

## “He Will Never Leave Or Forsake Us”

“...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee...” This precious promise is from God and it is given to His faithful children (Heb. 13:5-6). This blessed assurance is not given to everyone in general, but it is given to His church (Heb. 12:23). Keep in mind that He does all of this because He loves His church dearly (Rom. 5:6-11; Eph. 5:25). Such promises bring comfort, strength and peace of mind to the Christian, which is truly needed as we encounter many problems and challenges in this life. Dear friend, these passages affirm that we can, with confidence; always trust in God’s helping hand.

### God’s Promise Of Loyalty

God promises to be with the church as it does the work of evangelization. The very last words of Jesus recorded in Matthew 28:20, as He issued the Great Commission, contained the promise of His abiding presence, “...and, lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Because of this promise we should not fear being evangelistic, either individually or congregationally. In Romans 8:31 the Bible says, “...If God be for us, who can be against us.” The answer is certain: “no one.” Concerning a life-threatening experience Paul wrote the following: “...the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion” (2 Tim. 4:17). We see that while Paul was spreading the Good News the Lord was helping him. The Bible states that **we are laborers together with God** (1 Cor. 3:9). Let’s keep doing this important work.

God promises to be there when a Christian prays. “The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil” (1 Pet. 3:12). This is another indication that He is always with us. Prayer is available twenty-four hours of the day, seven days a week. Our Lord never sleeps or takes a

day off. The knowledge that He is constantly there motivates the Christian to never give up, but to ever press toward our goal. May we “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). God has the power to answer all of our prayers (Eph. 3:20).

God promises to be like a devoted Shepherd to the Christian. In Psalm 23 a wonderful scene is presented in which the Lord is pictured as a Shepherd that constantly watches over His sheep. He is with them when they are walking and when they are lying down. His care is so complete that those that follow Him can truly say, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want” (v.1). In this beautiful passage we learn that the servant that follows the Lord will have good times (still waters, green pastures, table prepared, cup overflowing) and he will have anxious moments (valley of the shadow of death), however, the Lord will abide faithfully with His disciples and keep them with His rod of protection. A good shepherd watches over his flock day and night for dangers can come at any time of the day.

The blessing of serving the Lord faithfully is having His watchful eye always on us for good (Prov. 15:3). He will never leave or forsake us, not even in death (Psa. 116:15).

### God’s Record Of Loyalty

God’s record of loyalty is stellar. God has faithfully watched over all of His servants from the beginning of time. Not even one servant can be named of which God cannot be seen giving aid along the way. We shall briefly reflect on just a few: God was with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3); it is said that Enoch walked with God (Gen.5:21-25); God favored Noah and gave him instructions on how to be saved (Gen. 6-7). The record is extremely clear also that God was always with Abraham, Issac and Jacob and assisted each of them as they followed His directives (Gen. 12-50). God’s specific help toward Joseph may also be studied in Genesis 37-50. For Joseph there were good times and there were also many difficult years. He was

hated by his brothers, he served as a slave and was lied about and was incarcerated in an ancient Egyptian prison. However, through all of those circumstances the Lord never left Joseph’s side. Even Joseph realized this as we see in his statement found in Genesis 45:5-8. God made sure that all of us could see His marvelous providence working in Joseph’s favor so that we would be convinced that He will work for us too.

God’s record of loyalty continues through the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These books detail all of the many, many things that God did on a continual basis for forty years as the children of Israel traveled from Egypt to the Promised Land. It also explains how God was extremely patient with the Israelites as He witnessed numerous acts of disobedience committed by them. He never left them nor did He forsake them; however, He did punish them for the evil that they committed.

God’s abiding presence was also seen in the lives of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. These devout Jewish young men were carried far from their Judean homes by the victorious Babylonian army (Dan. 1:1-7) and yet were given high offices in that land (Dan. 3:2-8). But when they refused to bow down to the king’s golden image (an idol) they were cast into the furnace of fire. Even though they were loyal to God the king threatened to end their lives in a burning furnace. However, while in the furnace a fourth person appeared with them (the Lord) and he protected them from being injured by the intense flames (Dan. 3). Daniel is another that received God’s wonderful protection as he was protected all night long from the hungry lions (Dan. 6). These did not fear what man could do to them, but they did fear and serve their God (Heb. 13:5-6).

There are many other cases from both old and new testaments that verifies the fact that God does not leave His faithful servants stranded and without His help. God helped people that

were weak, sick, in battle, being tempted, suffering persecution, in prison, lonely, disappointed, as well as those that were strong, victorious, worshipping God, living righteously. As the words of the Psalmist states, it is not even possible to be born or to die without the Lord being present (Psa. 116:1-16; 139:1-16).

### God's Loyalty Provides Strength

Knowing that God will always help should generate within us strength, confidence, and courage. Look what it did for David, the young shepherd boy. When he walked out on the battle field against Goliath, the champion warrior of the Philistine army David had no fear. Though Goliath stood about ten feet tall, David was not afraid. Goliath was an imposing figure with his shield, sword, and armor, yet David said to him: "This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands" (1 Sam. 17:46-47). That statement shows the faith, courage, and resolve that David had because he knew God was with him. Remember that David is said to have penned the twenty-third Psalm. And thus we see how God's assurance to protect us can strengthen us.

The apostle Paul was a very brave and dedicated servant of Christ (a fact no Christian will deny). He faced many, many dangers and suffered hardships beyond description (2 Cor. 11:24-33). It was the Lord's presence that bolstered Paul's confidence to keep him going though death could have come at any turn along the way. As a very dangerous and possibly life ending experience seemed to arise in the city of Corinth, God told Paul, "...Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: **For I am with thee**, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10

emp. mine, RM). The "much people" were not people that would necessarily protect Paul, but people that would obey the Gospel if Paul would remain in that dangerous environment and preach the word.

Hebrews 11:1-40 explains how that all of the spiritually dedicated servants of God carried out their duties and tasks because they strongly and firmly believed in the God that they served. Their confidence came from their belief that God would do what He said He would do.

### Conclusion

God challenges His people to face danger and even death, but He also assures us that He will be right by our side. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love and of a sound mind." The Christian is in a spiritual battle and God expects us to stand our ground and fight the battle no matter what experience we may face (Eph. 6:10-18). If there is a giant – God will help us. If there is a furnace of fire – God will not forsake us. If there is temptation – God will make a way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13). May we follow the words of the inspired writer that stated: "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me. Thy vows are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" (Psa. 56:11-13). That statement reveals the formula for victory of every person in the Bible that served the God of heaven successfully. Dear reader, the very same trust will also bring success for you.

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Mid-West Lectures, "God's Precious Promises." To hear or view the complete lesson go to [www.kc-cofc.org/2009Lectures.htm](http://www.kc-cofc.org/2009Lectures.htm) or contact the 39th Street Church of Christ 15331 East 39th Street Independence, MO 64055-4240 USA

*God's Precious Promises...*

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