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Subject: Precious Promises - 2 Peter 1:3-4

"According as His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the Knowledge of Him that has 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."
2 Peter 1:3-4

Greetings once again my beloved friends, our Lord has allowed us the privilege of uniting together around His Book of "precious promises" and O how "precious" they are!

They are our "songs of deliverance" (Ps. 32:7); they are "sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (Ps. 19:10); they are better than "thousands of gold and silver" (Ps. 119:72); and they are the "joy and rejoicing" of our hearts! (Jer. 15:16). God's Word is so "exceeding great," that King David's heart was so filled with joy that he burst out in utter gratitude in Psalm 119:48

"My hands also will I lift up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in Thy statutes."

Like when an officer shines his flashlight and aims his pistol at a thief and shouts, "Freeze!" and the criminal stops what he's doing, drops his weapons and tools, and lifts his hands up in the air; so are we beloved, when God ~~renew~~^{shines} His Spirit and renews our hearts by faith in Jesus Christ - the Son of God - and are powerfully contrasted with the Word of God; we should cease our criminal behaviour, and lift up our hands unto God, and embrace His commandments.

All of our unsaved life we use our hands to perform our desires, now we may use them to perform His desires.

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Romans 6:13

Do you see this operating in your life, beloved? Well if we truly are "born again", we should. We should see progress in our Christian life by way of greater conformity to the will of God, this is what is meant by "grow in grace." Like a lily in a pot of dirt; whether that lily is one inch tall, two inches, or more; it is still a lily, yet all the while it must grow and bloom. So must we beloved, notice how God doesn't say that "you will grow in grace" as if to say, "Don't do anything, I will make you grow." Rather, the Bible says, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen." (2 Peter 3:18). He tells us to grow! Think about that. If I yell "Grow!" at that lily in the pot of dirt, will it ~~grow~~ sprout right up and bloom?

Of course not, we know that God makes that lily grow; just like He makes us grow; Paul writes, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. 3:6) But unlike that lily, it's God's desire and

pleasure for us to seek to grow. It should be our desire to please our Saviour by way of loving obedience to His Word. Therefore the undependable worker should try to be better for his Lord; the angry wife should try to be more loving; the husband that neglects his wife and children should try to love his wife as Christ "loved the church, and gave Himself for her" (Eph. 5:25) and to safeguard the spiritual health of his family.

These are only a few examples, but this principle applies to all of our life - we should remember that it is an honour to be a Christian, and so we should seek to improve upon every aspect of our life. Never be content to be a "D" Kind of Christian; rather, we should always strive for "A's".

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye

"transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:1-2

Whether you have just recently become a Christian, or you have been ~~one~~ for many years now - and though the saying goes, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," - you're not a dog beloved, and if you're His, you have His Holy Spirit within you.

Sometimes we get the impression that the Bible is all types and figures; but this is not true. Are there many types and figures in the Bible? Absolutely, but that is not all; in fact, very much of the Bible is ~~practical~~ practical doctrine for life.

"According as His divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue:"

You see beloved, God doesn't leave us unequipped for the job. He has atoned for our sins, given us His Holy Spirit, and these beautiful "precious promises," so God has given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" - you hear that? Have some of your "tools" been collecting dust beloved? Have you stashed them in a drawer somewhere, and maybe forgot where you placed them? It happens all too often in our physical life, ^{but} has it been going on in your spiritual life?

The beauty of it all beloved, ^{is} that it doesn't have to continue that way, change can begin today.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these [meaning, by these "precious promises"] ye might be partakers of the divine nature [the more we obey these "precious promises" the more we are conformed into the image of Christ], having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:3-4

Does this all mean that it should all be easy? Can we simply make a list of all of our sins, check them all off and be done with them all?

No, it doesn't work that way beloved, it takes a lot of work, and a lot of perseverance; but like Paul wrote in Philippians 4:13 we "can do all things through Christ Who strengthens" us. What's that? What was that we just read? That's right beloved, a precious promise; and the Bible is full of them. Our greatest delight, comes by believing them, by believing God's "precious promises."

God willing, next week we will get into some particulars beginning with you ~~all~~ ^{husbands}. Until next time, live in His presence and feed on Christ by faith.

Your servant for Jesus's sake,

Heidi F. Whelan

Teach Me, O Lord, Thy Way of Truth by Holbrook.

Teach me, O Lord, Thy way of truth,
and from it I will not depart;
that I may steadfastly obey,
give me an understanding heart.

In Thy commandments make me walk,
for in Thy law my joy shall be;
give me a heart that loves Thy will,
from discontent and envy free.

Turn Thou mine eyes from vanity,
and cause me in Thy ways to tread;
O let Thy servant prove Thy Word
and thus to godly fear be led.

Turn Thou away reproach and fear,
Thy righteous judgments, I confess;
to know Thy precepts I desire,
revive me in Thy righteousness.