



Pastor's Pen

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.

2 Peter 1:4

Dear Bethel Church family and friends,

Grace and peace to you from our great God. I pray you are well. For my regular readers, you may recall that the recent focus of these monthly missives has been on exploring the biblical traits of a child of God, as recorded in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. As I've been praying about what comes next and watching the building connector take shape after ten long years of planning, praying, and hard work, the Lord has laid something a bit different on my heart. What is it? It's what Peter writes about in his second letter to the church, what the apostle calls God's **"very great and precious promises."**

Why God's revealed assurances? Maybe this illustration will help you better understand. There was a man who got lost in the desert. As he was wandering around, his throat became parched. Just about that time, he saw a little shack in the distance, so he made his way over to the lonely building. Upon his arrival, he found a water pump with a small jug of water and a note.

The note read: *"Pour all the water into the top of the pump to prime it. If you do this, you will get all the water you need."* Now the man had a choice to make. Did he trust the note and pour the water in? Or, did he instead drink the small jug that was already present and immediately quench his thirst? If he followed the instructions and poured the water into the pump, his needs **might** be met. But if it didn't work, he would still be thirsty, and he could very well die.

After thinking about it, the man decided to take the risk. Pouring the entire jug into the pump, he began to work the handle. At first, nothing happened, and he became anxious. But he kept going, despite appearances, and at last water began to flow from the pump. In fact, so much water flowed from the well that he drank to his heart's content, took a shower, and filled all the containers he could find. Because he was willing to trust the promise of

the note and give up momentary satisfaction, he got everything he needed.

Bethel, we have the same choice to make. Do we hold on to what we have because we don't believe there are better things in store for us, settling for immediate satisfaction? Or do we trust God and surrender all that we have to receive what God has promised us? Brothers and sisters, I think the choice is obvious. We need to be all in, trusting God with everything.

Thankfully, this is a topic to which all of us, from the very young to our most senior saint, are accustomed. How come? Because promises are simply a part of our lives as humans, both in their making and, unfortunately, in their breaking. Truly, there are many reasons why this is the case. Sometimes, as finite creatures, we forget what we have promised others we will do. At other times, we neglect our vows through our own sinfulness, and occasionally we are unable to keep our promises due to providential circumstances beyond our control. And lest we forget, a vow has no more value to us than the ability of the one who made it to bring it to pass. We can promise our loved ones the moon, but since we can't provide it, that promise is empty.

However, since we love and serve a sovereign God, one who continues to control the workings of the vast universe, the same cannot be said about the promises He's made to us. But maybe you've forgotten the pledges God has made in His Word. Or perhaps you've never taken the time to get to know the guarantees our Lord has made to His covenant people. In an effort to overcome these obstacles, I want to spend several months examining the vows God makes to us in the Scriptures, both what He tells us He will do for us and how those promises are fulfilled in our daily lives today.

For, as we find in the OT book of Numbers, the prophet Balaam was hired by the Moabite King Balak to curse the people of God. Instead of blaspheming the Israelites, Balaam blesses them. Why? Because, as he tells Balak, **"God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?"** (Num 23:19)

May God help us understand and rest in the promises He has made to us as we study them together.

Blessings in Christ, Pastor Chris

this week

Sunday's sermon:

Coram Deo

1 Peter 1:17-21

events

MS Girls Discipleship Group
9/28 at 4:00 pm

Kids' Quest
9/28 at 5:00 pm

Youth
9/28 at 5:00 pm

GriefShare
9/30 at 6:30 pm

Men's Bible Study
10/1 at 6:00 am

GriefShare
10/1 at 1:00 pm

Mentors & Moms
10/2 at 9:30 am

volunteer schedule

Infant Nursery

Ann Carol Love
& Cindy Love

Toddler Nursery

Laura, Brent, &
Macie Clinton

Worship Training

Peggy & David
Long

The Young Adults' community group will meet on 10/5, at Ross and Judi Love's home. We are joyful to begin this time of fellowship together! See Matt Clay for more details.