

“THY COUNSELS OF OLD ARE FAITHFULNESS AND TRUTH” Isaiah 25:1

(Sermon to the saints and servants of the Most High God at Westboro Baptist Church on August 10, 2025)

In a continuation of the theme of my latest sermons, I want to expand upon the faithfulness of God, and that in connection with how the faithfulness of Christ may be observed in his concern with the covenant of grace, and the promises of it.

The counsels of old referenced in this verse (**Isaiah 25:1**) include those which are contained in the covenant of grace. The covenant of grace is full of His counsels of old which are faithful and true. **Ephesians 1:4**: “*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.*” **Isaiah 46:10**: “*Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*”

Gill: “[T]hy counsels of old [are] faithfulness [and] truth; the decrees and purposes of God, which are from eternity, are all truly and faithfully performed; this is an amplification of the wonderful things which are done according to the counsel of the divine will; not only the choice of men to salvation, the redemption of them by Christ, and their effectual calling; but the calling of the Jews and Gentiles, in particular, in the latter day, and all things relating to the church to the end of time; which, as they were fixed in the eternal purpose of God, they are punctually and exactly brought about in time; these are the true and faithful sayings of God, #Re 19:9 21:5.” **Revelation 19:9**: “*And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*” **Revelation 21:5**: “*And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*”

The covenant of grace was made with our Lord Jesus Christ as the Head and Representative of his people, and stands fast with him; the terms of that covenant are firm, fixed and settled. All the accusations of the accuser of the brethren fail because the answer is eternally fixed, firm and settled. Christ has paid it all; there is no more payment due. From Toplady’s hymn (“From Whence This Fear and

Unbelief"): "Of thou hast my discharge procured, and freely in my room endured the whole of wrath divine, payment God cannot twice demand, first at my bleeding Surety's hand, and then again at mine." All the blessings of the covenant of grace are lodged with him, fixed and settled and firm with him; and faithfully dispensed by him. **John 10:28**: "*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*" The promises of God were made to our Lord Jesus Christ, who only actually existed when they were made, and to whom only they could be given. **Psalms 89:3**: "*I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant.*" **2 Timothy 1:9**: "*[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*" Our Lord Jesus Christ was the Amen, and faithful Witness of them, of their being made. **Revelation 3:14**: "*And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.*" **Revelation 1:5(a)**: "*And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.*" And they are Yea and Amen in him. **2 Corinthians 1:20**: "*For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*" By whose blood, the blessings and promises of it are ratified and confirmed; and therefore called, "*the blood of the everlasting covenant.*" (**Hebrews 13:20**). And it is in and through him that believers come to have an interest in the promises, a right unto them, and to be partakers of them. **Ephesians 3:6**: "*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.*"

2 Samuel 23:5: "*Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.*" Gill: "[I]t was made with Christ from everlasting, as appears from the everlasting love of God, the source and spring of it; the earliness of the divine counsels on which it is formed, and blessings and promises of it, with which it is filled, which were before the world was; and from Christ being set up as the Mediator of it from everlasting: and it will continue to everlasting; it is a covenant that cannot be broken, will never be removed, nor give way to or be succeeded by another: it is "ordered in all things": to promote and advance the glory of all the three Persons in the Godhead, Father, Son, and Spirit; to secure the persons of the saints, and to provide everything needful for them for time

and eternity: and it is "sure"; it stands upon a sure basis, the unchangeable will and gift of God, and is in the hands of Christ, the same today, yesterday, and forever; its mercies are the sure mercies of David, and its promises are yea and amen in Christ, and are sure to all the seed. Though things may not be with them God-ward, as they desire, and could be wished for; though they may be attended with many sins and infirmities, the temptations of Satan, divine desertions, and various afflictions, and be guilty of many backslidings, yet covenant interest always continues; and so, though in the kingdom and interest of Christ in the world, there are, and may be, many things disagreeable; it may be attended with persecutions, heresies, scandals, &c. yet it shall continue and increase, and spread, and be an everlasting kingdom."

Isaiah 9:7: *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."*

We now will cover the faithfulness of God in the performance of what he has said in the covenant of grace, and the promises of it, with respect to his special people. God is denominated "faithful," from his keeping covenant and mercy with them, **Deuteronomy 7:9:** *"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations."*

Every covenant God has made with man, he has been faithful in. He made a covenant with Adam, as the head and representative of his posterity, promising a continuance of happiness to him and his, provided he remained in his state of innocence; and threatening with death, in case of disobedience. (**Genesis 2:15-17:** *"And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*) Adam was unfaithful, and broke the covenant; *"they, like Adam, have transgressed the covenant,"* **Hosea 6:7.** But God was faithful to it, and deprived man of his happiness, and pronounced the sentence of death on him and his. **Genesis Chapter 3.**

God made a covenant with Noah, and all the creatures, promising that he would no more destroy the world by a flood; and he has faithfully kept it. (**Genesis 9:8-17:**

“And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.”)

God made a covenant with Abraham, that he would make him the father of many nations, and that kings should spring from him, and that he would give to his posterity the land of Canaan. The former part of which was verified in the Ishmaelites, Israelites, Edomites, Midianites, and others, with their kings, which were of him. The latter part was verified by putting the people of Israel in possession of Canaan, by Joshua; which they held long by the tenure of their obedience, according to his promise; but when they broke the covenant, he destroyed them from it, as he threatened. (**Genesis 17:1-6:** *“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.”* **Joshua 21: 43-45:** *“And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that he sware unto their fathers:*

and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.” Joshua 23: 15-16: “Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.”) And as large sections of the Bible testify, that is exactly what they did and being faithful to His covenant, he did what he promised by covenant to do.

He made a covenant at Sinai, with all the people of Israel; and, according to his engagements, continued to them their blessings, natural, civil, and religious; but they were not steadfast in his covenant, and he dispossessed them of them to the current date. Again, from one end of the Bible to the other this testimony is given.

But the grand and principal covenant, is the everlasting covenant of grace; which God has made in Christ with all his elect. It is ordered in all things, and sure; and which he will never break, and they cannot; and which will never be removed, but ever be inviolably kept (never broken, dishonored or infringed upon). Contained therein are promises of various sorts, which God has graciously made to his people, and which are faithfully performed by him. **Jeremiah 29:11:** *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”*

Some of these promises are of a temporal nature; for "godliness" and godly men have *"the promise of the life that now is,"* of things belonging to it, as well as *"of that which is to come,"* **1 Timothy 4:8-9:** *“[G]odliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.”* **1 Peter 3:10-11:** *“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.”* **Matthew 6:33:** *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”* **Psalms 84:11-12:** *“For the LORD God is*

a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee."

These temporal blessings their heavenly Father knows they have need of (**Matthew 6:8(b)**): "*for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*"), and therefore provides them for them, and promises them unto them. He has said, "*that they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing,*" **Psalm 34:10**. Barnes on "*shall not want any good thing*": "Any real good. God is able to supply every need; and if anything is withheld, it is always certain that it is not because God could not confer it, but because He sees some good reasons why it should NOT be conferred. The real good; what we need most; what will most benefit us — will be bestowed on us; and universally it may be said of all the children of God that everything in this world and the next will be granted that is REALLY for their good. They themselves are often not the best judges of what will be for their good; but God is an infallible Judge in this matter, and He will certainly bestow what is best for them."

They shall have that which is good, as every creature of God is good, good food and good raiment (**1 Timothy 4:4; 1 Timothy 6:8**); though it may be but mean (humble, poor, shabby, inferior, base, contemptible), yet it is good, and better than the best of men deserve. God's elect want not any, that God, in his infinite wisdom, sees is good for them. For though they and others may think it would be better for them if they had a greater affluence of the things of this life; but God thinks otherwise, and knows it would be to their hurt, as sometimes riches are. He has bid his people "*trust in the Lord, and do good,*" and has promised, they "*shall be fed,*" **Psalm 37:3**. Not all of them with dainties and delicious food, but with *food convenient* for them (**Proverbs 30:8** ["their allowance"]; he has assured them, their "*bread shall be given them,*" and their "*waters shall be sure,*" **Isaiah 33:16**: "*He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.*" And this is sufficient to support and confirm his faithfulness. Nor is the poverty of some of God's people any objection to it, since he has nowhere promised them the riches of this world, and has given them no reason to expect them. But he has promised them better riches (**Psalm 37:16**), durable riches (**Proverbs 8:18**), and righteousness (**Psalm 24:5; Psalm 72:1; Proverbs 8:18; Isaiah 33:5; Isaiah 54:17; Isaiah 61:3, 10; Ephesians 6:14** ("*breastplate of righteousness*"); **Revelation**

19:8), the riches of grace and glory (**Psalm 84:11**), and these he gives to them. Also among the dozens of verses, see : **Psalm 119:72**: “*The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*” **Proverbs 8:18**: “*Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.*” **Proverbs 22:4**: “*By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.*” **Psalm 119:14**: “*I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.*” **Ephesians 2:7**: “*That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*” **Ephesians 3:8**: “*Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*” **Philippians 4:19**: “*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*” **1 Timothy 6:17**: “*Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*”

God has not promised his people security from outward afflictions; but rather has suggested to them that they may look for them; since his people are described as a poor and afflicted people (**Zephaniah 3:12**: “*I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.*”) It is their common case; many are the afflictions of the righteous; it is what they are appointed to, and what are appointed for them. **Psalm 34:19**: “*Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*” **1 Thessalonian 3:3**: “*That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.*” Throughout Scripture, afflictions are a dominant theme from first to last for God’s people, all of which God has promised shall work for their good. Either for their temporal good, as Jacob’s afflictions worked for his good (**Genesis 50:20**: “*But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*” And please read the blessing and true fruits of Joseph’s affliction at **Genesis 49:22-26**); or for their spiritual good. Such as the exercise and increase of grace and holiness; and always for their eternal good. **2 Corinthians 4:15-17**: “*For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*” Also

God will be with them in them, support them under them, and deliver out of them in due time: all which is faithfully performed by him. Prime example: **Daniel 3:23-27**: *“And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.... Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king’s counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.”*

Others are of a spiritual nature; and the principal of these is, and which is the sum of the covenant, *“They shall be my people, and I will be their God,”* **Jeremiah 32:38**. These spiritual benefits of this covenant appear in their election, redemption, and the effectual calling. He has a special love and affection for them, and will continue it, as he does. His chastisements of them, his hiding his face from them for a time, his displeasure at them, and being angry with them, do not constitute any objection to the perpetuity of his love; since these are not contrary to it, but rather the fruits of it, and for their good. See **Hebrews 12:5-11**. Verses 5-6 *“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”* It signifies, that they shall have his gracious presence with them, and may expect it, and which they have; nor do their doubts, and fears, and complaints disprove it. **Isaiah 41:10**: *“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”* **Isaiah 49:14-16**: *“But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.”* Their doubts and fears are generally owing to their ignorance and unbelief. He is never far from them, nor long; he does not depart from them, nor withdraws his gracious presence from them totally and finally. This knowledge

assures them of his protection, that he will be all around them, guard them, and secure them, preserve and keep them by his power, through faith unto salvation (**1 Peter 1:5**), as he does. For though they may fall into sin, yet they rise again by his grace; and though they fall into temptation, and by it, yet they are delivered out of it; they are kept from a final and total falling away. **1 Corinthians 10:13**: “*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*” They are not of them that draw back unto perdition (**Hebrews 10:39**). This promise is expressive of their enjoyment of God here, and for evermore (**Ezekiel 37:26**: “*Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.*”) He is their shield, and exceeding great reward. **Genesis 15:1**: “*After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*” He is their portion in life, at death, and forever. **Psalms 73:26**: “*My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*” He is their all in all. (**Ephesians 1:23**).

There are many particular spiritual promises made to the people of God; and which are made good by him; such as these:

(a) That he will sprinkle clean water upon them, and cleanse them from all their sins; **Ezekiel 36:25**: “*Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.*” **1 John 1:9**: “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” This is to be understood of justifying grace, through the blood of Christ (**Colossians 1:20**).

(b) That he will forgive their iniquities, and remember their sins no more; and he is just in doing it, upon the account of the blood of his Son, and faithful to his own promise. **Jeremiah 31:33-34**: “*But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of*

them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

(c) That he will give them new hearts and new spirits, which he does in regeneration. **Ezekiel 18:31:** *“Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?”* **Ezekiel 36:26:** *“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”*

(d) That he will take away the heart of stone, and give an heart of flesh; as he does, when he removes the hardness of the heart, and gives evangelical repentance unto life. See **Ezekiel 36:26.**

(e) That he will put his laws in them, and write them in their minds; not only give knowledge of them, but both a disposition and grace to observe them. **Hebrews 8:10:** *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”:*

(f) That he will work in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. **Philippians 2:13:** *“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”*

(g) That he will put his Spirit into them, and give them spiritual strength to keep his statutes, and perform every duty; that he will continue his good work of grace in them, and perform it, until the day of Christ; of which they may be confident, since he has promised it. **Ephesians 3:16:** *“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”* **1 John 4:13:** *“Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”* **Romans 8:11:** *“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”* **Philippians 1:6:** *“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

(h) that he will give them “*more grace*” (**James 4:6**), a “*sufficiency*” of it (**2 Corinthians 9:8**), and “*supply all [their] need*” (**Philippians 4:19**) out of the fulness in Christ (**Ephesians 1:23**). **John 1: 16**: “*And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*”; and

(i) That his fear shall be continually in their hearts; and they shall not depart from him, but persevere in faith and holiness to the end. All which promises, and more, are faithfully and truly performed in all his people; see **Jeremiah 32:38-40**: “*And they shall be my people, and I will be their God: And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*” **Ezekiel 36:25-27**: “*Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*” **Ephesians 1:4**: “*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.*”

There are other promises which respect the life to come; the eternal happiness of the saints in another world. The apostle speaks of the promise of this, “*as the promise,*” by way of eminence, as if it was the only promise. It certainly is the principal one, in which all others issue and end; “*This is the promise that he has promised us, even eternal life,*” **1 John 2:25**. This is an ancient one, made before the world began, and by God, that “*cannot lie,*” **Titus 1:2**; who is “*faithful and true*” (**Revelation 19:11**), and will most certainly perform it. **Matthew 25:34**: “*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*” Wherefore, “*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,*” **James 1:12**.

I love you. Amen