

# SESSION 6

# GOD IS FAITHFUL



*What comes to mind when you hear the word "guarantee"?*

**QUESTION #1**

#BSFLfaithful

## THE POINT

*God's past faithfulness ensures our future is secure.*



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Promises, promises.

Have promises lost their value to you? Management promised your job wasn't in jeopardy, but now you're unemployed. A friend promised to pay you back on payday, but that was six months ago. And we all know the fickleness of a politician's campaign promise.

Even the most sincere person can't guarantee every promise, and even the best of us can become cynical. For an idea of how rare faithfulness has become, look at how society marvels when a married couple celebrates a 50th, 40th, or even a 25th anniversary.

But faithfulness is not absent in this life. We have a God who keeps His promises. God is faithful to His Word and faithful to us. Unlike everyone else, He can guarantee to keep every one of His promises.

The Book of Hebrews provides a small glimpse of how God made a promise and kept it through the centuries. Best of all: He remains faithful to that promise today.

# WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** SAY?

## **Hebrews 6:17-20; 10:19-23** (HCSB)

**6:17** Because God wanted to show His unchangeable purpose even more clearly to the heirs of the promise, He guaranteed it with an oath,

**18** so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us.

**19** We have this hope as an anchor for our lives, safe and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain.

**20** Jesus has entered there on our behalf as a forerunner, because He has become a high priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

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**10:19** Therefore, brothers, since we have boldness to enter the sanctuary through the blood of Jesus,

**20** by a new and living way He has opened for us through the curtain (that is, His flesh),

**21** and since we have a great high priest over the house of God,

**22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.

**23** Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

## Key Words

**The curtain** (6:19)—The veil in the temple that separated the holy of holies, where God dwelled, from the people. It was torn when Jesus died, giving all people access to God.

**Forerunner** (6:20)—A person who goes in front of others to lead them where they could not go on their own or to prepare the way for them.

**Melchizedek** (6:20)—Old Testament king/priest who blessed Abram and also received tithes from him; forerunner of the Messiah; and symbol of the inferior priestly system Jesus would surpass.



**How have your experiences with human faithfulness affected the way you perceive God's faithfulness?**

**QUESTION #2****Hebrews 6:17-18**

When God makes a promise, He will be faithful to keep His word. How can we know that? Look at the life of Abraham. When God first called Abraham (see Gen. 12:1-3), He promised that Abraham and his descendants would receive His blessing. God confirmed that promise years later (see Gen. 17:4-8), and when Abraham obediently offered Isaac as a sacrifice, God again confirmed His promised blessing (see Gen. 22:17-18).

God made an explicit promise of faithfulness. He did this by guaranteeing it with an oath. Keep in mind that God's "yes" means "yes," but because it's the practice of people to form binding statements to confirm agreements, God also used an oath. Doing so changed nothing about the outcome—God was always going to act faithfully, oath or not.

In the Bible, oaths are considered serious and sacred (see Deut. 10:20). Divine oaths are of a unique character, being extremely sacred and unbreakable. There are no more serious and sacred words than those of an oath. When *God* makes an oath, then, it carries the idea of the most important promise possible. God's guarantee is a formal assurance that the conditions He laid out will be fulfilled.

Despite the best intentions of reliable people, human promises are subject to being broken simply because we are finite beings. We have limited knowledge, limited power, limited presence, and limited control of a very small part of our environment. People simply cannot guarantee all their promises.

Not so with God. He is the all-in-all. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, everywhere present, completely good, and unchanging. **When God makes a promise, He will keep it.**

"When our Lord looked at us, He saw not only what we were—He was faithful in seeing what we could become!"

—A. W. TOZER

## **Hebrews 6:19-20; 10:19-21**

Our hope in God's promise securely anchors our faith. Anchors were once symbolic within Christianity because God's promises are anchors of reliability in an unsure world. The certainty of God's promises provides an immovable anchor that can make our faith in Him unshakeable.

When God established a covenant, it was built on a relationship with Him. For example, God entered into a covenant relationship with Abraham, which included His promise of blessing (see Heb. 6:13; Gen. 22:17-18). God also established a covenant with Moses and the entire Israelite community at Sinai (see Ex. 19–20).

That covenant provided a way for the Jews, God's chosen people, to live in relationship with God (see Ex. 24:3-8). Though the Israelites failed to honor their promise to the Lord, God promised to never break His covenant with them (see Gen. 17:7).

God's faithfulness continued as He established a new covenant through Jesus—a covenant in which He offers salvation to all people (see Heb. 9:15-26). God's promise in this new covenant brings salvation through reconciliation and intimacy with God, which is symbolized by our access into the inner sanctuary of God. This inner sanctuary is the most holy place, the holy of holies, and it represents the privileged access granted to all who surrender to God in faith and repentance to meet with God in intimate fellowship.

Jesus is the physical incarnation of God's love and the fulfillment of His covenant (see John 3:16). He established a new covenant in His blood (see Matt. 26:28). In becoming our offering for sin, Jesus entered into the holy of holies with His own blood.

The result? We now have access to God.

***How can God's faithfulness be an anchor?***

**QUESTION #3**

***When has Jesus kept you anchored?***

**QUESTION #4**

## **Hebrews 10:22-23**

God has been faithful; He is faithful; and He will remain faithful. This faithfulness attests to the fact that He can be believed. Because of all God has done for us and on our behalf, He has the moral authority to ask us to trust Him. Anything less is not worthy of Him.

This passage notes two things that happen when we place our trust in the One who is faithful:

- 1. Our hearts are made clean through the blood of Christ.** God's salvation means we receive His righteousness; it is imputed to us through His work.
- 2. Our bodies are washed in pure water.** The water mentioned in verse 22 represents the symbolic washing away of our sins through immersion (i.e., baptism) in the Holy Spirit (see Rom. 6:3-5). The Bible often uses the imagery of water to describe the Holy Spirit (see John 7:37-39). Therefore, being baptized in water serves as a public statement of our faith in Christ and a firm testimony to others.

Baptism in New Testament times was an extreme and sober act of faith. Because Christians were being persecuted, being immersed as a statement of faith was a clear indicator of a person's unwavering confidence in Christ. According to the writer of Hebrews, this is exactly what God wants—believers who hold on to a confession of their hope without wavering.

God expects His faithfulness to be reciprocated. He who promised us is faithful. And just as we can fully trust Him, we are to remain faithful to Him. God want us to draw near to Him with a true heart and to be fully committed to Him—just as He is fully committed to us. God wants us to know Him like He knows us. When we do so, our faith will become unshakeable.

***How can we help each other draw near to God and hold onto our hope?***

**QUESTION #5**



## YOUR STORY

*Use the space below to record a time when God demonstrated His faithfulness to you. Get creative by telling a story, sketching a picture, making a list, writing a poem, and so on.*

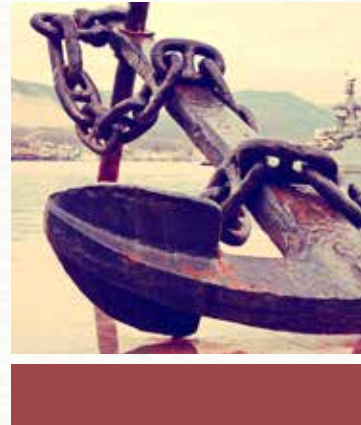
A large, empty rectangular area with a light yellow background, intended for the user to write or draw their story.



# LIVE IT OUT

In light of God's faithfulness, how should you respond?

- ▶ **Seek out God's promises.** As you read God's Word, highlight any verses that contain a promise from Him.
- ▶ **Remember God's faithfulness.** Find a picture of an anchor (or draw one yourself) and display it someplace you'll see it every day. Let the image remind you that God's faithfulness is an anchor for your life.
- ▶ **Fulfill your promises.** Take a step back and evaluate the different promises you've made in recent months. If there are any promises you've yet to keep, move forward to reconcile the situation.



Place your future in Christ's hands and walk with Him in the present. He is faithful in this life and the next. That's a promise you can count on for all time.

## Moving Mountains



*"Dear Ms. Parks. This is Arianna Miskowski. I am in Ms. Dubois' class. I found out in Sunday School that kids in Haiti have to play with parts of old cars for toys. This made me sad. I don't have money, but I have a lot of stuffed animals I don't play with anymore. I know my classmates probably do also. I was thinking I could collect them all for the kids in Haiti. My mom said she could wash and dry them and help me get them to Haiti through our church. Would it be OK if I asked the kids to bring me the stuffed animals they don't play with anymore? Can you help me with my idea? Sincerely, Arianna Miskowski."*



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