe it and that's good enough for me.

That Quote is supported by the scripture found in:

*Titus 1:1-3 1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life **which God, who cannot lie, promised before time***

began, 3 but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of (NKJ)

George Washington Story

As children we were taught that George Washington said that he “could not tell a lie” about chopping down the cherry tree only later to discover that this most famous example of his fortitude of character is, in fact, just fiction (a lie). The story of Washington and the Cherry Tree, a tale which still lingers through probably every grammar school in the U.S., was invented by a parson named Mason Locke Weems in a biography of Washington published directly after his death.

More than a century later, Weems would be vigorously debunked by a new corps of biographer’s intent on resurrecting the real truth of Washington’s life. Some favored dismantling the myth wholesale and dismissing it from the record. Others, however, intended to portray the story as apocryphal, but commend its inspirational value anyway. As Marling quotes from a woman who remembered every verse of the story from her days as school, “If the tale isn’t true, it should be. It is too pretty to be classified with the myths”

How many remember being taught that it is God that Cannot lie?

We have all been recipients of empty promises. An empty promise is one that there is little or no truth in it. There are promises that start out full of promise but over the course of time the fullness begins to leak down to empty.

The promises of God are not empty promises and there are over a thousand in the Bible. When we speak, we should do so in truth then there is no need to promise. There must be a connection between our word that it is as good as a promise and backed by truth as the absolute truth.

Jesus is the truth

John 14:6 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. NKJV

I believe that because Jesus said it. But God is not only truth He is the God of Truth

Deut 32:4 4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. NKJV

Ps 31:5 5 Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. NKJV

God and Christ are truth and what they say is true. They do not have to convince us or meet our standards for us to say they are truth. It is our responsibility to believe them in faith looking forward to the fulfilling of their word which is better than a promise.

But there are those even today as there were long ago that scoff

Definition: Scoffer - mean to show one's contempt in derision or mockery. SCOFF stresses insolence, disrespect, or incredulity

V3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?

Where did this promise of His coming, come from? Let us look to the scriptures for our answer. Jesus said it

Matt 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory NKJV

John 14:18 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. NKJV

Paul preached it as many do today

Acts 1:9-11 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." NKJV

1 Thess 4:16 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. NKJV

The writer to the Hebrews taught it.

Heb 9:27-28 28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation. NKJV

We as Christians cannot selectively believe one part of the Bible and discount another part as being untrue. God and Christ are pure 100% truth. One un-truth makes them less than 100%. No better than man.

Those that scoff at His return/coming again have no hope for eternal life because His coming again is tied to our having eternal life.

We, who call ourselves Christians, are looking forward to His coming. I know I am. If I believed that the best Christ has to offer me is what I receive in this life then brother I am a miserable being and one to be pitied. That means that there is no life after death. I am like the heathen believing that we are born live and die and that is the end of it all. Or I believe like those that say we get our heaven or hell right here on earth.

But, glory to God and praise His name I can go to His word and find great hope (faith) in knowing that is not true. If Christ should tarry, I know that death is not the end for me but a portal into the presence of my savior.

I know He is coming again for me whether I am dead or alive at His coming. Are you sure He is coming for you? If we have not nailed that down before we die or before His coming, which can be at any time, then when He comes again He will not be coming for you to take you with Him V23 says "those that are Christ's at His coming" shall be made alive again.

*1 Cor 15:17-24 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 **If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. (miserable, pitiful)** 20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, **even so in Christ all shall be made***

alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father NKJV

Let us not think because He has not yet come that He is not coming. He is coming again. But until He comes, we must be about the business of our savior. We are to work until He returns so that when He comes, we will be able to present to Him an increase in all that He has entrusted to us as His stewards. When He comes, He will find that we have obeyed His commands to make disciples.

When He comes, He will find that we are denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, (*Titus 2:11-13*)

Message Scriptures: **2 Peter 3:1-13**, Ex 20:7, Ps 138:2, Titus 1:1-3, *John 14:6*, *Deut 32:4*, *Ps 31:5*, *Matt 25:31*, *John 14:18*, *Acts 1:9-11*, *1 Thess 4:16*, Heb 9:27-28, *1 Cor 15:17-24*

END