

Title: Confirming Your Calling (Part 3)

Passage: 2 Peter 1:5a

Theme Growing in the knowledge of grace demonstrates the reality of grace

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{{Read Passage}}

This AM we continue in this section of 2 Peter that I've entitled "Confirming Your Calling."

In that regard, Peter's words in v. 10 are central to the passage:

"be diligent to make your calling and election sure, for in doing these things you will never fall."

These words point in 2 different but not unrelated directions. On t/one hand we're told to be sure about our salvation, that t/danger always lurks among those in t/CH that someone may be a professor of Christ and yet not a possessor of Christ. He may affirm in his head what he denies in his heart.

Such are those of whom Jesus speaks in Matt. chapt. 7 when He warns about those who could be so religious as to prophesy, cast out demons, and do miracles "In His Name" - yet be denied entrance into t/eternal KD because they did not do God's will. They won't be hearing **"Well done good and faithful slave, enter in to the joy of your Master,"** but, **'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'**

So Peter speaks to those who may profess a faith they don't possess (cure = genuine repentance).

He also speaks to those who are true believers in JC that they enjoy t/assurance of their salvation, that in making their calling & election sure they may more greatly enjoy Christ's riches & in knowing Him, as v. 8 says, they may be both useful and fruitful.

This is a tremendous passage of Sacred Scripture and I trust you will be as challenged by it as I am.

There are three main movements in these 9 verses ==>

I. Salvation's Sufficiency: The Believer's Inheritance (3-4)

II. Salvation's Service: The Believer's Faithfulness (5-9)

III. Salvation's Surety: The Believer's Security (10-11)

Last week (if you weren't here I'd really encourage you to get a copy of that message) . . .

Last week we looked at that first main point ==>

I. Salvation's Sufficiency: The Believer's Inheritance (3-4)

By "inheritance" I'm talking about all that is our salvation. Past, present and future.

And in verse 3 we see ==>

A. An Inheritance Granted by Grace (3)

[It is by Christ's] **divine power** [that we have been granted] **everything pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.**

1. The word "granted" = δωρεομαι

A word that implies great generosity. Another way of saying it would be that ==>

. . . His divine power has 'lavished upon us' everything pertaining to life and godliness . . .

a. That comes through ==>

. . . the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

The fact that our inheritance has been granted to us and that it's based on knowing Christ, something that He does by His sovereign calling all points to the fact that all of our salvation is grounded in grace.

We'll point out again and again how important this is to t/rest of t/passage.

2. Before we move on I want to clarify one thing

a. Verse 3 - Specifically the statement in the first part of the verse

. . . His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness . . .

Last week I said that ==>

"If you are a believer you have Christ. If you have Christ He has given you an abundant supply of all you need to live a life pleasing to Him."

And that we're not to search for a "second blessing" experience or some secret to a "deeper life" — but that God has given us everything we need to live a satisfying life in Christ.

A lot of people use this verse to support some wrong ideas. I want to talk in terms of what it doesn't mean that God has given to us, at the moment of salvation, everything we need.

(1) This doesn't mean that life will be easy

To life in this fallen world is to be subject to suffering. That's something we saw time and time again in 1 Peter.

(2) This doesn't mean that living the Christian life is easy

Or that we will always be on cloud nine.

I don't think there are many of you who can honestly say ==>

"Everyday I get up I am so filled w/joy and excitement in being a believer in JC! It's exhilarating! I can't believe that God loves me, knows me, and has forgiven me! I am ecstatic and can't wait to spend time in prayer and in His Word. Repentance comes so easy to me. I can't wait for opportunities to serve Him today. And I look forward to Sunday when I can be with God's people and sing songs of worship to Christ and hear His Word proclaimed!"

Hey, I wish I always felt that way! In fact, I wish I felt that way most of the time. Are those things true? Sure! But t/reality of these things moves us in different ways at different times.

I love mountaintop experiences, but we can't live in t/mountains all t/time. There must be valleys as well.

Frankly, for me, quite often living t/Christian life consists of plodding along, one foot in front of the other. That's part of our perseverance.

(3) This doesn't mean that we won't suffer physically and emotionally

Sickness, depression, mental disorders ==> all are part and parcel of our fallenness. I know there are those who have never struggled w/things like depression, or anorexia, or panic attacks, or phobias - that think all Xns who do is trust God's Word and these things will go away.

I read one such Xn leader who denied that mental illnesses even exist, because "mental" is some non-tangible thing that can't be ill. Plain silly.

While I am an advocate of nouthetic biblical counseling, that doesn't mean there isn't a place for doctor prescribed medications for some abnormal brain functions. That these things are misused is beside the point. Just because something is abused doesn't negate it's proper use.

(4) This doesn't mean that we don't work hard

This isn't a call to "Just let go and let God."

(a) 2 Timothy 1:13 - 2:7

(5) This doesn't mean that we aren't resourceful

BTIM - We have to take advantage of t/resources God has given us.

Growing in t/Xn life involves being involved! Discipline.

We are to pray w/o ceasing // be reading & studying His Word // be active in t/local CH. Times when I'm asked, *"What do you offer for my Xn growth? Do you have any programs? Do you have anything special?"* My answer: *"Yes, we have something very special. The CH!"*

Times when we need t/advice of others. We go to a Xn friend or leader to seek wisdom in a given situation.

Or we need accountability, so we go to a friend saying, *"I'm really struggling with something. I'm being tempted and need your prayer and accountability so that I can overcome it."*

That God has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness doesn't mean we don't do things like put filtering on our computers or avoid certain situations anymore than God's sovereignty means we don't wear our seatbelts, lock our doors, or avoid bad parts of town at night.

(6) Lastly - It doesn't mean that there's no need for growth and improvement

Remember, Peter uses t/perfect tense. Yes it's something that God did in the past, when we believed, but it is still relevant and alive in the present. Right here, right now.

As we'll see later on ==>

For if these things are yours and are [what?] *increasing*, they make you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes ==>

... His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness ...

b. And we can't miss the context — I'm struck by how this passage unfolds

(1) God has given us His Promises (4)

Through these [through his own glory and excellence] He has given to us precious and very great promises ...

God has called you by His glory and excellence, and through his glory and excellence he has given you precious and very great promises.

When you were born again and believed t/Gospel you received t/Holy Spirit & were made a new creation.

All of our inheritance // eternal life // the gift of the Spirit // grace of sanctification ==> promises.

By those promises we become a partaker of the divine nature (4)
That relates to our union w/X - that X is in t/Xn and that t/Xn is in X.

By those promises we escape the corruption that is in the world.

All of that relates to ==>

I. Salvations Sufficiency: An Inheritance Granted by Grace

That brings us to verse 5 and our 2nd main ==>

II. Salvation's Service: The Believer's Faithfulness (5-9)

We're talking in terms of being "fruitful." Cf. v. 9.

A. We talked about how this passage unfolds – note the connection (how verse 5 begins)

Now for this very reason also . . .

Points back to verses 3-4.

I like what Tom Schreiner says about this connection ==>

"The logical relationship between vv. 3-4 and vv. 5-7 is crucial. Verses 5-7 summon the readers to a life of virtue, but vv. 3-4 remind us that a life of godliness is rooted in and dependent upon God's grace. Believers should live in a way that pleases God because Christ has given them everything they need for life and godliness. The indicative of God's gift

precedes and undergirds the imperative that calls for human exertion. **Peter did not lapse, therefore, into works righteousness here since he grounded his exhortations in God's merciful gifts.**" [Schreiner, 296-97]

B. While this points backward it also looks forward

Yes, God has lavished upon us His grace. Yes, our standing, our hope of salvation is totally by grace apart from any works or self-effort. Yes, God has given to us all things that we need for life and godliness. Yes, He has given us his precious and very great promises, joining us with X that we might escape the world's corruption.

BUT - We still have work to do! We're in a battle. It's not time to relax // rest. We have to be diligent.

1. I love this!

. . . for this very reason, applying all diligence . . .

This is the perfect balance that Scripture teaches as it relates to living the Xn life.

We persevere, we discipline ourselves, even though it's all of God's grace.

Colossians 1:29 ". . . I labor, striving according to His power that mightily works within me."

Striving is translated from t/Greek verb αγωνιζομαι. It's the word from which we get our English "agonize."

It pictures discipline and hard work.

It's the same word used by Jesus in Luke 12:34 ==>

"Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able."

It's the same word used by TAP in t/context of being disciplined for t/purpose of godliness in 1 Tim. 4:10 ==>

For it is for this we labor and strive . . .

Sometimes it's translated "to compete" as in an athletic event ==>

1 Cor. 9:25 **And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. . . .**

Sometimes it's translated "to fight" as in a war ==>

1TI 6:12 **Fight the good fight of faith . . .**

In 2 Tim. Paul, knowing that his earthly life has come to an end, uses it in the past tense ==>

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; (4:7)

We see personal discipline. Effort.

On this text John Calvin writes ==>

"As it is a work arduous and of immense labor, to put off the corruption which is in us, he bids us to strive and make every effort for this purpose. He intimates that no place is to be given in this case to laziness, and that we ought to obey God calling us, not slowly or carelessly, but that there is need of alacrity (energy); as though he had said, *"Put forth every effort, and make your exertions manifest to all."*

Maximum effort. Personal discipline as it relates to living the Xn life. Parallel to two of t/virtues found in v. 6 (self-control & perseverance).

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply . . .

What follows from vv. 5-7 are 7 virtues ==>

A. Faithfulness Demonstrated Through Seven Virtues (5-7)

Moral Excellence & Knowledge (v. 5); Self control, Perseverance, & Godliness (v. 6); Brotherly kindness & Love (v. 7)

These are the sorts of things that are to be evident in the believer's life. This is part of what it means to be sure of your calling & election.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is considered by many to be the Spurgeon of the 20th century. Lloyd-Jones, who passed away in 1981, preached for nearly 30 years at London's Westminster Chapel.

In the mid-1940s he preached though 2 Peter. I've been reading through his sermons which are quite rich.

As it relates to his passage, he makes some very essential points ==>
"Here is something which is truly important, and something which is again basic and fundamental to the whole Christian position. The order in which these things are put [what we've been looking at] is something which is absolutely vital. The Apostle does not ask us to do anything until he has first of all emphasised and repeated what God has done for us in Christ. I say that this is basic and for this good reason. How many times, especially during the last hundred years, have men taken it for granted that the real essence of the Christian Gospel is in this text we are

considering! How often during the past hundred years have men given the impression that to be Christian means that you display in your life a kind of general belief of faith, and then you add to it virtue and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness and brotherly kindness and charity!

That is completely wrong, he argues ==>

To them the Christian message is an exhortation to us to live a certain type of life, and an exhortation to put these things into practice. But that is an utter travesty of the Gospel. The Christian Gospel in the first instance does not ask us to do anything; it first of all proclaims and announces to us what God has done for us.

That is so for quite a number of reasons. It is one of the very essentials of the Christian Gospel to show that man as he is by nature cannot do anything. He is 'dead in trespasses and sins', he is without life, and all his righteousness is but 'as filthy rags' - that is the scriptural teaching. In effect the Gospel is not interested in any of our actions or our conduct and our behaviour until we become Christian. The first statements, surely, of the Gospel are these, 'There none righteous, no, not one'; 'We have all come short of the glory of God.' Man at his best and highest is a lost creature; he is a sinner doomed in the sight of God. Any man, every man! Though a man may strain and strive and pray, and go from one end of the earth to the other, in an attempt to seek for righteousness, he will be no nearer to God, and to a true knowledge of God, at the end than he was at the beginning.

The first statement of the Gospel is not an exhortation to action or to conduct and behaviour. Before man is called upon to do anything, he must have received something. Before God calls upon a man to put anything into practice, He has made it possible for man to put it into

practice. . . . There is no point in addressing an appeal to a dead person. The only person to whom you can with any logic address an appeal is one who is alive; and that is precisely the teaching of the Gospel - when a man becomes a Christian he is born again; whereas he was dead, he now lives. The Bible compares it to a birth. Before there can be activity there must be life, there must be muscles, there must be the faculties and the propensities. And that is the position of the Christian; he has been given all this. He has these muscles, these spiritual muscles - all things pertaining to life and godliness are given.

So he rightly argues that this is the foundation from which Peter writes. That the only way we can apply all diligence and in our faith supply those things that are part and parcel of Christian graces is because we have been graced.

He goes on to give an excellent analogy. He talks about a farm. The entirety of the Gospel is like a farm, he says. It is given to t/believer by God. Grace.

The believer is given all of the necessary tools to work the farm. We are give the seed, the plough, the soil, the rain.

Those things are given to us by God. But that doesn't mean we don't get busy. What we are called upon to do, is to farm.

Lloyd-Jones observes ==>

It is no use telling a man to farm if he has not a farm; if he is without land and without seed and mhout the implements, nothing can be done, but all these are given us, and therefore, having received them, we are asked to farm. But even then we are reminded that that does not guarantee the increase. 'It is God who gives the increase.' The farmer

may plough and harrow, he may roll the land and sow the seed, but in the absence of the rain and the sunshine, and many other factors, there will be no increase.

Now there, it seems to me, is the perfect balance which is ever preserved in the New Testament. That is the order in which it invariably puts these things. It is because you have obtained a like precious faith with us, says Peter, it is because you have all things that pertain to life and godliness, it is because of these exceeding great and precious promises, it is because of the power of God that is in you, that I now beseech you to add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and so on.

That's the difference between the religion of human achievement and genuine Christianity which is by divine accomplishment.

Religion is no more than dead men trying to make themselves alive.

In the end it is really no more than makeup on a corpse.

I pray that you know the greatness of God's grace. That your calling and election be evident in your life and thus certain.

If that's new to you, or if it is in doubt. I invite you to the cross of Jesus Christ. Believe in Him alone. Submit to him as Lord.