

God Always Keeps His Promises

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[0:00] Acts chapter 13, Acts 13, Acts 13, I'm going to start reading in verse 13 through verse 41.

That's a long passage. Acts 13, again page 103 in that black Bible, Acts chapter 13 starting in verse 13, okay? Acts 13, verse 13. Now Paul and his companions put out to sea from Paphos and came to Perga and Pamphylia, and John left them and returned to Jerusalem. But going on from Perga, they arrived at Pisidia and Antioch. On the Sabbath day, they went into the synagogue and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it. So Paul will take advantage of that. And Paul stood up and motioning with his hand, he said, verse 16, men of Israel and you who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt. And with an uplifted arm led them out from it. And for a period of about 40 years, he put up with them in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of

Canaan, he distributed their land as an inheritance about 450 years. And after these things, he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin for 40 years. And after he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king concerning whom he also testified and said, I found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my heart who will do all my will.

From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God is brought to Israel, the Savior, Jesus.

After John had proclaimed before his coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

And while John was completing his course, they kept saying, what do you suppose that I am? I am not he. But behold, one is coming after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.

Verse 26. Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the word of the salvation is sent out. For those who live in Jerusalem and their rulers, recognizing neither him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. And though they found no guilt for executing him, they asked Pilate that he be executed. And when they had carried out all that was written concerning him, they took him down from the cross and laid him in a tomb. Verse 30. But God raised him from the dead. And for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now his witnesses to the people. And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers. That God has fulfilled this promise to our children and that he raised up

Jesus. That is, as it is also written in the Psalm, second Psalm, you are my son today, I have begotten you. That he raised him up from the dead, no more to return to decay. He has spoken in this way, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. Verse 35. Therefore he also says in another place, you will not allow your holy one to undergo decay. For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay. But he whom God raised did not undergo decay. Verse 38. Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. And through him, everyone who believes is freed from the things of which you could not be freed through the law of Moses. Take heed, therefore, so that the things spoken of and the prophets may not come upon you. Behold, you scoffers and marvel and perish, for I'm accomplishing a work in your days, a work which you will never believe, though someone should describe it to you. Lifehack.org put out on their websites 15 promises all couples should be able to make to each other. Here you go. 15 promises. I promise, dot, dot, dot. I promise to listen.

[4:41] I promise to learn. I promise to let you be you. I promise to let you grow. I promise to live for us, to find time, to work as a team, to save things for just us, to care about your interests. I promise to show you off, to keep trying to win you, to never get into a routine. I promise to always

pick up the phone. I promise to love your family as my own. I promise to keep you. 15 promises. Those are pretty good promises. However, about 40 to 50 percent of married couples in the U.S. divorce.

The divorce rate for subsequent marriages is even higher. I just googled that and coach Google knows all, right? Promises, promises. It's like the old 80s song. I grew up in the 80s. You made me promises, promises, as the song goes. You knew you'd never keep promises, promises. Why do I believe?

But God's not like us, is He? He's otherness. That's what holy means. God's other. God's not like us. God's not like us. He's holy. He's set apart. If He makes a promise, He will always keep it because His very character is at stake. If He makes a promise to do something, He will always keep that promise because if He doesn't, then He'd be a liar. Well, He can't do that.

He's God. His character is at stake. God will always be faithful first to Himself, which means He will always be faithful to His word, which means He will always be faithful to His people, to us. So, as a title for today, God always keeps His promises.

From Acts chapter 13, verses 13 to 41, this sermon, this is a sermon on a sermon. Acts chapter 13, verses 13 to 41, if you miss anything, don't miss this.

[7:07] God always keeps His promises. That's what He's trying to say. Paul, the driving force of it. God keeps His promises.

Always does. Here's a statement for you. God always keeps His promises. Longer statement. God graciously kept His promise by bringing, preparing, killing, and resurrecting the Savior, through whom there's forgiveness of sins and justification before God.

Listen and respond now. Amen. The point to this passage that we have before us is that God has fulfilled His promise of salvation, which is given in the Old Testament, in Jesus, who is both Lord and Christ.

Respond to the message today. And there's two kinds of people here in this room. There's those of you who are Christians, who follow Christ, you're a disciple of Jesus, and there's those of you who are not.

If you're not, you must realize that you need a Savior. Jesus is the Savior, the promise fulfiller, the Son, the Holy One, who brings forgiveness of sins, and you can be made right with God through Jesus.

[8:21] He's the only way. Repent and trust Him alone, and you can be saved. Well, there's more to this. Not only is this that God has fulfilled His promise of salvation in Jesus, not only is that for you who might be here and you don't know Jesus, you're not a Christian, but it's also for us as Christians.

Christian, God keeps His promises. As we humbly confess our sins, He will keep His promise of forgiving us of our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. Won't He?

How come there's not 5,000 amens coming from you at that point? Come on. Thanks, Mom. That's your mom. I mean, she's got to do that.

We stand before Him justified as His people. And He changes us by this gospel. He saves us by the gospel, and He keeps changing us by the gospel. And not to mention the fact that God will keep His promise to bring His Son again, to return to this earth and judge this world so that we will always be with the Lord.

God always keeps His promise. Always. So we'll walk through this text quickly, actually. First, God graciously kept His promise by bringing the Savior.

[9:41] In verses 16 to 23, He goes all the way back to Abraham, to the fathers, choosing them, the fathers, and then He chose Israel to be His people through a special covenant.

He supported them. He made them great in Egypt. He led them out of Egypt with a strong arm. Notice how He says He put up with them. Tolerated, bore with them for 40 years in the wilderness. But God was faithful despite Israel's faithlessness. In verse 19, He says He brings Saul on the scene of Judges, and then Saul on the scene, and then He says He raises up David, verse 22, to be their king concerning whom He testified and said, I found David the son of Jesse, a man after my heart.

He raised up Jesse. He uses this phrase raised up in verse 30, verse 37, with a different meaning, with a wordplay. Raising up David, He's going to raise up Jesus. And from David's offspring, God brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, who was the fulfillment of God's promise to David.

This one would deliver God's people, Israel, and anyone who would repent and believe in Him as their Savior. He'd fulfill that promise to Israel.

[10:57] So He brings about the Savior, and notice, preparing for the Savior, look at verse 24. John the Baptist, he gave a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

This is a big deal. Israel was estranged from God, needing His forgiveness. If you were a Jew, you wouldn't think that way. But they needed that.

They needed to be made right with God. Just because you're a certain ethnicity doesn't mean you have rights with God. You don't, whether you're a Jew or a Gentile. But it was the Lamb of God who was going to take away the sins of the world, not just for Jews, but for Gentiles too.

So He brings the Savior, prepares for the Savior, and then notice by killing the Savior, He says here in verse 26, Brethren, sons of Abraham and those who fear God, this word, this word of this salvation is sent out to us.

And He speaks about the rulers. In Jerusalem, the rulers, they were culpable for their foolish act of killing Jesus. The rulers, He says here in verse 27, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets, they actually fulfilled everything that the prophets had predicted.

[12:11] They acted in will for ignorance, and yet they fulfilled their role. Notice He says in verse 28, though they found no ground for executing Him, they asked Pilate for His execution.

He did nothing wrong. But they carried out all that was written about Him. And notice He says they took Him down from the cross, they buried Him. Yes, Jesus truly did die.

It wasn't a swoon theory. He didn't pass out. He really died a shameful, penal death to make atonement for sinners. So He prepares, He brings, He prepares, He kills the Savior, but then lasts, and by resurrecting the Savior, look at verse 30.

But God raised Him up from the dead. He acted on behalf of the Son of David by resurrecting Him. He kept the promise. And notice He says, He came up with Him, these that have seen Him, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people, these eyewitnesses, the apostles, proclaim what God did through His Son, Jesus.

They guaranteed the message of Christ was real, true, and historical. We don't believe in some spiritual resurrection of Jesus.

[13:33] We don't believe that they saw a ghost. We don't believe this was some figment of their imagination. This was a real, true, historical event.

Jesus actually physically resurrected from the dead. The only one who has. Others actually have. They resurrected from the dead, but they died, but He is the one who resurrected and is still alive. So that's why it's so important for us to bring up the resurrection. Christianity is the true proclamation of real historical facts about Jesus.

How God stepped into time to act on behalf of sinners by sending His Son to fulfill His promises for sinners. He was gracious, kind, loving, and merciful by sending this Savior.

This is what He does. So Paul is trying to bring this up to all these hearers, to those hearing and listening to Him. And then as he brings up the fact that God keeps His promise, He graciously kept His promise by bringing the Savior, preparing for the Savior, killing the Savior, and resurrecting the Savior, and he shows there's two proofs of that, the proof of the resurrection.

[14:46] First, the disciples testify to the historical event of His physical resurrection, but second, Scripture confirms that the promise has come in Jesus through God's vindication in His resurrection.

Look at what He does. Here in verse 33, God raised, excuse me, God fulfilled this promise to our children. He raised up Jesus. He wrote this in the second Psalm.

You're my son today, I've begotten you. That's Psalm 2. Later on in verse 34, I will give you the holy and sure promises or blessings of David.

Isaiah 55. Look at verse 35. Therefore, He also says, in a Psalm, you will not allow your holy ones to undergo decay. Psalm 16.

Paul's trying to make a point. The disciples testified with the very eyes that Jesus resurrected, and the Old Testament testifies that God keeps His promises. Friends, this is why we're here.

[15:49] To proclaim this message of hope. That God kept His promise in resurrecting Jesus. The promise made to David. The promise made to the fathers. God's promises are faithful and wrapped up in the faithful, holy one, Jesus.

So He goes through all of this. And then He does something here in verse 38. Here's the response. Here's what takes place. Verse 38.

Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through Jesus, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. So, through this Savior, there is forgiveness.

That's why it's so important that Jesus resurrected from the dead. God keeps promises and because He kept His promise, we can be forgiven. Because God kept His promise, we can have forgiveness of all our sins.

There's two major benefits of salvation. It comes only through Jesus. First, forgiveness of sins. Only through the raised and living Jesus can anyone have forgiveness of sins.

[17:08] Because sin was conquered by Christ. Anyone who responds to the Savior, Son, Holy One, will receive forgiveness of all their sins.

So you can come to Jesus today. And you can be wiped clean of all your wrongs, past, present, future. Christian, praise God that all your sins have been washed away.

You're cleansed, you're pure before God. He's forgiving of all your sins. That's the promise. Whether you feel like it or not. Whether you feel that guilt or that shame, the guilt should be gone, right?

The shame should be gone, right? Why? Because the promise is there. You're forgiven. This whole concept that's brought up in psychology today, you have to forgive yourself. You don't forgive yourself.

You're not believing in the promise that God forgives you. There is no forgiving yourself. You must embrace the promise that God has forgiven you in Christ.

[18:09] You should be condemned. You should be shamed. You should be guilty, but you're not. You're not condemned. You're not guilty. There is no shame.

There's forgiveness. And what's more, and through the Savior, there's justification. Not only does God forgive you, take away, aphimi takes away your sins, sets or releases you of your sins.

For those who believe in Jesus, you can be made right with God. Jesus provided what Moses and the law could never do, justify sinners or make us right with God.

Not only are your sins gone, but now you're justified. Well, the first question, because notice he says, through him, everyone who believes is freed from all things. You're justified. You're freed through the law, what the law Moses could not do.

You're freed because of Jesus. Well, what does justified mean? Good question. Justification is the legal forensic act of God whereby he declares a sinner righteous.

[19:23] God renders a favorable verdict upon the sinner. How? He credits a sinner with his own righteousness in Christ. He credits you or reckons you or you can say imputes you with his very own righteousness in Jesus.

This is amazing. Not only are you forgiven, but now God looks at you as he looks at his son because you have the very righteousness of God in you.

The only way one can be made right with God is through the resurrected Savior, Son, Holy One, Jesus. Another way to translate this here in verse 39, everyone who believes in him is freed from all guilt and declared right with God.

Your good works have no merit with God. Your good works don't add or take away from your salvation. It's only by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

It's only by that. To seek forgiveness it means one repents because one recognizes the wrongs committed and also means one exercises faith in Jesus and what God has done in him, his person and work.

[20:41] So for anyone who repents and trusts Jesus, not only will that person receive forgiveness taken away of all your sin, but that person will also be declared righteous, is being credited with the very righteousness of God in Christ.

If you want to experience the blessing of salvation, then repent and trust Jesus. And for us as Christians, we keep repenting and we keep trusting Jesus, right? That's what we do.

We keep repenting. We keep trusting Christ. And this is for everyone. Anyone and everyone. Black, white, slave, free, it doesn't matter to all ethnicities.

Whether you're from America or from Singapore, you can trust Christ. The good news is not help me live a better life. The good news is not get your life right now.

No. It's only Jesus and what God has done in and through his son. That's what makes Christianity different from all the different religions of the world. from Roman Catholicism to Mormonism,

Hinduism, Shintoism, Buddhism.

[21:53] It's all about you working. You work, work, work, work, work. It's what Christ has done. Which is why he says here in verse 40, Take heed therefore so that the things spoken of in the prophets may not come upon you.

Take heed. Listen and respond. Don't leave today without responding. Be careful. Pay attention. Watch carefully lest you fall into judgment just like the prophets warn.

If you do not respond that will mean judgment upon you. Paul here quotes in verse 41 or last verse from Habakkuk chapter 1 verse 5. One must repent and embrace the son.

Don't be a scoffer. It says here verse 41 Behold you scoffers. What's a scoffer? One who despises or has contempt for God's work done in and through his son.

You scoff. You mock it. Those who fail to believe or embrace God's work in his son will perish in judgment.

[23:03] That's what he's talking about. Yes, yes God is a God of grace and compassion gentleness mercy and love for sinners but don't spurn him.

Don't disregard his grace. He's calling. Christian, that's why we can take the heart that God always keeps his promises.

I mean as we confess he's faithful to keep his promise. He's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. God always keeps his promises. Always.

we stand before him forgiven. We stand before him justified and the same gospel that saves us is the gospel that changes us.

And God will keep his promise to have his son return. God always keeps his promises. God graciously kept his promise by bringing, preparing, killing, and resurrecting the Savior through whom there's forgiveness of sins and justification before God.

[24:08] Listen and respond now. Would you pray with me? Gracious Father, promise, fulfill our Jesus.

and convicting, regenerating spirit. We come before you just amazed that you would step into time. You would step into our world. You, Jesus, taking on humanity. when you didn't need to do anything, you would continue to be just and righteous to condemn every single person that's ever lived.

We are obligated to you. You are not obligated to us. You never will be obligated to us. we are your creation. We have gone our own way.

And yet, Jesus, you took on flesh the great God-man. You lived where we failed. You were perfect where we were very much and have been and will continue to be imperfect.

[25:53] perfect. And you showed yourself to be the perfect sacrifice, sacrificing yourself on behalf of sinners in the place of your people.

You conquered death, sin, and hell. We celebrate today together your resurrection, Lord Jesus. so we pray that we will listen and respond.

We'll encourage each other that because of the resurrection as Christians, as followers of you, we have forgiveness. Guilt and shame is gone. Though we have sinned and we continue to sin.

Though others have sinned against us, the power of the resurrection reminds us of the change that you do in us and how the guilt and shame can be gone.

And for those that are here that don't know Christ, oh God, it's our prayer to see them respond to you, Lord Jesus, to repent and trust you for you are the truth, you are the way, you are the life.

[27:17] It's only through you that we can get access to the Father. I want to encourage you at this time to take a few moments between you and the Lord and ponder that your mind think about these things that we've seen from Acts chapter 13.

maybe you want to take some time in prayer, maybe you want to read through your notes, remind yourself of this gospel truth, of these gospel truths.

And after a few moments we'll do our time of giving and we'll sing some more songs together. But let this be just a time between you and the Lord or you can stop all the things that will be happening today or plans that we've got going on.

You can just stop just about a minute and reflect, think, ponder. Let your mind just mull through these truths of God's word.

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be always accepted.
[28:51] Maybe as passo