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## Are Promises Made to be Broken?

**Proverbs 3:5-6:** (NKJV) <sup>5</sup>*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;* <sup>6</sup>*In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*

Promises, promises! We have all made them, heard them, kept them and maybe even broken them. Promises have always been an integral part of the fabric of any society, for they are truly the basis of trust and loyalty. When promises are kept, life is better and less lonely and when they are broken life gets to be broken as well. So, if promises are so important, then why are they so undervalued today?

### How do we define "promise?"

**Merriam Webster Online Dictionary:** **Promise:** A statement telling someone that you will definitely do something or that something will definitely happen in the future

**Promised:** Strongs #1696 dabar daw-bar'

AV-speak 840, say 118, talk 46, promise 31, tell 25, commune 20, pronounce 14, utter 7, command 4, misc 38; to speak, declare, converse, command, promise, warn, threaten, sing

**Jeremiah 33:14:** *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have **promised** <1696> unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.*

**Promise:** Strongs #562 'omer (o'-mer); something said, AV-word 2, speech 2, thing 1, promise 1

**Psalms 68:11:** (KJV) *The Lord gave the **word** <562>: great was the company of those that published it.*

**Psalms 77:8:** (KJV) *Is His mercy clean gone forever? Doth His **promise** <562> fail for evermore?*

There is an uncanny connection between a spoken word and a promise! In ancient days, your word WAS your bond. Your spoken word was a reason for trust.

**Promises:** Strongs #1860 epaggelia (ep-ang-el-ee'-ah) an announcement (for information, assent or pledge; especially a divine assurance of good): KJV - message, promise.

**Galatians 3:16:** (KJV) *Now to Abraham and his seed were the **promises** <1860> made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*

**Promise:** Strongs #1861 epaggello; to announce upon (reflexively), i.e. (by implication) to engage to do something, to assert something respecting oneself; KJV - profess, (make) promise.

**Galatians 3:19:** (KJV) *Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the **promise** <1861>; was made and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.*

**Promises:** Strongs #1862 epaggelma (ep-ang'-el-mah); from NT: #1861; a self-committal (by assurance of conferring some good): KJV - promise

**2 Peter 1:4:** (KJV) *whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious **promises** <1862>: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

### A "Rick" definition:

*A promise is a decision to transform a stated intention into a reality.*

### What kinds of promises do we or should we make to ourselves?

We often make promises to ourselves without even realizing it. What we say when we talk to ourselves is a form of promise. Be it for good or ill, our "self-talk" firmly guides our daily attitude, decisions and life. It essentially is deciding what our intentions are and bringing them to reality.

Should we filter our internal talk in a concrete way? Our promises to ourselves as Christians ought to be making ourselves godlier in our everyday life.

**Rather than "think good thoughts" or "think spiritual thoughts," we need to be specific:**  
**Philippians 4:8**



We must decide where to place our allegiance, where to place our trust, where to place our promise: Joshua 24:14-15: Make a choice then follow through. A lot of Christians don't make their Christianity the most important thing in their lives. Keeping that promise of spirituality is then impossible. Where is my personal allegiance?

Promise yourself to grow one day at a time! Matthew 6:31-34: Focus first on God's kingdom and righteousness.

Example of the prodigal son promising himself a course of righteous action: Luke 15:17-21

John 15:12-14: NASB) <sup>12</sup>This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this that one lay down his life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do what I command you.

This was the original premise upon which Christianity was built. That helps us focus on what we should be focusing on.

### What kinds of promises do we and should we make to God?

The deepest and most serious promise we can make to God is a vow to which we are deeply accountable.

#### Old Testament:

**Vow:** Strongs #5087 nadar (naw-dar'); to promise (to do or give something to God)

**Vow:** Strongs #5088 neder (neh'-der); or neder (nay'-der); a promise (to God); also (concretely) a thing promised: KJV - vow ([-ed])

Deuteronomy 23:21-22: (NKJV) <sup>21</sup>When you make a **vow <5087>** to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and it would be sin to you. <sup>22</sup>But if you abstain from vowing, it shall not be sin to you.

Notice how the light of the original purpose grows dimmer, so logically our promises to God could grow dimmer as well.

#### New Testament: (Same exact word translated both *vow* and *prayer*)

**Vow:** Strongs #2171 euche (yoo-khay'); properly, a wish, expressed as a petition to God, or in votive obligation: KJV - prayer, vow.

Acts 18:18: (KJV) And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a **vow <2171>**.

James 5:15: (KJV) And the **prayer <2171>** of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Prayer itself is a deep commitment to God. We have to make sure we are keeping our promises to God. A vow is never to be taken lightly as it is the deepest form of commitment to God that we have.

We need those around us who embody Christianity. This can be hard to do! We can see through the centuries how Christianity tried to appeal to pagans by including rituals, special holidays, and so on. They watered down the original passion to make it more appealing to many. Instead there needs to be a standard to which people will be drawn.

Our devotion to God is carried out in the fulfilling of our promised life of sacrifice: Romans 12:1-2 **Never give up...** Proverbs 24:16

What are the results of a lack of laser focus for the everyday Christian life?

Especially when formed in the context of a very worldly background...1 Corinthians 3:1-4

### What kinds of promises do we and should we make to one another?

**Covenant:** Strongs #1285 beriyth (ber-eeth'); in the sense of cutting; a compact (because made by passing between pieces of flesh)



(Source: McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia) 1. Properly, of a covenant between man and man; i.e. a solemn compact or agreement, either between tribes or nations (1 Samuel 11:1; Joshua 9:6, 15), or between individuals (Genesis 21:44), by which each party bound himself to fulfill certain conditions, and was assured of receiving certain advantages. In making such a covenant God was solemnly invoked as witness (Genesis 31:50), whence the expression "a covenant of Jehovah" (1 Samuel 20:8; Jeremiah 34:18, 19; Ezekiel 17:19), and an oath was sworn (Genesis 21:31); and accordingly a breach of covenant was regarded as a very heinous sin (Ezekiel 17:12-20).

**Marriage is one example of a "covenant of Jehovah:"** Genesis 2:21-24

There are some great promises in Scripture. **David speaking with Jonathan:** 1 Samuel 20:8:  
These friends swore allegiance to each other. Ruth 1:16 Proverbs 17:17

No promises in life = No responsibility in life  
No responsibility in life = No fulfillment in life

**Here is the opposite - something bigger than all of us!** John 15:13-14: (NKJV) <sup>13</sup>Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. <sup>14</sup>You are my friends if you do whatever I command you.

**The promises of God to individuals - varied promises for blessing and consequence - but God always keeps His word:** Genesis 2:16-17 Proverbs 3:5-6 Genesis 22:17-18

ME! ME! ME! ME! MY! MY! MY! MY! This only produces a distrust of others! We can no longer see ourselves being a part of something bigger. Our society does not show value in promises and that our word should be our bond.

**The promises of God to nations and specific groups:** Amos 3:1-2

**God's promise to Israel based on His deliverance of them and Israel's promise back to God:** Exodus 19:5-8

**God's promise to those who truly seek His protection and guidance:** Psalms 91:1-6: This is a promise of incredible comfort for those of us seeking God's protection in our lives. We can get what we want in life from God as long as we are as good as our word to God, to others and to ourselves.

**Jesus' promise to true Christians:** Revelation 2:10

**What kind of promises did God make to all of humanity?**

**God promised that He is smarter and wiser than us and that He has ultimate integrity:** Isaiah 55:8-11

**Prophecy is a kind of promise from God. It tells us that He knows and cares:** Zephaniah 3:8-9: God will destroy the way the earth is now run by Satan. He will replace things with worldwide unity.

**God promised that His promises are always on time (from His perspective!) and complete:** 2 Peter 3:8-9: God's ultimate plan is so much bigger than the difficulty we experience in this moment.

**God promised that with necessary destruction of sin also comes the foundation of righteousness:** 2 Peter 3:10-13: God will extricate all the evil in the earth and usher in something new and exciting and righteous! That will be the *new heavens* and the *new earth*.

We need to maintain personal relationships and not rely only on technology.

**God promised a true opportunity for all!** Micah 4:1-4: God is the Father of integrity and His word is His bond. We need to focus on making promises and keeping them.

**So, are promises made to be broken?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!**