

PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

January 29, 2017

Delivering on Promises

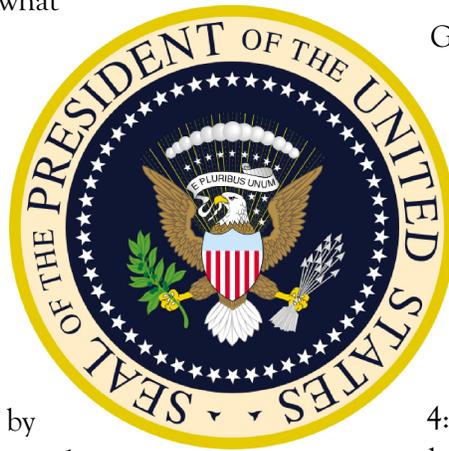
by Frank Himmel

As others before him have done, President Trump promised great things in his inaugural address. As others before him, he will do some of what he promised, but not all. Everyone knows that, including Mr. Trump. It's not that political leaders are intentional liars (though some may be); the problem is having sufficient power, wisdom, resources, and cooperation to make high-sounding goals actually become reality.

Contrast that to God's promises. "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:4). *By these* is a reference to God's power, glory, and excellence (v. 3). God has made marvelous promises to us, and He delivers on every one!

God promised that Jesus will return (Acts 1:8), the dead will all be raised (John 5:28-29), and all will be judged (Acts 17:31). The righteous will be given eternal life (Titus 1:2); the unrighteous, eternal condemnation (Matthew 25:46). These promises are now unfulfilled, yet they are certain (2 Peter 3:8-10).

Many of God's promises relate to the present. For example, He promises forgiveness to those who believe in Jesus (Acts 10:42-43), repent (Luke 24:47), and are baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38). After that, He promises forgiveness to Christians who walk in the light and confess their sins (1 John 1:7, 9). Those who comply with God's conditions may be confident of His forgiveness.



God promises His people grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16). He promises us that our temptations will not be greater than we can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13). He promises to hear our prayers (1 John 5:14).

God promises that His way works, both now and in eternity (1 Timothy 4:8). We can count on that, even when we do not see the wisdom in a particular requirement or restriction. (This was likely Peter's point in our text, anticipating false teachers' allegations that life would be more complete with the license to sin they promoted.)

God promises that His kingdom will never fail (Matthew 16:18; Hebrews 12:28). He is the only ruler that can ever make such a guarantee.

I hope Mr. Trump proves to be a good president. In any case, my life will be neither built upon nor wrapped up in what he or any other president promises. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." ■

Ecumenism

by Frank Himmel

Theopedia.com says *ecumenism* “refers to a movement or effort promoting unity among Christian churches or denominations. In a more general sense, it may also refer to movements promoting worldwide unity among the various religions through greater cooperation and improved understanding.”

Some distinguish the adjectives *ecumenical*, *interfaith*, and *interreligious* as depicting varying levels of acceptance of other religions. However one describes it, there is no denying a growing tendency to regard divergent, conflicting beliefs as equally valid.

Against that backdrop, I remind you that Jesus said...

- 📖 “For unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” (John 8:24).
- 📖 “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6).
- 📖 “He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters” (Luke 11:23).
- 📖 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). ■

Reading Our Bibles



by Frank Himmel

“Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Revelation 1:3).

This verse is evidently about Bible reading in assemblies: few early Christians would have had their own copy of Revelation, and the blessing is pronounced on a single reader and multiple hearers. Nevertheless, it emphasizes that Bible reading is a vital part of the blessed man’s life.

The Bible is God’s word to us. It contains promises, instructions, warnings, and encouragement, as well as faith-building evidence. Apart from it, we have no idea how to please the Lord.

Given its importance, surely we all need to make time for Bible reading on a daily basis. Psalm 1 says of the blessed man, “But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in it he meditates day and night” (v. 2).

One more thing: you did notice, didn’t you, that in our text, the blessing is on the one who *heeds* the Bible message, not just the one who *hears* it? ■

Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday Morning	Sunday Evening	Wednesday Evening
GREETER	Greg Winget	Bruce Williams	Chris Brooks
SONG LEADER	Bruce Williams	Gary Hagler	Greg Winget
OPENING PRAYER	David Gray	Ron Cunningham	
LORD’S SUPPER			
BREAD	Adam Gibson	Adam Gibson	
CUP	Kerry Gray	Kerry Gray	
CONTRIBUTION PRAYER	Josh Baucom		
SERMON/INVITATION	Frank Himmel	Frank Himmel	John Baucom
CLOSING PRAYER	Chris Brooks	Steven Turner	Gary Hagler