

Good News for Families

February 2021

Keeping Promises

Do you remember “pinky swear”? Or “cross my heart and hope to die”? When you’re a kid, promises are a big deal. To break a promise is unacceptable. Promises are often made because someone has a secret, usually about a wrongdoing. The promise is more of a gag order, not meant to bless someone but rather to hurt someone. Other times, the promise is made in order to correct some kind of mistake made in the past—to give the other person some reassurance that it won’t happen again.

Of course, I’m willing to bet that most promises are not kept—and many are likely broken within moments of their making. This is just the sort of thing that movie plots thrive on—dad makes a promise to throw the ball around with his son this weekend or to finally make it to his daughter’s ballet recital for once, but he messes up *again*. He breaks his promise. Maybe promises just aren’t worth making at all.

What does God have to say about promises, anyway?

Well, a lot, actually. In Genesis 3:15, after the fall into sin, we hear God’s first promise: a Savior will come

to redeem the world. Then, in Genesis 17, it gets even more intense when God begins to reveal yet more about this promise, or covenant, with His chosen people:

Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, “Behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.” (Genesis 17:3-7)

Unlike the promises that we make with one another, God’s promises are *Continued ...*

in our best interest. Instead of making a promise to somehow undo His own mistake, He makes a promise that is meant to undo our mistake. His promise was intended to bless us, not hurt us.

And He never broke His promise. He spends the rest of Scripture either talking about this promise or carrying it out before our very eyes. It’s never vague. It’s always so clearly Jesus. And this promise, He says, is for us and our children and grandchildren. It wasn’t just for Abram. It is a covenant, a promise, between God and us. We, His people chosen in Baptism, don’t have to fear that there will be no Savior forthcoming.

Author: Drs. Jennifer L. Miller

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He has come, as promised, and will come again to make sure that we get to bask in the joy of that kept promise forever.

We have trouble keeping our promises, even the ones we make to our own beloved children. Our Lord knows our struggles, and we have the freedom to confess our sin to Him and receive forgiveness—to have His promise applied to us once again through His very Word and Sacrament. He does more than “cross His heart and hope to die.” He sent His very heart, His own Son, to die on the cross so that we could have hope. And we do! I promise. ✠

Recommended Reading

Moses, God’s Chosen Leader

by Concordia Publishing House

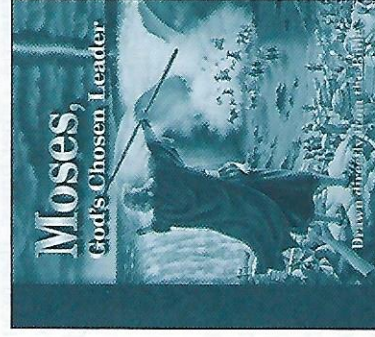
Rich, realistic, and vivid illustrations retell the true story of a hero of the Old Testament: Moses. Bring children ages 3 and up directly into the biblical story of Moses leading His people out of Israel with passages lifted directly from Scripture.

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Key words are printed in the margins to encourage vocabulary building and deep reading. Gather your family together and read the magnificent story of Moses.

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