

**I Have Assurance and Hope**  
Series: God Keeps His Promises  
Hebrews 6:18-19a  
August 21, 2022

Welcome again to worship.

A mother was taking her four-year-old daughter to school. The mother was a doctor and had left her stethoscope on the car seat. Her little girl picked it up and very excited began to play with it. “Excellent,” thought the Doctor. “My daughter wants to follow in my footsteps!”

Then the child spoke into the instrument, “Hello and welcome to McDonald’s, may I take your order?”

All parents have high hopes for their children.

So does God. He wants His best for our lives. That’s why He makes promises to us, one’s that we can depend upon.

We have just begun our series “God Keeps His Promises.” We’re looking at 10 promises – 2 at a time – that God has made to us. Last week, we looked at the first 2:

**Promise #1: Forgiveness.** 1 John 1:9 says:

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*<sup>1</sup>

John tells us that when we confess our sins, God is faithful and just. He is both faithful as well as just to forgive us and get rid of all the junk we brought into our lives.

**Then Promise #2: Freedom.** Because we have forgiveness, we can now have freedom. Titus 2:4 says:

*He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.*<sup>2</sup>

Today, we are going to look at 2 more promises from God.

I want to refer you to the Scripture for the week at the top of the bulletin on page 2. The writer of Hebrews penned these words:

*So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us. This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls.*<sup>3</sup>

These verses encapsulate today’s promises. They declare that God embodies all truth; therefore, He cannot lie. Because God is truth, you can be secure in His promises; you don’t need to wonder if He will change His plans. Therefore, we have great confidence, an assurance, and because of this assurance, we have a hope that is secure and immovable, anchored in God, just as a ship’s anchor holds firmly to the seabed. To the true seeker who comes to God in belief, God gives an unconditional promise of acceptance. When you ask God with openness, honesty, and sincerity to save you from your sins, he will do it. This truth gives us assurance and hope.

**So, Promise #3 is Assurance.**

Now, what is assurance?

---

<sup>1</sup> 1 John 1:9 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup> Titus 2:14, NLT2)

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 6:18-19a (NLT2)

Assurance is a positive and dynamic confidence of a “life rooted in God, who cannot fail. It is a growing, deepening, expanding faith in Christ measured by a growth in love and obedience and which looks upward to Him, not backward to some past point.”<sup>4</sup>

Now, there are a couple of beliefs about assurance out there that I believe are false, and here they are: **Assurance is not eternal salvation or universalism.** Let me explain these.

Eternal salvation, or colloquially called, “once saved, always saved” is the belief that if a person becomes a Christian, they can never drift outside of God saving grace. They are eternally secure to go to heaven no matter what happens after their conversion.

So, if a person gets saved, they could be a murderer and still go to heaven. Now, those who believe in eternal salvation would say such a person would never be a murderer, or that they were never really saved, never really converted to begin with, but this is the logical conclusion of the “once save, always saved” belief. So, a person who converts to Christ, then backslides, was never saved in the first place. That’s their argument.

The problem with this belief is that it does not have room for human freewill. They hold to such a high view of the sovereignty of God that they believe in a view of predestination that ultimately states that God decides who will and who will not go to heaven, and we have no choice in the matter. None whatsoever.

Instead, I believe we have the choice to choose to follow Christ, and the choice to turn away from Him. We are the ones who condemn ourselves to hell by our actions and lack of belief.

No, I do not believe in eternal salvation. A Christian can backslide right out of heaven.

The other erroneous notion about assurance is universalism. Universalism is the belief that a God of love cannot allow anyone to experience damnation. They believe everyone is a child of God. Everyone: the greatest saint and the worst sinner.

Once again, you do not have a choice to go to heaven; God has already decided for you, because He accepts everyone in.

There is a whole denomination who believes in this, but they are not a Christian denomination. And there are segments in our denomination who are essentially universalists, but that is not what the Bible says. The Bible says there is wide gate that leads to hell, but a narrow gate that leads to eternal life. So, rock-n-roll song writers were accurate about the eternal traffic patterns: there’s a highway to hell, and a stairway to heaven.

So, assurance is not eternal salvation (once save, always saved), nor is it universalism.

**Instead, assurance is the witness of the Spirit.**

It is God’s spirit speaking within us.

Romans 8:16 is a very important verse. It reads:

*For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children.*<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Mildred Bangs Wynkoop. “Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology.” Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 1967. Page 121

<sup>5</sup> Romans 8:16 (NLT2)

God's Spirit within us tells us we are God's children. I am absolutely convinced I am a child of God, that I am going to heaven, not because of anything I am, but the conviction of God's Spirit within me. This is assurance.

Mildred Bangs Wynkoop wrote, **We are not saved by the strength of our faith, but the Object of our faith – Christ.**<sup>6</sup>

So, Promise #3 is assurance, and this promise leads to the 4<sup>th</sup> promise:

**Promise #4 is Hope.**

Hope. We have hope in the future, in part, because we have assurance.

There once was a photographer for a national magazine who was assigned to take pictures of a great forest fire. He was advised that a small plane would be waiting to fly him over the fire.

The photographer arrived at the airstrip just an hour before sundown. Sure enough, a small Cessna airplane was waiting. He jumped in with his equipment and shouted, "Let's go!" The tense man sitting in the pilot's seat swung the plane into the wind and soon they were in the air, though flying erratically.

"Fly over the north side of the fire," said the photographer, "and make several low-level passes."

"Why?" asked the nervous pilot.

"Because I'm going to take pictures!" yelled the photographer. "I'm a photographer, and photographers take pictures."

After a long pause, the "pilot" replied, "You mean, you're not my instructor?"

We can have hope in a lot of things, but that are in the end: false hope.

No, we are talking about a different hope. A hope in God.

Let me quickly share 4 things about Christian hope.

**First, like assurance, hope comes from God.**

Romans 15:13 says:

*I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.*<sup>7</sup>

Paul says we can be excited to experience enlarged views of the salvation which God provides, and have all our expectations fulfilled by the power of the Holy Ghost, enabling us to hope and believe; and then sealing the fulfillment of the promises upon our hearts.

But we can trust in our God of hope and know that He is the source of our hope.

**Second, Hope will last forever.**

We tend to miss this truth in one of the most famous and well beloved verses of all the Bible, found at the end of the love chapter:

*And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*<sup>8</sup>

Paul says the greatest is love, but do not miss what else will remain forever. Not buildings or bank accounts, but faith and hope. Hope will remain forever.

**Third, Hope does not disappoint.**

---

<sup>6</sup> Mildred Bangs Wynkoop. "Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology." Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, Missouri, 1967. Pages 125-126

<sup>7</sup> Romans 15:13 (NLT2)

<sup>8</sup> 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIV)

Romans 5:5 says:

*And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*<sup>9</sup>

A hope that is not rationally founded will have its expectation cut off; and then shame and confusion will be the portion of its possessor. But our hope is of a different kind; it is founded on the goodness and truth of God; and our religious experience shows us that we have not misapplied it; nor exercised it on wrong or improper objects.<sup>10</sup>

Everything man-made disappoints. Everything. But God's hope does not disappoint.

**Finally, Hope promises eternal life.**

From Colossians 1:5, we read these words:

*You have this faith and love because of your hope, and what you hope for is kept safe for you in heaven. You learned about this hope when you heard the message about the truth, the Good News.*<sup>11</sup>

Our hope is ultimately in heaven, where God promises we will be with Him.

William Barclay wrote, "The Christian hope is the hope which has seen everything and endured everything, and has still not despaired, because it believes in God. The Christian hope is not hope in the human spirit, in human goodness, in human endurance, in human achievement; the Christian hope is hope in the power of God."<sup>12</sup>

We are promised assurance and hope through the Holy Spirit. You can know without a shadow of doubt that if you were to die in the next minute... you will go to heaven. Now for those of you who feel deep within your heart that you don't know that, then you have never truly given your life to Christ, or you are listen to a spirit that is not God's spirit. Either way, repent today. Turn your life to Christ. Believe in Him for your assurance and hope, and nothing else. Not how many years you have gone to church. Not how good you are. Not because you had Christian parents. Only by giving your life to Christ can Christ take your life to heaven with Him.

---

<sup>9</sup> Romans 5:5 (NIV)

<sup>10</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary, Romans 5:5

<sup>11</sup> Colossians 1:5 (NCV)

<sup>12</sup> William Barclay, The Letter to the Romans