



Advent Week 2: God's Love is Faithful to His Promises
Matthew 1:18-25

God's love compels Him to keep His promises to us regardless of the cost to Himself.

I. The God of Love & the Fight of Faith

Eventually we all have experiences, circumstances, or seasons when we are in a fight of faith – a real battle to keep trusting in the Lord's love and power.

Q: Is God trustworthy? Can He be trusted to keep His promises to us?

"Loved ones, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." 1 John 4:7-8

II. God's Commitment to Love & Faithfulness
(Psalm 108:4; Matthew 1:22-23).

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord has said through the prophet: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel – which means 'God with us.'" Matthew 1:22-23

The verb "fulfill" is a reference to God's keeping the promises He made about a Messiah. Throughout the Bible, God makes promises to His covenant people. Throughout the Old Testament, there is the question lurking in the background of the story: Will God keep His promises? How?

"I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love [hesed], higher than the heavens; your faithfulness [emet] reaches to the skies." Psalm 108:3-4

God's love (hesed) = steadfast love, loving kindness, His commitment to act for the good of His covenant people.

God's faithfulness (emet) = His determined loyalty to His covenant of love (hesed).

Q: How far will God go to keep His promises to His covenant people? How faithful is He? How deep is His love for His people?

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord has said through the prophet: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us.')" Matthew 1:22-23

III. Trusting God to Keep His Promises to Us

God's Covenantal Promises

"But if from there 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

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. . . 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

Romans 10:9-13

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9

"Know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself; the Lord will hear when I call to him."

Psalms 4:3

"Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear...But seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Matthew 6:25, 33

"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

John 8:31

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you..."

Isaiah 43:1-3

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 11:9

"Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Isaiah 40:30-31

“He tends his flock like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.”
Isaiah 40:10-11

“Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.”
Isaiah 46:3-4

“...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 1:6

“And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character; and character, hope.”
Romans 5:2-4

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”
1 Peter 5:6-7

“He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.”
1 Corinthians 1:8-9

“For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.”
Romans 14:7-8

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you may also be where I am.”
John 14:3

“He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”
Revelation 21:4

IV. Jesus Christ is God’s Guarantee He Keeps His Promises (Romans 8:28-32, 35, 37-39)

Advent is a season of both celebration and groaning. The Bible is honest about both experiences.

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you heard the statement “God is love” expressed by people who do not identify as Christians? If so, what do you think they understand that statement to mean? How about the statement expressed by Christians?
2. Read 1 John 4:7-10. John uses the Greek *agape* for “love,” which is the kind of love that gives itself for the good of another even at great cost as compared to romantic love or friendship love. How does this Scripture give weight and content to John’s statement: “God is love.”

3. Read Matthew 1:18-23 and specifically v.22-23. What is Matthew saying about the extent that God will go to keep His promises? How does this align with 1 John 4:9-10?
4. What has been your experience trying to trust God in challenging circumstances or seasons?
5. Look at the sample of promises God makes to His covenant people. How might this equip and encourage you in your fight of faith?