

## ***Should candidates make so many promises?***

(by George Battey)

For the entire year (2008) Americans have been listening to the candidates for political offices make their sales-pitch in order to get elected. Unfortunately, most people are not concerned with which candidate will be best for the country. Instead, they are concerned with which candidate will be best for themselves. People are selfish creatures. They do not care about the future generations which will follow in years to come. They are concerned about themselves right here and right now. They want:

- *Tax credits which are refundable (i.e. welfare checks).*
- *Prescription medicine assistance.*
- *Social security benefits increase.*
- *Government paid health care.*
- *Government paid housing.*

On and on the list goes. The candidates know that to get elected, they have to make all sorts of promises. Whoever promises the most, he or she is the one who will be elected.

Unfortunately, after candidates are elected into office, they very often do not keep the promises they make. It is very likely that many candidates have no intentions whatsoever of fulfilling the promises they make. Many of them realize that the public will forget about the promises. Other issues will arise to distract people and the lapse of time will contribute to people forgetting that very few, if any, of the promises made were kept.

What does the Bible say about making so many promises?

*Ecclesiastes 5:2-5 (NKJV)*

*2 Do not be rash with your mouth,  
And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God.  
For God is in heaven, and you on earth;  
Therefore let your words be few.*

This means: ***Don't make very many promises.*** God is watching and listening in heaven and He will require from men the promises they make. If men break their promises, they may escape punishment here on earth, but God will deliver justice in the next life.

3 For a dream comes through much activity,  
And a fool's voice is known by his many words.

This means: **A fool is the one who makes many, many promises.** A fool multiplies his words and makes all sorts of promises which he either (a) cannot fulfill or (b) has no intentions of fulfilling. This is a fool in the sight of God.

4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it;  
For He has no pleasure in fools.  
Pay what you have vowed —  
5 Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

This means: **A man would be better off promising nothing than to promise and not fulfill that promise.**

We're living in a time when promises mean very little, but promises are very important in God's sight.

James 4:13-16 (NKJV)

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";

14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

This passage describes a very common practice: **People making statements about all the things they will do in the future.** This is called "boasting" and "arrogance" in v16. This boasting is evil according to v16.

When people make promises like this they are leaving God out of the picture. These people are arrogantly boasting to the world that they are in ultimate control and not God. This is evil.

Notice v15 again: "**Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'**" By saying, "If the Lord wills," one acknowledges that God is sovereign and retains the right to overrule what a man determines.

When George Walker Bush ran for president in 1988 he made a very famous statement. He was promising that if he was elected president he would not raise anyone's taxes. He said, "**Read my lips: No new taxes.**" He was making a boastful promise.

The scripture says men ought to say, “*If the Lord wills.*” In other words, Mr. Bush should have said something like, “*If the Lord wills ... there will be no new taxes.*” But he didn’t say this. He arrogantly boasted and vowed he would not allow any new taxes if elected president.

Why should he not have boasted? Because no president is in control of everything. Only God can control everything that happens. No man (no candidate) is wise enough or powerful enough to control or foresee all the variables in the future. Therefore, men ought to say, “*If the Lord wills ... we will live and do this or that.*”

Mr. Bush was elected based, in part, on this promise he made. He was unable to keep that promise. When he ran for a second term, many people remembered he did not keep his promise and he was not reelected.

Rather than boastfully and arrogantly making so many promises, candidates ought to consider God for a moment. Candidates ought to remember they are mortal men who cannot see into the future. They ought to remember there is a higher power than them in control – and that higher power is God! He is called “*God Almighty*” (Gen 28:3) because He is in complete control. He is the only being capable of saying for certain something will definitely happen.

*Proverbs 19:21 (NKJV)*

*21 There are many plans in a man's heart,  
Nevertheless the LORD's counsel — that will stand.*

## **GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION**

Five steps in God’s plan of salvation:

- 1) **Hear** the word of God (Rom 10:17).
- 2) **Believe** Jesus is the Son of God (Mk 16:16).
- 3) **Repent** of sins (change from living a sinful life) (Acts 2:38).
- 4) **Confess** your faith verbally before men (Rom 10:10).
- 5) **Be baptized** (immersed) in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19) for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

*Mark 16:16* (NKJV)

16 He who **believes and is baptized** will be saved; ...

*Acts 2:38* (NKJV)

38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; ...

After being baptized, one must continue to be faithful (Acts 2:42; Mt 28:20; Rev 2:10).