

Performance or Promise?

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- [0 : 00] God of waters. God of the sky.
God in the morning. God in the night. God of the desert. God of the rain.
God in the busy. God in the mundane. God of the mountain. God of the plains.
God in the laughter. God in the pain. He's God of the promise. What he says remains true.
He does what he's promised. For me and for you. Okay. If you got your Bible.
- [1 : 02] Go to Galatians chapter 3. Galatians chapter 3. Is where we will be this evening. We are finishing up. Our series that we kind of started. The new year off on.
On the God of promise. Looking at some of the promises of God. In scripture. Of course this series was not meant to be. An exhaustive list. There's a lot of promises in the Bible.
Right. And so this again wasn't intended to cover every promise. It was more intended to kind of start the new year off. With a few of the promises that God has given us.
To kind of get our mindset right. As we enter into 2026. To have a sense of security. Assurance. And confidence. Again no matter if this is the best year ever.
Or it's a challenging year. That you can rest and trust. In the promises of God. It's been a great feedback. Over the last few weeks. I know some of these have really hit home.
- [1 : 59] With some of the things that you're dealing with. And so I do trust that you are encouraged. As we've been thinking about these promises. As far as where we're going next. I'll give you just a little bit of a preview.
In terms of it. Lord willing. Next week. Our plan is to start a series. And with that. Take a look at this. We'll be right back.
So there you have it.
There we go. Next week we will. Lord willing. Begin a new series in the book of Daniel. Very excited to be able to teach through that series.
I mean the word of God is always relevant. but as we think about how do we live out our faith in a growing secular age, in a growing ungodly culture, I believe Daniel is a book that really informs us how to remain faithful to the Lord with everything that's going on around us. So I do trust that you'll be here for that, invite others to join, and trust it'll be a great, great series for us as a church.
- [3 : 48] So with that, tonight we finish our promises series here in Galatians 3 with what is a common theme for us here at Faith Family, and I make no apologies for that. We keep coming back to this idea over and over again. One, because it is central to the gospel, and therefore, number two, it is essential to the culture that we have here at Faith Family as we are all about the gospel. Amen?

And so because of that, we will continue to talk about this particular issue over and over and over again throughout this year as well as years to come. So I didn't want to finish this series without looking at this specific promise that we have in God's Word. So if you're able to stand, I'll invite you now to do so. As we look at Galatians 3, and we're going to begin reading at verse 21, and we'll read down through the end of the chapter. Paul writes this to the church in Galatia, and he says, Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not. For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we're no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

And there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, there is no male or female, for all are one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to what?

Promise. Let's pray together. Father, thank you for this time to study your Word this evening, and I do pray that you would come and talk to us. This is just something we continue to struggle with, even as believers who've been taught this, who are trying to grow in our understanding of the gospel. We need to be reminded of this truth over and over again. So come talk to us through your Word.

[6 : 31] We pray in Jesus' name and God's people said, Amen. Amen. You can be seated. Huguette Clark was born into a world of unimaginable wealth. She inherited her fortune from William Clark, her dad, who made his riches as a Montana copper industry and was second only to John Rockefeller in his net worth. Now, Huguette's inheritance was so enormous that she could literally buy anything she wanted, anytime she wanted. And she did. For example, Huguette owned a hundred million dollar mansion overlooking the ocean in Santa Barbara. She had a 24 million dollar chateau on 52 acres in Connecticut.

She also had a 121 room luxury apartment building in New York City, and all of those rooms were filled with priceless art and antique furniture. Those were just a few of the things that she had.

On paper, she had all of the financial freedom that anyone could possibly dream of, but get this, she never set foot in any of them. Instead, she chose to live under a false name in a small room inside a New York hospital. It was there that she spent most of her days listening to violin music and watching Flintstone cartoons. And it wasn't because she was physically sick. It wasn't because she required medical attention. Huguette simply chose to live alone, and no one ever really knew why.

She passed away at 104 years of age, surrounded by a few nurses and her French doll collection.

She was a woman who had everything, but chose to live with nothing. She had the freedom to explore the world, and rarely ever left her room. Hers was a life with a mansion of possibilities.

[8 : 57] But lived in the confinement of a hospital room. Now, I don't know about you, Faith Family, that's very difficult for me to get my mind around. When I read that story, my initial thought is, how can someone who has that much freedom never enjoy it, right? How can someone who has all of the access to those things, and yet never take advantage of that? And the truth is, you and I do the same thing, don't we? It's not that we have millions to buy mansions. It's that you and I, all of us have access to things that we do not enjoy the fullness of. Are you tracking with me? We have access to things that we don't enjoy the fullness of. I'll give you several examples. Some of you have access to great technology, and all you ever do is email and Facebook. That would be my parents. Like, that's the only thing they know to do is email and Facebook, and it's rather dangerous. Some of you, some of you have all these vacation days at work, and yet you never use any of them. Maybe you have a relationship that could be amazing, and yet you never pursue one another. Some of you, maybe you have a gift or a talent, and you never use it. All of us, we have access to knowing God, and yet many of us spend very little time in His Word. And as we're going to see in our passage this evening, we in Christ have been promised freedom. We have a promise of freedom in Jesus, and yet like you get, many of us choose to live in a spiritual hospital room. That's precisely the issue Paul addresses here in Galatians chapter 3.

And what he starts with is he starts with the very issue that keeps us from enjoying the freedom we have in Christ. We have all of this access, all of this freedom, and yet we don't enjoy it. We don't live in it, and Paul tells us why. Look at verse 22. He says, but the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

Now, before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. Now, in this particular section of Galatians, Paul is addressing how the Old Testament law took people captive. And what Paul means, did you notice all the language in that verse is imprisoned, take captive. What Paul means by this is two things, namely that the law revealed our sinfulness, but secondly, the law also revealed our inability to do anything about it. Are you with me? Say yes. It revealed our sinfulness, and it also revealed our inability to do anything about it, that is, our inability to save ourselves. Paul's point then is this, namely notice it on the screen, that the law did not bring freedom. In fact, it wasn't even meant to bring freedom. The law actually brought captivity. It made us enslaved. It took us captives. And it did that in order to prepare us for the one who does provide freedom. Look at verse 24. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith. So everybody with me, the point here is very clear. The law was meant to take us captive, to enslave us, to reveal our sinfulness and our inability to save ourselves until what? Until Christ. And then Christ would bring the freedom the law couldn't give you. Now, the problem that's taking place in the Galatian church is that the Galatians are being influenced by a group known as the Judaizers. Some of you already knew that. You don't have to remember that. But what you need to know about the Judaizers is the Judaizers were telling the Galatians that even after, listen, even after you put your faith in Jesus Christ, you still need to live according to the law. You still need to follow the law of Moses. And their particular emphasis was circumcision.

And Paul wants to say, have you lost your mind? Like, are you crazy? That is not at all what Christ came to do. Look back at the beginning of chapter 3, what Paul says. And Paul does not mince his words here. Oh, foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. Let me ask you only this. Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish, right? Paul is not being politically correct here.

Like, you've lost your mind. You're foolish. Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? In other words, even though the Galatians were given this freedom, they had access to freedom in Jesus. They were, like you get, choosing to live in a spiritual hospital room of captivity.

[14 : 56] Rather than enjoying freedom from the law, they're still living under the law. Everybody with me? Say yes. All right. Now, I would submit to you, and I talk about this a lot, that you and I do the exact same thing. We do. We do. We functionally live under the law. Now, by that I don't mean that probably anybody here is trying to live under the law of Moses. Here's what I mean. If I came up to you tonight, and I asked you this question, and I want you to think about what your answer would be. If I ask you, what is it that gives you confidence before God? What is it that gives you assurance before God?

My guess is nobody here is going to say, I was circumcised as a baby. I've never heard anybody say, well, my confidence before God is I was circumcised when I was born. But I have heard a lot of people say, I was sprinkled as a baby. Even though that's not baptism, and there's no biblical grounds for it at all, there are many people who will put their confidence in that. I doubt anybody here would say, you know, pastor, here's my answer. Here's my answer to what makes me feel confident before God.

I didn't eat pork this week. In fact, I'd probably slap you if you did say that to me, right? Why not? You're missing out on the good stuff. Anyways, right? You wouldn't say that, but people have said this to me, I haven't had a drink in a year, which is great, but that's not what gives you confidence before God. I doubt anybody would say what gives me confidence, pastor, is that I didn't boil a young goat in its mother's milk. Nobody's ever answered that to me from Exodus. But all of the time, all of the time, even Christians that have been in church for years, what they will do, notice it on the screen, they'll give me an activity that then defines their identity before God. It's their parenting. It's their popularity. It's how you look. It's your success. It's your education.

It's your involvement or activity at church, on and on and on. We functionally do the same thing the Galatians are doing. It is that we have some sense of a law of performance that we feel like, in addition to faith, gives us confidence before God. I've used this before, but it's so, so, so good.

I'm going to use it again. Anybody ever seen the movie Saving Private Ryan? Show of hands. Anybody seen that movie? That's your homework assignment. See, Saving Private Ryan. There's a very, very critical scene at the end of the movie. You probably, if you've seen it, know what I'm talking about, where, first of all, the story's about, and if this ruins the story for you, you probably should have watched it by now, okay? So, there's a soldier, played by Matt Damon, who a few other soldiers literally give and risk their life to go and find him and to get him out of the war so he can return home to his mother. And they lose their life, but his life is saved. And at the end of the movie, he goes to one of those other fellow soldiers' grave, and he's looking at the grave, and notice what he says.

[18 : 25] My family is with me today. They wanted to come with me. To be honest with you, I wasn't sure how I'd feel coming back here.

Every day, I think about what you said to me that day on the bridge. I've tried to live my life the best I could.

I hope that was enough. I hope that at least in your eyes, I've earned what all of you have done for me.

James?

Captain John H. Miller. Tell me I've led a good life.

[19 : 34] What? Tell me I'm a good man. That is a perfect example of law-based living.

This feeling of, tell me that what I've done in my life is enough. That my existence justified itself.

And what was that man looking at? Yeah, it was a grave, but specifically, what was it? A cross. A cross. And it's such a great spiritual example of the same way we think about our relationship with God.

It's, I hope I'm good enough. I hope that I did enough. I mean, this is where so many Christians live.

Even people that feel like they understand the gospel. Tell me that I've done enough to make God pleased with me. But here's the problem, faith family.

[20 : 37] When you try to justify your life with your life, you end up a slave to your life.

Let that settle. When you try to justify your life with your life, you end up becoming a slave to your life.

And that's why some of you feel like this. You're stuck in the same patterns, seeking the same approval, constantly trying to measure up, letting your insecurities control you.

And be honest, it's exhausting. That's you at the end of your day. Right? Anybody felt like that? Amen? And it's not because you have a busy work schedule, though that may be true.

It's because you have a busy soul. Preach. Yeah, it may be a busy work schedule, but it's a busy soul. It's a constantly feeling like, I've got to do enough and measure up.

[21 : 37] It's why every day feels like this. I've got to lift more. I've got to be better. I've got to do more. And you live that way until you eventually come crashing down.

Right? That had to hurt. But these are meant to be spiritual examples of the way many of us as Christians live. And that is the predominant mindset of our world, of our culture.

Amen? How many of you know the name Michael Phelps? Michael Phelps. If you know anything about the Olympics or you've been alive in the last 20 years, you've heard of Michael Phelps. When Michael Phelps finished his career, he was the most decorated Olympian in history with 23 gold medals.

All of his life, he only knew one mindset. And I would submit it's the same mindset we think as Christians. It's the same way these Galatians were thinking.

His mindset was this, quote, train harder, swim faster, win more. That was his motto. Train harder, swim faster, win more.

[22 : 46] But once his career ended, emptiness set in and Phelps, if you know his story, actually spiraled into a deep depression. He turned to alcohol and he isolated himself completely.

In an interview, Phelps admitted this, quote, listen to this, I was chasing satisfaction, but it was never enough. No matter what I achieved, I needed more.

And it wasn't until later in life that he learned something that helped him to become free. He said, quote, that my value isn't tied to my performance.

This is what he said, my greatest victory didn't happen in the Olympics. My greatest victory didn't happen in the Olympics. It happened when I stopped believing more would be enough.

Think about that. One of the most decorated Olympians of all time said what ultimately was his greatest victory in life was when he stopped believing more would be enough.

[24 : 00] See, family, the weight of performance is simply too heavy to carry. And that's what a lot of us look like spiritually. But what if there's another way?

What if there's a freedom that isn't found in performance? In fact, Paul would say it wasn't meant to be found in the law. It wasn't meant to be found in performance.

It was meant to be found, listen, entrusting a promise. Verse 16. Now, the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring.

It does not say and to offsprings, rather referring to many, but referring to one, and to your offspring who is Christ.

This is what I mean. The law, which came 430 years afterwards, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God so as to make the promise void.

[24 : 59] Paul does something that is so brilliant here. Paul goes Old Testament on them, right? Because they're trying to attach the Old Testament to faith or the Old Testament law to faith.

And Paul says, okay, okay, if you want to do that, let's just take a moment and go back to the covenant that was made to Abraham and the covenant that was made to Moses. Now, real quickly, before I briefly give an overview here, a covenant, that's a word some of us use, but it's not all that common in our lingo, but a covenant in the ancient world was an agreement between two parties and it was very, very, very serious.

In fact, it was so serious that in the ancient world they would sacrifice an animal, they would put half of it on one side, the other half on the other side, and then they would walk down the middle as a way of saying only death can break this covenant.

Are you with me? Say yes. And there were two types of covenants that were given. One was, you know, so many of you know this, a conditional covenant and an unconditional covenant.

A conditional covenant had conditions. An unconditional covenant did not have conditions. See how brilliant I am? Like, I went to seminary for that.

[26 : 19] Some of you are like, that's the most insightful thing I've ever heard, right? Yeah, one comes with conditions. That is, I'll do my end of the bargain if you do your end of the bargain.

The unconditional is, I'll fulfill my end of the bargain regardless of what you do. Now, Paul mentions the two covenants. Come on, zone in here. This is so brilliant.

Paul says, you want to break this down, Galatians? Here's how it goes. The Abrahamic covenant was given to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12. And it was there that God made an unconditional covenant to Abraham when He promised him an inheritance.

An inheritance of land. An inheritance of people. An inheritance of blessing. And then He added to that in chapter 15 when He promised Abraham a future offspring.

That from Abraham would come an offspring. Not offsprings, right? Galatians 3. But an offspring. A seed. And through that one all the nations would be blessed.

[27 : 25] And then God in chapter 17 gives the sign of this unconditional covenant. And that sign was circumcision. Listen, circumcision was not given to gain approval.

Circumcision was given to remind God's people of His promise. Are you with me? So I made an unconditional covenant to Abraham of all this inheritance.

It would come through an offspring. And to remind you of that, I give you the sign of circumcision. And in Him, that is in Abraham, salvation would come to the nations.

It was a promise and it didn't depend on Abraham. Are you with me? Now here's the covenant given to Moses. 430 years later, God makes a different covenant.

This covenant is made to Moses what we know as the law. And this covenant was conditional. You can go back and read it in the book of Deuteronomy Deuteronomy and places in the Torah where God will say, if you do this, then I'll bless you.

[28 : 40] And if you don't do that, then there'll be curses. There'll be consequences for that disobedience. It's like what some of you will do as parents with your kids.

You do this. Hey, if you don't make a scene at Walmart today, I'll take you out for ice cream. Okay? But if you do make a scene, then you're going to be in big trouble when you get home, right?

Oh, you're just perfect parents. You've never had to do that with yours. Okay. But it works like that. And of course, Israel proved over and over again that they couldn't obey the covenant. They continued to break the law.

Notice it on the screen. Israel broke the law repeatedly and spent most of their life in captivity. Is everybody with me on this point so far?

This is the point that Paul is making out of Galatians. Are you with me? Are you really with me? So then that raises this question. Are you ready, Galatians? Are you ready, faith family? Did freedom, did salvation, did blessing, did the inheritance come through performance or through promise?

[29 : 54] And the answer, of course, is verse 18. For if the inheritance comes by the law performance, it no longer comes by promise, but God gave it to Abraham by a, say it, promise.

So guess what, Galatians? Guess what, faith family? You, your confidence before God is not based on what you do. It's based on the promise of God.

The covenants prove this because the only thing, the only thing you can do with a promise is believe it. You know this.

Notice it on the screen. You don't earn a promise. You believe a promise. You don't earn a promise. You believe a promise. So why would you try to earn God's blessing of salvation when you already have God's blessing by faith in Jesus Christ?

I mean, this is the gospel, right? I mean, if you're a faith family person, you just probably should want to jump up and scream hallelujah. I mean, this is what we're about. Amen? Okay, eight of you are excited, but that's okay.

[31 : 18] I'm working on the rest of you. Here's the point. Faith family, we will never be free. We will never be free until we stop living by our performance and start living by God's promise.

The path of performance is one of slavery. The law proved that. The path of promise is one of freedom. Now, just as a little side note, not that you're asking, but some would.

Paul's point, you can look at it in verse 19 if you want to, but we won't read it, is Paul makes clear this doesn't make the law bad. The law was good. The law was good in that it did what it was intended to do, namely, listen, prove you can't perform.

That was the reason it was given, and it did that, and therefore, it's a good thing. In fact, this is beautiful, it's actually both covenants that work together.

They don't compete. They complement. Why? Because the covenant of performance was given so that you'd only have one option left, and that's the covenant of promise.

[32 : 31] So, the covenant of performance was given to show you there's only one way to have confidence. There's only one way to enter into the inheritance of God, and that is through the promise of God.

So, Galatians, family, grow up. Grow up. It is time to start living, and I say this to me as much as I do you, it is time to start living in the mansion of freedom, not the hospital room of the law.

You have been given access to an amazing inheritance. Enjoy it. Live in it. Take full access of all that is yours in Christ.

Look at what he says in verse 23. Now, before faith came, we were held captive under the law in prison until the coming faith would be revealed. So, then the law was a guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith.

But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. This is essentially Paul telling the Galatians it's time to grow up.

[33 : 53] It's time to mature. It's time to stop living that way. In the ancient Near East, families would often have a servant or servants and their responsibility would be to watch the children, to take care of the children.

It's kind of the modern form of that would be like a babysitter today, someone that would oversee the kids. But there would come a point, of course, when you don't need a babysitter anymore.

I mean, we know that to be the case today. I came across a story about Stanley Thornton Jr. Stanley's a 31-year-old who still lives his life every day as an adult baby.

Complete with adult diapers, bottles, you see his cribs, like literally every single day of his life as a 31-year-old man, he lives only doing child things.

Now, it is no way, I don't share this with you to make fun of or in any way put down. That's not my heart whatsoever. It's really to make a spiritual illustration that oftentimes we as Christians are just like that.

[35 : 03] Right? We've been a Christian for a long time, but we're still in childish ways of thinking. But Paul's point here is to say, listen, law-based thinking, performance-based thinking, you're to the point now, you should have grown out of that.

You shouldn't be living that way. Spiritual maturity is not how much Bible do you have memorized. Are you listening? Spiritual maturity is are you living by the promise of God instead of the performance of yourself?

Preach. Preach, preacher. Spiritual maturity, according to Galatians 3, is not how much Bible do you know. It is, do you walk in the promise of God rather than the performance of yourself?

So what is the promise then that we have here in Galatians 3? And we'll wrap it up with this. Look at verse 13. Y'all having fun? Okay, I am. Verse 13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is everyone who's hanged on a tree so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles so that we might receive the promised spirit through faith.

Now, the promise here starts not with us or what we do. The promise starts with what Jesus did. And this is so important.

[36 : 39] This is so important. Hang with me because we're going to hit a powerful point here in just a moment. Notice this on the screen. Paul is saying here that Jesus fulfilled the covenant to Abraham and the covenant to Moses.

What I mean by that is Jesus fulfilled the covenant to Abraham in that he is, he's the offspring that Abraham was promised. He's the one that salvation comes to the nations.

He's the blessing. He's the one that inherits the earth, Matthew 28, right? Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham.

And he's also the fulfillment of the covenant given to Moses. Why? Because on the cross, these are the verses that we just read, he took our curse. He took our sin.

Everything that the law revealed in us, Jesus took upon himself. And so Jesus fulfills the Abrahamic covenant and he fulfills the Mosaic covenant.

[37 : 40] Are you with me? So what happens is when we put our faith in Jesus, oh boy, the promise that was given to Abraham becomes our promise because of what Jesus did.

Let me say it again. The promise given to Abraham, given to Moses, Jesus fulfills both of those, which means now when I put my faith in Christ, he takes the curse of my sin and gives me all the promise and blessings and inheritance that was given to Abraham.

It's exactly what Paul is saying in Galatians 3. We are Abraham's offspring when we put faith in Jesus. Look at verse 26.

Oh man, if you think I've been excited, wait till this. For in Christ Jesus, say this with me, you, here's the promise, you are all sons of God through faith.

Did you see how we got there? Right? In Jesus, you are all sons of God through faith. And then look at verse 29. And if you are Christ, if you belong to Him, if you put your faith in Him, then you are Abraham's offspring.

[38 : 57] Guess what you are? Guess what promise you have? You're heirs. You're heirs of the inheritance. You are heirs according to promise.

The promise that we have in Galatians 3, and it's expressed in different ways because some of you might say, wait a minute, wait a minute. Verse 14 says, you receive the promised spirit.

So, why isn't the promise that we receive the spirit? I'm so glad you asked that question. What does the spirit, according to Romans, enable us to do?

Cry out, Abba, Father. That is, the spirit is what is the guarantee that we are sons.

The spirit, the promised spirit, is a part of the same promise that you are sons of God. And some of you ladies in the room are saying, excuse me, excuse me, pastor, I think you mean sons and daughters.

[40 : 11] Right? Anybody feeling that? You mean sons and daughters. I know you say sons, but you mean sons and daughters. And my answer to you is, no, I do not mean daughters. Nor does Paul.

Paul does not mean you are sons and daughters. He means you are sons. To which you say, pastor, you need to be more gender inclusive. Hold on now, right?

Say, I am being very gender inclusive here. In fact, Paul is being very gender inclusive here. Listen, when Paul, Paul does not say daughters, and that's the best news you'll hear today.

Let me explain. Who, come on, come on, this is good. I love the tension. Some of you are ready to punch me. Others of you want to hug me. Okay? I prefer the latter.

Listen, listen, listen. Who receives the inheritance in the ancient world? Sons do. Sons receive the inheritance in the ancient world.

[41 : 21] They are the ones that are the heirs to their father's inheritance. So, watch what Paul says. There is neither Jew nor Greek or slave or free or, told you, male and female.

Paul, you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs, according to the promise.

Do you realize how radically inclusive this is? Paul is not only saying that women are sons, he's even saying that Gentiles are sons, meaning it doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, doesn't matter if you're male or female, doesn't matter if you're Jew or Gentile.

Anyone who has faith in the Son is a son, and that means you receive the promised inheritance of God.

So, this is radically inclusive, and ladies, you should say, I am so thankful he doesn't say daughters.

[42 : 41] I'm thankful he says sons, because that means I share in the inheritance of God with the same equality as anyone else.

we are all one in Christ and heirs of the promise, and listen, listen, listen, you don't have to perform to get it.

You don't have to perform to get it. It's yours by trusting the promise of God.

And when that clicks, freedom, real freedom, the Son will set you free and you will be free indeed.

And you'll no longer be like that little spiritual hamster in the wheel trying to do enough and be enough and live up enough and justify your existence. You'll be free.

[43 : 53] but trusting in the promise. Amen? Amen? In 1994, a 67-year-old carpenter by the name of Russell Herman died in Illinois.

This is what his last will and statement said. This is how it read. I leave \$2.4 billion to a nearby town, \$2.4 billion to a city in eastern St. Louis, \$1.5 billion for projects in southeastern Illinois.

In addition, I leave \$6 trillion to the Federal Reserve, which would have paid off the national debt at that particular time. The problem was, at the time of his death, the only thing that Mr. Herman actually owned was a 1983 Oldsmobile tornado.

He made great promises, but he didn't have the resources to make any of it a reality.

Now listen to me as I close this series. We live in a world of broken promises. In relationships, in business, in politics, in medicine, in all areas of life.

[45 : 19] And that's why, family, I ask, if in 2026, you want this to be a year of security, of hope, of confidence in your faith, then you cannot build your life on the performance of others.

You must build it on the God of promise. He's the only one that has the authority to give the promise, and he's the only one with the power to see it through.

And all God's people said, amen. Would you pray with me? Father, thank you for your word to us tonight. Help it click, even if this is something that we've heard or even preached for years, Lord, that we would truly rest and understand that confidence and assurance, that salvation, receiving all the desires in Christ comes by believing the promise, not performance.

That we are sons of God, heirs to the promises. promises. And I wonder, I just, I wonder how that would change each day.

That rather than basing our life on the promises made by others, we lived our life based on the promise you have given us. And we enter now into a time of remembrance, the guarantee of this promise as we think upon the cross, the crucifixion of Jesus, and his resurrection for us.

[47 : 13] Lord, I pray that this will be a beautiful time of worship as we think about what you have done for us once and for all. The all-sufficient merit that we sang about earlier is ours in Christ alone.

We pray this in his name. Amen.