

Greg Laurie: The Holy Spirit's Good News for Today's 'Loneliest Generation'

Have you ever eaten something, only to realize that it was past its shelf life?

Or maybe you drank something, only to realize that it was past its expiration date. It isn't a happy experience, is it?

I love it when things don't have shelf lives. And I'm very glad there is no shelf life on the promises of God. When He makes a promise and when He establishes a covenant, He keeps it.

There's a certain theological teaching that you'll hear in some churches today called "covenant theology." Sometimes it's called "replacement theology." This theology suggests that the church has taken the place of Israel, and all the promises that applied to Israel now apply to the church.

Well, God made a covenant with the Jews that He never will break. And God has made a covenant with the church that He will not break, either.

The Bible calls these promises "exceedingly great and precious" (2 Pet. 1:4b). For instance, God has promised that you never will be alone in life, even though sometimes you might feel like you are.

This is good news, especially for Generation Z, the generation that follows the Millennials. This group has been described as the loneliest generation.

There never has been a generation more connected through

technology, yet it's the loneliest, according to researchers.

But I have good news for Generation Z, as well as any generation that came before them or will follow them: You're not alone in life if Jesus Christ is in your heart.

Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5b).

The original language indicates that he was emphatic about it. This verse could be translated, "I will never, no never, no never leave you or forsake you."

And in Isaiah 41:10 (ESV), God promised, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

God promises to get us through whatever we're facing. I don't know what you're going through right now, but it might be a hard time. Maybe you're wondering whether you'll ever get through it. God will get you through. He will be with you every step of the way.

In Isaiah 43:2 (NKJV), God said, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you."

David, in a beautiful psalm that is very familiar to many of us, wrote, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4). This promise of God's presence has brought comfort to many.

And here's another promise. Jesus said that He would come again: "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and

receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:2-3).

Jesus is coming again. Of the 333 prophecies concerning Christ in the Old Testament, only 109 of them were fulfilled in his first coming. That leaves 224 prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled in his Second Coming.

Twenty-three of the 27 New Testament books mention the Lord's coming, and Jesus referred to his Second Coming at least 21 times. He was trying to remind us again and again that he is coming back.

God keeps His promises, and one of the ways we know that is because of His faithfulness to the Jewish people, His chosen people.

In fact, in the book of Romans, the apostle Paul talks about God's special relationship with Israel (see Chapters 9-11). God first established a covenant with Israel through their father, Abraham. God said, "I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:2-3).

Anyone who has chosen to bless the Jewish people, and I think by extension, the nation Israel, will be blessed. Anyone who oppresses or attacks the Jewish people, and by extension, the nation Israel, will face the ramifications as well.

God has kept His promise to the Jewish people, and we owe a great debt to them, because it is through them that we received our Scriptures. It is through the Jewish people that our Messiah came, because Jesus, of course, was Jewish.

God keeps His promises, and the promise God made to Abraham doesn't have a shelf life. It's still good. God will keep His promises to Israel. God will keep His promises to us. And He

will keep His promise to come again. Jesus is coming. His return could happen at any moment. Are you ready?

If you're not ready, then why not get ready right now? Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29, NLT).

Jesus is saying, "Come to me. Come to me with your problems. Come to me with your sins. Come to me with your burdens. I'll give you rest." Just come to Him. Then you'll be ready for His return.

We've all had promises made to us that were broken. But when God makes a promise, you can take it to the bank. It's good to go. {eo}

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