

and active, standing eternal over all creation with God himself.

*For the word of God is living and active,
sharper than any two-edged sword,
piercing to the division of soul and of spirit,
of joints and of marrow,
and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
And no creature is hidden from his sight,
but all are naked and exposed
to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

– Hebrews 4:11-12

Begin to know these promises and remember them. Concentrate on them, because they will stabilize your soul in good times and bad, in life or death, and in the light or in darkness.

There are many more promises with even more detail revealed in Scripture. We will now take a look at more of God's promises that teach the ways of the Lord that will help us anchor our souls and maintain our place in the rest of God.

9 - THE PROMISES: KNOWING GOD'S WAYS

Some promises include temporal blessings and daily provisions for life.

Other promises include a call to service, endurance, and the sacrifice of temporal blessings in order to achieve God's plan for us as we run the race of life marked out for us.

The first kind of promise is about blessings to be enjoyed with thanksgiving in this lifetime. The second kind normally pertains to blessings and provisions for the future.

These two types of promises are distinguished in Hebrews 11 where a rather extensive list of believers, leading all the way up to the time of Jesus Christ are commended. Some of these believers had faith to trust God for temporal blessings and daily deliverance. Others were denied temporal blessings, and endured hardships in order to fulfill God's plan for them in history.

The writer of Hebrews identifies 10 situations where believers received deliverance or provision, and took leadership to accomplish God's temporal plan. In Hebrews 11:33-35 these heroes of faith accomplished these things and received these blessings during their lives in this world:

1 Tim. 4:4-
"For everything
created by God
is good, and
nothing is to be
rejected if it is
received with
thanksgiving

1. Conquered kingdoms
2. Enforced justice
3. Obtained promises
4. Stopped mouths of lions
5. Quenched the power of fire
6. Escaped the edge of the sword
7. Made strong out of weakness
8. Became mighty in war
9. Put foreign armies to flight
10. Received dead back to life

These believers knew God's promises and understood God's ways. They did not compromise God's truth or the reality God had created. They were faithful, endured much, and received deliverance and provision in this world.

These events and provisions really happened centuries ago, and similar things continue to happen today. God is good and he promises to lead us, provide for us, protect us, and empower us to fulfill our purposes. Our responsibility is to know God's promises, know God's ways, trust him, and endure until he manifests his power and his purpose. All of these things are accomplished by God as we hold onto his promises by faith and trust in him.

After the author of Hebrews identifies these 10 glorious accomplishments, he immediately continues with another list of 15 events in Hebrews 11:36-38. In these examples, the believers were not delivered, they were not "blessed" with temporal glories, and they lived subpar to normal lives (by human standards). But because they also knew God's promises, understood God's ways, and were willing to endure temporal defeats in order to remain faithful to God's purpose for their lives, they stood firm. These believers faced these trials with great endurance, patience, and faith because they had no doubt that the good God had called them to them:

1. Tortured
2. Refused release
3. Suffered mocking
4. Suffered flogging
5. Chains
6. Imprisonment
7. Stoned
8. Sawn in two
9. Killed with the sword
10. Went about wearing the skins of sheep and goats
11. Destitute
12. Afflicted
13. Mistreated
14. Wandering in deserts and mountains
15. Dwelt in dens and caves

Despite the grimness of this list, far from being spiritual losers, these believers were actually victorious overcomers who knew the promises of God and knew God's ways. They were unwilling to compromise their faith in the truth or their knowledge of God's reality. But, instead of delivering them from suffering in this world, God allowed them to manifest their faith in the midst of hardship. God called these believers to testify to his absolute truth without denying him. They all suffered and perished in this age without compromising their knowledge, their understanding, or their faith in their good God.

Troubles and suffering like these still occur today. But still, God is good and he promises to lead us, provide for us, protect us, and empower us while we endure mistreatment. Our responsibility is to know God's promises, know God's ways, trust God, and steadfastly endure until he manifests his power and his purpose. Great things are accomplished by God when we have faith in him. And great will be your reward in eternity.

Romans 8:36-37-
"As it is written,
"For your sake we
are being killed all
the day long; we
are regarded as
sheep to be
slaughtered." No, in
all these things we
are more than
conquerors through
Him who loved us."

"Our responsibility" –

- KNOW God's promises
- KNOW God's ways
- TRUST God
- Steadfastly ENDURE