

Promises, Promises!

Joe Slater

Beginning at the second plague (frogs) Pharaoh promised repeatedly, *“I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to the Lord”* (Exodus 8:8, see also 8:28 & 9:28). And every time, *“when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart”* and went back on his promise (8:15, see also 8:32 & 9:35). The king considered himself to be, if not a god at the present time, at least a god in the making. He had no respect for the God of his Hebrew slaves and evidently felt no compulsion to be honest. Like a true politician, he said whatever he needed to say at the moment of crisis. But when the pressure was off, his promise wasn’t worth the time it took to make it.

Let us rejoice while praising our God because He consistently keeps His promises! *“I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father”* (Genesis 26:3). *“I am the Lord. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass. . . I will say the word and will perform it”* (Ezekiel 12:25).

The God of truth has always required His people to be truthful like He is. David, by inspiration, commended the person *“who swears to his own hurt and does not change”* (Psalm 15:4). Yes, keeping our promises can be painful! But Jesus Himself said, *“let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes,’ and your ‘no,’ ‘no.’”* (Matthew 5:37). Mean what you say! In most circumstances you shouldn’t even need to swear an oath.

When Pharaoh broke his promises, he was simply taking a cue from his master, Satan. Jesus said that the devil *“is a liar and the father of it”* (John 8:44). When people of the world lie, we shouldn’t be surprised. But let us carefully keep our word, for *“all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death”* (Revelation 21:8).

Does Church Feel Routine?

If you don’t want church to feel routine this weekend, then approach it differently:

1. Pray before you leave home.
2. Sing in the car on the way.
3. Arrive early at the meeting house.
4. Invite someone to attend with you.
5. Bring your Bible.
6. Take notes on the sermon.
7. Talk to people.
8. Sing loudly.
9. Serve.
10. Live out the sermon.

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Real Talk From Teachers:

Parents, if you let your child argue with you, they will argue with me.

If you let your child speak to you in a disrespectful tone, they will take that same tone with me.

If you allow your child to break rules without consequences, they will not do what I say either.

You see, you are your child’s first and most important teacher. We can only build on the foundation you’ve laid at home.

--Bored Teachers (via Facebook)

Unchanging Truth

“People cannot change truth, but truth can change people.” Truth has always been one of life’s most

precious commodities. Solomon, the wise king of Israel, advised his son to buy the truth and not sell it (Proverbs 23:23). What is so special about truth? It doesn’t change. It abides forever. It can be relied upon.

In this world, deception is the order of the day. We are well advised to examine everything carefully. The misrepresentation and distortion of truth leads to tragedy. We hear of some losing their life’s savings because they believed a lie. Truth is precious because people can be deceived.

In the spiritual realm, dependence on truth carries eternal significance. The word of God is our only reliable guide to heaven. The psalmist says, *“The sum of Your word is truth and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting”* (Psalm 119:160). Sadly, there are many who misrepresent the truth. For this reason, we must test all that we hear by comparing it to the word of God (Acts 17:11). We cannot risk our eternal well-being by blindly accepting the words of men. Instead, our faith must rest on the teaching of our Lord.

Jesus said, *“everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin”* (John 8:34). The question of slavery had been introduced earlier, when Jesus said: *“If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (vv. 31-32). Insisting on the truth and adhering to it is essential because only the truth sets us free from the bondage of sin.

We cannot change the truth. We can exchange it for a lie; but that lie will not set our souls free from sin. We cannot change the truth, but we can let the truth change us as we earnestly seek its teachings and follow its precepts.

--Glen Elliott (Greenbriar, AR)

You can lead a human to knowledge, but you can’t make it think.