

Precious Promises

Sunday, August 17th, 1986

2 Peter 1:2-4

*“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,
according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*

I invite you to open your Bible with me to the book of 2 Peter. I want to bring you a message on this subject: “GOD’S PRECIOUS PROMISES.”

In 2 Peter chapter 1: verses 2 through 4, Peter writes these words; *“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and (through the knowledge) of Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

The Master prayed in John 17 and said these words; *“Eternal life is to know God, to know the true and living God and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.”*

That is exactly what Peter is saying here, *“Grace and peace to you from God the Father, multiplied to you,”* and all of that through the knowledge, (a heart knowledge) of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord. *“According as His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.”*

Notice carefully, *“His Divine power has given to us.”* It is He who has given to us; it is the gift of God. Where does it come from? God gives it to us. Through whom is it given? It is given *“through the knowledge of Jesus Christ who hath called us to glory and virtue.”*

I could just camp there. The Scripture says, *“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord, according as His divine, (mighty, sovereign), power hath given (as a free gift) unto us, all things.”*

Nothing needs to be added. Everything that pertains to life and everything that pertains to godliness is given to us through that knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord *“who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, “who hath called us” by His blessed Spirit to repentance toward God and faith in Christ, “who hath called us” to glory.*

Look at this next verse, *“Whereby, are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these promises you might be a partaker of His divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in this world through lust.”*

Everything that we have is given to us. *“Who made you to differ? What do you have that you didn’t receive? Now, if you received it, why do you boast and glory if you didn’t receive it?”* All of these things are given to us.

I will tell you this, this business of preaching the Word of God is a weighty, heavy responsibility. Paul said this, *“Who is sufficient for these things?”* Who is sufficient in ministering the Word of God, speaking for God, and delivering God’s message to our generation?

This is a heavy and weighty responsibility that is not to be taken lightly. As a matter of fact, James wrote the 3rd chapter of James, verse 1: *“My brethren; covet not to be teachers knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.”*

What is He saying? He is saying this, *“Don’t rush eagerly and aspire to be a preacher or a teacher of the Scriptures.”* God will hold you responsible for everything you teach. Our Lord said, *“It is better that a man have a millstone hanged about his neck and cast into the sea”* (than to teach error when you speak for God).

“Covet not my brethren, to be teachers.” Don’t rush madly and eagerly and aspire to be teachers and preachers of the Scriptures. God Almighty will hold us responsible for what we say in His name.

In fact, a lot of people at the judgment said, *“Lord, we prophesied in your name.”* He said, *“You are workers of iniquity.”* The religious works that you did were works of iniquity. *“They were not for My glory.”*

I will tell you this, we have not made full-proof of our ministry. I want you to listen to me. Just pull your chair up a little closer and listen awhile, will you? We need to stop screaming at people, dancing jigs, stop singing foot-stomping songs and start telling men what God Almighty has said.

Pull up your chair and listen; we have not made full-proof of our ministry until we learn and are taught by God’s Spirit to totally shut men and women up to the free and sovereign grace of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

Did you hear how many times he said “*given to us*” as I was reading those verses of Scripture from 2 Peter? These things were “*given to us,*” “*given to us,*” “*given to us.*” We have got to be shut up to the grace of God; “*Salvation is of the Lord.*”

Salvation is not something that I do for God or something that I do for myself or something that a preacher does for me. Salvation is of God; it is of the Lord. David said two or three times, “*The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.*”

Salvation is of the Lord in its origination; He purposed it and He planned it. Salvation is of the Lord in its execution; It pleased Him to send His Son into the world. “*It pleased God to bruise Him. It pleased God that in Him should all fullness dwell.*”

Salvation of the Lord is in its application; “*It pleased God to reveal His Son in me. It is not of him that willeth. It is not of him that runneth; it is of God that showeth mercy.*”

“*As many as received Him (Christ), to them gave He power (the right, the privilege) to become the sons of God, who were born, not of blood (not of fleshly inheritance), not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man; they were born of God.*”

“*It is the Lord that hath saved us.*” Salvation is of the Lord in its application and its sustaining power; “*We are kept by the power of God through faith,*” not without faith and not apart from faith. It is God who keeps us; we don’t keep ourselves.

Salvation is of the Lord in its ultimate perfection. Yes, let us preach the Gospel so powerfully, boldly and Biblically, that men are shut up to the mercy of God and the grace of God. Yet, we must preach that Gospel so that our hearers are led to seek the Lord and they are led to cry out of their misery for mercy.

We are to preach the free grace of God so that sinners will flee to Christ in their need, just like the leper of old. Our Lord came down from the mountain and this unclean leper covered with a corrupting disease ran to meet Him and fell at His feet, knowing of His sovereign power.

Yet, he looked up at our Lord, and said to Him; “*Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.*” Now, that is the way to preach the grace of God and the sovereign mercy of God in such a way that men are shut up to the will of God. They will be shut up to the power of God. They are shut up to the mercy of God.

Yet, they are led to His feet to seek that mercy and to seek that grace like the Canaanite woman. She came to our Lord and said, *“Master; have mercy upon me.”* He didn’t even answer her; He said not a word. She kept pleading, *“Have mercy upon me.”*

He turned and said, *“I’m sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”* She kept saying, *“Lord; have mercy.”* He said, *“It is not right to give the children’s bread to gentile dog.”* She said, *“Yes; but the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the Master’s table. I am a dog, but you are my Master. I will be satisfied with crumbs.”* Our Lord told her, *“Woman; great is your faith.”* Can you do that?

What about the woman with the issue of blood? She came to Christ and said; *“If I could just touch the hem of His garment, if I could but touch His clothes; I will be made whole.”* Now, that is the way to preach the Gospel. It has to be preached in such a way that God gets all the glory and yet men are led to seek Him.

I wish I could preach like that! Our Lord did; sinners sought Him out. Yet, they knew it was according to His own will and power what He did for them.

When He went down to the Pool of Bethesda; He didn’t heal everybody. He did heal one. When He went down to the land of the Gadarenes; He didn’t save them all; He did save one.

Then, we have not made full-proof of our ministry until we preach holiness, perfect, immaculate, infinite, holiness and righteousness in Christ alone. *“He is our Righteousness, the Lord our Righteousness,”* Jehovah-tsidkenu, (the Lord our Holiness).

In 1 Corinthians 1:30, the Scripture says; *“But, of Him, (of God) are you in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.”* All the righteousness that I need is in Christ.

All the holiness that God requires, all the perfection that the Law demands, and all that heaven requires, is mine in Jesus Christ. I add nothing to it. *“He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”*

Some of you may ask me what kind of holiness I have; I have God’s holiness. That is the only kind that will be admitted to Heaven, God’s holiness. It is not manufactured holiness and it is not a vain holiness.

It is not hypocritical holiness, phony holiness or worldly holiness; it is God’s holiness and God’s righteousness. *“Jesus Christ is the end of the Law, (the consummation and the*

determination of the goal of the Law for holiness) *for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*” He is our righteousness.

We must preach the Word of God so clearly and so plainly that no man glories in himself. We must preach the Word of God so that no man, within himself, has any holiness. Isaiah said, *“We all do fade as the leaf. Our righteousnesses are filthy rags in God’s sight.”* Did you know that?

“Man at his best state is altogether vanity. There is none that doeth good; there is none that seeketh after God; there is none that understandeth; they are all gone out of the way. In the flesh dwelleth no good thing. In the flesh no man can please God.”

Well, how is God pleased? He said, *“This is My Son in whom I am well pleased.”* He is our holiness. Yet, we preach the Gospel so that men can understand that the grace of Christ, the mercy of God and the salvation which is in Jesus Christ, produces works of faith, labors of love, and a godly walk.

Those who know the Lord Jesus Christ know Him by grace, but they hate sin and love righteousness. They adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour by walking in love, truth, honesty, integrity, generosity, hospitality, gentleness, kindness, humility, faith and love.

No man has ever been saved by praying. Yet, no man knows God who does not pray. Do you see what I am saying? No man has ever been saved by works but no man knows God who does not have works of faith and labors of love.

God saves greedy men, but they don’t stay greedy. These men become generous, warm, kind, and caring. This is the fruit of grace. Being generous and kind is not what produces grace. Grace is the gift of God. Mercy is the gift of God. True mercy and grace produce righteousness.

No man is saved by loving others. That is not the way that you are saved, by loving others; you can’t love anyway, not by nature. No man has ever been saved who does not love others. No man knows God who does not love others.

The Scripture says, *“For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. It is not of works lest any man should boast.”* But, *“We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works.”*

Do you see what a responsibility it is to preach the Word of God? Preaching is not just standing up and popping off, showing your knowledge of the Bible, arguing doctrine,

defending your traditions or even swearing on a stack of Bibles that you are saved when you are not. Preaching is delivering God's message to your generation for the glory of God and the Spirit of God.

You have to be shut up to the power of God. You have to be shut up to the Spirit of God. We've not made full-proof of our ministry until we are able, with compassion and affection, to warn men, and to warn the false religionist.

Paul said, "*Whom we preach, warning every man*" We are to warn men and caution men against presumption. My friends, be presumptuous about a lot of things but don't be presumptuous about your immortal soul. "*Let the potsherd of the earth strive with the potsherd of the earth.*" A man is a fool who strives with his Maker.

We just have one death to die and one Judgment to face, one eternity to spend and one soul in which to spend it. "*Take heed brethren, lest there be found in you an evil heart of unbelief.*" Don't be so sure; don't be so cock-sure and so presumptuous.

Don't let your hope for eternal glory rest in a silly profession that you made years ago. Don't let your hope be on an old profession that stayed old. Don't be following some man, putting confidence in the flesh or following the voice of a man. Be careful; "*Try the spirits whether it is God who has spoken to you.*"

Salvation is not in the church. Salvation is not in the Law. Salvation is not giving mental assent to some facts. You might say, "*Well; I believe there is a God; the devil believes that too.*" Others say, "I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross, was buried and rose again." The devil was there when He died, when He was buried and when He arose again. He is not saved.

Salvation is not mental agreement with certain facts. Salvation is in a person, in a living, vital, personal union by faith with the Son of God. That is salvation! That salvation gives strong evidence of the assurance of salvation in Christ alone. By faith we continue in the faith and grow in grace. Everything that is living grows. I can promise you that. This pulpit is dead, it does not grow. Everything living grows.

There are too many professors of religion that are still standing right where they made their profession some forty years ago; they have digressed a little bit. The Scripture says, "*Continue in the faith and grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.*" God, give us the wisdom, to warn men.

And yet, we preach the mercy and grace of God in Christ so as to give comfort and assurance and confidence to those who truly believe. My brethren, we are hedged about in the Word of God with warnings, warnings and warnings, lest we presume.

Thank God we are hedged about with precious promises. Oh the precious promises of God, lest any man despair. If it were not for His promises I would throw up my hands in helplessness and hopelessness, for what I see in myself is not God. I have to look without myself to see God. Peter calls these promises, "*Exceeding great and precious promises.*"

You know; these precious promises are in good company. I will show you the value of them and the glory of them. The Word of God uses the word "*precious*" in reference to Christ; "*He is precious*" and so are His promises.

The Scripture uses the word "*precious*" in reference to His blood; "*His precious blood with which we are redeemed.*" Do you know how precious His blood is? Do you know how precious He is? "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.*" Do you know how precious that is? What august company these promises keep. They are "*precious promises.*"

Why are these promises precious? In 1 Kings 8:56, it says; "*There hath not failed one Word of all His good promises.*" Abraham said this, "*He is able to perform all that He promised.*"

What is His chief promise? That is what I thought about when I was preparing this message. We talk about the precious promises of our God. What is His chief and most glorious, beneficial, promise, the one that I am so vitally interested in and the one that you are most vitally interested in? Do you know what it is?

The most vital promise is the promise of eternal life. He said in Titus 1:2, "*In hope of eternal life which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began.*" You think about that; He has not failed one word in any of His promises. Yet, He promised before the world began that there would be eternal life.

I will show you that again in 1 John 2:25; "*This is the record that He hath given us (and promised us), even eternal life.*" Think about it! His precious promise; not one word has ever failed. He is able to perform them. "*God hath promised us eternal life.*"

Brethren, this life on earth is short, so short. That life which He has promised is eternal. This life will one day end. That life will never end. This life is one of sorrow and that life is one of happiness and glory, free from pain.

This life is one of sin; that's right; the other life is perfection. This life is one of toil and tears. Yet, John wrote in Revelation; *"I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold, the tabernacle of God is with men."*

"He will dwell with them and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and will be their God. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying; neither shall there be anymore pain. All of these former things have passed away." What a promise!

I must confess, I am desperately interested in this promise of eternal life for myself. This thing of salvation is a pursuit of God; it is seeking the Lord. Paul said, *"O that I may know Christ, (that I may know Him), that I may win Christ and be found in Him."*

How can we take such a precious, precious, commodity such as our eternal souls and rest them on such flimsy, flimsy, foundations. It is like me saying, "I haven't done this and I haven't done that. I've made my profession. I am a Baptist or I am a Methodist, Nazarene or Presbyterian." God help us!

Where is this promise of God? Where is this promise? I want you to listen to me; this promise of eternal life is to be found where? You tell me where it is to be found. I will tell you; In 2 Corinthians 1:20 it says this; *"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."*

Where is this promise? This promise is in Christ and it is in nowhere else. *"This is the record that God hath given us eternal life and this life is in His Son."* Could that be spoken in a clearer fashion? I wouldn't know how it could be. *"This is the record,"* this is the truth and this is the testimony. This is written down. *"God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son."*

This life is not in the Law, in the church, in the ordinances, baptism or your profession; it is in Christ. The Scripture says, *"He that hath the Son of God hath life and he that hath not the Son of God, listen to me, hath not life."*

God has no spiritual blessings for sinners except in Christ. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the*

heavenlies in Christ. The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hands."

God has no word for forgiveness or redemption for sinners except in Christ. Ephesians 1:7 says, *"In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sin, through His blood."* You don't spell that "w-a-t-e-r;" it is blood, precious blood.

God will not speak to any man nor will He be spoken to by any man except through Christ. *"There is one God and one Mediator between God and men and that is the man Christ Jesus."* There is a promise and it is precious.

It is the promise of God who cannot lie. It is the promise of God given us *"before the foundation of the world."* It is the promise of eternal life and that promise and that life is in Christ *"who loved us and gave Himself for us."* The Word is clear.

It is not a matter of denominationalism, sectarianism, what I think or what anybody else thinks; it is *"what hath the Lord said."*

Noah said, *"There's going to be a flood."* They didn't believe it but it came. The Bible says, *"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ Jesus. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."*

Our Lord said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me."* These are precious promises.