

## God's Unconditional Love and Conditional Promises

We live in a day when the importance of biblical doctrine is being minimized and the trend is toward universalism. In an attempt to spread the gospel message to everyone we know and inform them of His unconditional love, we neglect to accurately apply certain scriptures exclusively to those to whom they were written. The Apostle Paul who gave his life as a living sacrifice in the service of his Master warned against this very tendency.

***“Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you”*** (Rom. 6:17). The only true, consistent, and Christ-honoring experience is that which emerges from clear-cut faith in the explicit facts of the Word. ***Sound doctrine is the one basis for a mature walk and effective service. “Thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine”*** (1 Tim. 4:6).....***“Give attendance . . . to doctrine”*** (1 Tim. 4:13).

Stanford, M. J. (2002). Complete Works of Miles J. Stanford. Galaxie Software

One of the most frequently misapplied portions of scripture is the eighth chapter of Romans

***“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”*** (Romans 8:1 NKJV)

How often do we hear this text applied to all believers as a blanket promise when in reality it is intended for those ***“who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”***

Or how about the infamous Romans 8:28? ***“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”*** (Romans 8:28 NKJV) but we neglect to establish the relevance of loving God! Is that love merely “sloppy agape” or is it a love that manifests itself in a genuine love for God and fellow believers?

This morning as I opened Gods word I was reminded of this as I considered one of the most loved and comforting portions of scripture.

***“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”*** (Psalms 91:1 NKJV)

Listen to Charles Spurgeon’s commentary on this verse;

The blessings here promised are **not for all believers**, but **for those who live in close fellowship with God**. Every child of God looks towards the inner sanctuary and the mercy-seat, yet **all do not dwell in the most holy place; they run to it at times**, and enjoy occasional approaches, but they do not habitually reside in the mysterious presence. Those who through rich grace obtain unusual and continuous communion with God, so as to abide in Christ and Christ in them, become possessors of rare and special benefits, which are missed by those who follow afar off, and grieve the Holy Spirit of God. **Into the secret place those only come who know the love of God in Christ Jesus, and those only dwell there to whom to live is Christ.....Outer court worshippers little know what belongs to the inner sanctuary, or surely they would press on until the place of nearness and divine familiarity became**

**theirs.** Those who are the Lord's constant guests shall find that he will never suffer any to be injured within his gates; he has eaten the covenant salt with them, and is pledged for their protection.

The Omnipotent Lord will shield **all those who dwell with him, they shall remain under his care** as guests under the protection of their host. In the most holy place the wings of the cherubim were the most conspicuous objects, and they probably suggested to the Psalmist the expression here employed. **Those who commune with God are safe with him**, no evil can reach them, for the outstretched wings of his power and love cover them from all harm. **This protection is constant—they abide under it, and it is all-sufficient**, for it is the shadow of the Almighty, whose omnipotence will surely screen them from all attack. No shelter can be imagined at all comparable to the protection of Jehovah's own shadow.

Spurgeon, C. H. (2009). The treasury of David, Vol. 4: Psalms 88-110 (88). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

He goes on to say commenting on verse 7 of the same Psalm;

***"A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; But it shall not come near you."***(Psalms 91:7 NKJV)

How true is this of the plague of moral evil, of heresy, and of backsliding. **Whole nations are infected, yet the man who communes with God is not affected** by the contagion; he holds the truth when falsehood is all the fashion. Professors all around him are plague-smitten, the church is wasted, the very life of religion decays, but **in the same place and time, in fellowship with God, the believer renews his youth, and his soul knows no sickness.**

Spurgeon, C. H. (2009). The treasury of David, Vol. 4: Psalms 88-110 (91,92). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

As we dwell in the Holy of holies and experience the nearness of God, His promises flow increasingly and bountifully into our lives. Hannah Whitall Smith elaborates on this;

Nothing is to be compared with Him just Himself! Even the idea of glorifying Him is lost sight of beside Himself. And **we have such a promise** in John 15:5: "He that abides in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." **If we only continue to abide, we may be sure of bringing forth much fruit without any effort of our own!** I think this gives us a rest which words cannot express!

Smith, H. W., & Dieter, M. E. (1997). The Christian's secret of a holy life: The unpublished personal writings of Hannah Whitall Smith. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

***"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."*** (John 15:4-5 NKJV)

Thus today as we find shelter in the shadow of the Almighty let's be sure to expound on the word of God and the promises contained therein completely and correctly as we invite others to share fully in His conditional blessings.

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