

November 5, 2022. Local Church Budget

Claim His Promises

Appeal: Psalms 34:8

“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”

We worship God with our resources because this places us in a condition to claim His promises. The Bible is full of promises. Everett R. Storms spent a year and a half counting Bible promises and came up with 7,487 promises made by God to humankind. God’s promises have three characteristics: they are true, all can claim them, and they are often conditional. Paul wrote about his confidence in God’s promises: “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.” (2 Cor. 1:20a). When God says, “Yes,” nobody can say, “No!” Several are conditional to faith and obedience as two essential requisites (Matt. 21:22; Isa. 59:2). About obedience, Ellen G. White writes: “All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises.”—Christ’s Object Lesson, p. 145.

An incident in the life of Fred Stirewalt, a farmer from Hollister, California, shows the value of obedience in claiming God’s promises. One afternoon Fred observed that army beetles had covered his field. Immediately, he realized the disastrous outcome awaiting: these small creatures eat until there is nothing green left. Feeling powerless, he had an insightful conversation with his daughter Helen:

Helen asked, “Daddy, you pay your tithe, don’t you?”

“Yes,” he replied.

“Then why not ask God to keep His promise and drive the beetles away?”

Convinced by these words, they knelt and prayed, claiming the promise of Malachi 3:10, 11: “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, ... I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe, ...” Right after praying, they saw a cloud of blackbirds descending on their fields. The blackbirds remained for a short time, but there wasn’t a beetle left when they flew away.

God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will cooperate with Him. This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings we are placing ourselves in a position to claim His promises.

Prayer: Lord, we are thankful for Your promises of spiritual and temporal blessings. We claim them over our lives. Remove all doubts and unfaithfulness that could be obstacles. Story of Fred Stirewalt adapted from <http://guidemagazine.org/pdfs/Guide-5-23-20.pdf>. PP. 12-14.