**Exceedingly Great and Precious Promises**

*2 Peter 1:2-4*

**Introduction**

1. God has ***“given to us exceedingly great and precious promises” (2 Peter 1:4)****.*
   1. Superlative – ***“exceedingly great”*** (*megistos* – greatest or very great, from *megas* – big or great)
   2. ***“precious”*** – to those who have ***“precious faith” (v. 1)*** – “by which precious to us and exceedingly great promises have been given” (Greek)
2. His promises are necessary – **Galatians 3:18; Romans 9:8** – scripture stresses that we cannot be saved apart from God’s promises. (We must stand on the promises.)
3. His promises are certain – **Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:16-18**
4. The Text in Context
5. False Teachers
   1. Warning of false teachers – **2 Peter 2:1**
      1. Twisting scriptures – **2 Peter 3:16**
   2. Peter’s life is close to an end, and he wishes to remind them, thus, equipping them for the confrontation of these false teachers – **2 Peter 1:12-15; 3:1-2**
   3. Two main components of their error:
      1. ***“Where is the promise of His coming?” (3:4)***
         1. **3:3-7** – promise is unreliable and false due to elapsed time.
            1. Willful ignorance of previous promises of a similar nature – flood – **cf. Genesis 6:3** – 120 years
            2. **2:5** – Noah preached concerning such judgment, and it came.
         2. **1:16-19** – sought to discredit apostles’ doctrine, but they were eyewitnesses, and inspired men **(3:2)** – also in harmony with OT scripture.
      2. ***“They promise them liberty” (2:19)***
         1. **3:3** – denial of 2nd coming part of their immoral walk.
            1. Their lusts are both the cause and the effect of their unbelief in the promise of His coming.
            2. (1) Because they wish to do as they please, they adopt a doctrine which frees from consequence, (2) this doctrine only encourages more immorality.
         2. **2:18-19** – deceptive words of liberty to do as one pleases without consequence, but in bondage.
            1. **2:12-14** – behaving like animals, can’t cease from sinning.
         3. **3:9, 15-16** – take longsuffering for granted, time to continue in sin.
            1. Despise His goodness – **Romans 2:4**
            2. Turn His grace into lewdness – **Jude 4**
6. A Call to Growth
   1. ***“but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (3:18)***
      1. **3:17-18** – call to growth as a response to the warning of error.
      2. They say He isn’t coming, but since we trust He is, and will destroy everything and bring judgment – **3:11-14** – we are to live sober lives of holiness in anticipation of His coming to reward the righteous and punish the wicked.
   2. ***“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” (1:2)***
      1. NOTE: incipient Gnosticism – **2:1** – ***“denying the Lord”*** (**cf. 1 John 2:22; 4:3** – Jesus hasn’t come in the flesh) – say flesh inherently sinful, so will be involved in immorality bodily, but transcended it in spirit.
      2. **Modern (relatively) idea – (neo)Calvinism** – inherent sinfulness, cannot break free from sin, cannot help but sin, will always be sinful but saved anyway.
      3. Peter – **1:2, 8** – you can, and must, live like Jesus by God’s grace.
         1. **Knowledge** – *epignōsis* – “a deeper and more intimate knowledge and acquaintance” (R.C. Trench); “expressing a fuller or a full “knowledge,” a greater participation by the “knower” in the object “known,” thus more powerfully influencing him.” (VINE)
         2. Those false teachers allure ***“those who are just escaping from them that live in error” (2:18, ASV)(new converts who have already showed change)*** – can escape, can remain free from.
7. **Important implications: when Peter speaks of “exceedingly great and precious promises,” they have to do with:**
   1. The fact of the Lord’s coming.
   2. The fact that the preparation of purity is necessary and possible.
   3. The fact that growth out of sin and into righteousness is central in the scope of these promises.
8. Exceedingly Great and Precious Promises
9. Provision
   1. ***“as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him” (1:3)***
      1. **Life** – spiritual (opposite = death – separation from God); fellowship/union with God.
         1. ***“through the knowledge of Him”*** – *epignōsis* (see above) – participant. **(cf. 1 John 2:3)**
         2. **Isaiah 53:11** – by His knowledge, i.e. what He teaches, then others obey.
      2. **Godliness** – godward piety; devotion – the presupposition and practicality of fellowship with God.
      3. **All things that pertain** – nothing lacking.
   2. ***“His divine power has given…through the knowledge of Him”*** – **Romans 1:16-17** – power of gospel revealing justification by faith. (NOTE: including confirmation of revelation – **cf. Hebrews 2:3-4; Mark 2:10-12 –** *exousia)*
      1. **Sufficient** (Promised to reveal all) – **John 14:25-26; 16:7, 12-13** (your advantage I go away – death, burial, resurrection, ascension); **Romans 8:31-32** (Gave Son, give all things – that pertain to life and godliness; **Romans 8:2, 28** – in the gospel plan)
         1. All sufficient – **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
         2. Word all we need – **Luke 16:27-31**
      2. **Trustworthy –** **2 Peter 1:19-21** (prophetic/inspired word is reliable)
         1. ***“We also have the more sure prophetic word” (NKJV, fn)***
         2. **Confirmed** – *bebaios* – “metaphorically sure, trusty” (THAYER); “of something that can be relied on not to cause disappointment” (BDAG)
         3. Than even eyewitness testimony – **(vv. 16-18**)
         4. ***“day dawns…morning star rises”*** – description of illumination of gospel, and Christ dwelling by faith (**cf. Revelation 22:16** – Christ the morning star) (**cf. Hebrews 6:4-6** – enlightened, word of God, Son of God; **Ephesians 3:16-17** – Christ dwelling in heart by faith)
10. Participation
    1. ***“that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature” (1:4)***
       1. “through these” – “exceedingly great and precious promises”
       2. “by which have been given” – “called us by glory and virtue”
          1. ***“called us by His own glory and excellence.” (NASB)***
             1. Glory and virtue – **Hebrews 1:3; 4:15**
          2. His glory and virtue called us or drew us to Him.
             1. **John 12:24, 32-33** – dies to produce much, draws many to Him in His death – they come to His death to receive life.
          3. By means of His “glory and virtue” He has given the promises.
       3. The promises (whatever they are specifically) are the instruments which bring us to be ***“partakers of the divine nature.”***
          1. **Partakers** – *koinōnos* – sharer, fellowship. (life, **v. 3**)
          2. ***“who called us to his own glory and excellence” (ESV)*** – ***“by”*** may be more accurate, but the sentiment is expressed in **verse 4**.
          3. **We are called by His own glory and virtue to share in it through the gospel.**
    2. **Christ is displayed in the gospel for more than mere observation and admiration, but for imitation** – **1 Peter 2:21** – this is not a burden, but tremendous blessing.
    3. His promise is that we CAN live like Christ – and must. ***(All doctrines suggesting otherwise are false.)***
    4. How? – **2 Peter 1:2** – through the knowledge of Him.
       1. **(vv. 5-7)** – adding to our faith what the gospel requires.
       2. **(v. 8)** – in doing so, not baren or unfruitful in the knowledge of Him.
       3. We can, but not without Him – **John 15:5** – hence relying on the word which has given all things pertaining to life and godliness.
11. Protection
    1. ***“for if you do these things you will never stumble” (1:10)***
       1. He has promised us a way to never stumble – does He mean so? Of course!
       2. **NOTE: Not a denial of apostasy** – **(v. 9); 2:20-22** – warning, example of such w/ false teachers.
       3. “never stumble” does NOT mean “never fall away totally” – **His point is even narrower than such, but greater in power.**
          1. **Stumble** – 5x in NT
             1. **Romans 11:11** – sin/trespass, but still hope to accept Christ.
             2. **James 2:10** – sin in any point of the law.
             3. **James 3:2** (2x) – many ways (forms) to sin.
          2. **“you will never [sin]”** – yet, conditional.
             1. ***“for if you do these things”*** – **(v. 10a)** – diligence to make call and election sure.
             2. **(vv. 5-8)** – growing in grace by adding virtues to faith and being fruitful in the knowledge of God.
    2. False concept – we WILL sin because it is something we CANNOT KEEP FROM DOING.
       1. Why did John say this? – **1 John 2:1, 6** – not sin, just as He walked.
       2. **1 John 3:9** – does not, cannot
          1. ***“for”*** – conditional – ***“His seed remains in him”*** – word of God.
          2. **Psalm 119:11** – word in heart = not sin.
          3. When sin is present, we have not heeded the word.
    3. God promised protection – Yet it is conditioned upon yielding to it:
       1. Way of escape provided – **1 Corinthians 10:12-13**
       2. What about the Israelites? – **1 Corinthians 10:2-5** – Paul’s point: they had the necessary provisions/protections, and could have avoided sin – they did not take God’s provisions.
    4. Do you believe this promise of God?
12. Passage
    1. ***“for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom” (1:11)***
       1. **Supplied** – *epichorēgeō* – *epi* (intensive), *chorēgeō*
          1. *chorēgeō* – “to lead a stage chorus or dance” (*choros*, and *hegeomai,* “to lead”), then, “to defray the expenses of a chorus”; hence, later, metaphorically, “to supply,” (VINE)
          2. “to supply fully, abundantly” (VINE)
       2. **Abundantly** – *plousiōs* – copiously: — abundantly, richly (STRONG)
       3. **“an entrance will be abundantly fully supplied to you into the everlasting kingdom”**
          1. I.E. THIS IS NOT BARELY MAKING IT, OR JUST GETTING IN – GOD IS OPENING WIDE THE ENTRANCE INTO HEAVEN FOR US.
          2. **Jude 24** – able to present us faultless in the presence of His glory.
          3. **Hebrews 7:25** – able to save to the uttermost.
          4. **Romans 8:37** – we are more than conquerors.
    2. ***“for so”*** – *gar houtōs* – for in this way, for in this manner – also conditional.
       1. Ultimately looks back to **verse 5** ***– “giving all diligence, add to your faith”***
          1. Add – *epichorēgeō* – as in **verse 11.**
          2. You supply fully to your faith, and God will abundantly fully supply and entrance into heaven to you.
       2. **2 Timothy 4:7-8** – If we fight, run, and keep we will receive the reward – we can have as much confidence as Paul.

**Conclusion**

1. God has ***“given to us exceedingly great and precious promises” (2 Peter 1:4)****.*
2. We can trust His promises, and we do so by meeting His conditions by faith.
3. We will always be provided what we need, and by this we can participate in the divine nature, be protected from sin, and find passage into heaven.