

another condition for us to meet; our focus and goal must be involvement in the good work that makes up the life of the Christian. He designed our bodies, so He knows we must have food, exercise, relaxation, and fellowship, but these are peripheral to our main focus in life – our work with Him.

Then, like the comforting Father that He is, He takes us on His lap and gently says: “**Be anxious for nothing**, but in everything by prayer and supplication, **with thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

“ Finally..., whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things. (Philippians 4:6-8).

And He looks us right in the eye and says, concerning the problems that we will inevitably have to face: “*My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.*”

And we answer, with gratitude and confidence, that we will be thankful for the challenges, because those are the times when we draw most from the strength that Christ, our Brother, supplies. “*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in*

reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9,10).

And on those occasions when Satan has been doing his worst to hurt us, God pulls us to His breast and He says, “*Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. SEE [and He holds up His hand before my eyes], I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands....*” (Isaiah 49:15,16).

Then He puts me down and sends me on about His work, and as I turn I hear the happiest and most beautiful singing! “*The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.*” (Zephaniah 3:17)

What a guarantee! What a life!

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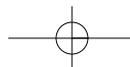
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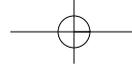


The Lifetime Guarantee
Betty Burton Choate

We’re always looking for the “Lifetime Guarantee” on things that come into our possession. That paper brings us a sweet sense of security, provided the company has a good reputation for standing behind its products.

If a new coffee maker doesn’t last, in the grand scheme of life, it’s no big deal. If a dishwasher stops working just after the warranty is out, that pinches, but we can manage a replacement without too much challenge to the monthly budget. If a vehicle suddenly has to be replaced, that is a larger, longer-term commitment, and can be extremely painful. But, look-





ing back at life's challenges in the material world, through the years, we've survived, met the crises, and we've moved on past them.

However, it isn't in the world of material possessions that we face our greatest insecurities and most daunting challenges. It is in life itself, with all the unseen dangers and trials that lurk along the path on which we are traveling. Where is the "guarantee" that will undergird us and assure that we will come out safely on the other side, with our spirit intact and whole before God?

God offers a "Lifetime Guarantee" to every child of His. True, we have to accept it, fill out the form and send it in – but He has done His part. Is the guarantee any good? Titus 1:2 states in clear language: "... *in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal...*" So the guarantee is iron-clad.

What is our part of the agreement?

First: the contract is only between God and His children. So, one must be a baptized believer, a member of the Lord's church, in order to have access to the guarantee.

Second: Since the product being placed under warranty is yourself, you must totally submit your life, your mind, your body, your possessions, your everything to Him. He can't take care of what you have not entrusted in His hands.

This kind of submission can well be expressed in the frequent prayer: "Father, everything I am and everything I have is Yours. Use my thoughts, my strength, and my time today as You see best. Please don't let me get in Your way."

Now, you've registered God's purchase of yourself, and you are His responsibility. You can voice your confidence in the warranty in these words: "*I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day*" (2 Timothy 1:12).

What does His warranty say?

"... I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

"... And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do..." (John 14:13).

"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. (14:15).

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him'" (John 14:18,23).

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have ["have" — already, it is ours] the petitions that

we have asked of Him" (1 John 5:14,15).

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8).

This statement is the clincher. He promises:

ALWAYS: there will be no situation and no occasion in which He will fail.

ALL SUFFICIENCY: Guaranteed to be enough of whatever it is you need to do what He wants you to do. True, sometimes – looking down the road, or the day, or the hour – you may not see how there can possibly be enough time or enough money or enough of self to meet the challenge, but go on by FAITH. He has promised, and it is His responsibility to work out the details. [And sometimes the only way God can alert us to the fact that we are trying to go through a door He has closed is to deny us the "all sufficiency" we ourselves expected. If He wants it done, the door will be open, and the sufficiency will be there.]

IN ALL THINGS: Often we don't even know what we need, but God sees all the way to the end of the road, and He guarantees that nothing will be lacking.

AN ABUNDANCE: He repeats His promise, for the sake of our struggling faith.

FOR EVERY GOOD WORK: Well, here is

