

GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES

2 PETER 1:4 • TV190B

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2 Peter 1:4

“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’m hopeful that this message today will be one of encouragement to you; I hope it will be a message of comfort. Isaiah spoke, *“comfort ye my people; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.”*

That’s what I want to do today; I want to give some assurance and some comfort to those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here is the title of the message and I am going to be speaking on the subject: “GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES.” *“That by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, whereby, are given unto us great and precious promises: that by these promises you might be a partaker of the divine nature.”*

Quite often after a sermon is over, people make statements like this; “preacher; you sure walked on my toes this morning.” I had this said to me after a sermon just last week.

Or somebody says something like this; “boy, the preacher skinned us today, didn’t he, didn’t he get us told today?”

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Somehow, I feel that this type of response all the time (“you walked on my toes; you sure got us told; you sure skinned us alive today,”) this type of response all the time indicates that there is something wrong with the preaching or there is something wrong with the hearing.

Now that’s right; this type of response, this type of comment, in which you say; “well, it’s just people talking.” No, I don’t know, whether it is or not. I believe *“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”*

But, this type of response indicates to me that there is something wrong with the preacher or the disciples, the hearer. Here is what they said when our Master preached to the disciples in **Luke 24**; they came away from His presence and His message saying this; *“didn’t our hearts burn within us while He opened to us the Scriptures?”*

There is nothing there about, “boy; didn’t He walk on our toes?” There is nothing there about “boy, didn’t He skin us?” No sir; they are talking about a heart work, *“didn’t our hearts burn within us as he opened for us the Scriptures?”*

All right, listen to this. When Peter preached at Pentecost these were not disciples; these were unbelievers. These were folks who had just bloodied their hands with the blood of the Son of God. They crucified the Son of God.

Peter preached to them just 50 days after the death of Christ. These were the folks who were walking around the cross and shooting out their lips by saying, *“you trusted God; let’s see if God will have you,”* and other horrible things like that.

Peter preached to those people from the Word of God and it says, *“And they were pricked in their hearts.”* There is nothing said about their toes being walked on. *“They were pricked in their hearts and they cried men and brethren, what shall we do? Is there any hope for us?”*

**“Depth of mercy
Can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?”**

**And can it be
That I should gain
An interest in
The Saviour’s blood?**

**Died He for me
Who Him, to death pursued.”**

These people were pricked in their hearts; their hearts were broken. They were smitten in their consciences and souls. They cried, “What are we going to do? We have crucified the Lord of glory.” Now, that is a real response to real preaching.

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When Paul preached to the Gentiles in **Acts 13**, it is said in the Word of God that these people were glad. When Paul preached to them they were glad and *“they glorified the Word of the Lord.”*

Then, the noble Bereans, the Scripture says, *“and searched the Scriptures (took the Bible home, took the Scriptures home) to see if what the man was saying was true.”* That’s what I am talking about.

This type of response is so different; *“didn’t our hearts burn within us?”* They were pricked in their hearts and cried, *“men and brethren, what shall we do?”*

They were glad and glorified the Word of the Lord. *“They went home and searched the Scriptures to see if these things be so.”* That is so much different from, “Well, you stepped on my toes or you sure got us told tonight.”

Now, my friend; I realize that we are living in a famine of the Word of God. I realize that we are living in a parched, and dry, and barren land. We are living in the day of promotion, programs, pep-rallies and religious cheerleaders; I know that.

I know that there is a warning note to be sounded to this generation. God said, “Warn them for me.” I know that *“Noah, being warned of God of things not seen, moved with fear.”*

I know that we are told in the Scriptures to *“rebuke, reprove, and exhort men with all long-suffering.”* But, I will tell you this, I will tell you this; we are to comfort God’s people. We are to have a ministry of reconciliation, reconciliation.

Now listen to this, we are to preach from the Scriptures to the hearts of men. We are to minister the Word of God to the hearts of men. We are to preach and teach people the gospel.

They are to be instructed in the things of God, not just scolded, not just rebuked, not just warned, not just screamed at, but they are to be taught the things of God.

A man cannot believe unless he knows what to believe, he has to be told. I hear preachers all the time say, “believe, believe, believe.” They never tell people what to believe or whom to believe.

2 Corinthians 5:18 says this; *“God has given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”* We are not just bearers of bad news; we are bearers of good news. We are the ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

The angels said, *“We bring you, (as they were coming down the Judean hillside that night; they spoke to a bunch of shepherds and they said), we bring you glad tidings of great joy. Unto you is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord.”*

“God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, (the world was already condemned) Jesus Christ came into the world that the world through Him might be saved.”

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What I want us to do is preach in such a way that men will be exhorted and encouraged to approach God, not to run away from God but to preach the type of message and the good news of the Gospel that men will approach God in the hope of finding mercy.

It's not to flee from the presence of the Lord, not flee from the presence of the preacher, not flee from the Gospel, flee from the church or flee from the Word of God, because they are unworthy sinners and they don't belong in that kind of crowd.

Our Lord Jesus invited sinners to come to Him. He said, "*Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.*" Somehow, some way, preachers and churches today have an uncanny ability to attract to themselves the self-sufficient, the self-righteous, and scare away the needy. You know that is so and I do too.

Down at church on Sunday morning, there are not too many needy people. There are not too many weary people. There are not too many sinful people and there are not too many lost people. Most of them are pretty self-satisfied, self-sufficient, self-righteous folks. They are "holier than thou and so pious and so self-righteous."

Somehow, our preaching and churches and pastors today, have an uncanny ability to draw those types of people around them and those are the very people that avoided our Lord, the religious folks.

He avoided them too. It said that He was eating with Publicans and sinners and the religious folks came by and said, "why does your Master eat with folks like that? Why does He associate with folks like that?"

Our Lord turned to them and said, "*The well don't need a physician.*" A man who does not have any problems does not need help. A man who doesn't have sin doesn't need mercy. A man who doesn't have guilt doesn't need grace.

The Lord said, "*I didn't come to call the righteous, I came to call sinners to repentance.*" These are the people Christ came to save. We are going to the people who have no need. They will admit that they have no need. They say, "I'm not a sinner. Do you think that I am a sinner man?"

One fellow asked a man one time, "Are you a Christian?" He said, "Well, blankety-blank, yea; do you think that I am a heathen?" You see; there are not many sinners out there.

I know that a child of God must be corrected. I know that he must be rebuked. I know that a he must be taught. But a constant rebuke, a constant correction, a constant badgering, and constantly being put down, will drive him away.

He will know nothing of forgiveness. He will know nothing of love. He will know nothing of grace. He will know nothing of those things.

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Somehow, we have driven men away from us. We have driven those who need us. We have driven those who are crying out for help; we have driven them away. We have attracted to ourselves, these folks who are self-sufficient, self-righteous, and have no need, who have no need. It is sad.

I know that God has hedged us about with warnings. There are warnings all the way through the Word. There are warnings to sinners and warnings to the people of God to *“flee from the wrath to come.”* I know that!

We are hedged about on one side with warnings, lest we presume. We must not be presumptuous. These warnings of God will keep us from presumption:

**“I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home.”**

But my friend, let’s don’t forget; God has hedged us about on the other side with grace from God, *“Great and precious promises.”* That word *“precious”* is a clue to the importance of these promises.

I want you to look at the company that these precious promises are keeping. Listen to the company in **1 Peter 1:18**; it says, *“We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.”* In other words, He is uses the same word *“precious”* to talk about these promises of redemption by His blood.

Then, in **1 Peter 2:7**, it says; *“To you that believe, he is precious.”* Christ is precious. You can use the same word there. These promises must be something. His blood is precious and Christ is precious.

Then the Lord talks about those *“that have received like precious faith.”* Faith is precious; oh what a precious, precious, valuable possession, faith in Christ. Then in **Psalms 116**, the death of His saints is called precious, *“precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”*

Then, He comes to these promises and He says; *“God’s promises are precious.”* I wish you could lay hold on them. I wish you could see the preciousness of them. That is how precious they are, like the precious blood, like the precious Son, like the precious God-given faith, like the preciousness and death of a believer. God’s promises are great and precious.

The promises of men are not very precious; you know that. It is because they are often broken. Yea, they are often broken. The promises of men are subject to so many infirmities. The promises of men are subject to our natures, which change.

The promises of men are subject to our wills, which change, to our ability or health, which sometimes diminishes. There are so many things.

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Our promises and the promises we make are dependent upon too many things to be precious. I may promise you something. I may have every intention of fulfilling it but not be able to fulfill it. That is not so with God; that is not so with our Lord God.

His promises are always precious; they are always precious. They are sure and as steadfast as His throne. They are always as sure and as steadfast as His character. *“He cannot fail.”* That is what the Word of God says, *“whereby, are given unto us, exceeding great and precious promises.”*

There are the promise of life, the promise of forgiveness, the promise of mercy, and the promise of salvation in Christ Jesus. These are great and precious promises that are established upon four foundations. They are great and precious because they are established on these four foundations.

I want you to listen to me; this ought to be good news. We ought to reach out and grab a hold of this and take it right into our hearts and say, “I am going to rest on that. I am going to quit trusting in the arm of the flesh and leaning upon the arm of the flesh and I am going to trust God and I am going to believe God.”

Like Abraham of old, I am going to believe God. I don’t know where, I don’t know why, and I don’t know how, but I am just going to believe God. *“Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.”*

I will tell you why you can believe God, it is because God cannot fail; His promises are established on four foundations and let me give them to you:

First of all: His promises are established on His justice.

Secondly: His promises are established on His love.

Thirdly: His promises are established on His truth.

Fourthly: His promises are established on His power; therefore, they cannot change, He absolutely cannot change.

First of all: There is God’s justice.

God is just and holy and righteous. His promises will not alter because His justice will not let His promises fail and will not let His purpose be altered.

I don’t mean, (now listen to me); I don’t mean to put our Lord’s redemptive work on a commercial basis at all; I don’t want to do that. I don’t want to put it on a fatalistic foundation.

I am here to tell you this; “what Christ came to do, He will do.” Now that is so! His justice will not let Him do otherwise. What Christ came to do He will do.

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What Jesus Christ purchased in life and death will be given to Him and it will be His. His justice and righteousness won't let Him alter His purpose or His promise. Listen to these Scriptures:

In **Romans 8:29** it says; *“For whom he foreknew, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first born among many brethren.”*

“Moreover, whom he did predestinate, he called and whom he called he justified and whom he justified, he glorified. Now, here is the question: “What shall we say to these things; if God be for us who can be against us?” Now, here's the Scripture: “He that spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” If Christ purchased it, it will be done. If God purposed it, it will be done.

The sheep that were given to Christ shall come to Christ. Those sheep shall be called and those sheep shall come. He said, *“Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring,”* those for whom Christ died must be justified or His sacrifice is all in vain.

God promises to those who believe and those who receive Christ eternal life. That is as certain and as sure as the justice and righteousness of God. He cannot change, He cannot change. His justice is satisfied in the death of His Son and His righteousness is honored by the obedience of His Son and He will not change.

Listen to **Ecclesiastes 3:14**: *“I know, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever.”* Nothing can be put to it. Nothing can be taken from it. *“God doeth it that men should fear before him.”*

Paul, as he is writing to the church at Philippi said; *“I'm confident of this very thing that he who has begun a good work in you shall perform it until the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* That is what I am saying my friend; I am saying that God's promises are as sure and as steady as His justice and God is just.

God's promises are as steadfast as His righteousness; God is righteous. He will never be unjust and He will never be unrighteous. Therefore, His promises will never change.

Our Lord said, *“All that My Father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him that sent me and this is the will of him that sent me that of all which he hath given me, I will lose nothing but raise it up at the last day.”* His justice will not allow Him to alter His promises in Christ.

Secondly: Great and precious promises; God's love will not suffer Him to change His promises.

I wish we could comprehend the love of God, just something of the love of God. Oh the depth of His love, oh, the freeness of His love, oh the riches of His love, oh the unchangeableness of His love that we may experience that.

Not, just know it doctrinally, but enter into it as the songwriter put it:

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**“O love of God how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forever endure
The saints and angels song.**

**Could we with ink the ocean fill?
And were skies of parchment made
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above,
Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.”**

God’s love! Do you know something? His love, His love is free. There are no strings attached to it. *“Herein is love, not that we love God; He loved us and gave His Son to be a propitiation for our sin.”*

“But God commended His love toward us that in while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” We don’t merit the love of God or earn the love of God, it is free, and it is free. Not only that, but His love is eternal both ways. He always has loved us and always will love us.

Not only that, His love is infinite. Our capacity to love is based on our spirituality. The more man knows about God the more he can love. God’s love is infinite because God is an infinite Spirit, an infinite holiness and an infinite righteousness.

The godlier a man is the more he loves. The more spiritual a man is the more he loves. His capacity to love is increased as his knowledge increases.

But God is perfect knowledge, perfect righteousness, and perfect holiness. Therefore, His love is infinite. There is no end to it; it is infinite love. Not only that, but His love is unchanging, unchanging. Therefore, His promises are unchanging. His love is always in Christ; that is where His love is.

So, God’s love, being free and being infinite, being eternal, and being in Christ, will not suffer Him to change His promises to those whom He loves. He will not change.

I change, you change, and everything changes. The Hymn Writer said:

**“Change and decay
In all around I see,
Oh Thou that changeth not
Abide with me.”**

These are exceeding great and precious promises.

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Thirdly: You can lay hold upon them; you can rest and trust in them. You can lean upon them, you can build upon them, and you can hope in them because they cannot change.

His justice won't let Him change. His love won't let Him change and His truth won't let Him change. Listen to this Scripture in **Titus 1:2**; *"In hope of eternal life, (that is in Christ and trusting Christ), which God who cannot lie, promised before the world began."* We have a hope of eternal life, in God, who cannot lie. You see; He promised this before the world began. These promises are eternal promises. They are not subject to change anymore than God is.

Here is our assurance, here is our confidence, and it is not in our faithfulness. It is not in our steadfastness. Our confidence is in His faithfulness and His steadfastness. He said in **Malachi 3:6**; *"I am the Lord; I change not: Therefore, you sons of Jacob are not consumed."*

Oh, how fickle we are. You know that in **Psalms 50** the Lord brought His charge against us. He said, *"You thought I was altogether such as one as yourselves."* "You measured Me by yourselves. You measured Me by your ruler." Do you put your thumb up to Me and try to make Me be like a man? I am not a man." *"God is not a man that he should lie."*

I'm talking about the exceeding great and precious promises of the living God, which are unchangeable to those for whom those promises have been purchased and provided in Jesus Christ. They cannot change.

God's justice won't let Him change. God's love won't let Him change and God's truth won't let Him change. In **Romans 11:29** it says; *"The gifts and calling of God are without change."*

"Eternal life is the gift of God." Salvation is a calling of God; we are the called of Christ Jesus. They are not subject to change or repentance. In **Isaiah 46:11**, God says; *"I have spoken; I will bring it to pass. I purposed it; I will do it."* In **Numbers 23**, Moses wrote; *"God is not a man that He should lie. Neither is the son of man that he should repent. Hath He said; shall He not do it?"* Who are you dealing with? *"Hath He spoken? Shall He not make it good?"*

He surely will make it good. That is what I am saying; this is a message of comfort and hope to any weary sinner, to any weary traveler who is out of his sin and darkness and has reached out to Christ the light. Out of his death he has reached out to Christ the life. Out of his inability he has reached out to Christ the sufficient one.

Out of his hopelessness he has reached out to Jesus Christ our eternal hope. You have laid hold upon Him and believed on Him. God said, *"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. He that hath the Son hath life and he shall never die."*

You may say, "That's a good promise." It is as good as God; it is as good as God because His justice and His love and His truth won't let Him change. *"I am God; I change not. That is the reason you sons of Jacob are not consumed."*

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It's not your steadfastness; it is not your faithfulness; it is not your dependability; it is Gods. It is built on this foundation; *"God knoweth them that are His. Let him that loveth Christ depart from iniquity."* We have a hope!

All right; watch the last thing: His power. His power enables Him to perform what He promised, His power, His saving power, His redemptive power. Abraham, an old man of 100 years old, and his wife 90; God promised them a Son. She was past the age of bearing children and he was an old man. The time of life had passed them by.

God said, *"you will have a son."* In **Romans 4:20** it says *"Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in faith giving glory to God."* Faith gives glory to God; faith gives glory to God. *"Being fully persuaded that what God had promised, He was able to perform."*

Do you mean that God is able to cleanse a guilty, filthy, old sinner, and make him as pure and as righteous as the Lord Jesus Christ himself? Yes sir; I surely do.

Do you mean that God is able to lift a sinner out of a spiritual grave and give him life eternal and take him to glory forever and glorify him with Christ? I surely do!

Do you mean God is able to reach down into the dust of death and raise our old bones and join our spirit with our bodies and raise us to everlasting life where we will ever live with Him? I sure do; I surely do!

Almighty God's power; He is able; *"He is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by Him. He is able to keep us from falling and to present us holy and without blame, spotless before His throne of glory."*

"He is able to raise our vile bodies and make them like unto His glorious body;" He is able.

Now there is a reason why He is able. This power of God to fulfill every saving promise is based on who He is; He is the God-man. It is based on what He did. He wrought out for us a perfect righteousness by His perfect life and a perfect atonement by His death.

Because of where He is, He is on the right hand of God. God is able:

**"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.**

**His purposes will ripen fast
Unfolding every hour
The bud may have a bitter taste**

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But sweet will be the flower.

**So ye fearful saints
Fresh courage take,
The cloud you so much dread
Are filled with blessings and will burst
With grace upon your head.”**