

# The Old Paths

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## “God Keeps His Promises!”

Jarrod Jacobs

**P**eter wrote, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Pet. 3:9). With those words, we are assured of the fact that God keeps His promises. This is not only true in the immediate context of I Peter 3, but from Old Testament to New Testament times, we are impressed with the fact that God keeps His promises!

For example, when God promised to destroy the world by water (Gen. 6), this is exactly what He did (Gen. 7)! Every man and beast that was not on the Ark was destroyed (Gen. 7:23). When God promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations (Gen. 17:4-5), this is exactly what happened! Through Abraham came the Ishmaelites, the Midianites, the Israelites, the Amalekites, the Edomites, as well as many other nations.

Joshua said in no uncertain terms that, “The LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein....There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass” (Josh. 21:43, 45). Before he died, Joshua stated, “And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your

souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof” (Josh. 23:14). Yes friends, God keeps His promises!

In reading the Scriptures, we find God’s greatest promise to man was made when He promised to send His Son to this world to die for our sins. God first promised a Savior in Eden (Gen. 3:15). His promises were repeated in the days of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, the prophets, and John the Immerser. The promise of a Savior was fulfilled in Christ, and now we should look back to the time of Christ in joy, humility, and gratitude to the God who sent His only begotten Son to die for us (Jn. 3:16).

God sent His Son to die for us, and the Holy Spirit has revealed His word (Jn. 14, 15, 16; II Pet. 1:21). In this word, we read of a promised salvation from sins for those who will believe on Christ, repent of their sins, confess their faith and be baptized (Jn. 8:24; Lk. 13:3; Matt. 10:32; Mk. 16:16; etc.)! Knowing that God has kept His promises in the past, we are assured He will keep this one! We can also rest assured that He will keep His promise to send Christ back one day to receive those who are faithful, and punish those who have refused and disobeyed God (I Thess. 4:13-18; II Thess. 1:6-9). Knowing that God is faithful to keep His promises, are we preparing for the last day? Today is the day of salvation!!

## “Standing With Jesus The Christ”

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“**A**nd I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads.” (Rev. 14:1) Regardless of the many other lessons gained from examination of this verse, the passage assuredly shows a great number standing with Jesus; having His name, and the name of God identified within them! No one can deny these are the faithful ones, humbly and devotedly diligent within His service (1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Pet. 1:5-11; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; et al). They “stand with Jesus the Christ” and nothing, or no one else matters regarding their allegiance!

The term “fellowship” appears some sixteen times in the New Testament: twice it speaks of “fellowship with Christ”, once expressly with God, nine in connection with the righteous working within the gospel, and three times teaching us to “have no fellowship with unfruitful/sinful works”. In more “modern” times, the term has become synonymous with “agreement” regarding doctrinal matters, opinions and even friendships, and has departed from its scriptural connotation of “joint participation.” It is a “war cry” at times when brethren are at odds regarding the scriptures, and a “comforting ally” when needing a “friend” to defend us. Sadder still, many establish their “fellowship” with another by the very contrast of Jude 16. While such a

“buddy system” may increase the temporal ego, it does nothing to strengthen the soul before God and in fact may destroy that soul (Rom. 8:6; Jas. 4:4).

“Where do you stand?” is a frequently asked question regarding many doctrinal matters. It is a fair question, for such an examination is instructed (1 Jn. 4:1–4). Paul endured such examinations (Acts 24:10–21) and when others “chose sides” Paul continued his stand with Jesus the Christ (Phil. 1:15–20). Peter declares we need to give answer concerning the hope within us (1 Pet. 3:15). Paul said as well that he was “set for the defense of the gospel” (Phil. 1:17) and that faithful ones will don the armor befitting the soldiers of Christ (Eph. 6:10–17) as we stand with Jesus the Christ.

The idea of this “stand” is not one of arrogance or pride. Such an attitude precedes destruction and fall (Prov. 16:18). Standing with Jesus the Christ is a position of humility (Jas. 4:7–10; 1 Pet. 5:6–9). Saying, “I stand with Jesus the Christ” may sound arrogant and prideful, yet it is simply as Paul states, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (1 Cor. 11:1). How does one know another stands with Jesus the Christ? They discover such by taking the Word of God and examining it to see whether these things be so (Acts 17:11). We note an example of this very practice in Acts 9:26–31 and mentioned again at Galatians 2:9.

Further, those that stand with Jesus the Christ welcome such examination. Jesus gave the example when He said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are

they which testify of me.” Read the context of John 5:39–47 noting this request! Therefore, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,” (1 Thess. 5:21) combined with 1 John 4:1 leads to an acceptance of James 1:21–27. Such a critical analysis does no harm, but only good! (2 Cor. 13:5)

Keep in mind that such examinations must be righteous (Jn. 7:24). Many appear to hold some “personal agenda” in examining others without the same critique toward their own souls. Such is unrighteous at best. Still, regardless of the examination made by man, it is my responsibility to assure my stand is with Jesus the Christ! The only soul I can assure regarding its salvation is my own (1 Jn. 5:13–15). Within this examination, I will not find “party names” regarding my stand with Jesus. I will find but two: either FAITHFUL or UNFAITHFUL. Anything less than the former pronounces eternal danger upon my soul until corrected. (Examine 1 Jn. 1:5–10) Therefore, as Paul, I must “keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” (1 Cor. 9:27).

Standing with Jesus requires my constant study (2 Tim. 2:15) and growth in both the grace and knowl-

edge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18). I shall not reach the pinnacle of this growth until my appointed time shall come (Heb. 9:27). It is then I may rest from my labors and then that my works follow me (Rev. 14:13). Until then, it is not a matter of “changing my mind” but rather “enlarging my heart” (cf. 2 Cor. 6:11) to discern both good and evil (Heb. 5:12–14). Once the truth is learned, I must guard myself from falling back into error (2 Pet. 2:20–22). This is why Peter stirred minds to remembrance (2 Pet. 3:1–18; emp. vs. 17 for this point). Unlike Jesus, I make mistakes. But please note again, dear reader: I am not Jesus the Christ – I am merely standing with Him, learning of Him and endeavoring to obey Him in all I say and do! (Col. 3:17)

**"People don't miss church services because they live too far from the building; it's because they live too far from God!"**

--The Shively Messenger, June 1995

**"Some of the best sermons are not preached in the pulpit."** - J.C. Roady

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