

Living Hope:
The Ultimate Word on our Living Hope
2 Peter 1:3-21

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Introduction to Text: Our text today comes from 2 Peter. The author of 1 and 2 Peter is the apostle Peter that we are familiar with in the Gospels and Acts. During the ministry of Jesus, no other person is more important to the story than Peter. You will remember that Peter was the one who first identified Jesus as being the “Christ.” (Matthew 16) Peter is the primary preacher of the early church proclaiming the significance of the resurrection of the Lord. (Acts 2) Peter’s influential background is the backdrop of the importance of these two letters. These letters are written to “those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” That is, these are letters written to Christians who have been scattered perhaps as a result of their beliefs, but not necessarily so. They may have been scattered simply at the whim of the Roman government. Nevertheless, the idea of being a stranger is figuratively true for these believers. Peter desires to make the point that as believers they are strangers in this world. Their beliefs are foreign. Here is where these two books begin to take on contemporary application for the modern day believer in Christ. We also are strangers in this world. Our beliefs are foreign to the world around us. Our beliefs, desires, and habits of holiness are often thought of as foreign and silly among an unbelieving world. And as such, we sometimes fall into patterns of the world and lose our pursuit of holiness. This text speaks to that struggle that we often feel.

We have spent several weeks in 1 Peter, essentially going through this wonderful book verse-by-verse. Today, I want you to see the beginning of Peter’s second letter—called 2 Peter. We find there an “Ultimate Word on our Living Hope.”

Text: ³His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴By these he has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, ⁶knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, ⁷godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being useless or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹The person who lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten the cleansing from his past sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election, because if you do these things you will never stumble. ¹¹For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you. ¹²Therefore I will always remind you about these things, even though you know them and are established in the truth you now have. ¹³I think it is right, as long as I am in this bodily tent, to wake you up with a reminder, ¹⁴since I know that I will soon lay aside my tent, as our Lord Jesus Christ has indeed made clear to me. ¹⁵And I will also make every effort so that you are able to recall these things at any time after my departure.

¹⁶For we did not follow cleverly contrived myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; instead, we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying “This is my beloved

Son, with whom I am well-pleased!”¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice when it came from heaven while we were with him on the holy mountain.¹⁹ We also have the prophetic word strongly confirmed, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.²⁰ Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet’s own interpretation,²¹ because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Introduction: In a rather famous sermon from Billy Graham, Graham identified that all of us have three common fears: the fear of emptiness, the fear of guilt, and the fear of death itself. Graham then outlined from the 23rd Psalm how God helps us with each of those fears. The same is true of this passage before us today.

Everything! You see that word in verse 3. Do you believe that? Everything! You have all you need in Christ.

R. C. Sproul observed, “The issue of faith is not so much whether we believe in God, but whether we believe the God we believe in.”

Do you believe that God is enough? This is the ultimate word of our “Living Hope.”

God gives us power for everything required for life and godliness.

Here’s the big picture of verses 3-4. God provides everything you need for life and godliness. The emphasis on this passage is godliness, but we can’t help but pause a moment on that word life. I guess we should understand the context is what you need not what you want. Nevertheless, this is a big deal. Notice, as we consider verses 3 and 4, several things about God’s provision.

- The Power—His Power (Divine)
- The Parameters—Everything required for life and godliness
- The Pathway—Relationship through His Work
- The Purpose—His Glory and goodness

God gives us Powerful and Precious Promises.

The promises of God are unlimited, but a few are pointed out by this text. We share in the divine nature and we escape the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires.

Now, sharing in the divine nature does not mean here “becoming God,” but rather being conformed into the image of God or put simply, “becoming godly.” He has given us everything we need for this. Irenaeus, a second century theologian said, “God became what we are, out of His immeasurable love for us, in order to make us what He is.”

If we are not growing in godliness, this is not God’s fault, this is our fault. So, we have a plan.

God gives us a plan to grow in godliness.

Here is the big idea: We cannot become godly without His power and grace, but we must be willing participants in getting to godliness. There is a balance.

- 7 Areas to Consider:
 - (1) Goodness—moral character
 - (2) Knowledge—different word than knowledge in verse 3. Knowledge relationally and theologically are both necessary.
 - (3) Self-control
 - (4) Endurance
 - (5) Godliness
 - (6) Brotherly love
 - (7) Love—agape
- These are not 7 steps to godliness, but a continuing cycle!

Notice that we are to be increasing in these areas (v. 8).

There is an interesting Greek word back in verse 5 that is helpful in illustrating this balance of God's part and our part. The word is the one translated, "supplement." The Greek word is *epichorego*. The word comes from the Greek drama world. The *choregos* was the financier of the chorus that participated in the theater. This was very expensive and so a very rich individual was sought after to cooperate with the poet and the state to put on the show. The *choregos* partnered with the ones who supplied the other things required.

We are to be the ones who partner with God, the supplier of all power to be godly.

So What?

Read these words as Testimony of God's Sufficiency.

Think of Peter. Peter had been an eyewitness to the grace of God.

- Acts 2—Peter preached and 3,000 are saved.
- Acts 3—Peter and John were met by a man who was lame who begged them for money. Peter said, "I don't have silver or gold, what I do have, I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!" And he did.
- Still in Acts 3, Peter preached again and another 2,000 people are saved.
- Acts 4—Peter and John are arrested. They are released being warned not to preach again of Jesus. But Peter and John responded that they could not be silent.
- Acts 5—They are rearrested, but an angel of the Lord opened the door during the night.
- Acts 12—A second time Peter is released from prison.

Peter knew of the sufficiency of God.

Recognize these words as a Test of our Standing before the Lord.

Look at verse 10. This is how we know that we know that we have been saved. This is not the work to do to be saved, but the result of being saved.

Respond to Teaching so as not to Stumble.

Put your hope in Him and in His Word!

Last night I went to my 30th High School Reunion. Here is my take away—a lot can happen in 30 years. But, as I look back over those 30 years, “His Divine Power has given me everything I need for life and godliness.”