

June 20, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "Do You Understand the Credibility of God's Promises?"

—Receiving Spiritual Resources—

Text: 2 Peter 1:3,4

1:3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

1:4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Introduction

Last Sunday we studied the opening part of the Second Epistle of Peter. Let us briefly review it now.

The writer was Peter, an apostle, and the receivers were Jewish Christians who were exiles. They were under battles and sufferings. On the other hand, Peter prayed for them to become Christians who would live in **grace and peace (spiritual grace)** in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, Peter said that the secret to receive **grace and peace** is to acquire the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The following two points are the most important.

1. We should keep in mind a master-servant relationship.

It is a relationship where we follow Jesus as our Lord.

2. We should keep listening to the words of the Lord Jesus.

We should read the word of the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit for His help, so

that we come to know the Lord Jesus Christ in knowledge and based on a personal relationship. This is what we studied from the text last time.

Today we continue studying Chapter 1, Verses 3 and 4. What did Peter try to teach through these two verses? He wanted to teach that we can absolutely trust in God's promises.

In general, it is difficult for us to keep a promise. If we could fulfill every promise, our problems would greatly decrease. We have weakness so that we cannot always keep a promise even though we want to fulfill it.

However, God is not kind of One. The Bible records as below,

2 Corinthians 1:20 For all the promises of God find their 'Yes' in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

Then, what promises did God make with us?

Let us study the following two points.

Main Points

1 . The Privilege that Was Given to Us

1:3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

1) Life and Godliness

The New Testament was written in Greek and the beginning of the verse 3 begins with a word "**all things**". The Lutheran Bible also begins the verse 3 with the word "**all things**". It means that all things we need in our lives of faith are given to us. It is only because of God's grace.

My friends, please misunderstand what I mentioned. It does not mean that everything that we think and want are given to us. Peter teaches a deeper meaning than we think. *It is given to us day by day through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.*

Peter recorded," all **things that pertain to life and godliness.**"

Life here means a new life, an eternal life.

Godliness means the way of life to honor God. It is a life to live with God. It is the attitude of life to fear God, honor God's authority, and follow God's will.

The pairing of the words **life and godliness** has an inseparable relationship here. **Godliness** is a new way of a life that begins in those who received **new life**. The godliness covers over the rest of our new lives and all things are given there. How blessed we are!

Peter taught that we are allowed to experience the grace of God through the knowledge of God. It is the privilege that is given to us.

2) Acquiring the Knowledge of God

It is very important for us Christians to know God. Acquiring the knowledge of God gives us power to live godly lives.

Paul recorded as below,

Ephesians 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,

The Spirit of wisdom and of revelation was given to our daily lives to help us know God. However, this world did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God.

Romans 1:28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

For Christians, we would like to lead lives by retaining the knowledge of God and receiving wisdom from heaven.

Then, what does it mean to know God in detail? Let us look the following three points.

① Retaining the knowledge of God's Authority

Peter records "**His divine power.**" It refers to God's authority.

Jesus said,

Matthew 26:53 Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?

It is the authority that Jesus Christ has. The important thing is that we should know that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One who has the supreme authority like this. We should know that God is still alive and dwells in history and has the authority.

② Realizing the calling of God

Peter said,

1:3... who called us to his own glory and excellence,

To call means **to cry out to** or **to summon**. God chose us to give us salvation and called us. It was God's **calling**. God invited us to have precious fellowship with Him so that our faith in God is supported, encouraged, and guided. Therefore, it is important to know God. The more we realize the abundance of God's grace, the more we should want to live faithfully according to **the calling (invitation)** of the Lord.

③ Knowing the nature of God

It is important to know the nature of God whom we believe in.

Peter records the nature of God as below,

1 Peter 2:22 He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

1:23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

1:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

1:25 For you were straying like sheep but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

The nature of God is **love**. God is the faithful One. He is full of glory and goodness. We need to keep looking Him in our daily lives. By acquiring the knowledge of God, we realize that all things that pertain to **life and godliness** are given to us.

It is the privilege for those who are called by God.

Peter said,

1:3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and

godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

Peter taught another point.

2. We Should Know God's Precious Promises

1:4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

1) God of Israel is the Holy One

God guarantees us the faithfulness of His promises according to His word. He is the One who is faithful to His word. For this reason, we also need to be faithful to the word of God.

God taught His justice and righteousness in the days of the Old Testament.

Isaiah records the God of Israel as below,

Isaiah 37:16 "O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth.

God says,

Isaiah 54:10 For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

God says,

Isaiah 55:10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

55:11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

This is the God of Israel. Trusting in God's authoritative word is the foundation of faith.

2) God's Precious and Great Promises

God has given His precious and very great promises, so that through them we may become partakers of the divine nature or become in God's image.

Then, what promises has God given to us?

◎ God's Promises

- ① **Forgiveness of sin.** John 3:16~18
- ② **Being newly created.** 2 Corinthians 5:17
- ③ **Knowing God and having eternal life.** John 3:36
- ④ **Being lit by the light of truth through the Holy Spirit.** 1 John 2:20
- ⑤ **Living a new life by the Holy Spirit.** 1 Corinthians 12:13
- ⑥ **Being sanctified and becoming victorious by the abiding of the Holy Spirit.** 2 Corinthians 3:17,18
- ⑦ **Receiving the fruit of the Holy Spirit.** Galatians 5:22,23
- ⑧ **Blessed hope, be raised imperishable at Jesus' second coming.** 1 Corinthians 15:42~57
- ⑨ **Entering the new heavens and earth of the Lord and leading a blessed life.** 2 Peter 3:13

My friends, God called us and gave His grace to those who strayed away from God and were completely useless. Paul records as below,

Ephesians 1:19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.

There are many temptations around us. Our old nature still remains in us, and this world tempts us day and night. However, the Scripture below records about God's promises as below,

Philippians 1:6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Then, how can we receive the promises of God?

There are two ways a Christian can live according to the parable of Jesus.

Matthew Chapter 25, Verses 14~30

- ① A type of a servant who was entrusted with 1 talent.
- ② The type of servants who were entrusted with 5 talents and 2 talents.

The wicked servant ① said, “My master does not give me anything,” and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. He did not give thanks for anything and constantly grumbled.

The servants ② gave thanks for talents that the master entrusted to them. They made the best of them and lived wealthy lives. On top of that, they pay the master back double. What did the master say to the servants? He said, “Well done, good and faithful servants.” (Matthew 25:32)

God gave us spiritual wealth (**life and godliness**) in abundance. How do we manage it?

{Illustration} Hudson Taylor, a Missionary

Hudson Taylor, a founder of the China Inland Mission (now OMF International), has many amazing stories and testimonies in his life. He was a person who found rich resources in Christ, as a result he and his society grew significantly.

The society that he began was responsible for bringing many missionaries (over 800 missionaries for a time) to China and started 125 schools and resulted in 18,000 Christian conversions. He is said to be a man of joy.

He put everything in God’s hand and spent a large amount of time praying. He used to go to bed early and got up at 5 in the morning. He became quiet and prayed and studied the Bible before he started his daily work. He came to receive great spiritual grace as a Christian.

The world today becomes very confusing. People always lead lives of tension. Therefore, they need to live in the richness of Christ. We can find the richness of Christ in the Bible even though we are not like Hudson Taylor who lived dramatically. It refers to the spiritual grace that is **life and grace**. We would like to grow step by step.

Conclusion

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We studied a very important point today. God really loved us and gave us precious promises. We studied that God's promises are 8 points from ① the forgiveness of sin to ⑧ entering the new heavens and earth of the Lord. God gave them without charge to those who believe in Him as His grace.

Then, how can we lead such a blessed life?

→ We should take time in silence before God and understand His precious and very great promises.

We should live lives so that we receive God's word, "**Well done, good and faithful servant.**"

Let us conclude the message by reading Verse 4.

1:4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

* God bless you!