

PROMISES YOU CAN COUNT ON!

A Bible study focused on God's amazing promises

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More Promises You Can Count On!

STUDY SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS SERIES:

PREPARATION -As you begin each lesson, you will find that it is enormously helpful to calm your mind and spirit and get in touch with The One who invites you to come into His presence. He takes delight in having His children humbly bow before Him and express their honest desire to get to know Him better. There are suggestions at the beginning of each lesson to help you focus on Jesus and His unfailing love for you.

INFORMATION - Read the suggested Scripture passage. Take your time. This is not an academic assignment or a textbook. This is God's Holy Word – His love letter to you. If possible read it in 2 or 3 different translations. You may want to underline the promise and make note of some of the words, phrases or ideas that catch your attention.

MEDITATION - The heart of the lesson is found in this section. There will be several questions for you to consider. These questions have no right or wrong answers. They are meant to help you to understand the passage and to discover the truths that the Holy Spirit wants to teach to you. Feel free to focus on the questions which seem most interesting to you. Take time to reflect on the verses in the passage that seem most important to you.

ADDITIONAL VERSES – You will want to reinforce this promise by savoring and absorbing the reality of it through these extra verses. You might want to write some of them out in a special booklet or make a "Promise Box" with 3 x 5 cards.

APPLICATION - Finally, you will want to listen quietly for the still, small voice of the Lord. His promises are meant for you to acknowledge, to believe, and to integrate into your thinking and your actions through prayer. Some of them will meet a felt need that you have at the present time, while others will be more meaningful in the future. Perhaps God will use you to encourage someone else through these promises, too. A promise is God's gift to you, so your part is to gratefully receive it.

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Promises That Enable . . .

Lesson 1

“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.” - II Peter 1: 3

Words of encouragement and warnings! There is a sense of urgency that comes through in Peter's second letter to those who shared his faith in Jesus Christ. No doubt it was written shortly before his execution. His language was both strong and direct as he explained to them that it is in coming to really KNOW the Lord Jesus Christ that they would be both protected from error and enabled to experience His resurrection power in their lives. While in much of this letter, Peter used very direct commands, such as “make every effort . . .” and “be on guard . . .”, it was in the opening verses and in the closing sentence that he made it very clear to them (and to us) that our strength and our life come, always and only, through knowing God and trusting the promises that He has given to us in His Word.

Preparation - *What are the desires of your heart at this time in your journey? Take some time to reflect on the goodness and greatness of the One who longs to uphold you in your weakness and reassure you of His unconditional love today.*

Information – Read II Peter 1: 1 – 4

Read these 4 verses, the introduction to this letter, in several translations.

Take time to write out these verses by hand and to read them out loud.

If possible, post verses 3 and 4 where you can see them every day and be reminded of these truths.

Meditation

1. To whom is Peter writing this letter and what do you notice about his opening greeting to them – verses 1 – 2?
2. When you think about God's “divine power”, what comes to your mind? In what ways has God demonstrated His power so that mankind, so that you personally, can begin to grasp His “omnipotence”? Begin a list and add to it as you get new ideas. Are there Bible stories that illustrate God's limitless power throughout history?
3. As you reflect on verse 3, what are the 2 attributes that Peter used to explain why God initiated a relationship with us? You will notice some variation in different translations that will help you think about who God is. What are other synonyms for these descriptive words? When you think of the God whom you know, what are the adjectives that you would use to describe Him?
Psalm 33
Psalm 145
Acts 17: 24 - 28
Romans 11: 33 – 36
I John 4: 7 – 10
4. Because of God's “glory and goodness”, He not only called us to Himself but He gave us “great and precious promises”. According to verse 4, what are the 2 purposes for the promises which God has given to us?
5. As you consider what Peter is trying to convey to these believers in these opening statements, how would you summarize these verses? How important is it to get to KNOW (experientially not just theoretically) God and to trust that His promises are really true for you in the circumstances of your life?

Invitation – Peter's final prayer and desire for these believers is that they would “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”. Could it be that in discovering and relying on His promises to you this prayer would be answered? Could it be that this is all He is asking of you and He will accomplish the rest?

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The Promise of WISDOM

Lesson 2

*If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God,
Who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given him. James 1: 5*

Preparation - *What are the concerns of your heart as you come to Jesus today? He is The One who knows you by name and has invited you to be His child, His beloved, His precious possession. You can come to Him just as you are. He knows just where you are feeling inadequate and insecure. Ask Him in faith to give you the insight and wisdom that you need.*

Information - Read James 1: 1 - 12

The context and setting – To whom is James writing this letter? What are their circumstances and challenges?

The content – As James begins this letter, what are the basic truths that he wants them to grasp and to consider? As you glance through the whole letter, what seems to be his greatest reasons for writing it?

Meditation -

1. Re-write James 1: 2 – 12 by making a list or outline of the ideas that James is giving to his friends. What words are repeated or ideas are emphasized?
2. As you reflect on these verses, how would you define the word *wisdom*? What do the people need? What are some other words that describe a person who is wise?
3. What can you learn about God in these verses?
4. What makes it possible to ask God for wisdom with full confidence that He will answer your prayer?
John 14: 25 – 26
John 16: 23 - 24
John 17: 17 - 19
5. How would you answer the question posed in James 3: 13 – “Who is wise and understanding among you?”
What impresses you about James’ description of wisdom - verses 3: 13 - 18?

Additional verses: Psalm 32: 8, Psalm 51: 6, Proverbs 1: 7, Proverbs 2: 1 – 8, Proverbs 3: 5 -6, Jeremiah 33: 1 – 3

Ephesians 1: 17 – 21, Colossians 2: 2 – 3, James 3: 13 – 17

Invitation –

1. As you sit quietly and wait for the Lord to speak gently to you, begin to think about some decisions, relationships or challenges that you have in which you need God's wisdom and understanding. Take time to write down some specific situations where you want God to give you His wisdom and insight.
2. Review James 1: 5 – 6 – Is there anything that keeps you from believing this promise? Confess it and then ask the Spirit of God to reassure you and give you hope. Would you be willing to invite someone else to pray with you about your desire for wisdom and God's promise to you?

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The Promise of HOPE

Lesson 3

*May the GOD OF HOPE fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him,
so that you may overflow with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15: 13*

Preparation - *What are the concerns of your heart as you come to Jesus today? He is The One who knows you by name and has invited you to be His child, His beloved, His precious possession. You can come to Him just as you are. He knows where you are feeling discouraged or disappointed. He is waiting to give you a real measure of hope and joy. Ask Him!*

Information - Read Romans 15: 5 - 13

The context and setting – Why did Paul write this letter to the Romans? (See Romans 1: 1 – 7 and Romans 15: 14 – 16)

The content – As Paul concludes his amazing letter to the new believers in Rome, what are the final ideas that he wants them to know and to remember?

Meditation

1. As Paul concludes his letter to these new Christians, he tells them what his prayer for them is. How would calling God, “the God of hope”, encourage them? What truths about Jesus would this title help them to remember?
2. What is the connection between having real hope and experiencing joy and peace?
3. Earlier in Romans, Paul used Abraham to illustrate what it means to believe God’s promises against all odds. Read Romans 4: 18 – 24. How do these verses help you understand what it means to believe or trust in God so that you can be filled with His hope?
4. What are some synonyms for “overflowing”? How could you illustrate or re-write this prayer to make it more personal for you?
5. Isn’t it amazing that Paul once again reminds his readers that all of this is possible because of the power of the Holy Spirit? What does that mean to you? How do you explain this reality? Have you experienced it?

(Bonus: Read Ephesians 1: 15 – 21 if you want a glimpse of what this power really is.)

Additional verses: Psalm 33: 22, Psalm 42: 11, Psalm 71: 5 - 8, Jeremiah 29: 11, Lamentations 3: 22 – 26

Romans 5: 1 – 5, Romans 8: 22 – 27, II Corinthians 4: 16 – 18, I Peter 1: 3 - 9

Invitation

1. As you sit quietly and wait for the Lord to direct your thoughts, begin to ask Him to reveal to you places in your life where pessimism, discouragement, and confusion are causing your trust and your confidence in the Lord to limit your hope and therefore your joy and peace. Be as specific as you can.
2. What would you like the Holy Spirit to do for you? Are you willing to make this prayer your own?

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The Promise of JOY

Lesson 4

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love.

I have told you this so that MY JOY may be in you and that YOUR JOY may be complete. John 15: 9 and 11

Preparation - *What are the concerns of your heart as you come to Jesus today? He is The One who knows you by name and has invited you to be His child, His beloved, His precious possession. You can come to Him just as you are. He knows what makes you feel sad, gloomy, dejected, or depressed. He is waiting for you to come to Him and to trust in His unfailing love.*

Information - Read John 15: 1 - 17

The context and setting – When and where was Jesus when He gave this promise to His disciples? John 13: 1

What had Jesus just told them about the events that would soon take place? John 13: 21, 14: 1 – 3, 19

The content – What is the picture that Jesus has just given to His disciples?

Meditation

1. Summarize briefly in your own words the content of these verses. What is Jesus telling His disciples?
2. What do you believe that Jesus means by the word “joy”? What is joy? How is it the same or different from happiness?
3. How have these disciples experienced and observed Jesus’ love for them in the past 3 years?
4. The connection between love and obedience is very clear in Jesus’ mind and is seen clearly through His relationship with His own Father. How would this help the disciples to grasp both what He was asking them to do and the reason behind it?
5. Beside joy, what are the other promises that Jesus gives to those who choose to “remain in His love”?

Additional verses: Psalm 4: 7 - 8, Psalm 5: 11-12, Psalm 16: 11, Psalm 28:7, Psalm 67:4, Prov. 10:28, Isaiah 55: 8 – 12]
John 16: 24, Galatians 5: 22, Hebrews 12: 1 -3, I Peter 1: 8

Invitation

1. Take the time to wait on the Lord and to let the Holy Spirit make His desires known to you. What would it feel like to simply focus on God’s immense love for you personally for the next few minutes. You don’t deserve it and you cannot earn it. He gives it to you and to me because that is who He is – every day and always - John 15: 9
2. Jesus also want you to have His joy, His complete joy. What would that look like for you? What changes would He enable you to make if you asked Him to do so and then eagerly responded to His desires?

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The Promise of HIS PRESENCE

Lesson 5

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go. Joshua 1: 9

Preparation – *What's on your mind as you come to this time with Jesus today? He is waiting for you to admit your concerns and your anxious thoughts so that He can reassure you of His presence and His willingness to strengthen you. He is The One who knows you by name and has invited you as His child, His beloved, His precious possession, to know that He is always with you.*

Information - Read Joshua 1: 1 - 18

The context and setting – As the historical book of Joshua opens, where are the people of Israel? Who is Joshua?

The content – There are 2 conversations in these verses. What are they all about?

Meditation

1. As Joshua takes over the leadership of this nation, what do you know about him?
Read Numbers 13 - 14: 26 for some insight and background information
2. The book of Exodus chronicled the amazing story of the Israelites as they crossed the Red Sea (from slavery in Egypt to freedom) and then their long journey through the wilderness to the Land which had been promised to Abraham more than 400 years before. A new generation is now on the brink of crossing over into this land in order to conquer it and make it their homeland. What do you imagine that they are feeling and discussing.
3. As the Lord talks to Joshua, what are the commands that He gives to him? How would this information help Joshua as he began his new role as the leader of God's chosen people?
4. This is not the first time that Joshua has heard these words from the Lord. Read Deuteronomy 31: 1 – 8. How would this repetition help Joshua and the people? How does it help you?

Additional verses: Deuteronomy 31: 6 – 8, Psalm 73: 23 – 24, Psalm 145: 17 – 20, Isaiah 41: 10, Jeremiah 1: 7 – 8

Matthew 28: 19 – 20, John 14: 15 – 20, Romans 8: 9 – 11, Hebrews 13: 5, I John 4: 10 - 15

Invitation

1. In the quietness of this moment, listen patiently for the still and quiet voice of the Spirit of the Lord. Wait on Him and let Him reassure you of not only His presence with you but in you. What would He like you to remember and to know about His care for you? About His desires for you?
2. Weak? HE will be Your strength!
Doubtful? HE has promised to be with you!
Are you willing to believe His promises?
- Afraid? HE will give you courage!
Discouraged? HE will not leave you!

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The Promise of PROTECTION

Lesson 6

*“Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges My name.”* Psalm 91: 14

Preparation - *What are the concerns of your heart as you come to Jesus today? He is The One who knows you by name. Let Him remind you that you are His child, His beloved, His precious possession. Does the idea of needing protection or wanting it cause you to think of circumstances in your life or relationships that make you feel vulnerable or defenseless? Why not ask Him to show you His love and His grace today?*

Information - Read Psalm 91

The context and setting – While we do not know who wrote this Psalm or the circumstances, what would you say the is the writer’s theme?

The content – Try to summarize this Psalm in a sentence or two.

Meditation

1. Where or when do you think or feel that you need protection? Physically, emotionally, culturally, morally? When do you need a refuge or a fortress? Is there a difference?
2. What names does the Psalmist use to describe God in this Psalm? Do these titles help you picture who God really is? How?
3. There are several descriptive pictures of the ways in which the Lord protects those who trust in Him. What are they?
4. What do you think the Psalmist is clarifying in verses 1, 2, 9, 14 and 15?

Additional verses: Deut. 33: 26 – 27, Psalm 4: 6 – 8, Psalm 18: 1 - 6, Psalm 121: 5 – 8, Proverbs 3: 21 – 26, Nahum 1: 7
Matthew 6: 25 – 33, Matthew 10: 16 – 20 and 29 – 31, John 10: 11 – 16, I Peter 1: 6 - 9

Invitation

1. Take some time to reflect on how God has been your protection in the past? When has He surrounded you with His angels or let you take refuge under His wings? Have you ever called on Him when you were in trouble and heard Him answer you? Give Him your praise and your thanksgiving right now.
2. How do you think the Spirit of God would like to reassure you that the promise of His protection is as true for you today as it has been for the Psalmist and for all those who are willing to trust Him throughout the ages?

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The Promise of COMFORT

Lesson 7

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion
and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles,
so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*

II Corinthians 1: 3 - 4

Preparation – *Is there some sadness or grief that you are feeling right now? Is there loss or disappointment that you are eager to deny or bury? Why not let Jesus' loving arms uphold you as you enter His presence. He is willing and waiting to comfort you. Remember He understands what you are feeling and thinking.*

Information - Read II Corinthians 1: 1 - 14

The context and setting – Why do you think Paul is writing a second letter to the church in Corinth?

The content – As he begins this letter, what is on his heart? What is his mood and purpose?

Meditation

1. Describe what Paul's attitude is toward hardships and suffering?
2. Most likely Paul is describing his experience in Ephesus in verse 8. Read about it in Acts 19. Why did Paul travel and endure these pressures and difficulties?
3. While there are serious problems that Paul addressed clearly in his first letter to this church, yet Paul longs for them to understand how they can encourage each other. How does he model this in his writing?
4. What does Paul believe about power of prayer? How does he encourage them to continue to pray for him?

Additional verses: Psalm 23: 4, Psalm 37: 23 – 24, Psalm 46: 1 – 3, 10, Psalm 55: 22, Psalm 119: 76 – 77, Isaiah 41: 10

John 14: 1 – 3 and 25 -27, Romans 8: 28 – 30, Philippians 2: 1 – 2, I Peter 5: 7

Invitation

1. "The Father of compassion and the God of all comfort" – In the quietness of these moments let the Spirit of God bring His gentle encouragement and tender understanding into your inner being. Jesus came to heal the sick and care for the wounded. Will you let Him begin to do that for you?
2. As you experience God's comfort, His care, His compassion, let Him bring to mind someone who needs you to be there for them in whatever way God wants to use you – a smile, a note, a kind deed, mercy, forgiveness. To whom will you pass on God's kind of comfort?

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The Promise of HELP

Lesson 8

Because YOU ARE MY HELP, I sing in the shadow of Your wings.

I stay close to You. Your right hand upholds me.

Psalm 63: 7 – 8

Preparation - *What are the concerns of your heart as you come to Jesus today? He is The One who knows you by name and has invited you to be His child, His beloved, His precious possession. You can come to Him just as you are. He longs for you to admit that He alone is God and that you are not. He has invited you to acknowledge your need for Him to be your help, your strength, your wisdom, your guide. What do you want to confess to Him just now?*

Information - Read Psalm 63

The context and setting – David wrote this Psalm when he was in the desert of Judah – see I Samuel 23 – 24.

The content – How could you summarize the song? How would writing this song help David in his situation?

Meditation

1. How was David feeling about himself and about life as he composed this Psalm? How did he picture his emotions?
2. What did David know and believe to be true about his God?
3. David could have chosen to focus on the dangers that surrounded him and the dilemmas that he faced. What kept him from doing this?
4. David was being pursued physically by very real enemies, but he was also being tormented emotionally and mentally. How did he choose to position himself before the Lord in order to receive God's help?

Additional verses: Psalm 28: 6 – 8, Psalm 46: 1 – 3, Psalm 121, Psalm 146, Isaiah 41: 8 – 10

II Corinthians 4: 16 – 18, II Corinthians 12: 7 – 10, Philippians 4: 13 and 19, Hebrews 4: 14 – 16

Invitation –

1. As you sit quietly and wait for the Lord to speak gently to you, why don't you compose your own "Psalm" expressing to Him the thoughts and feelings that are in your mind about how He has helped you in the past?
2. What regular habits of meditation, study, prayer, music, creative expression or journaling do you think might enrich your awareness of the presence of the Lord and His desire to help you throughout each day?

MORE PROMISES YOU CAN COUNT ON!

"Because of His glory and goodness, God has given us His very great and precious promises so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil (human) desires." II Peter 1: 3 - 4

PEACE

John 14: 27

Psalm 29: 11, Psalm 119: 165, Isaiah 26: 3-4,
John 16: 33, Romans 15: 13, Galatians 5: 22, Philippians 4: 6 – 7, II Thessalonians 3: 16

GUIDANCE

Proverbs 3: 5 – 6

Joshua 1: 8 – 9, Psalm 25: 4 – 9, Psalm 37: 3 – 6 and 23 - 24, Proverbs 16: 3 & 9, Isaiah 30: 21 & 42: 16
John 8: 12, John 10: 3 – 4, Acts 8: 29, Ephesians 2: 8 – 10 and 5: 8 – 10, Colossians 2: 6 - 7

STRENGTH

Philippians 4: 13

Psalm 29: 11 & 46: 1, I Chronicles 16: 11, II Chronicles 16: 9, Isaiah 40: 28 – 31, Habakkuk 3: 19
I Corinthians 1: 24 – 25, Ephesians 1: 19 – 23, II Timothy 1: 7, I John 4: 4

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS Lamentations 3: 22 – 23

Deuteronomy 7: 7 – 9, I Kings 8: 56, Psalm 89: 19 – 37, Psalm 119: 89 – 90, Psalm 145: 13
I Corinthians 1: 9 & 10: 13, II Corinthians 1: 19 – 20, II Thessalonians 3: 3, II Timothy 2: 10 – 13, Hebrews 10: 23

FORGIVENESS

I John 1: 9

Psalm 51: 7 – 11, Psalm 103: 2 – 3 and 8 – 14, Isaiah 1: 18
Matthew 26: 27 – 28, Acts 10: 42 – 43, Acts 13: 38 – 39, Acts 26: 15 – 18, Ephesians 1: 6 – 7, Colossians 1: 11 - 14

A FUTURE and A HOPE

Jeremiah 29: 11

Psalm 23, Psalm 62: 1 – 2 and 5 – 8, Psalm 103: 1 – 5 and 11 – 19, Isaiah 40: 27 – 31, Isaiah 43: 1 - 2
Romans 8: 28 and 35 – 39, II Corinthians 1: 21 – 22, II Cor. 4: 16 - 18, Hebrews 10: 19 – 23, Hebrews

GOD's TENDER CARE I Peter 5: 7

Deuteronomy 33: 26 – 27a, Psalm 91:14 – 16, Psalm 121, Psalm 145: 8 – 20, Proverbs 2: 8, Zephaniah 3: 17
Matthew 10: 28 – 31, John 14: 9 – 12, Romans 8: 22 – 27, II Corinthians 1: 3 – 7, II Thessalonians 2: 16, I John 3:

ETERNAL LIFE

John 3: 16

Psalm 17: 14 – 15, Psalm 21: 1 – 7, Psalm 23: 6, Isaiah 59: 21,
John 11: 25 – 26, John 14: 1 – 2, Romans 6: 23, Philippians 3: 17 – 21, I Thessalonians 4: 13 – 18,
Titus 3: 4 – 8, Hebrews 9: 13 – 15, I John 3: 1 – 3, I John 5: 13, Revelation 22: 1 - 6

ANSWERED PRAYER Psalms 145: 18 – 19

I Chronicles 7: 12 – 15, Psalm 32: 5 – 9, Psalm 55: 16 – 18 and 22, Jeremiah 33: 2 – 3
Matthew 6: 5 – 13, Matthew 7: 7 – 11, John 16: 24, James 5: 16, II Thessalonians 1: 11- 12, I John 3: 21 – 22,
I John 5: 14 – 15,