

# God Is, God Gives, You Must

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Date: 02 August 2009

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[0:00] 2 Peter 1, 1-11. Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ! have received a faith as precious as ours.

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

Through these, He has given us His very great and precious promises so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness and to goodness, knowledge, and to knowledge, self-control, and to self-control, perseverance, and to perseverance, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love.

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[1:33] But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I just don't have what it takes. Maybe you've said that before. I just don't have what it takes.

You don't have what it takes to finish that run that you began. Or you don't have what it takes to get out the door for the run in the first place. I can't finish this paper.

This project. I'm too tired. I don't have the supplies I need. I don't have the will to do it any longer. I just don't have what it takes.

[2:42] I can't do it. More significantly, maybe you've said that when discouraged in this Christian life. I just don't have what it takes.

Fighting sin and temptation is too hard. The affliction is too great. The worry and fear are overwhelming. And you say, I just can't do it.

Well, God's Word has something to encourage you tonight if you have ears to hear. Yes, you do. Yes, you do have what it takes.

By God's grace. Notice with me verses 3 and 4 again of 2 Peter 1. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises. So that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption and the world caused by evil desires.

[3:47] You see, as a child of God, you have everything for life and godliness. A life of following Christ in a world that hates him. And you may not feel that way tonight, but I want us to consider this sweet promise from God's Word.

And find encouragement from it tonight. Three things we want to see. God is. God gives. And you must. Two things about God and something about ourselves.

God is. We'll look at what he is. In this passage, what we see of him. God gives. What it is that he gives to us. And then what we must do.

There's something of our responsibility here as well. We begin with what God is. And it begins with his divine power. And stop with me for a minute to think about the power of God.

We see it displayed all sorts of ways. We caught a glimpse of it last Sunday. In hearing about the mighty God who answers prayer. A demonstration of his power in answering those prayers.

[4:45] We see it in creation around us. Ask one of the young people that were out at the Grand Canyon recently. If they saw something of the power of God. And looking at that just incredible, marvelous sight.

That no human hand could have ever made. A couple of times when I lived in California. I remember. More than a couple. But I remember experiencing the power of God. And the earth itself moving. Once in an earthquake. And the ground. I think I've probably said this before. But the ground is what's stable for us.

It's where we pour our foundation. This rock isn't going anywhere. It doesn't move. But to feel not just your body. Your house shaking. But the very ground that all of those things are sitting on shaking.

Is in some ways a terrifying thing. It's a humbling thing. God has taken the earth and he's shaking it like a toy. And that's power. That only God can demonstrate in an earthquake.

[5:45] The other time I felt the ground shake in California was at the roar of a lion. It was at a wild animal park. And you walk down and you look out. And I've probably told you this before too. And there's an area where they're enclosed.

But there's an area where they house the lions right underneath where you stand. When they're not out in the enclosure. And there was a lion under there one day when we were looking for him out here. He was in here.

And he roared. Or she roared. I don't know. Some lion roared. And the ground shook. That's a powerful lion. Just his voice could make the ground shake. And you know who made the lion? The powerful God. You hear his power in the thunder. You see what his mighty wind can do uprooting trees and blowing down fences. And destroying whole coastlines.

It's power. We see his power in redemption. If you've been saved, you need any greater demonstration of power than to think about your own sin. And your helplessness to do anything about it.

[6:44] But to see that God came and changed your heart. He broke your bondage to sin. Your slavery to sin. And delivered you to live a life of obedience and holiness.

That's power, brothers and sisters. That's not something that we just sort of shrug off. That's remarkable. God's might and strength in delivering us. He is so powerful he can raise the dead. 1 Corinthians 6.14 By his power, God raised the Lord from the dead and he will raise us also. I don't know anybody in the world that can do that. Can raise somebody from the dead. Only God can do that. We look at people and we marvel at their strengths.

Oh, he's strong. He's a strong athlete. He can hit home runs. Miles long. It's amazing. He can lift so much weight. He can hit people so hard when he tackles. Strong. But that's nothing.

That's nothing compared to the might and power of our God. Children, you sing it in a song you learn in Sunday school. My God is so big, so strong, and so mighty.

[7:45] There's nothing my God cannot do. That's what we're talking about. He's big. He's strong. He's mighty. There's nothing that God can't do. That's who God is.

He's powerful. But he's also a God who calls. We see his divine power. He is powerful. He is also the one who calls. It talks here in verse 1 about our knowledge of him who called us.

God is the one who calls. We see his power in this, too. Drawing lost sinners to himself. God issues a general call to all men.

When I preach and I plead with you to repent and to trust in Christ, that's a general call that goes forth. And that's as far as my power and authority go. I can call you to come to Christ.

But when God effectually calls, it affects something. It makes something happen. When he calls effectually, he draws you to himself. The call itself pulls you in. It's not like my call.

[8:42] I can say come all I want, but I can't draw you to Christ. But when God says come, he pulls you in. And it's irresistible. Peter talks about it back in his first letter. Chapter 2 and verse 9.

You're a chosen people. A royal priest to the holy nation. A people belonging to God that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

And he didn't just call you out. He drew you out. That call brought you out of darkness into light.

Kids, you know what it's like to be out playing. Maybe out of sight of the parents. And you hear the voice.

And in our house, it's, Ryan! Andrew! It's time for dinner! And of course you come running right away. Because you're all obedient children. Well, you don't always come running right away, do

you?

Because you're having too much fun playing. But you should. Because you should honor your father and mother. And you should obey. But imagine with me for a moment. If when they called you, all of a sudden you felt something pulling you back to the house.

[9:45] No hands. Nothing. Just an invisible force. It's pulling you. Their call would be effectual. It's drawing you in. That'd be kind of creepy, wouldn't it?

Kind of scary. But that's what God does. He calls. And when He calls you to Himself, He draws you. That's the God we're talking about. He's powerful. And He's the one who calls.

But He's also glorious and virtuous. Or glorious and good. He calls us by His own glory and goodness. It's not for anything in us that He calls us, but rather because He is glorious and good. And in the calling and drawing of us, His glory and goodness is demonstrated. It's clearly made plain to us. Isaiah 42 and verse 8 uses these two words. I am the Lord.

That is my name. I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. And that word praise there, when they translated the Old Testament into Greek, they used our word here for goodness or virtue.

[10:45] He won't give His goodness or His excellence or His praise to another. And if we claim some sort of responsibility for our response to God, oh, God called, but it was me that responded.

It was all about me. I'm saved because of my response. And if we take the credit, if we take the glory, it takes away from God's glory. It detracts from Him. And God won't give His glory to another. It's by His glory and virtue that He drew us in. And kids, how would you like it if you did something so kind and so generous to someone? You did something very nice for them. And it was out of the goodness of your heart.

But then the person to whom you were so kind and generous began to take all the credit. They got the glory for the good thing that you had done. And they were pretty pleased with themselves and other people.

He praises on them. And you're over here going, I'm the one that did it. Well, that's how God is. He won't give His glory to another. He doesn't want His praise to be given to men.

[11:44] And so God is powerful. He's the one who called us. He is glorious and He is good or virtuous. But secondly, God gives. God is, but God also gives.

Out of all that He is, He acts. And the giving in these two verses is directional. It's given to us. His divine power has given to us.

And the precious and very great promises are given to us. Twice it's very clear to us. To us that God gives. We're not virtuous. We're not worthy.

We're not lovable. We don't deserve the gift. But God gives anyway. If God acts in His power towards us, it should be to punish us. It should be to destroy us. That's what we have earned. That's what we deserve.

But instead, instead of that, He gives us great blessing. That's not what we find. He freely bestows. He lavishes on us. It's the picture of a Christmas tree.

[12:41] And gifts are piled underneath it. And kids, you didn't earn those gifts, did you? They wouldn't be called gifts if you had earned them. No, they're given to you because somebody loves you.

And they wanted to do something good for you. It's given, not earned. Well, everything for life and godliness is given to His people by His divine power.

You remember that power we just talked about? Power in creation and redemption. Power to answer prayer. Power. That power isn't just generic power. Wow, God is powerful. That power, God takes and He puts it to work for His people.

His divine power gives something to you. It gives you everything for life and godliness. There can be a mighty rushing river. And it's powerful. And if you've ever been caught in a current, you know that it's powerful.

But as long as it's there and the current's running, that's just power for power's sake. But if you build a dam, you know you can harness that power and turn it into electricity and use it for something good.

[13:44] Well, God has taken His great power. It's not just power that's floating out there. It's been harnessed and directed to be used for your good. God's taken that power and He's using it for our blessing.

You remember the song that we learn as children. My God is so big. I won't torch you by singing again. My God is so big, so strong, and so mighty. There's nothing my God cannot do for you. So goes a version of this song that I've heard. There's everything. What is it that He gives to us? It's everything for life and godliness. Seriously?

Everything? I mean, I need a lot. I don't know if Peter knew about my needs when he wrote this, but I need a lot for life and godliness. Well, yes.

There's enough for every godly man, woman, young person, or child. The position of the word everything is emphatic. It's right up in the middle. It's the second word of the verse and the first word is a tiny little preposition.

[14 : 48] And it's like He's calling our attention to it. Everything! Everything! Everything! For life and godliness. His divine power is giving you everything. There's no question. And God doesn't want us to misunderstand.

We need much to live this life. And God's power gives it all to us. I need strength. I need strength because I'm weak. We've seen that God has power for you.

2 Corinthians 13.4 For to be sure, He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by God's power.

Likewise, we are weak in Him, yet by God's power we will live with Him to serve you.

Live by God's power. I need power. I need strength. I need wisdom. I don't know how to view this world in my circumstances. I need wisdom to understand God's Word. I need... Well, His divine power is given everything.

And that includes wisdom. 1 Corinthians 1 and verse 30. It is because of Him, that's God, that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God. He's given us the wisdom we need.

[15 : 49] And if we lack wisdom, haven't we heard from the book of James, if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask. He should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

His power gives you this. He said, I need resources. I need resources to live... I think He's talking about the Christian life here in particular. He's writing to believers, those who have received a faith as precious as ours.

And He's given you everything you need to live that Christian life. You say, I need resources to live any kind of life. Oh, doesn't the God who clothes the field with lilies and feeds the birds of the air, doesn't He provide for us as well?

Hasn't He given us that need in our life? I need grace. This is the God of all grace. 1 Corinthians 1.4 I always thank God for you because of His grace given you in Christ Jesus.

I need forgiveness. I'm a sinner. I'm going to live this Christian life. I need forgiveness. And I need it ongoing. Not just once at the beginning, because I continue to sin. Ephesians 1.7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's grace.

[17 : 08] We have it. We need it. We have it. See, I need help against temptation because I still fight it every day. But most of you know the verse that I'm going to read.

1 Corinthians 10.13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful. He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but when you are tempted, He will provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

I need help in temptation. He gives you an escape from it. A way to bear up underneath it. He's given you everything. We need the Holy Spirit. He's given us this. 1 Corinthians 6.19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God?

He's given us that. And that Spirit in us. Ephesians 3.16 I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being. We need the Spirit.

He's given it to us. I need assurance. Romans 8.16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. We could go on and on.

[18 : 17] Things that we need for life and godliness. And God has supplied every one of those needs. Anything you can think of that you truly need, God gives it to you in His divine power.

That's amazing. That's hard for me to comprehend. When I work on a project, I usually don't have everything I need. I might think I do at the beginning. And so I'm working in the house and pretty soon I realize I don't have this tool.

I've got to go back to the shed and get this tool. And I come back in and I keep going, you know what? I don't have this tool then. I'm back to the shed. I don't have everything I need. And then

what's really annoying to me is when I have to make a trip to the hardware store.

I get that. I need a part. I need a piece. I need this. And I go and I get it. And I come back. And I get about three steps further in the project. And I go, oh, there's something else I don't have that I need. And I've got to go back to the hardware store. And did you know that Ace Hardware closes at 3.50 in the afternoon on Saturdays? I don't know what that's about. But man, it's frustrated me more than once.

[19:18] It's 3.50. Like four. I get that. But anyway, I don't have everything that I need. But God's not like that. It's not like you get partway into your Christian life and say, Lord, I need this.

And He doesn't look around and go, oh, I didn't think of that. He's not like us. Everything. Everything that you need. He provides.

And that means that we can't blame God for our shortcomings. And I say, God, you haven't given me what I need to get this done. No, He has. And we can't hang our heads and say, I just can't do it. I don't have what it takes. Yes, you do by God's grace. Not on your own, but by the grace and power of God. And to say you don't is to question God's power and His promise. And so whatever God has called you to in this life, brothers and sisters, you Christian homemakers, you have everything that you need to order your home according to God's Word and to raise your children. You breadwinners, you have everything you need to get through your godless workplace every day and to provide for your family. Christian parent, you're overwhelmed by this parenting class that we're having down here.

[20:31] And you see your shortcomings and your failures every week like I have. His divine power has given you everything that you need to raise your children.

Christian minister has given you everything you need for being a faithful minister to God's people of Word and Sacrament. Everything.

Christian student, you have everything you need to do your work, to stand up to the peer pressure that you face every day in your school. Whatever God has called you to do, you have everything you need to do it and to be godly in so doing.

So go and do it in His power. I'm going to come back to the kids again. Can you imagine if some kind, generous person that you know decided to give you everything that you need in this life, physically speaking.

They came along and they brought you all the clothes that you needed, all the food that you could eat. They gave you a home to live in, a car to drive. They put money aside for your college education. They gave you everything. And then money for all of that stuff the rest of your life so you'd never be in want.

[21:41] They thought of everything and they gave it all to you. Enough to last you until you die. Well, that's what God does for everyone He calls to be Christians.

Everything that they need to follow Him, He gives them. And that's enough, isn't it? But you know what? God's not done giving. There's more. Along with everything that we need for life and godliness, verse 4, through these He has given us His very great and precious promises.

God doesn't only call us and give us everything to follow that call through the same glory and virtue by which He calls us. Through these He also gives us precious and very great promises.

And because God's precious promises flow to us through His glory and virtue, there's a tie between verse 3 and verse 4. It's all one sentence in the Greek. Knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

Through these, through His glory and goodness, He's given us His very great and precious promises. Now because those promises come through His glory and His virtue, they are utterly trustworthy.

[22:50] Now the promises of a dirty, shady, cheat, a charlatan, those aren't valuable to us. I'm not comforted by that.

But when they come from the glorious and good, virtuous God, oh, then we can lay hold of them. We can trust them fully. And precious speaks of value, doesn't it?

And in today's world, a promise isn't really very valuable. We don't think of a promise as something that has value or weight. Somebody's promised their word and their handshake. I need something more than that.

I need a signed contract that's carefully worded. I'd like it notarized in the presence of several witnesses. Promises don't carry a lot of weight. They're not very valuable.

That's not the case, though, with the promises that God gives us. They are precious. They are valuable. Their worth is beyond measure. Peter talks this way about the blood of Christ in 1 Peter 1, 18-19.

[23:51] For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

The promises of God are precious. They're valuable like the blood of Christ is precious and valuable. And these two things are connected. The promises are precious to us because those things promised are secured for us by the blood of Christ.

He's the one that earned the right for us to enjoy those promises. It's His blood that was shed so that we might enjoy them. We don't deserve them, but we receive them because of what Christ... Just the price that Christ paid for us to enjoy those promises should show us their value. Jesus' priceless treasure. 2 Corinthians 1.20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are, yes, in Christ.

And that makes them precious. They're valuable. And they are very great. Or the greatest. It's the word great and it's in the superlative form and this is the only place in the Bible that it's used that way.

[25:04] Or that that form occurs. And aren't God's promises the greatest? I love this. Paul's speaking our language. He's talking in a way we can understand. We say, He's the greatest, man.

And that's what Paul's saying. God's the greatest. His promises are the best. Nothing can compare with them. His promise is greater than any, of course, a human could make.

And we could take a whole series of sermons to look at all the promises of God. His faithfulness. His presence. His enduring presence with His people. His answering our prayers. His salvation. Well, listen to just a couple that Peter records for us. 1 Peter 5 and verse 4. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

That's a promise. That's a guarantee for God's children. You're going to receive a crown of glory. Or 2 Peter 3 and verse 13. But in keeping with His promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

[26:05] We are looking forward to heaven where we'll find rest from affliction and sin and temptation and unsatisfied desires. We are eagerly anticipating it, I hope. But we would be fools to be looking forward to that if God hadn't promised it.

But He has. And so we're not fools. And isn't verse 3 that we've just looked at? A marvelous promise. His divine power has given us everything for life and godliness.

Precious promises. You remember, kids, the generous person that gave you everything that you need for your life. Imagine now that they gave you guarantees. Guarantees that they proved somehow they could back up.

That your life would always be protected. That you would have joy and peace. That you would never need to fear or worry. And they would always be there to help you if you ever had any need. You say, there's nobody in the world that can do that.

You're right. But God can. And He has. He's given us those promises. And so we praise Him for it. One other thing that He gives us, and that is participation in the divine nature.

[27:09] Precious and very great promises at the end of verse 4, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature. Through the fulfillment of these promises, He gives this privilege of partaking in His nature.

Now these words cause trouble for a lot of people. I don't think they have to. We're not partakers in the divine being. We don't become God. It's not some pantheism where there's something of God in all of us and in everything and so we worship everything and we worship ourselves.

That's not what Peter's talking about. In fact, Peter's taking the language of pagan, worldly philosophers in his day and he's reclaiming that language for Christianity. So what does it mean to be partakers of the divine nature?

Well, remember that we're all created in the image of God. An image that was marred by sin in the fall. But in redemption, as we partake of the promises and power of God, that image is being restored in us.

We are becoming more and more like Christ. More and more like God. And one aspect of partaking of the divine nature is to be like God. To be virtuous as He is.

[28:17] To be good as He is. And that's why He continues to exhort us to this in the verses that follow. We're going to look at verses 5 and following very briefly in a moment. But just verse 5 there.

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith. Goodness. And that's our word. God is glorious and good. You need to be good like God is good. Virtuous as He is.

And so, we're becoming like Him in that way. And when we get to heaven, we'll be glorious as He is glorious. More on that in a moment. But it's more than just being like God and made in His image.

We're also in union with Christ by His Spirit dwelling in us. So that we do share or fellowship. And that's the word here. Fellowship. You're fellowshippers or partakers in the divine nature.

So that we fellowship so closely and intimately with God. We're joined to Christ and our union is so close that when we go and Paul says when we join ourselves to a prostitute, we're dragging Christ with us.

[29:23] 1 Corinthians 6.15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ Himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never. You see how close and intimate our union with Christ is.

And how we share with Him in the things that God shares in. We're so united with Him that we are partakers, sharers in His suffering. 1 Peter 4.13 Rejoice that you participate.

That's our word. That you participate in the sufferings of Christ. so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed. And we will participate. We will be partakers in His glory too.

1 Peter 5.1 To the elders among you I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who will also who will share, that's our word, partake in the glory to be revealed.

Partakers of the divine nature in that we are made in the image of God. We are becoming more like Him and we are joined in union with Christ. Remember the nice man?

[30:27] Gave you everything that you need? And then he gave you promises and guarantees. Well, he also wants you to be like he is. He wants you to be good and generous to other people.

Not to just take all that generous blessing for yourself. And we are to be partakers of the divine nature. This he gives us. And so, God is, God gives, and now you must.

There's great promise and blessing in these verses, but if you look closely, there is responsibility as well. And it sets us up for a passage of exhortation. And so let's consider our part tonight.

First thing we must do is we must know Him. The giving of everything for life and godliness does not happen in a vacuum.

It happens through the knowledge of Him who called us. See it there in verse 3. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us.

[31:27] The word our isn't there in the Greek, but it's true that we must know Him. The knowledge must be ours. And if we don't know Him, we won't receive everything we need for life and godliness.

And that's sort of obvious. It's this generous man that we've been talking about. He's given you everything. But if you don't know Him, and He doesn't know you, and we're talking about more than just a passing acquaintance, then He's not going to know you're in need.

He's not going to give you anything if you don't know Him. You've got to know Him first. And so if you want to receive these promises, these blessings, you have to know God. The gift that comes to us is through that knowledge of God.

So do you know Him? If you've rejected God, and you're not trusting in Him, you're not one of these people that He describes up in verses 1 and 2, those who have received a faith as precious as ours. If you've rejected Him, then you don't know Him. You can know all about God. You can come to church every day of your life and know all about God and still not know Him. And love Him. And trust Him.

[32:34] And serve Him. You must come to repentance of sin and faith in His Son Christ. You have to know these realities personally.

And if you haven't, I beg you tonight, I'm going to give you a call to come to Christ, to flee to Him, to put your hope and trust in Him. And then you can know God and you can enjoy these great and precious promises.

But if you don't come to Him, then you won't enjoy these blessings. You won't have everything that you need. But having done so, having come to Christ and trusted in Him, as many of you have done, you must be growing in that knowledge of Him.

2 Peter 3, verse 18, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To Him be both glory now and forever. Amen. So how can you grow in your knowledge of God so that you can receive the everything that you need?

Well, we grow in the knowledge of God when we read His revelation of Himself. Here's where He reveals Himself. If you want to know Him, then read this book. Don't rest satisfied that you've come to Christ and have the basics.

[33 : 42] If you really want to be growing in grace and enjoying the fullness of this promise, keep learning. Keep reading. It's your lifeline. Read it every day. And come to know God more and more.

Better and better. Pray to Him. Talk to this God. It's that essential element of communion with God. Walking closely with Him. You can't know someone if you never talk with them. So talk with God. And the more closely you walk, the better you'll come to know Him. Come to church. Hear His Word. Fellowship with His saints. Learn about how God is working in their lives.

What we do here is not optional for the Christian life. It's not for the people that are really spiritual. If you want everything for life and godliness, then you better know God. And here is where you can come to know Him.

And deepen that knowledge week by week. Watch how God is working in your life and in the lives of other people around you. And you'll come to know Him better as you see His plan unfolding perfectly.

[34 : 40] Not your plan. And you wouldn't have done it that way. But as you see how God's working, you come to know Him better. And your fear and your worry begin to subside. And you see that the better you get to know God, the more you see of this promise that you really do have everything you need for life and godliness.

My worry and fear, they're subsiding as I see God doing all things well. So we must know Him. But there's something else here, at least implicit, that we must do.

Those who partake of the divine nature are also escaping that which is in the world literally by the desire of corruption. It's at the end of verse 4. So that through His promises, you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

The desire of corruption. These promises are not for those who are still seeking the corrupt things of this world. We can take corruption a couple of ways here.

It's a word that talks about decay. That which is decaying and temporary. A word used of our physical bodies in 1 Corinthians 15. So it will be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown perishable, corruptible, subject to decay, temporary, that body will be raised imperishable.

[36 : 00] So it can refer to things that don't last. Things that are corruptible. But it can also mean moral corruption. 2 Peter 2.19 They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of depravity.

That's our word. Slaves of corruption. For a man is slave to whatever is mastered in. And I think we can take it both ways here. Now we can't escape our corruptible bodies. That you can't escape. But we can be escaping our desire for that which is fleeting and temporary. And fixing our hearts on what is lasting and eternal. The things that really matter. And we must be escaping that which is morally impure and clinging rather to the holy, virtuous God.

And you can't just blame the wicked world in which we live. There's a lot of corruption in the world. And I can't help that. The desire is in your heart. It's the things that are in the world by the desire of corruption.

It's the things that you want by nature as sinners. So don't blame the world. Rather be escaping it. Be fleeing it. Don't make friends with the world and all that's temporary and wicked.

[37 : 08] It will be your downfall. Partakers of the divine nature, those who are seeking to be like God and are joined to Christ will not be pursuers of what is unholy and impure.

Paul paints a different picture of what we should be thinking about. What we should be pursuing. Philippians 4.8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent, that's our word virtuous, good.

If anything is excellent or virtuous or good or praiseworthy, think about such things. Don't pursue corruption. Those are the things we should be fleeing and escaping. But rather pursue that which is good.



That's the outlook of one who knows God, who loves Him and is a partaker of the divine nature. It's a sobering thing to think about our union with Christ and how we should be more and more like our God.

Will you drag God into the corruption of the world with you? Would you watch that movie or TV show or read that magazine or book or go to that place if God were there watching and reading and going with you?

[38 : 19] He is. He is there. And so may God make us faithful to be fleeing, to be escaping the desire of corruption.

Well, what's the point of all this? It's leading into verses 5 and following. Notice just verses 5 through 7 with me. He gives us these promises and then says, for this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness and to goodness knowledge and to knowledge self-control and to self-control perseverance and to perseverance godliness and to godliness brotherly kindness and to brotherly kindness love.

What? I can't do that. Oh, don't forget what he's just told you. That list is overwhelming to me.

I need to make every effort to add those things in my life. To be demonstrating, I can't do that. Yes, you can. And he's just told you how. His divine power has given you everything that you need for life and godliness, partaking and escaping.

These two verses that we've considered tonight are really, in some ways, just a stepping stone for what follows. Now, it's a beautiful stepping stone. It's a diamond. It's something I hope you lay hold of these verses and find much comfort in them.

[39 : 43] These verses, and you read all the way down and you find that exhortation in verse 10 to make your calling and election sure. And what we find in the first verses of 2 Peter is just as much a juxtaposition, a putting next to each other, of the truths of divine sovereignty and human responsibility as we find in Philippians 2.

We like to quote Philippians 2, 12 and 13. Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. That's something for you to do. You work it out with fear and trembling.

4. It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. Which is it? Do I work it out or is God working?

Yes. And Peter is saying the same thing here. Which is it? Do I need to make every effort? Or has God given me everything that I need? Yes, is the answer.

Both. And so here it is. He gives us everything. But we must know Him. We must be escaping the desire of corruption. We must be making every effort to add virtue and knowledge and self-control and perseverance and godliness and brotherly kindness and love.

[40 : 56] We must be making our calling and election sure. But we only do it by His promises. And with everything He gives for life and godliness. And it's like Peter, he started to say this.

In v. 3, it begins with a preposition. And we can translate it here, because. And he starts, because His divine power has given us everything we need. And it's like he gets lost in this long sentence. And he's got to stop at the end of v. 4 and start again in v. 5. So because His divine power has given us everything we need, and then he expands on it, the promises and these things. And then he comes back to his point.

Because of these promises, for this very reason, make every effort. He's tying these things together. He's not just going to exhort us to work hard and leave us in despair.

He gives us the promises that precede it. And so we must pursue virtue, but we do it in the strength of the virtuous God. what encouragement that is.

[42 : 00] So you say you don't have what it takes. Too much. Peter says, yes, you do. God says, yes, you do. I've given it to you by my divine power. And you see the beauty of this then.

There's no room for us to be lazy and to coast home to heaven. Not exerting, not expending ourselves in the Christian life. No, we must make every effort. We've got a lot of work to do as Christians.

And so we can't just coast home and say, oh, God's going to get me there. He's given me everything I need. No, there's work for us to do. But on the other hand, there's no room for pride here. There's no room for us to say, look at all of this goodness and knowledge and self-control and brotherly kindness that I'm putting on.

I'm doing a really pretty fine job in the Christian life. There's no room for that because it's only because His divine power has given you everything that you're able to do it. There's no room for

pride.

And then there's no room for despair either. There's no room to throw up your hands and say, I can't do it. Too big. Too hard, God. You're asking something entirely unreasonable of me.

[43:03] We can't say that either because His divine power has given us everything that we need for life and godliness. He's supplying all those needs. And so let's praise Him tonight for His promises and for His supply of strength.

And let's pursue Him tonight with hearts that are on fire for the Lord and wanting to be more and more like Him and pursuing these things. Go home and spend some time with verses 5 to the end of the chapter and see what we should be pursuing.

Let's praise Him and let's pursue Him. His divine power is giving us everything that we need to do so. Let's pray. Our Father, we thank You.

We are unworthy. We don't deserve these blessings. We don't deserve these promises. And so we thank You for the precious blood of Christ tonight that has purchased these things for us.

We thank You for Your great grace. For Your very great promises. And we pray that You would encourage our hearts with these things. May we not throw up our hands in despair.

[44:07] But rather look to You and trust You for the grace and strength that we need for each day. And we pray then that You would make us a people that long to know You better.

That pursue a deeper knowledge of You. That pursue holiness. And that are escaping and fleeing the corruption that is in this world. That which we still have desire for in our hearts.

Help us to put that to death. And we thank You that You've given us everything that we need. And so send us away from here encouraged, knowing that You will not leave us, You will not forsake us, but that You will carry us safely home.

And for any here who are apart from Christ, we pray that they would come to know You tonight.

That You would open their eyes. That they would see the precious blood of Jesus shed on behalf of sinners like them.

And may they cry out, would You effectually call some to Yourself tonight. That they might join us on this glorious journey to a glorious and unspeakably glorious heaven.

[45:08] We pray that You would give us grace to help each other along the way. To draw back those that are wandering. To bring them in. That You might receive the reward of the labors that Christ has done.

We thank You for what He has done. And we pray in His name. Amen. Amen.