

No. 31 **BAPTISM: Never Abandon Your Loyal Love for Jehovah**

[PLEASE NOTE: This talk includes interviews]

DEDICATION IS A PROMISE (3 min.)

Some believe that promises are made to be broken (w99 9/15 8 ¶1-2)
Loyal servants of Jehovah, however, are determined to keep their promises [Read Psalm 61:8]

When you dedicated yourself to Jehovah, you made the most important promise of your life

You will symbolize that promise today by water baptism

Loyal love for Jehovah moved you to make a dedication, and loyal love for him will move you to keep that promise (1Pe 4:2)

God's Word is full of examples of people who kept their promises

Let us examine a few of these examples to see what will help you never to abandon your loyal love for Jehovah

IMITATE THOSE WHO WERE LOYAL TO THEIR PROMISES (8 min.)

When Jonathan promised to help David escape from Saul, David in turn promised that he would care for Jonathan's family (1Sa 20:13-17)

What motivated David to make that promise?

Loyal love for Jehovah and for Jonathan

But would David keep his promise when he became king and no longer needed Jonathan's help?

After Jonathan died, David took the initiative to care for Jonathan's son, thus proving faithful to his promise (2Sa 9:5-7)

Even when his situation in life improved, David did not waver in his loyalty; he had made a promise, and he was determined to keep it

How can you imitate David's loyalty to his promise?

Today, you likely feel keenly dependent on Jehovah for help, but what if your life becomes more comfortable materially?

Never allow physical comforts to cause you "to forget Jehovah" (De 6:10-12)

Like David, remain loyal to your promise, and give Jehovah exclusive devotion forever

Jephthah promised that if Jehovah enabled him to defeat the Ammonites, he would devote to divine service the first person to exit his house (Jg 11:30, 31)

Would Jephthah keep his promise when his unmarried daughter, his only child, came out to meet him?

Jephthah's loyalty did not waver when his life took a heartbreaking turn; he had made a promise, and he was determined to keep it (Jg 11:35, 39)

How can you imitate Jephthah's loyalty to his promise?

Your life as a dedicated Christian may take some sudden turns, and you may even face heartrending situations, as Jephthah did

Like Jephthah, remain loyal to your promise, and be determined to serve Jehovah, come what may

IMITATE THE GREATEST KEEPER OF PROMISES (7 min.)

No one keeps promises more faithfully than Jehovah does (Nu 23:19)

Consider two examples of Jehovah's trustworthiness

(1) Jehovah promised Abraham that He would give his offspring the land of Canaan (Ge 15:18)

Most of Abraham's offspring kept rebelling against Jehovah in the wilderness (De 9:7)

Even so, Jehovah kept his promise (Jos 21:43-45)

God did not allow the foolish actions of some to cause him to abandon his loyal love for Abraham

Will you imitate Jehovah's loyalty to his promise?

You are now becoming part of an organization of *imperfect* ordained ministers

At times, your Christian brothers and sisters will disappoint you, even giving you "cause for complaint" (Col 3:13)

Act quickly to resolve personal differences; forgive freely

Do not allow any action of a *human* to affect your loyal love for *Jehovah* and your promise to do his will

Doing God's will includes sharing fully in all aspects of the ministry, regularly attending and participating in meetings, and having a routine of personal study

Be determined to stick to your spiritual routine, even when someone upsets or disappoints you

When you make mistakes, admit them, apologize, and keep giving evidence of your deep attachment to Jehovah

(2) Jehovah made a promise in Eden some 6,000 years ago (Ge 3:15)

Countless generations have come and gone since then, and the world has changed dramatically

Yet, Jehovah has not allowed the passage of time to weaken his resolve to keep his promise

He does not change, and he will soon carry out the final part of that promise (Jas 1:17; Re 20:2, 10)

Will you imitate Jehovah's loyalty to his promise?

You have become convinced that these are the last days

However, what if the end of this system does not come as soon as you hope?

Remember that Jehovah has waited patiently for thousands of years; are you willing to wait patiently? (Mic 7:7)

You dedicated yourself to Jehovah, not to his promised new world

Today, we know that you are resolved to live up to that dedication

Do not change in this respect; keep your promise to Jehovah

INTERVIEWS (3 min.)

[Interview a youth who was baptized recently and an older publisher who was baptized many years ago. Ask each one: (1) What significant challenge to your loyalty have you faced? (2) What Bible example has helped you to remain loyal, and how so?]

STAY LOYAL IN THE NEW WORLD (3 min.)

Since your dedication is forever, it will carry over into the new world

You have promised to do God's will, which is revealed *progressively*

In the future Paradise, what will the doing of God's will include?

We will learn how to take care of the earth and its creatures

We will build houses so that no one is homeless again

We will teach resurrected ones

Doing God's will may also include things not yet revealed

Can you see yourself there, living up to your dedication in God's new world?

NEVER ABANDON THE ONE WHO WILL NEVER ABANDON YOU (2 min.)

Jehovah will fulfill his promise of a new world because he is *righteous*

Jehovah will also keep his promise because he has *loyal love* for his worshippers, including you [Read Psalm 89:33]

Thus, throughout eternity, he will never abandon you
Loyal love for Jehovah brought you to this important step of baptism
May your loyal love for him move you to keep your solemn promise
May you never abandon your loyal love for Jehovah!

PUBLIC DECLARATION OF YOUR PERSONAL DEDICATION (3 min.)

[Invite candidates to stand]

Please answer the following two questions in a *loud* voice:

- (1) **On the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, have you repented of your sins and dedicated yourself to Jehovah to do his will? (Your answer, please)**
- (2) **Do you understand that your dedication and baptism identify you as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with God's spirit-directed organization? (Your answer, please)**

Your clear, affirmative answers to these questions indicate that you are qualified for baptism as ordained ministers of Jehovah God

[Prayer by speaker, after which he invites the audience to stand and join the candidates in singing the song indicated on the printed program. Session chairman will take speaker's place on the platform during the song]

TO BE COVERED IN 29 MINUTES