

"Standing on the Promises of God"

"For all the promises of God in Him are Yea and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us."

2 Corinthians 1:20

When dealing with the Corinthian assembly, Paul had to defend his apostleship on a few occasions to this group of gifted believers. It is an amazing aspect of Christian ministry that someone Paul had the tables turned on him after establishing them in the faith. But such are the vacillations of the work of the Lord that we can be abounding one moment and suffering the next, sometimes in the same week. Ironically, those who should have gratefully acknowledged their indebtedness to Paul actually turned against him through the influence of false teachers who exhibited little care for their spiritual welfare. When Paul's plans changed through the providence of God, they seized on this fact and twisted it to make it seem that he was fickle in his commitment to them (v. 17). Guided by the Spirit, Paul reminded them that God is faithful and that though our plans may change, He does not, nor does His promises to His people.

The Precious Promises of God

In 2 Peter 1:3-4, Peter refers to the promises of God as exceedingly great and precious, one of a number of precious things that he highlights in his two epistles. It is through these promises that we have the desire and capacity to live a godly life and to escape the corruption that is the world through lust. First, He promises salvation ("life") to those who turn to His Son, and then promises that through this life we also have everything that pertains to godliness - that's sanctification. Salvation and sanctification, the two parts of the Christian life available to those who exercise faith and belief in the Word of God. May every reader take these words to heart! If salvation in Christ has not been your experience yet, you can have it today by acknowledging your need of Christ and confessing Him as your Savior. It is that simple. He promised before time began that eternal life comes this way (Titus 1:2). Don't delay, do it today.

However, I am also addressing another part of the Christian life to those who have taken that wonderful step of faith. We are encouraged in Colossians 2:6 that just as we have received the Lord Jesus, so we are to walk in Him. This same principle of faith should be at work in our lives all the time just as it was when we first trusted Him. However, it has been my experience to see many who have entered into the first part of this verse to the glory of God, have only taken baby steps in regard to the second part of that verse. Just as it would be strange to see a grown adult sitting at a desk in a room full of second graders, so too, it seems strange that someone who has been on the path of faith for many years is not advancing in the school of God but still grappling with the basics (Heb. 6:1-2). It was David who penned the words of Psalm 103:7 when he said that God "*made known His ways to Moses and His acts to the children of Israel.*" At first glance, it would seem these words are a statement of praise. But actually it was a rebuke to the nation of Israel. God had made His ways known to Moses because he was faithful in all God's house (Num. 12:6-8). He understood the reasons why God moved as He did. All that Israel could do however was to discern only the overt acts of His powerful manifestations among them and not the reasons behind them. As His Word reminds us: "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him*" (Ps. 25:14).

What Makes the Difference?

So what makes the difference in the lives of those Christians who are making great strides in their walk with the Lord and those who are not? I believe the answer is when we tap into these promises through the diligent reading of God's Word and fully comprehend their import in our lives. When Paul said to

Timothy, “*lay hold of eternal life*,” he was not encouraging him to come to Christ. He already had done that. Instead, he was challenging him to grasp the reality of eternal truths and to appropriate them in his life, something that we need to do every day.

As a child of God, all Christians are encouraged to do what many heroes of the faith did with the promises of God – to be persuaded of them, embrace them, and confess that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth (Heb. 11:13). These promises are part of the spiritual inheritance and blessings that we have in Christ. Ephesians 1 identifies a number of them that we receive the moment we believe. 1 Peter 1 reminds us that these blessings are reserved for us in heaven (v.4). 1 Kings 8:56 reminds us that none of God’s promises which He has promised has ever fallen to the ground. What do we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?! We can certainly say with the hymn writer, “*Blessings all mine and then thousand beside!*” Further, the spiritual picture in Joshua 1 reminds the NT believer of the prerequisites of entering the land, just as the children of Israel needed to enter into their inheritance. Like Israel, we need to realize that there is indeed: a “land” to possess (vv. 1-5); a word to obey – the Bible (vv. 6-9); a lesson to learn – the danger of border-line living (vv. 10-15); and a Leader to follow – the Lord, the Captain of our salvation (vv.16-18). Like Samuel, we need to make sure that we don’t let any of God promises fall to the ground (1 Sam. 3:19), but incorporate them in our daily walk with the Lord.

Every promise in the Book is mine, every chapter every verse, every line,

All are blessings of His love divine, every promise in the Book is mine!