

Fil-Am Community Church  
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## **A God Who Assures Me (Because Life is No Picnic)**

If you've lived long enough on earth you know that life is no picnic. In a picnic, which we're all having after this, there are lots of food, and lots of fun as well, and everyone has a good time which seems to go on forever. But life is no picnic, as we all know. It is not all fun and celebration. It is a combination of happiness and sadness, a mixture of ups and downs, a blend of excitement and disappointment.

I know that right now our minds are focused on this day which the Lord has made. It is a beautiful sunny day and we praise God for giving us a beautiful place as well where we can worship and have fun afterwards. But when the day is done, and the picnic's over, we know that we're back to reality. And we have to face life head-on.

This morning, I'd like to talk about "A God Who Assures Me" which is the last part in our 3-part series called "What Kind of God is He?" In fact, the whole title is "A God Who Assures Me Because Life is No Picnic".

In this message, I just like you to know that God hasn't forgotten you even though you feel he has, or you think people have. He is your refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble as the Bible says in Psalm 46:1.

I myself have my own share of fears and troubles. I'm ordinary like everyone else. But the God I believe in is extraordinary. And this morning, I'd like to share with you a few principles that I have always banked on and which you can

bank on as well when you're going through a difficult time.

The first is this:

## **1. GOD IS WITH ME**

Say with me, GOD IS WITH ME. Say to the person next to you, GOD IS WITH YOU.

No matter how alone you might feel right now, if you are a Christian, you are never really alone. I understand that loneliness is a horrible thing. For many it can lead to depression, a feeling of worthlessness, and downright despair.

The good news is that whether you recognize it or not, or feel His presence or not, God is always with you. Even when He seems far away and unavailable, He is still there. When Jesus gave His Great Commission, He ended it with these words:

*“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” – Matthew 28:20b (ESV)*

Jesus promised that there would never be a time when He would not be with us. He promised that even when He left the earth He would still be our companion – the Holy Spirit would take His place.

*“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.” – John 14:16 (ESV)*

There will never be a time when you do not have God as your companion in life. Even in the worst of times, when things seem to be falling apart all around you, God is still there.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians, *We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.* – 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NLT)

I understand that the difficulty in all this is accepting something you can't see, hear, touch or feel. But has God come through for you in other areas? Has He kept His promises? Has he done what He said he would do?

If you can trust God for those other things, certainly you can trust Him when He says that He will never, ever leave you.

God gave this promise to Joshua, but I think it also applies to us:

*Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.*

– **Joshua 1:5b (ESV)**

God is with me. That's the first principle. And the second, goes like this:

## **2. GOD LISTENS TO ME**

Say to your neighbor, God listens to you. Are you listening?

Have you heard of Phil Callaway? He is a Christian writer and comedian and radio personality. He lives in Canada and has written some popular books like "I Used to Have Answers...Now I Have Kids" and "It's Always Darkest Before the Fridge Door Opens."

There was a time in Phil's life when he didn't know what to say when his young children asked if Mommy was going to die. His wife, Ramona, suffered horrible seizures.

Hundreds of friends and relatives prayed, but Ramona's weight eventually slipped to 90 pounds. Medical specialists tried everything, but by the fall of 1996, the epileptic seizures were occurring daily, sometimes hourly.

Phil rarely left Ramona's side. He wondered if she would even make it to her 30th birthday. One evening, when things looked utterly hopeless, Phil paced their dark back yard, then fell to his knees. "God!" he cried out. "I can't take it anymore. Please do something!"

Suddenly a doctor's name came to mind. Phil called the doctor, who saw Ramona the next morning and diagnosed a rare chemical deficiency.

Within a week, Ramona's seizures ended. Her eyes sparkled again. The miracle was so incredible, Phil says, "God gave me back my wife."

I could repeat that story over and over and over again but with different names and circumstances. I cannot begin to tell you how many people have experienced God listening to their prayers and answering them. It is not always the answer we want, but God is always listening.

The psalmist says in Psalm 4:3, *But know that the LORD has set apart the godly for himself; the LORD hears when I call to him.* – **Psalm 4:3 (ESV)**.

Then also, in Psalm 6:8,

*Depart from me, all you workers of evil, for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.* – **Psalm 6:8 (ESV)**

And in Psalm 34:15

*The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous and his ears toward their cry.* – **Psalm 34:15 (ESV)**

Isn't it an amazing thing that the God who has been for all of eternity, who created the universe around us, who knows everything about everything, is willing to take the time to listen to us when we pray? You have the ear of God Almighty!

So, because life is no picnic, God assures me that he is with me, he listens to me and

### **3. GOD HAS SAVED ME**

There are a lot of people walking around who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ and trusted Him for their salvation who doubt that they are really saved. That is a tragedy, because while I'm sure they are not doing it intentionally, they are, in effect, doubting the very promises of God.

Jesus says:

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” – John 3:16 (ESV)*

In Peter’s sermon on Pentecost he declared:

*“And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” – Acts 2:21 (ESV)*

Paul the Apostle writes:

*If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. – Romans 10:9 (ESV)*

Now either all of these men – Jesus, Peter, and Paul – are lying, or they are telling the truth. I tend to believe the latter. When you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior you are saved. There are no ands, ifs, or buts about it.

Let’s look at Jesus’ promise in John 5:24:

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” – John 5:24 (ESV)*

First He gives the terms of salvation – we must hear and believe. Those who do these things are saved, according to Jesus. But He takes it a step further than that. He says that the person who does those things “has” (present tense) “eternal life.” Eternal life, salvation, is the present possession of the believer in Jesus Christ. While there are obviously things we don’t yet know about eternal life and we are not experiencing the full effects of it, the promise is true in the here and now.

Then Jesus says that this person who hears and believes “has passed” (past tense) “from death to life.” This is something that has already happened if you are a believer. It is a done deal. If you have placed your trust in Christ you are saved.

This is not something we are hoping for; it is something that we know to be true. Not because of anything we have done, but because we believe the promises that Jesus has given to us.

God is with me, God listens to me. God has saved me. Those are three principles you can bank on. And the final principle is this”

#### **4. GOD WILL PROVIDE FOR ME**

Missionary statesman Hudson Taylor had complete trust in God’s faithfulness. In his journal he wrote:

Our heavenly Father is a very experienced One. He knows very well that His children wake up with a good appetite every morning... He sustained 3 million Israelites in the wilderness for 40 years. We do not expect He will send 3 million missionaries to China; but if He did, He would have ample means to sustain them all... Depend on it; God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.

*And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4:19 (ESV)*

The promise here is that God is able to supply every need that you have. He has enough riches to go around. He has the ability to come up with what you need in any given situation. This would apply to our physical needs, but perhaps more so to our spiritual needs.

*Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us. – Ephesians 3:20 (ESV)*

God is able to bless you, not just in any way, but in a way that will blow your mind. He will do more than you could even think to ask for. And how does He do it? “According to the power at work within us.” That power is most likely a reference to the Holy Spirit who indwells every single person who has given his or

her life to Jesus Christ.

Now with the abundance of “Prosperity” preachers out there, I think we need to focus on what the purpose of all provision is ultimately for.

Jesus said:

*“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” – Matthew 6:33 (ESV)*

As long as our focus is on the Kingdom of God, and not on our personal desires, God’s blessings will continue to pour out.

As we wrap up this series let’s remember what we have learned. God is a God who loves us, who develops us, and assures us. That’s the kind of God we serve. The kind of God who saved.

The question is: Is this the kind of God you know? Or are you still looking for this kind of God? Look no further for he is not far from you. He could be knocking at the door of your heart and you just need to turn that knob and let him in. Jesus says in Revelation 3:20, *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.”*

Jesus says to let him into your heart. Make him your personal Lord and Savior. Believe in what he has done for you on the cross. Admit that you cannot save yourself and only Jesus can. You see, he died, he was buried, and rose again from the dead. If you believe in this simple message of God’s salvation, then you are saved and you will be in heaven for all eternity.

Let us bow our heads and pray.