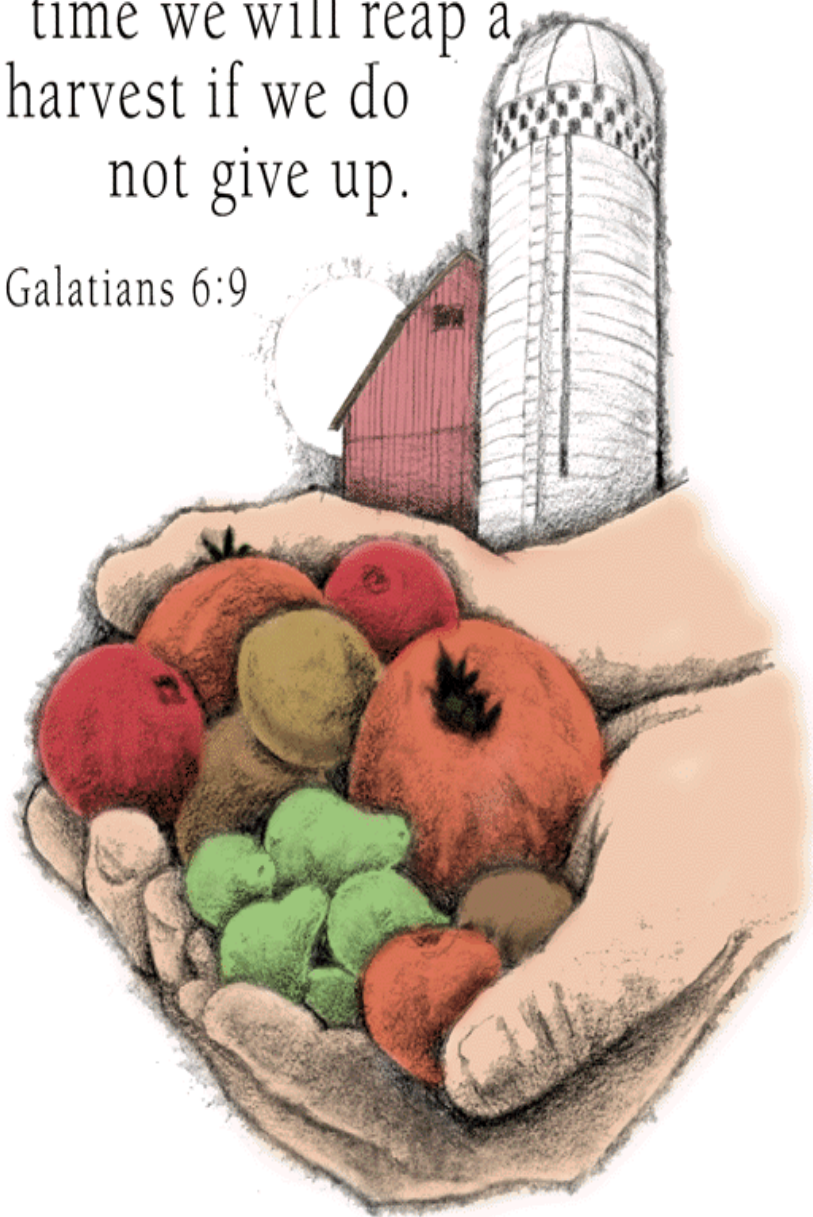


Let us not become weary in
doing good, for at the proper
time we will reap a
harvest if we do
not give up.

Galatians 6:9



Valley Forge Baptist Church

1701 Valley Forge Road • Valley Forge • PA • 19481
610-783-7417 • 610-783-5422 • 484-431-8463 • www.vfbaptist.org

Sunday
November 15, 2009

Sunday School - 9:15 AM Morning Worship - 10:30 AM
Evening Fellowship - 7:00 PM

Prelude

Invocation

Call to Worship - Psalm 121

Hymn #21 - O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 65:1-25

Hymn #52 - Blessed Be The Name

Chorus #43 - You Have Been Good

Chorus #35 - Holy, Holy, Holy Is The Lord Of Hosts

Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

Elder Prayer

Offering & Offertory

Hymn #648- Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Sermon: The Treasure of Biblical Contentment (Part 3)
Pastor Bill Farrow

Hymn #638 - I Need Thee Every Hour

Benediction

Postlude

This Week's Schedule:

Today:

- 9:15 AM - Sunday School - Steve Diem will be continuing his study of the Book of Joshua.
- 10:30 AM - Morning Worship - Pastor Bill will continue our brief new series on the Treasures of Biblical Contentment from Philippians 4.
- 7:00 PM - Our Evening Service - "Things an Unredeemed Person CANNOT Do" - #5-6.

Monday:

- It is NOT the Schmidt's Anniversary.

Tuesday:

- 10:00 AM - Missionary Circle at the Church.

Wednesday:

- 7:30 PM - Bible Study & Prayer Meeting - Praying for Members and Attendees, as well as for family and other immediate needs.



The Greiners and Family Christian Inspiration will be with us for our Morning Service **next Sunday Morning** for the whole Morning Service. We haven't seen them for a while and so this will

be quite a treat for us! We're looking forward to having Bevan and his entire family (including Julius) here to minister to us, musical glasses, singing, ventriloquism, and all! Please plan on being with us and invite some friends as it is sure to be a great and blessed time as well as time that honors and exalts our Lord Jesus.



Let us draw near ... with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith ... Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess.

Hebrews 10:22-23

Next Sunday

- In **Sunday School** Steve Diem will continue teaching the Book of Joshua, Chapter 23.
- In our **Morning Service** Pastor Farrow will continue our series on The Treasure of Biblical Contentment.
- **Next Sunday Evening** - We will have our Evening Fellowship and continue our brief study of "Things an Unredeemed Person Cannot Do".
- Next Wednesday Evening (November 25th) we'll have our Annual Thanksgiving Eve Service (7 PM - Communion will be a part of our service together).

God does not deal with us in this 'sentimental' way!

(J. R. Miller, "The SILENT Christ")

"A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to Him, crying out, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is suffering terribly from demon-possession!' Jesus did not answer her a word!" Matthew 15:22

We are apt to forget that the aim of God with us, is . . .

- not to flood us with tenderness all the time,
- not to keep our path always strewn with flowers,
- not to continually give us everything we want,
- not to save us from all manner of suffering.

No! God's aim with us, is . . .

- to make something of us,
- to build up strong and noble character in us,
- to mature qualities of grace and beauty in us,
- to make us more like Christ!

To do this--He must oftentimes deny us what we ask for, and must seem indifferent to our cries. *"Jesus did not answer her a word!"*

There are 'sentimental ideas of God' prevalent, which are dishonoring to Him. There are those who imagine that God's love means tenderness that cannot cause pain. They think that He cannot look a moment on suffering, without relieving it; that He must instantly hear and answer every cry for the removal of trouble.

Not such a God--is the God of the Bible! When suffering is the best thing for us--He is not too sympathetic to let us suffer--until the work of suffering is accomplished in us. He is not too kind to be silent to our prayers--when it is better that He should be silent for a time, to allow . . .

- faith to grow strong,
- self-confidence to be swept away, and
- the evil in us--to be burned out in the furnace of pain!

There is a danger with all of us--our tenderness lacks strength. We cannot tolerate to see people suffer, and so we hasten to give relief--before the ministry of suffering is accomplished. We think of our mission to others, as being only 'to make life easier for them'. We are continually lifting away burdens, which it were better to have left resting longer on our friend's shoulder! We are eager to make life easy for our children--when it were better if it had been left hard.

We must learn that God does not deal with us in this 'sentimental' way. He is not too tender to see us suffer--if more suffering is needed to work in us the

discipline that will make us like Christ!

Here we have the key of many of the 'mysteries of Providence'. Life is not easy for us--and God does not intend it to be easy!

Suppose for a moment, that God immediately gave us everything we ask for--and immediately removed every little pain, trouble, difficulty, and hardness that we seek to have removed; what would be the result on us? How selfish it would make us! We would become weak, unable to endure suffering, to bear trial, to carry burdens, or to struggle. We would be only children always--and would never rise into manly strength. God's over-kindness to us--would pamper in us all the worst elements of our nature, and would make us only poor driveling creatures!

On the other hand, however, God's wise and firm treatment of us, teaches us the great lessons which make us strong with the strength of Christ Himself.

- He teaches us to yield our own will to Him.
- He develops in us--patience, faith, love, hope and peace.
- He trains us to endure hardness--that we may grow heroic, courageous and strong.

It is well for us to make careful note of this--that in all God's delays when we pray--His aim is some good in us.

- Perhaps we are willful, asking only for our own way--and must learn to say, *"May Your will be done."*
- Perhaps we are weak, unable to bear pain or to endure adversity or loss--and we must be trained and disciplined into strength.
- Perhaps our desires are only for earthly good, not for heavenly blessings--and we must be taught the transitory character of all worldly things, and led to desire things which are eternal.
- Perhaps we are impatient--and must be taught to wait for God. We are like children in our eager restlessness--and need to learn self-restraint.

At the least, we may always know that silence is not refusal--that God hears and cares, and that when our faith has learned its lessons--He will answer in blessing!



"The Lord disciplines the one He loves, and punishes every son whom He receives." Hebrews 12:6

"God disciplines us for our good--that we may share in His holiness." Hebrews 12:10

House Undivided Ministries, Inc.

P. O. Box 2695, Vineland, NJ 08362

President

Dr. Richard W. Sparling
3501 So. Lincoln Ave. #43
Vineland, NJ 08361

Telephone
856-765-9460

There are those things in life that we do that affect and even hurt others and ourselves. One of those behaviors is probably something that we don't think much about. It is the matter of making promises but not keeping them. These can be anything from a simple to a very important promise.

The definition of promise is "a declaration that something will or will not be done." (Webster). The word promise does not have to be included in what is said as long as there is a commitment to do or not perform some behavior.

For an example we will look to Scripture and see where a promise was made and then broken. It is in the life of Peter. In Matthew 26 Jesus was telling His disciples about the future. He spoke about His coming crucifixion and resurrection. He informed them that at the time of His crucifixion they would be offended. (vs.31).

Peter quickly responded, "Though I should die with you, yet will I not deny you. Likewise also said all the disciples." (vs. 35). This was a promise from Peter and the others to Jesus. He replied, "I say unto you that this night before the cock crows you will deny me three times." (vs. 34) Peter's promise was a very serious one of absolute dedication no matter what, including death.

Subsequently Jesus was arrested and taken to Caiaphas where He would be judged. We are told, "Peter followed afar off." (vs. 58). As Jesus was being judged we are told "Peter sat outside in the court." (vs. 69). He was recognized as a follower of Jesus three times. Each time someone recognized him, Peter denied knowing Jesus. He became so upset he began "to curse and to swear, saying, 'I know not the man!'" (vs. 74). He had made a promise and then broke it. Just as Jesus had foretold the cock crowed. Peter remembered the words of Jesus "and he wept bitterly." (vs. 75)

In this example we see the effect on the one who has made the promise. Peter had made an important promise to one he said he loved and then he failed. Revealed is that the one who breaks a promise can experience hurt.

Our concern in this article is with the one to whom a promise has been made and then broken. There is also hurt. In our story we see the reaction of Jesus. After the cock crowed, "The Lord turned and looked at Peter." (Lk. 22:61) Their eyes met and we know the reaction of Peter. We are not specifically told of the response of Jesus to Peter's broken promise. All we are told is that He looked. We know in our own lives that a look can send any number of messages.

Because this is Jesus He would not necessarily respond as we would but let me suggest just one possibility. That look (based on Peter's reaction) said, "You did it, you broke your promise." Possibly it was a look of sadness, or of hurt because it was Peter who was so close to Him and had even declared his

love for Him. We know that Jesus could show emotion for earlier He had wept when He saw the failure of faith at the raising of Lazarus. Whatever that look, it said something to Peter.

A promise made, a promise kept is essential for good relationships and in every situation. We all make promises and, sad to say, in varying degrees, we all break promises. There are, of course, different reasons why we make and break promises. Sometimes we do so because we honestly forget, or we don't believe it's important, or it is a flaw in our character. As children of God we need to be very conscious that our words are important. When we break a promise, even a small one, there is potential for hurt for the one to whom the promise was made.

An example of a promise that we might consider small and unimportant is when we tell someone that we'll call them later that day. The promise is made but the call is not made. In my own experience, I have waited all day, not going out or doing something that would keep me from hearing the phone ring, waiting for the promised call that never came. This is hurtful in two ways. Waiting controls the individual and what they are able to do. Second, if the purpose of the call was important to the one waiting, they could experience hurt or upset. I'll let you think of other simple promises you or others have made to you that were broken.

One of the more serious areas of promise breaking that is becoming more and more common today even among Christians has to do with the marriage ceremony. A number of vows, which are promises, are made by each to the other. These promises involve conduct with each other "until death". Sad to say, in a large percentage of marriages, these promises are broken and this often leads to divorce. Much of my counseling through the years involved broken promises. As a result there was much hurt and unhappiness.

There are many other areas where this problem could be discussed but space will not permit it. What are we to learn? How serious is it? What do broken promises say about the promise breaker?

A promise broken, whether it is something small or something very serious, all have some degree of consequence. It may also say something about our character. If failure is very seldom, it may mean nothing. If it is very often there may be at least one of two problems. It may be a physical problem that affects the memory. The one of most concern is where there is failure because the individual just doesn't care. This is a spiritual problem and a character flaw where the individual cannot be trusted or depended upon.

Promise keeping is serious. Make only a promise that you know you can keep and then make sure you keep it.



The Sparlings (Continued)

From Libby:

There have been several times in the last few weeks that I have talked with folks who are going through some long lasting and difficult trials or I've been told of someone who just seems to have one thing after another go "wrong" in their lives either personally or in their family. They are all Christians with great stress in their lives.

I was reading in II Corinthians recently and was struck again with the list that Paul gave of things that happened to him as he faithfully served the Lord. (1:8,4:8-11, 6:4-5, 7:5, and 12:7 to name a few). I wonder if he occasionally thought, "Can anything else go wrong?!" As we go through tough times sometimes with no end in sight, it wears us down emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Paul gave all kinds of reasons for these trials and it did my heart good to review the list. That God might be glorified and His greatness seen. That we might repent of sin and learn to lean on Him. To keep us from trusting in ourselves instead of on God. To make us more sensitive and willing to give to relieve the needs of others. That we might experience victories in our life and help others to see Jesus. It's bringing about our sanctification so we'll be more like Him. It's preparing us for the future. That we might learn to trust Him and depend on Him, etc., etc. (And these are just the ones mentioned in II Corinthians!)

I noticed something that we sometimes miss as a reason for trials. Paul spoke of it at the beginning of the book, part way through (7:6) and at the end. In our trials and losses we can experience God's comfort. This is so special. His peace and presence are so amazing. In the midst of pressure that seems so great that we think we cannot take much more, He is there. As Paul said, "His grace is sufficient." Beyond that, as we experience comfort we are then able to comfort others in a way that we wouldn't have been able to if everything in our lives ran smoothly (1 :3-7). Help us, Lord, to trust You even when we don't understand.

Dick & Libby

