God is Dependable

(The Trustworthiness of God)
(2 Corinthians 1:15-22)
10-18-2026

Introduction: (v. 15-18)

**** God is our model of trustworthiness!*** *(v.18)*

I. ***Believers can depend upon the*** **MESSAGE about CHRIST** (v.19)

II. ***Believers can depend upon the*** **PROMISES of GOD** (v.20)

III. ***Believers can depend upon the*** **GUARANTEE of the HOLY SPIRIT** (v.21-22)

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Did you ever make a promise you didn't keep?

"In popular novels nothing ever goes wrong for the hero. He strides through each episode of the story with success after success. It is not like that for ordinary people in real life; it was not like that for Paul. Because he did not return immediately to Corinth, as he had indicated he would, the Corinthians now regard Paul as a double-minded man, unable to stick to his plans. One senses in these words of Paul that nothing he can say will be able to change the Corinthians' opinion about him. And yet from his viewpoint he had the best of reasons for changing his plans and honorable motives for doing so." (Paul Barnett, The Message of 2 Corinthians, p. 36)

v. 15

"And in this confidence" - in the confidence that the Corinthians could rejoice in Paul (v. 14) and how God used him in their lives.

"A second benefit" - Paul's desire was to <u>benefit</u> those he visited. He had ministered to them in person before and how he was planning a second trip.

v. 17

"Did I use lightness" - Did I do it lightly? i.e. without meaning it, with irresponsible fickleness or vacillation.

When some people make promises they promise with no intention of fulfilling their promise. Paul, however, was not like that. If he promised something, he would make every effort to fulfill the promise (just as all of us should).

Have you made promises that you didn't keep?

"Do I purpose according to the flesh?" – Do I make plans like carnal unsaved people? A worldly manner of making promises is to make promises with no settled determination to do what you say.

“Yea, yea, and nay, nay” - this worldly way of making promises pictures a man who at one moment says he will do something and the next says that he will not. The picture is of “the untrustworthy man, who affirms just as fervently as he afterwards denies” (Rienecker, citing Meyer, p. 394).

After Paul promised to visit the Corinthians, he delayed his visit for very loving reasons. He was so filled with sorrow by their sinful ways that his heaviness prevented an immediate visit. He wanted to come to them with joy and gladness, not with sorrow and the “rod” (SEE: 2 Cor. 2:1-4)

v. 18

“As God is true” - true = faithful & trustworthy

**** God is our model of faithfulness and trustworthiness!*** *(v.18)*

Great is God’s Faithfulness - Psalm 89:1,2,8,24,33,34

Definition: The Hebrew word for faithfulness literally refers to the firmness or stability of God. The Greek word means to be trustworthy; believable; reliable; dependable.

God's faithfulness rises far above human comprehension (Ps. 36:5).

God is clothed with the attribute of faithfulness (Ps. 89:8; Is. 11:5). This characteristic should be part of the believer's armor: we are to have "our loins girt about with truth" (Eph. 6:14).

God's faithfulness is an extension of His truthfulness. It is called "transitive truth". In the same way that God's righteousness is His holiness in action, God's faithfulness is His truthfulness in action.

"He abideth faithful" (II Tim. 2:13); "He cannot lie" (Tit. 1:2); and "His Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).

Paul had confidence in the trustworthiness of God when he said to Timothy:
"I know whom I have believed, and am <u>persuaded</u> that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12).

When we say God is faithful, we are saying "God is worthy of my faith" or "I can have full faith in Him."

I. *Believers can depend upon the* **MESSAGE about CHRIST** (v.19)

In defending his own integrity, Paul appeals to the God he believed in, the Christ he preached, and the Holy Spirit he was sealed with as a great illustration of trustworthiness.

It is on these illustrations that I base this message.

"Because Christ is the grand consummating Yes – God's unambiguous, ultimate Yes – He is the ground and fulcrum of all Christian ethics. Those who are in Christ and embrace him as the Yes with all their hearts embrace truth – and truth-telling as a way of life. Nothing could be more dissonant and logically contradictory than to accuse the Apostle Paul (whose whole being was dedicated to preaching Christ) of playing with the truth! Paul's behavior was centered upon and in the character and actions of Christ." (Hughes, p. 42)

The Son of God will never fail us. There are no "maybes" with Christ. Those who trust Him will not be disappointed.

No need to waffle between "yea and nay" with Him. Every blessing promised "in Him" will be "yes."

He did in fact die for you.
He did in fact rise again.
He did in fact promise to save all who trust Him.

We are secure **"IN HIM"**

The Bible declares that a believer has already been saved (past tense); and Heaven's possession (with its blessings) is already ours.

1. **We have already been blessed with all spiritual blessings** (Eph. 1:3 - *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"*)
2. **We have already been accepted in the beloved** (Eph. 1:6 - *"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved"*)
3. **We presently possess redemption and forgiveness** (Eph. 1:7 - *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"*)
4. **We have already obtained an inheritance** (Eph. 1:11 - *"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"*)
5. **We have already been sealed with the Holy Spirit** (Eph. 1:13 - *"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise"*)
6. **We have already been quickened (made alive) with Christ** (Eph. 2:5 - *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)"*)

7. **We have already been raised up and seated together with Christ** (Eph. 2:6 - *"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"*) (NOTE: V. 8 - "are ye saved" = Greek "you have been saved and still are" (perfect, passive participle)

The Bible declares that a believer has already been saved from...

the curse of the Law (Gal. 3:13 - *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree"*),

from wrath (I Th. 5:9 - *"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ"*),

A sinner who trusts in Christ becomes:

a child of God (Jn. 1:12-13 - *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name"*),

regenerated (Tit. 3:5 - *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"*),

a new creature (II Cor. 5:17 - *"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new"*),

a heavenly citizen (Phil. 3:20 - *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"*),

an heir to God's grace and inheritance (Rom. 5:2 - *"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God"*; Eph. 1:18 - *"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints"*),

and complete in Christ (Col. 2:9-10 - *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power"*).

It is by an act of the immutable God that a believing sinner is...

"declared righteous" (Rom. 3:21-26),

sanctified (I Cor. 6:11 - *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"*),

perfected forever (Heb. 10:14 - *"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"*),

delivered from the powers of darkness (Acts 26:18 - *"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me"*),

and placed on the solid Rock (I Cor. 3:9-15 - *"For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"*).

Therefore, believers can <u>know</u> that they are:

of God (I Jn. 5:19 - *"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness"*),
have passed from death (I Jn. 3:14 - *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death"*),
are "in Him" (I Jn. 2:5 - *"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him"*),
possess eternal life (I Jn. 5:11 - *"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son"*).

In the future, believers <u>shall be</u>:

raised (I Th. 4:16 - *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first"*),
changed (I Cor. 15:52 - *"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"*),
caught up (I Th. 4:17 - *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*),
be like Him (I Jn. 3:2 - *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is"*),
be with Him (I Th. 4:17 - *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*),
and be satisfied (Ps. 17:15 - *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"*).

II. ***Believers can depend upon the*** **<u>PROMISES of GOD</u>** (v.20)

"<u>All</u> the promises" - Not some of them but all of them

"In Him" - Every promise of God is ours through Christ. Being connected to Him is the guarantee of all spiritual blessing.

The believer's entire security in regards to his/her salvation rests completely on the trustworthiness of God. Is He faithful? Can He be depended upon? Is He reliable? Are His revealed promises dependable? And the answer is a resounding "Yes!"

"Yea, and . . . amen" - true and trustworthy.

"Amen" - not just an appendage tacked on to the end of our prayers, but a word meaning: "So be it" or "It will happen just as God says."

"Amen" – a Hebrew word suggesting solidity, firmness and used as a strengthening and confirming statement" (Reinecker, p. 394).

"Unto the glory of God" – God must be true and trustworthy! His glory is at stake. He will shine by virtue of the fulfillment of every one of His promises.

"By us" - God gave precious promises by means of Paul and the Apostles.

God's promises come via man. God used the instrumentality of men to deliver His Word.

See: Romans 4:17-21: The Faith of Abraham
Romans 4:21 - And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

That which gives glory to God (v. 20b) is our assurance in Him.

We bring God glory by being fully persuaded (or filled with complete assurance) that what God promises, He is able to perform.

To not believe God is to question His truthfulness, to doubt His faithfulness, and to call Him a liar.

Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6).

Heb.10:23 - *"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised;)"*

The only unforgivable sin that can be committed is unbelief - to not believe God, is to call Him a liar. It is a strike (blow) against His perfect character.

II Tim. 2:13 - "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."

a) God's faithfulness should be our reason not to let go of our confidence in His salvation (a true believer will not let go - Heb. 3:6).
b) God's faithfulness should be our reason not to waver in our confidence in His salvation.

III. ***Believers can depend upon the*** **GUARANTEE of the HOLY SPIRIT** (v.21-22)

v. 21

"Stablished us" - to be legally guaranteed (the word appears often in the guarantee of a bill of sale) (Reinecker citing Preisigke, p. 394).

"Anointed" - speaks of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which occurs at the moment of belief.

(Christ was anointed by the Spirit at His baptism to begin public ministry and we are anointed at conversion to begin the Christian life.)

Ephesians 1:13-14
In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

The sealing of the Spirit marks us as Christ's Property

A seal served at least three purposes in Bible times. It marked:

1. Authenticity - It was a seal used on legal documents. EX: Today, a county clerk has his own seal, which certifies that the marriage license issued is valid.

   EX: FBC seal

   Our salvation is authentic.

2. Protection - A seal was used to make something secure (Mt. 27:66) or to keep something guarded or protected (Rev. 10:4).

   "When seals were placed on deeds, titles, and other objects, they assured secrecy and protection against tampering or intrusion by unauthorized persons. . . The sealing with the Spirit is also an assurance to us that no one, not even the devil, can ever cancel out the redemption that God has provided for us in Christ" (DeHaan, Ephesians, p. 20)

3. Ownership - The seal marked something as one's property (Rev. 7:3-8)

   It identified the owner. "In function, it was quite similar to the practice of branding cattle in the early days of the west" (DeHaan, The Holy Spirit: What He does for us, Radio Bible Class, p. 20)

   We are God's special possession.

Satan, knowing how God marked His believers with the Holy Spirit,. will one day issue a counterfeit mark for the followers of Antichrist (Rev. 13).

The sealing of the Spirit is a <u>work of God</u>

1) "sealed us" - (passive voice)

2) It is "<u>God</u> who hath also sealed us" (Eph. 1:13)

The sealing of the Spirit occurs at the <u>moment of belief</u> (Ephesians 1:13)

Ephesians 1:13
In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

". . . ye believed (Aorist participle), ye were sealed (Aorist verb) ..." (v. 13)

The order:

1) <u>Hearing</u> the Gospel (Rom. 10:13ff)

2) <u>Trusting</u> the Gospel - <u>Sealing</u> with the Spirit

The Holy Spirit's ministry of <u>baptizing</u> and <u>sealing</u> occurs <u>simultaneously</u>.

The sealing of the Spirit <u>guarantees</u> the believer <u>Eternal Life</u>

"A seal indicates <u>possession</u> and <u>security</u>. The presence of the Holy Spirit, the seal, is the believer's guarantee of the security of his salvation" (Ryrie, KJV Study Bible, p. 1673).

This sealing of the Spirit is referred to as "the <u>earnest</u> of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession..."

a. The word "earnest" (Gk. arrabon) refers to a down payment, pledge, or guarantee deposit (cp. LXX - Gen. 38:17-20)

b. A Greek engagement ring is called an "arrabona"

c. The gift of the Holy Spirit, like an engagement ring, is Christ's <u>guarantee</u> that He will return and take His bride unto Himself.

1) The down payment ("earnest") of the Holy Spirit is a gift from God
2 Corinthians 5:5
Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

2) The down payment (seal of the Spirit) rests "in our hearts"

3) The down payment will last until the end. The believer is "sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). This proves that the Christian will never lose his salvation! God will keep His promise of eternal life!

Conclusion:

What should our response be to God's trustworthiness?

1. Trust God to be Trustworthy

Many times we trust man more than God!

We trust forecasters to predict accurately.
We trust airplanes not to crash.
We trust elevator cables not to snap
We trust social security to provide for retirement.
We trust the U.S. military to protect our country.

"Trust God's wisdom to guide,
Trust His goodness to provide;
Trust His saving love and power,
Trust Him every day and hour;
Trust Him as the only light,
Trust Him in the darkest night;
Trust Him in sickness, trust in health,
Trust in poverty and wealth;
Trust Him living, dying too,
Trust Him all the journey through."

2. Tell others about His faithfulness

Ps.89:1 - *"I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations."*

3. Always keep your word (do what you say you will do)

Be faithful (dependable; consistent)

Prov.20:6 - *"Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?"*

Examples of faithful men:

1) Moses was said to be "faithful in all his house" (Heb. 3:2, 5).
2) David - Abimelech the priest said this to King Saul: "Who is so faithful among all thy servants as David?" (I Sam. 22:14).
3) Hananiah - Nehemiah put Hananiah in "charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man and feared God above many" (Neh. 7:2).

EX: the faithfulness of Micaiah, who, when asked to tickle the ears of the king like all the other prophets had done, said: "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (I Ki. 22:14).

Be faithful in little things. Luke 16:10 - "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Be faithful in your stewardship (I Cor. 4:2).

Mt. 25:23 - "Well done, good and faithful servant."