

TRUSTING AND PRAYING GOD'S PROMISES

Trusting God's Promises

The Bible contains numerous promises from God, where He commits to fulfilling or abstaining from certain actions or outcomes. These assurances are not casual or trivial like human promises; rather, they are firm and unwavering commitments made directly by God. Because of God's unwavering faithfulness, those who receive these promises can be completely confident that what God has guaranteed will undoubtedly come to fruition.

According to one estimate, there are 3,573 promises in the Bible. Below are just a few of the key promises that God has made.

Some of the more specific promises or prophecies have already been fulfilled. It is estimated that, of around 2,500 prophecies in the Bible, around 2,000 have been fulfilled. Many of them relate to Jesus being the promised Messiah and Redeemer of mankind and accurately describe his birth, ministry, crucifixion and resurrection. This reinforces the reliability of God's Word in the Bible.

Praying God's Promises

Although many of God's promises and prophecies relate to specific historical events, many others are timeless and relate to His relationship with mankind. We can therefore take these promises as applying to us, so that we can draw hope and guidance from them in our prayers.

The way to pray God's promises is to make them personal to our own situation, applying them to our own difficulties and needs, and to pray from the heart.

1. We start by praising God as our loving Father, thanking Him that, through the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus, we are being forgiven, saved and made holy. We respond to His mercy and love by telling Him we love Him, we are sorry for our sins and want to follow His perfect instructions.
2. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in discerning the promises God is making to us; and to protect us from the temptation to put our own will ahead of God's will.
3. We then find a promise from the Bible (or from the list below) that seems to speak to our own need, and we thank God for the promise (and, if possible, the way it has been fulfilled either in history or in our own life in the past).
4. We make a prayer of faith, telling God about the situation we are praying for, and that we trust Him to deal with the situation because:
 - a. He is truthful – *“God is not human, that he should lie...Does he promise and not fulfil?” (Numbers 23:19)*
 - b. He is faithful – *“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.” (Hebrews 10:23)*
 - c. He is able – *“being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.” (Romans 4:21).*
5. We persevere patiently in daily prayer, proclaiming God's promises; that His will may be done on earth as in heaven; trusting that His timing is perfect; trusting that He loves us and wants to help us. *“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.” (Romans 8:28)*

Prayer example

There are no set words for these prayers: you can use the following example as a guideline to get you started, but it's important that you pray from your heart and from your need, putting your faith, trust and hope in God's infinite love and care for you.

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As an example, we will take God's promise of the Holy Spirit in Ezekiel 36:26 *"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."*

I praise and thank you Lord, for this promise and for the way it was fulfilled at Pentecost and in the lives of so many people down the centuries. I humbly come to you because my heart is hardened against X and Y; I am lacking in love and forgiveness; (add other relevant details. I have acted and thought selfishly and I admit I cannot change myself. I trust that you can give me a new heart and a new spirit because you are truth and you are faithful to your promises and with you everything is possible. I proclaim your mighty power to change and transform me, to replace my sinful heart with Jesus' loving heart, to fill me with His spirit. May your will be done in me, Father, in Jesus holy name and by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen

Promises of God in the Old Testament.

We have the promise of salvation. After our first ancestors disobeyed God and fell out of relationship with Him, He "buoyed them up with the hope of salvation by promising them redemption." (CCC#55. See Genesis 3:15)

We are protected. God made a covenant promise to Noah: *"I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood."* (Genesis 9:11)

We are blessed. God made a promise to Abraham, vowing *"I will bless you...and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."* (Genesis 12:2–3.) This commitment, known as the Abrahamic Covenant, anticipated the arrival of the Messiah.

He has chosen us. God promised Israel: *"I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people."* (Leviticus 26:12–13). Throughout the Old Testament, numerous instances demonstrate God fulfilling this pledge.

God promised that we can always find Him: *"if you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul."* (Deuteronomy 4:29).

He promised that, through prayer, we can be close to God: *"Our God is near us whenever we pray to him"* (Deuteronomy 4:7).

He promised: *"The Lord will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life."* (Psalm 121).

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." (1 Chronicles 16:34). God promised that His love will never fail He is faithful in every way.

God promises forgiveness: *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."* (2 Chronicles 7:14). Repentance opens the way to forgiveness, fellowship and blessing.

God promised blessing and prosperity to his people, if they chose to love and obey Him. *"I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you."* (Deuteronomy 30:15–18). However, Israel chose to disobey and the nation was destroyed.

God promised the Holy Spirit to transform us and make us holy: *"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."* (Ezekiel 36:26)

Promises of God in the New Testament.

We are promised salvation through believing the gospel, the good news of Jesus: *"the gospel...is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes."* (Romans 1:16–17). *"If you declare with*

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your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

Salvation is the beginning of a new existence. God promises *"if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

God promised He will "comfort us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God." (2 Corinthians 1:3–4).

God promised that He *"has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ*. (Ephesians 1:3).

God promises to make us holy. As we worship His glory, we *"are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory,"* (2 Corinthians 3:17-18) This is the work of the Holy Spirit, filling us with the holiness of Jesus and making us more and more holy.

God promises to protect us from despair if we feel the work of transforming us seems to be going slowly: *he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 1:6).

God promises to protect us from anxiety: when we pray *"the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:6–7).

God promised to supply what we need (though not all that we want) *"seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."* (Matthew 6:33) *"God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:19).

Jesus' promises in the Gospels.

Jesus promised rest *"Come to me... and find rest for your soul..."* (Matthew 11:28–30). Jesus took all our burdens on himself in his passion and death.

Jesus promised abundant life to those who follow Him *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."* (John 10:10). Following Jesus brings us spiritual fulfilment.

Jesus promised eternal life to those who trust Him *"whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* (John 4:14).

Jesus promised to be truly present with us in the New Covenant (promise) of the Eucharist: *"This is my body given for you... This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."* (Luke 22:19-20)

Jesus promised His disciples *"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses ... to the ends of the earth."* (Acts 1:8).

Jesus promised eternal life: *"if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."* (John 14:2–3). From then on, we will be with Him always.

There are many more promises throughout the Bible. All God's promises find their ultimate fulfilment in Jesus Christ. *"No matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ"* (2 Corinthians 1:20).
