

**Thank you Alexis Brown...
...for being our speaker for today!**

June Birthdays

9 Debbie Pescador

June Anniversaries

5 Kurt and Debbie Hoffman
5 Aaron and Esmeralda McCollum

*"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the
Lord is, there is freedom."
2 Corinthians 3:17*

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Website:
indiochurchofchrist.com

Preacher: Vacant

Church of Christ
81-377 Ave 46
Indio, CA 92201
(760) 342-1859

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*"Trust in the Lord with all
your heart and do not lean on
your own understanding."*

Proverb 3:5

- ***"Fight the good fight"***
- ***"Keep the faith"***
- ***"Finish the course"***

The Promises of God

By Travis Main

Promises of God were given to the Israelites/Jews when they became a people. Both the passages surrounding Deuteronomy 28:1-6, Leviticus 26:3-5 establish that God would physically and spiritually bless the people in many ways if they walked in obedience to Him. Many of Israel's successes and failures regarding this are recorded in the Old Testament. Were the same promises of God that were given to Israel given to the rest of mankind in the Old Testament? No. However, that God provided care and blessings upon the remainder of His creation is seen not only in the Old Testament but expressed in Matthew 5:43-48 by Jesus.

In Matthew 6 it is expressed that God knows what man needs. The passage as a whole expresses God's providence for his creation and for the Jews, though the Jews would have the specific material promises in mind that God only gave them. As the New Testament progresses, God reveals additional provision for all mankind through the gospel and the completed revelation of His will. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 expresses the Word's acceptance into a man's life allows him to be equipped for every good work which happens to be man's purpose (Ephesians 2:10). 2 Peter 1:1-3 establishes the knowledge of that same word has been given so that man has all he needs for his walk in life and godliness. Yet, these are just statements of provision regarding man, not

promises of material goods. Are there promises of God involving material possessions for His Christian Followers?

In answering the above question, consider that God provides by providence in many ways to His creation. He also promised very specific things applicable to individuals, His apostles, and Christians that applied only to them and the first century (specifically the endowments through the provision of the Holy Spirit). God's promises to Christians are relatively few in number when compared to the extensive material and national promises given to Israel. The New Testament focuses far more on spiritual and eternal promises than on temporal and material ones.

The Promises of God to the Christian:

Forgiveness of Sins – Acts 2:38, I John 1:9

Eternal Life – John 3:16, I John 2:25

Resurrection – John 6:40, I Corinthians 15:52

God's Presence – Hebrews 13:5

Wisdom – James 1:5

A way of Escape from Temptation – I Corinthians 10:13

All Spiritual Blessings in Christ – Ephesians 1:3

An Inheritance – I Peter 1:4

Suffering – Philippians 1:29, 2 Timothy 3:12

Final Victory – Romans 8:33-39

In a nutshell, what I am trying to convey here is fairly simple. Israel received specific promises of material prosperity. Christians receive specific promises of spiritual blessing and eternal salvation. God providentially cares for all mankind. Providence should not be confused with covenant promises.

If we understand the focus of specific promises and providence to various groups, then when we read Matthew 6, we can understand why it can be true even when Christians suffer hunger and poverty. Our understanding will also allow us to embrace how the New Testament confidently speaks of God's care. This will allow us to avoid the common error of treating every promise made to Israel as though it were automatically made to Christians.

We Need Faithful Fathers!

By Kevin Cauley

The Bible teaches that families need fathers (Ephesians 6:1-4). Many in society today contradict the Bible's teaching. They claim that fathers are not needed. The result is children who grow up without a father in their life, but children need both father and mother in order to develop well. Mothers nurture, comfort, and cherish. Father's balance things out with discipline, order, and grit. God's design to have both mother and father in the home reflects the complementary nature of the husband/wife relationship. We need faithful fathers!

Abraham was a faithful father. God said of Abraham, *"For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him"* (Genesis 18:19). The father is the spiritual leader of the home. He is to impart spiritual truths to his children so that they may learn God's ways. He is the chief implementer of justice and righteousness in the home. When children have no father, they will lack some understanding regarding righteousness and justice. We need faithful fathers!

Jesus had a faithful Father, and I'm not speaking about Joseph. His Father taught Him (John 8:28). The Father gave Jesus a good example (John 5:19). The Father gave the Son life (John 5:26). The Father loved the Son (John 5:20). The Father works (John 5:17), and the Father gave the Son work (John 5:36). All of the wonderful traits that we find in fathers were first found in the Father. Earthly fathers will fail. Their lives will come to an end someday, but our eternal Father in heaven will always be there for us (Ephesians 4:6). Thank God for faithful fathers!
