

DEVOTIONAL

FULLY PERSUADED // JANUARY 9, 2022

GRACE
FELLOWSHIP

Discussion Starter: What are some reasons why people struggle with faith?

Key Text: *“No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²²That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.” ²³But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” (Romans 4:20-25)*

The first American missionary to Burma in the 1800s was Adoniram Judson. He and his wife endured unbelievable hardships and persecution. He was arrested, beaten, strung up by his thumbs, cast into prison, and mocked by his enemies. They said to him once, “Well, what do you think about your plans to save the heathen now?” He answered in these unforgettable words: “My future is as bright as the promises of God.”

In today’s text, our attention is drawn to Abraham’s remarkable faith in the promise of God. Abraham and Sarah had waited many years for God to keep His promise to give them a son. God made the promise when Abraham was 75 years old, and the promise wasn’t fulfilled until Abraham was 100 years old—some 25 years later! Yet, Paul tells us that Abraham’s faith in God did not waver—he experienced no unbelief (v.20a)! In fact, Abraham grew stronger in his faith and continuously gave glory to God (v.20b)!

Further, in verse 21, Paul says that Abraham was *“fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised.”* Even as the years passed without the promise being fulfilled, Abraham remained fully convinced. Even though his own body was *“as good as dead”* regarding his ability to produce a child, Abraham remained fully convinced. That phrase *“fully convinced”* (v.21) is significant! It means that Abraham never wavered, never experienced disbelief, and actually grew stronger in his faith as he waited on the Lord!

Discuss: How can we maintain an unwavering faith in God’s promises?

God wants us to be fully convinced, too, that He will keep His promises. With more than 7,000 promises in the Bible, God’s Word is a storehouse of spiritual riches! And God’s promises are eternal. On the occasion of dedicating the Temple of God, Solomon said, *“Blessed be the Lord who has given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised. Not one word has failed of all his good promises, which he spoke by Moses his servant”* (1 Kings 8:56). As surely as the promises of God were valid in Abraham’s day, and in Solomon’s day, and in Adoniram Judson’s day, they are still valid in our day. God invites us to go into His storehouse of promises regularly and claim them for our very own, fully convinced that God will do all that He has promised.

Discuss: What are some of your favorite promises of God in His Word?

Discuss: In what ways have you “come alive” since receiving Christ—what changes have you seen in your life?

How can we be fully convinced like Abraham that God will keep His promises?

To answer this question, let's contrast God's character with our character. When we break a promise (whether intentionally or unintentionally), it is usually for one of two reasons: 1) We overpromised—we don't have the resources to fulfill our promise, or 2) We lack integrity—we made a promise we did not intend to keep. But Scripture teaches that God has the resources to fulfill every promise He has made, and since He cannot lie (Titus 1:2), He'll never fail to bring every promise to pass. God's promises are absolutely reliable because God is absolutely reliable—He never overpromises and He is holy!

As we march into this New Year of 2022, let's remember and rely on this sampling of just three of God's greatest promises:

1. God's Promise of His Presence

In Hebrews 13:5, the Lord promises, *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."* We understand that God is omnipresent—He is everywhere and always present. But the promise of Hebrews 13:5 assures us that we will experience God's presence on a more intimate, personal level. This promise by God refers to His divine companionship and embracing love.

Discuss: When have you experienced God's companionship and embracing love?

2. God's Promise of His Peace

In John 14:27, Jesus promises, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."* Unlike the false peace the world provides, the peace Jesus gives results in a sense of inner contentment, deep satisfaction, and absence of anxiety—all based on the reality that God is in control of all things!

Discuss: When have you experienced God's deep, calming peace in your life?

3. God's Promise of His Provision

Philippians 4:19 says, *"My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus."* Our all-sufficient Father, whose kindness never ceases, gives us whatever is required to grow our faith, whether it's physical, financial, mental, emotional, relational, or spiritual provision. God is in the business of keeping our bodies fed (Luke 12:29), our minds wise (James 1:5), and our hearts at ease (Php.4:7). We never need to wonder if God can or wants to meet our needs.

Discuss: When have you experienced God's generous provision for your needs?

For Further Study:

"How Do I Know Which of God's Promises Are for Me?" at www.gotquestions.org

The Promises of God by Charles Spurgeon

Building a Strong Faith That Endures by Tony Evans