

Growing in the Grace of God #22 - a Covenant of Better Promises Part 2

by Bob Hoekstra

We partake of the divine nature by believing God's promises and receiving the benefits of those promises through faith.

Duration: 51:05

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:20, Ephesians 1:17-18, Philippians 1:6, Hebrews 3:19 - 4:1, Hebrews 4:4, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of putting our faith in a faithful God rather than relying on our own flashy or forceful actions. He reminds the audience that God is faithful and will establish and guard us. The preacher shares a promise from 1 Peter 2:6 that those who believe in the Lord will not be put to shame. He also highlights the provision that God promises to provide for our physical needs, using personal anecdotes to illustrate this point. The preacher encourages the audience to have faith like branches connected to a vine, producing fruit that reflects the life of the vine. He criticizes the caricatured portrayal of spiritual warfare in American religious culture and emphasizes the simplicity and clarity of the message of faith.

Transcript

Covenant of better promises. We've looked at some of the better aspects of the New Covenant. We've looked at Old Covenant promises, which basically are do this and live.

Then the New Covenant promises are more like, I've done this so you can live. Major, major difference. Now, let's look for a while at some of the exceedingly great and precious promises.

Take a phrase out of 2nd Peter chapter 1. I think this brings home, in many ways, even more powerfully the contrast between the promises of the Old Covenant and the promises of the New. 2nd Peter chapter 1, verse 4, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises. That through these, you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

This great rescue work of God that takes us out of the corrupted world that is just debauched in its own lust and fallen and alienated from God. God has affected this rescue by his exceeding great and precious promises. Not just great promises, but exceedingly great.

Far out beyond great. Not just precious promises, but far beyond precious. You just run out of words.

By these great promises, look what God has affected for us. That we might be partakers of the divine nature. Through the promises of God, the New Covenant promises of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and then many other promises we'll look at right in the New Testament that are even more powerfully clear as you go out of the shadows into the substance more and more.

The exceedingly great and precious promises, through them God has provided for us to be partakers of the divine nature. Now this is an area where the enemy wants to really blind people or lie to them or distract them or distort or pervert. I mean this gets to the heart of life in the kingdom of heaven.

See, the law says be holy for I am holy. The law says be perfect as your Heavenly Father. The law summarized by love, love as I have loved you, Christ said.

Yeah, but that's what God is like. That's what God can do. Yeah, but what if God provided a way to access the very resource of his own life.

You know, make us partakers of the divine nature. You say, but it's just not in my nature to be holy, to be perfect, to be loving like that. Right.

That's why it must be death to the flesh, no to self. It must be take up the cross daily and follow Jesus. It's got to be death to self.

It's got to be find that life in another person. It is according to his nature to be holy, to be perfect, to be loving. It's just who he is.

And by his exceedingly great and precious promises, he has made us partakers of the divine nature. This in no way will make us divine ourselves. Watch out for that heresy.

It's pretty popular in the so-called word of faith movement. I don't even like to call it that. Personally, I'd call it the word of presumption movement.

You know, I'll just presume what God wants to do, and it's got to be what I want, so I'll just name it and claim it. It's not faith. Faith hinges on God's promises and us believing, not us coming up with some fantasy idea of what we want and just saying, I got it.

And that movement has those who teach that we are little gods. Boy, I remember hearing Kenneth Copeland teach once. I wouldn't want to face what he's going to face unless he repents.

There's still room to repent. He makes statements like, when I read the Scriptures, God says, I am, as I just chuckle and say, I am too. Whoa.

Like Gail Irwin does. Step back, because lightning could be coming at any moment. Whoa.

That is a total perversion of what's being taught here. And see, if the enemy can't get us to doubt what is being said and enter in the right way, he'll give us some other lie to kind of twist it and make it what it isn't. We are not little gods.

And like the Mormons teach, we're not on our way to godhood. That's not what this is teaching. And it's not, you know, contemporary Shirley MacLaine New Age-ism, you know, dancing on the beach saying, I

am God.

I've always pictured that scene. I don't know where that came from. I've heard of it.

I think it was probably a movie about her life or something. I've kind of pictured as she does that, you know, I am God. Exactly.

Oh no, you're not. Maybe she, like Paul, would fall on her Damascus Road, you know, right on their face. Oh my goodness, I'm not.

He is. See, all that stuff is a perversion of truth. And it's not what's being said here.

We aren't little gods. We aren't becoming gods. We are just, what it says, partakers of the divine nature.

Beneficiaries is a good way to put it, though it's more personal than that, really. We'll look at it in a minute. We're partakers of the divine nature, like a branch is a partaker of the life of a vine.

That kind of a thing, you know. Definitely a beneficiary benefiting by the reality of something else, but it's much more personal and intimate even than that. Yeah.

But we are partakers of the divine nature by the exceedingly great precious promises of God. God has promised such things to us that as we're believing those promises, receiving the benefits of those promises, to go back to this beneficiary term, we're actually not just getting little heavenly blessing packages, we're actually partaking of the divine nature. We have a lot of ways we talk about this, but not many Christians that I've come across take time to slow down and chew and meditate on this verse and these phrases.

I mean, it's a mind blower, but it's a faith builder too. Partakers of the divine nature. We say Christ lives in me.

Well, that's what it's about. I want Christ to be seen in me. Well, he really is.

It's not just, you vaguely remind me of Christ, you know. He can be seen in us. That's the astounding thing.

Eternal life in heaven, it isn't a box full of life, it's a share in his life. He's the only eternal one. Yeah, exactly.

Same kind of thing. And see, God promises us certain provisions and works, and as we believe, we're actually partaking of him sharing of himself with us. We don't become him, we benefit by partaking of who he is and what he's done.

Mark? The same as when it talks about, you know, we have access to enter the holy of holies at any time. The reality of that is, that's because we live, that's where we actually are, but through the exercising of our faith and the understanding and the knowing, becoming partakers of the divine nature, not only, but as God works that faith in us, we realize that's where we are. Yes.

We're in Christ. That's right. We're in Christ.

We're in the life that we're to partake of. Exactly. The holy of holies, that's in Christ.

That's where we're birthed, that's where we live. We need, as Ephesians 1, 17 and 18 say, the eyes of our understanding enlightened. It's like Christians are striving and straining, and they want to break through that veil by their great performance, and then the day comes and they open up their eyes, and I'm sitting on the mercy seat.

Wow. I'm in Christ. I'm there.

Was it Jacob that was at Bethel? And he said, this is the very house of God, and I didn't even know it. Isn't it like God moved in from way off there? He was right there with him, and I didn't even know it. I didn't even know it.

Let's look at some of these exceedingly great and precious promises that let us enjoy this participation in a share of the very life of the Lord Jesus. New Covenant promises, certainly of Jeremiah and the others, but like these two, Galatians 3, 13 and 14, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. Curse of the law.

Partly, do this and live, but you can't do it and you're cursed. You stagger about in spiritual death. Having become a curse for us, the end of that curse was, the soul that sins will die, and wages of sin is death, and Christ became that curse for us, the consequence of that curse.

For it is written, cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree. But let's pick up again without that parenthetical phrase. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, verse 14, that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles.

Now there again, folks, how can you apply those New Covenant promises to Gentiles? Well, here's another of the hundreds of ways the New Testament does it. That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles. Where and how? In Christ Jesus.

That's where. By being brought out of Adam and into Christ. That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

The promise of the Spirit. What is that? Well, the Spirit is the fulfillment of the promise. It's the promise that the Spirit would be given to those who believe.

The promise of the Spirit isn't tongues. The promise of the Spirit isn't some other gift or work of the Spirit. It's the Spirit.

If you make your child the promise of a baseball game, it doesn't mean you're going to bring them a ball from the game. Or the program from the game. You're going to take them to the game.

The promise of the Spirit is not just something the Spirit gives or offers or does. It's the Spirit. The promise of the Spirit through faith.

We, Gentiles, receive the promise of the Spirit. In other words, the Holy Spirit living in us. Sharing life from God.

This isn't something we do and make it happen. It's something God has done. It's ours to believe or disbelieve.

To count on or count our own resources. Those are our choices. Guard your own life.

Live your own life. Produce your own life. Trust in yourself.

And you'll be a good Christian Ishmael. Understanding that grace was given before the law and Abraham being the biblical example that grace came before the law. Is Abraham a Jew or Gentile? Good question.

And really many have debated on that. Certainly the Jews would call him Father Abraham. But what do we call him? We don't call him stepfather.

He's the father of those of the faith. Romans 4. So really both because Romans 9, 10 and 11, all those promises to Abraham, that's the olive tree, the Hebrews, but we've been grafted in. It's beyond Jew or Gentile really.

Even though there's some critical messages from God in his dealing with Israel and with the church. Ultimately, the things that really matter, we share in common. Yes, exactly.

He had good qualifications for both. Galatians 3, 13 and 14. The promise of the Spirit.

Now see, that's one of the exceeding great and precious promises that lets us partake of the divine nature. That if you believe in Jesus, the Father will fulfill the promise of the Spirit. He'll send the Spirit to live in your life.

What does the Spirit bring? The very presence and life of God. How do we partake of the divine nature? By the Spirit of God dwelling in us. Sharing that life in and through us.

Ministering the things of Christ to us and through us. Through faith. See that? The promise of the Spirit through faith.

The New Covenant is God's promises and us doing an amazing thing. Believing God tells the truth. Believing God can do what he promises.

Boy, we're something, aren't we? Look what I'm doing. I'm believing a God who cannot lie. Boy, you're really something.

I'm believing that God is able. Oh, you mean the one who can do all things? Boy, you're really something. That's real impressive.

I mean, it's about God. He's faithful. He's able.

And we still struggle. Well, we need to keep telling each other these things. Ministering this truth.

Faith comes by hearing. We hear this every time we hear it. Our faith is increased, is encouraged, is enlarged.

Not by, you know, I will believe, I will believe, I will believe, I will believe. It's just, tell me that one more time, Lord. Oh, I can believe that.

I can believe that. I can believe God's going to do what he said he's going to do. At least until the next time you have to remind me, you know.

So we keep ministering to each other these great promises of God. Now, let's look at John 15.5. What a great picture. This is such a great picture.

How could we be partakers of the divine nature? Well, here's a good answer to it. He's the vine, we're the branches. Verse 5, I am the vine, you are the branches.

He who abides in me and I in him bears much fruit, for without me you can do nothing. Just like a grapevine provides for the branch to be a partaker of its vine nature, so we are partakers of the divine nature. It's an absolute parallel.

Just like the vine shares its life with the branches. Jesus says, I'm the vine, you're the branches. I mean, yes, there's mystery in it beyond what the human mind could totally comprehend, and yet there's such a simplicity and clarity in it.

I mean, anyone who goes out to a vineyard and looks at a grapevine and the branches, it's not all that perplexing. Hey, God created it so that the life that's flowing through that vine, the branches become a partaker of it. And here comes fruit based not on what the branches could muster up or any life they had in themselves, because apart from that grapevine, the grape branch can do nothing.

And yet here come the grapes, characteristic of the life that's in the vine. I mean, I don't understand a lot of the intricate specifics beyond eyesight in that, but oh, doesn't it speak to all of us powerfully? And we can't see God and see the heavenly kingdom, but by the eye of faith, with that parable, you can sure see it, can't you? Yes, He's the vine. I'm in Him, joined to Him.

The life I'm to live flows from Him, if I just abide in Him. Abiding, it's a faith word, it's not something we're doing, it's a relational word between us and Christ. It's a word of relating.

It's not some work we're producing. Here's what's promised, the life of the true vine to flow through us as we abide in Him, depend on Him, look to Him, anticipate receiving life from Him. That's how we become partakers of the divine nature.

How many Christians try to find abundant life by straining and striving? I will be fruitful. It's not hard enough. Guess you gotta try harder.

Then you go to try harder rallies. And are we gonna do it again? You all strain together. Yes! Then you're back on the promises of man.

Oh, how much of the church runs on man's promises to God, instead of God's promises to man. Again, this is why my heart was stirred to do a seminar on promise believers. We sure don't want to be people who don't keep their promises.

That's being unfaithful, that's lying, that's sin. Fine, but how? How? What is gonna make us faithful men, faithful women, true to our word, true in our relationships? It's being partakers of the divine nature, it's living by God's promises to us. That's what changes us, that's what gives us life, life abundant.

And makes us more like Christ, and He is the faithful one. And the more of Him in and through us, the more people say, well, you know, you're becoming faithful. Well, who is that, us or Him? Ultimately it's Christ being seen through us.

Matthew 4.19, then He said to them, follow Me and I will make you fishers of men. Again, relate to the Lord, follow Him, look to Him, pursue a relationship with a person. See, here's the promise, if we will pursue a relationship with this person, the Lord Jesus Christ, He will remake us.

Come follow Me, I will make you. Again, that's living by the promises of God. What a great promise.

If we'll relate and pursue a relationship with this person, the Lord Jesus, God the Son, He will remake us. How many Christians are living by their promises to God to change? And boy, watch it, not only will the world have its great New Year's resolutions, the church jumps right on the bandwagon. I will read more Bible this year.

I will not scream at my wife as much this year. I will, I won't, I will, I won't. And this is our great hope for a new year of abundant Christian living.

Oh, you mustn't forget that. I will give more, or at least I'll pledge more. I will, yes, I will, I will.

Religious New Year's resolutions in the church, what a sad time. How about instead start the New Year out just listening again to God's promises to us. Lord, what are you promising to give us, to do in us? Well, He says, if you'll pursue a relationship with Me, you follow Me, I will remake you.

I'll change you. Not you setting these goals and making these commitments. God's already set the goals, by the way, here they are.

People say, what do you think about goal setting? Fine, if they're God's, then here they are. Here's what God says He's going to do. And if we follow Him, we just relate to Him, just seek Him, pursue a relationship with Him, all the while He's remaking us.

He's turning us into what He wants us to be. Fishers of men, yes, and everything else He wants us to be. What a promise that is.

Believing that is exceedingly great and precious. Let's just be partakers of His divine nature. Here's another one, Matthew 11.

Here's another great promise. Matthew 11, 28-30. Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. What's promised here? I will give you rest.

You will find rest. Those are the promises. What's involved? What do we have to do? The law says do this and live.

What do we have to do here? It isn't do, it's again, relate to a person. Relate to a person. Just come to Me.

How do you come to Jesus? Lord Jesus, I need rest. Lord, I'm laboring. Lord, I'm heavy laden.

I'm looking to You. If you get loaded down with life and you're willing to say, Lord Jesus, I need the rest that only You can give, you're walking in this promise. Because promise is certain.

I will give you rest. You shall find rest for your souls. I can't tell you through the years how many times I have taken God at His promise on these very verses.

If eyeballs going over pages could wear off words, this page would be blank. I mean, I have come to this so many times, and every time, He's been faithful. I shouldn't have to come there so often.

I should just remember it. And I remember it more than I did before. That's growing up in Christ.

Learning quicker to look to the Lord. Being willing quicker to say, yes, apart from You, I can do nothing. The quicker we can relate to the Lord that way, we're growing up.

It's kind of backwards, isn't it? In the world, it's when you, the more self-sufficient you are, the more the world says you are, you know, you're fully developed. Yes, a fully developed bundle of flesh. Resistant to the Spirit of God.

Able to handle it on our own. That's growing in unrighteousness. The quicker we are to respond to things like this, we're catching on.

We're catching on, little by little. What a fantastic promise. God giving us rest.

Don't you, aren't these wearisome days to live in? I mean, this is a dry and weary land where no water is. What are we going to do? Go dig up broken cisterns? Dig in with our hands and make a life for ourselves? Or are we going to come to Jesus? Just tell Him. Lord, here I am.

I think I qualify. I'm laboring and I'm loaded down. I'm worn out and the load's heavy.

Oh, I need rest. I'll tell you, there have been some days when the lack of rest, the intensity of warfare, the striving and the burden, I've literally just gotten right up from my desk, where I do a lot of my battling, and just start walking and talking to the Lord. Where is that Matthew 11? We need to get back to business here.

Here I am again, Lord. I can't even tell you the countless hundreds upon hundreds of times that even in a few moments, the expectation, the anticipation of that rest. I don't have to explain totally how He does it.

You just have to believe His promise that He'll do it. I know you've been there too. Exceedingly great precious promises.

Here's one, Philippians 1.6. This is a favorite, isn't it? Think of this as part of the covenant of better promises. Philippians 1.6. Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. What's promised here? What is this exceedingly great and precious promise? That the one who began the good work in us, how did this work of salvation start? Did we kick it off? Did we make it begin to come into reality? Or did we humbly cry out, Lord, forgive me a sinner.

We cried help. In other words, we began to relate to the person who has life and gives the promises. God began this good work in us, convicted us of sin, revealed Himself to us, showed Himself as faithful and able to save, and so we put our faith in Him.

We trusted in His ability. And He who began that good work in us, that internal saving work of Christ, will complete it. He'll just keep bringing it right up to that day of completion when we stand before Christ.

We can be confident of this being confident of this very thing. I marvel. When I was young, as Matthew used to say as a kid, Daddy, when you were alive, did they have this? Daddy, when you were alive, did they have this? That's a real humbling thing in itself.

Back when I was alive, I was very lacking in any kind of confidence. I was very timid and easily intimidated. And I kind of marveled at my dad.

He seemed like Mr. Paragon of confidence. And finally, eventually, I realized that was a confidence of faith in God. But through the years, the Lord has put amazing measures of confidence in my heart and life.

But I can really see that my efforts to develop that on my own were vain striving. You know, I got all those records and magazines and everything were going to make you a self-confident person. Boy.

The only thing I found out good about those things was when I bought a franchise and started selling them to other people. Then I got confident I could make money at least. But the Lord purged me of that and He's forgiven me of that.

But, confidence. Oh, the confidence we can have. I'm still easily, on a personal human level, easily intimidated.

And people say, do you ever get afraid when you teach? Oh, every time I teach. 29 years of beginning to open my mouth with a real sense of apprehension, a sense of, oh Lord God, here we go again. If you aren't faithful, this is going to be tragic.

It's going to be no good for anyone else. And agonizing for me, Lord. Please, be merciful again.

I've become very comfortable with that. In public speaking, you'd outgrow that kind of stage fright. You know.

Yeah, then the flesh is well in charge. You know. I thank God.

You know, I got all those records and magazines and everything were going to make you a self-confident person. Boy. The only thing I found out good about those things was when I bought a franchise and started selling them to other people.

Then I got confident I could make money at least. But the Lord purged me of that and He's forgiven me of that. But, that's grace, but confidence, oh, the confidence we can have.

I'm still easily, on a personal human level, easily intimidated. And people say, do you ever get afraid when you teach? Oh, every time I teach. 29 years of beginning to open my mouth with a real sense of apprehension, a sense of, oh, Lord God, here we go again.

If you aren't faithful, this is going to be tragic. It's going to be no good for anyone else. And agonizing for me, Lord.

Please, be merciful again. I've become very comfortable with that. In public speaking, you'd outgrow that kind of stage fright.

Yeah, then the flesh is well in charge. I thank God I don't have, even yet, a natural comfortableness in speaking to people. But in 29 years of doing just that, I have been given by the Spirit of God a tremendous growing confidence in God.

And it seems sometimes when I feel the least able to face the battle, the issue, the crowd, the class, it's like the Lord just says, well, want to count on me again? It gets kind of exciting. It's like, oh Lord, I'm just

so glad that I'm not real full of self-confidence here tonight. In fact, I'd like to have it all purged.

I know the flesh always wants to have some. It's always looking for some. But we can be confident of this very thing.

Absolute, rock-solid certainty that He who began a good work in us will complete it. We can trust in this. We can expect God to do this.

We shouldn't neglect this. You know, God began this good work in us. Now we'll handle it from here.

Oh, major mistake. We can trust this. We don't want to neglect this.

As important as we saw it was that God begin that work of salvation. Remember how we pled for forgiveness? Oh Lord, there's no place I can get forgiveness but You. No place I can get new life but You.

No one can deal with this mess that I am but You. We were so locked in on Him and He began that good work. We can stay just as locked in on Him that He who began the good work will perfect it.

We don't want to resist it, doubt it, or neglect it. We want to believe it. Here's another one, Philippians 4.19. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

What a great promise. That God shall supply all of our needs. Now we have to leave to God the deciding of what our needs are.

It's so easy for us to mix up our wants with our needs. And we even have to leave to God the timing. Not only the sorting out of what, but the when.

That was let God be God in the whole arena but still, bottom line, here's a promise. My God shall supply all of your need. Boy, this brings to my mind Dini and myself 28 years ago, 27 years ago after we had been married two or three years.

After I had sold the Get Rich Quick franchise. After I had worked in a warehouse loading trucks for a couple of years. After I had unloaded watermelons off the back of trucks to work.

And after we went to the seminary and it seemed like there wasn't in time to work. Just try to tuck in a house painting job here and a house painting job there. But the kids were coming faster than the paint jobs.

All of a sudden we got three kids and well I can't paint that many houses. And then papers and deadlines and one little wrinkle thrown in there. All of a sudden I was also a pastor by then.

Boy, I can remember being on our knees before God. Lord, it's this. Go into the cupboard and it's bare.

Three kids and you feed them the last food in the house. That's scary. You're checking others know.

You're checking your calling and you're going boy, well. Man, maybe I better forget this pastoring stuff. This is a get poor quick scheme.

Maybe I've told you the doorbell rings you go open the door and nobody's there but five bags of groceries and you just run into your bedroom and fall on your face and go, Lord, forgive me my doubts and my fears. Go to the mailbox and there's no mail but there's an envelope in there with your name in it and five \$20

bills. Listen, our house payment was \$98.

I mean, that was a lot of money back in 1968, 69. My God shall supply all your need according to His riches and glory by Christ Jesus. What is provided for us in Christ is not only eternal life, abundant life now but even the very basic physical needs that man strives after they're already promised to us.

Again, we just want to believe these things. And there'll be times when it looks like this promise is not being fulfilled and never will be. But that's God sorting out wants from needs, stretching our hearts, building faith, purging us of self-trust.

One reason a lot of us as they trust God, we've still got too much trust left in us. I'll get around to God when there's no other hope. I think I can handle this.

The Lord just keeps ratcheting down. Not till we cry uncle, we cry father. Father, I'm sorry.

Oh, I'm so self-sufficient. I'm so self-sufficient. I'm so self-confident.

I'm so honed in on what I can do or can't do. So good to believe the promises of God. And my God shall supply all of your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

The provision comes with Christ. 1 Thessalonians 5.24 Another great promise. 1 Thessalonians 5.24 He who calls you is faithful who also will do it.

Do what? It refers back to the previous verse. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely. Sanctified life.

More and more set apart for God. His glory, His use, His purposes. God, I will be more like you.

God, I will serve you more. Lord, I will bring you more glory. I promise, I promise.

Boy, Heaven's not holding its breath. Heaven gets excited when we respond to promises like this. This benedictory prayer.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely. May He take charge of your whole life making it more and more for God's glory, use and purpose. He who calls you is faithful who also will do it.

He will establish us. I mean, He will sanctify us. He will make us what He wants us to be again.

Faith is the key issue for us. We have seen the promises come in Christ by faith. Trusting the Lord, depending on the Lord, not obstructing the work of God in our lives by our flesh, by our fleshy striving, our fleshy doubts.

Humility is involved. Lord, I can't do this. Only you can.

Faith is involved. I believe you can. Second Thessalonians 3.3 But the Lord is faithful who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

Every Christian who even begins to walk with God and look in the Word, they want to get their life established and they want to be guarded from the evil one. We want a stable Christian life and walk and we don't want the evil one ripping us off, knocking us down, wiping us out. We don't want eliminating fruitfulness and growth.

Well, look at this promise. The Lord is faithful who will establish you and will guard you from the evil one. Would you like to be the one responsible to stabilize, establish your Christian life? You know, make it strong, firm, rock solid and growing? How about this? The Lord is faithful who will establish you.

Would you like to be responsible to be sure the enemy never got the upper hand in your life? Would you like that responsibility? Me neither. Well, there's one who's willing to take that responsibility and he's able. The Lord is faithful who will guard you from the evil one.

Those who look to the Lord to establish their lives, they find out their lives get established more and more. Those who look to the Lord to guard them from the evil one, they find out the enemy less and less is able to rip them off because more and more God is in charge of that task. Not their striving best effort or their newfound level of decibels in screaming against the enemy.

Boy, American religious church life, spiritual warfare has been so caricaturized by TBN. So typically, people think you've got to out scream the devil and it helps to dress fancy while you do it. Those are kind of the two keys.

Works better than Rolls-Royce. Works better than Rolls-Royce. Well, that's kind of the American caricature.

You know, this is how you do it. Oh. Folks keep track in those things of how many people they brought to the Lord.

Ray Steadman had a great line once he said, and God probably keeps track of how many we've driven away from him. Till they yell at him again. Starts wiggling and slipping.

Same channel. Find your victory. Same time, same station.

Wow. Yes. Isn't that amazing? Yeah, it's put up a really, it's put up a character sham of what life in the Lord is all about.

I mean, look at this. It's about the Lord's faithfulness, not our flashiness. The Lord's faithfulness, not our forcefulness.

It's the Lord is faithful. Listen, brothers, sisters, can't we put our faith in a faithful God? I mean, that's what it's about. He shows himself faithful, and we go, I can put my faith there.

It's not a pump-up job, it's a response to who he is and his revealing himself to us. These are his promises. He is faithful.

He will establish and guard us. Okay, just real quick, just three or four minutes, let's wrap this up because the hour is late. 1 Peter 2.6 1 Peter 2.6 Therefore, it is also contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect precious, and he who believes on him will by no means be put to shame.

What a great promise. We believe in the Lord, we will by no means be put to shame. Some of the passages in the Old Testament from which this is quoted have just little variations on it.

Like, we'll not make haste. We'll not be disappointed. If we believe in the Lord, we won't be disappointed.

Disappointment is so often an indicator that we're putting our hope in ourselves or others. Because they will disappoint. But he who believes in him will not be disappointed, will not be ashamed, will not be in a hurry, scurry, frantic, will not hasten.

What great promises these are. In conclusion, 2 Corinthians 1.20 Remember this verse? Think of this verse in light of all these great promises we've looked at tonight. 2 Corinthians 1.20 For all the promises of God in Him, in Christ, are yes, and in Him, Amen, to the glory of God through us.

Every promise of God, every one of the promises, in Christ, they are yes. Will He fulfill them in Christ? We can say, yes. Will it be this way for us as He promised? In Him we can say, Amen.

So be it. It will be so. And it will all be to the glory of God right through our lives.

God fulfills His promises and brings glory to Himself right through our lives. And we're in Christ where all the promises get a yes and an Amen. Can these work for me? Will they be fulfilled in my life? In Christ, they're yes and Amen.

If we hope in Him, look to Him, count on Him, all of God's promises are certain and guaranteed in Him. See, here's the contrast between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant is about do.

The New Covenant is what? Done. Done. It's done.

New Covenant, Old Covenant, do. Do this and live. New Covenant, it's done so you can live.

It's done. Old Covenant, do and live. New Covenant, we are now living in Christ.

Therefore, able to do. The Old Covenant is if then. If you do this, then that.

If then. Well, Jesus did the if. We can enjoy the then.

Our last verse, Hebrews 3.19. Hebrews 3.19. So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. God promised rest. Chapter 4, verse 1, Therefore, since a promise remains of entering as rest.

God promised a spiritual rest, a land of rest. There is a promise rest for us in Christ. Unbelief keeps us from entering into His promises.

May we not doubt the promises of God. When we sense we're doubting them and we ask God, tell them to us again. How can we minister to one another in a faith building way? Remind each other of the promises of God.

God promises and in His word He shows Himself faithful and able. The more He promises, the more we see Him as faithful and able. You know what happens to us? We have faith in His ability and faith in His reliability.

And our faith grows. What a great way to minister to each other. Just remind each other of the promises of God with an exhortation.

Put your trust in Him. This new covenant, it's a covenant of better promises. And through the promises we are partakers of the divine nature.

Let's pray together. Lord, how we thank You for these exceedingly great and precious priceless promises. Lord, by Your Spirit through Your word keep speaking them to us.

Build our faith in You, the God of promise who keeps His promise reliably and with His great ability. With You, nothing is impossible. Thank You for reminding us tonight, Lord.

We want to take our stand on Your promises in Christ where all the promises are yes and amen. In Jesus' name, amen.

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