

II Peter 1:4a - The Power of God in the Promises of God

Saturday, March 09, 2013

5:03 PM

Introduction

A. From big to little: how does our passage today fit into the whole of II Peter

1. The Big Picture: Premise of II Peter
 - a. Dangers will not only come from outside the church but also inside the church. Therefore we should guard against these by knowing the true gospel. The true gospel is marked by godliness and is found in Scripture. A gospel that denies godliness or disregards the promises of God or twists Scripture must be rejected. God will judge such things and will protect His church. Since the judgment of God is imminent, we must be diligent now to make our calling and election sure by pursuing righteousness and godliness.
 - b. In order to guard against false gospels, we must recognize the true gospel as that which is marked by godliness and is found in Scripture, any other gospel must be rejected.
2. II Peter 1: The Gospel is Marked by Godliness
 - a. Making your calling and election sure - godliness and the gospel go together (1:3-11)
 - b. Be reminded of these things - godliness is defined in Scripture (3:12-21)

B. Read II Peter 1:3-11

C. Godliness and the gospel go together

1. The first identifying mark of the true gospel that Peter gives us is that the gospel is marked by godliness, so when we hear teaching, we must compare it to this mark, is this gospel marked by godliness? Is it the real thing or is it a counterfeit gospel?
2. To build his argument here, he makes three points.
 - a. First, he shows that godliness and the gospel always go together because God has provided everything that is necessary for godliness in the gospel. If God has provided everything that is necessary for godliness in the gospel, then there is no excuse for a gospel that is not marked by godliness or does not call us to godliness.
 - b. Second, he gives us a list of eight qualities that godliness is known by. These are the qualities that we must know in order to determine if a gospel is counterfeit or not. The corollary to this is that these are the qualities that we must be marked by if we claim to know the true gospel.
 - c. Third, he exhorts us that the eight qualities he has listed are absolutely necessary to those who profess Christ. If someone comes with teaching but does not embody these attributes then he is not a true professor of Christ. If you claim Christ but do not embody these attributes, then you are not a true professor of Christ. But, if in professing Christ you see growth in these areas, you can be sure that your faith is genuine.
3. This week, we're continuing with the first point in verses 3 and 4 - God has provided everything that is necessary for godliness in the gospel.

D. Read II Peter 1:3-4

E. Review from last week

1. We looked at the start of this section last week as we went over verse three
2. We considered the first two principles we find here in these verses
 - a. Who has granted us the power to live godly lives
 - b. How has he granted us the power to live godly lives
3. Who has granted us the power to live godly lives?
 - a. Christ sovereign power is necessary and sufficient for us to live godly lives
 - b. This means that without Christ's sovereign power exercised in our lives, we cannot grow in sanctification - we can't grow in godliness by our own power
 - c. This means that with Christ's sovereign power exercised in our lives through His Word, we don't need to chase after other things - we will grow in godliness by Christ's power through His Word
 - d. Purpose to live a godly life because Christ's power has provided that for you
 - i. If Christ's sovereign power is necessary and sufficient for us to live godly lives, then we have no excuse for not living godly lives
 - ii. So, make this your purpose as we go through II Peter - desire to grow in godliness because Christ is giving you power through His Word
4. How has he granted us the power to live godly lives?
 - a. Knowing God is the means by which Christ's sovereign power is exercised in our lives
 - b. To know God is *epignosis* - to know Him fully or completely - not merely knowledge about God but knowing God
 - c. To know God entails knowing Him as the one who called us - to know Him as both sovereign and gracious
 - d. To know God entails knowing Him as the one who called us to, by, and for His own glory and excellence
 - e. When we know God, we are given power to fight against sin and live godly lives
 - f. Grow in the knowledge of God through the Scriptures because you have been called by God, empowered by His spirit, and you have put yourself in submission to His word
 - i. If we are granted power through our knowing God, then we ought to desire and strive to grow in our knowledge of God

F. Proposition and Outline

1. Proposition: God has provided us everything that is necessary for godliness so we have no excuse for not living godly lives.
2. Outline:
 - a. Who has granted us the power to live godly lives? (3a)
 - b. How has He granted us power to live godly lives? (3b)
 - c. What has he granted to us in order to live godly lives? (4a)
 - d. Why has he granted us power to live godly lives? (4b)

III. What has He granted to us in order to live godly lives?(4a)

A. His promises are precious and very great

1. These words ought to describe how we think about the promises of God
 - a. When Peter comes to the promises of God here in verse four, he is compelled to add some adjectives that describes how he feels about the promises of God
 - b. It's like Peter thinks the promises of God are so good that he couldn't mention them without adding a statement of how good they are
 - c. So, I want to take a moment and ponder how Peter thinks about the promises of God
2. We should think about the promises of God as precious
 - a. When Peter calls the promises of God precious, he is describing their intrinsic value
 - i. Precious stones: I Corinthians 3:12-13 - *Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw---each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.*
 - ii. Precious life: Acts 20:24 - *But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.*
 - iii. Precious blood of Christ: I Peter 1:19 - *but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*
 - b. So our attitude towards the promises of God should be to cherish them as valuable, valuable like a jewel, valuable like our own lives, valuable like the very blood of Christ
 - c. Do we view God's promises this way? Do we even take the time to ponder on how precious the promises of God are? As I meditated on this, it struck me that I think we would all agree that the promises of God are this precious, but do we take the time to savor them this way. Do we take time to ponder on how precious the promises of God are?
3. We should think about the promises of God as very great
 - a. Peter not only describes the promises of God as precious, but also very great, and when he calls the promises of God very great he is describing their comparative value
 - i. The word used here is actually a superlative, which means it might better be translated 'the greatest' - the promises of God are greater than all other promises
 - ii. So, not only are they valuable on their own evaluation, but when we compare them to other promises that might be made, God's promises are always better
 - iii. It's like you were inspecting diamonds. You could pick up any well cut diamond and say, "yes, this is precious," and you'd be right. But, if while you were inspecting diamonds, someone handed you the hope diamond, you wouldn't just say, "yes, this is another precious gem," you'd say, "this is the greatest gem."
 - iv. God's promises are like the hope diamond - they are precious and very great, the greatest.
 - b. So, our attitude towards the promises of God should be to view them as better than any other promises that might be made
 - c. I'm not going to dwell on this very long, because it's going to come back up in a few minutes, but hold this in your mind for a minute - do we view the promises of God as better than all other promises that might be made?

B. The glory and excellence of Christ have granted to us His promises (connection to the previous verse)

1. By which refers back to glory and excellence
 - a. By which is a phrase that describes instrumentality - Christ used His glory and His excellence in order to provide promises for us
 - b. It is Christ's glory and excellence that provide us His precious and very great promises
 - c. The definition of Christ's glory is straightforward - the magnificence of His nature
 - d. The word excellence refers to a moral virtue, so other places the word is use it is translated virtue or moral excellence - so Christ's excellence is His perfection, His sinlessness
 - e. So we might say, Christ's promises are provided to us by His magnificence and His perfection
2. But how does Christ's glory and excellence, or His magnificence and perfection, grant to us His precious and very great promises?
 - a. I've meditated on this question for a significant amount of time over the last two weeks, and to be honest, I'm not 100% sure I can give a satisfactory answer that would cover all the facets of this question
 - i. In fact, I'm not sure anyone could give a perfectly satisfactory answer, because in this question we are delving into the deep mysteries of God and salvation, things that Paul often refers to as great mysteries
 - ii. But, in my meditation, I have come to a couple of conclusions that I share with you for your consideration and edification in this passage
 - b. When we think of what attributes of Christ were necessary for Him to save us, to act as our substitute, these two qualities are often at the top of the list
 - i. Christ's glory, His magnificence, His deity was necessary to save us, because only God Himself could bear the full weight of the judgment of sin
 - A. So, some of the most profound verses in the Bible talk about Christ as the glory of God becoming a man, because a man who is God was our only hope, a man who was the glory of God
 - B. John 1:1, 14 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.*
 - ii. Christ's excellence, His moral perfection, was also necessary to save us, because only a perfect sacrifice would be accepted by God
 - A. Again, some of the most profound verses in the Bible talk about the sinlessness of Christ in His sacrifice on our behalf
 - B. II Corinthians 5:21 - *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
 - C. I Peter 1:18-19 - *knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*
 - c. So, how does Christ's glory and excellence provide for us His precious and very great promises? Christ's attributes made Him the acceptable sacrifice on our behalf. He was God sacrificed for man; He was the perfect sacrificed for the imperfect. Christ reconciled us to God by His own glory and excellence and in doing so has provided us with all the promises of God.
3. In any case, we can clearly say that it is in Christ that we receive all of God's promises
 - a. II Corinthians 1:19-22 - *For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not Yes and No, but in him it is always Yes. For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*

C. The promises of God are the means by which we live godly lives (connection to the next verse)

1. It is through the promises of God that we partake of the divine nature and escape the corruption of the world (4b)
 - a. "...so that through these..." in the middle of verse four refers to the promises of God
 - b. It is through the promises of God that verse four becomes a reality
 - c. Through the promises of God we are made partakers of the divine nature
 - d. Through the promises of God we escape from the corruption of sin
 - e. So, we could say that it is through the promises of God that we live godly lives
2. How do we use the promises of God to live godly lives?
 - a. Piper (Faith in Future Grace)
 - i. *The aim of this book is to emancipate human hearts from servitude to the fleeting pleasures of sin. Sin is what you do when your heart is not satisfied with God. No one sins out of duty. We sin because it holds out some promise of happiness. That promise enslaves us until we believe that God is more to be desired than life itself. Which means that the power of sin's promise is broken by the power of God's [promise]. All that God promises to be for us in Jesus stands over against what sin promises to be for us without him. This great prospect of the glory of God is what I call future grace. Being satisfied with that is what I call faith. And therefore the life I write about in this book is called living by faith in future grace.*
 - ii. *Consider, for example: By what power did Moses break free from the "fleeting pleasures of sin" in the courts of Egypt? The answer of Hebrews 11:24-26 is that he was set free by the power of faith in future grace. "By faith Moses...[chose] rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward." The promise of God overpowered the promise of sin and produced a lifetime of sacrificial love.*
 - iii. *The key to faith's power is that it embraces the future grace promised by God and is more satisfied with this than with the pleasures promised by sin - even if it costs us our lives.*
 - iv. *When faith has the upper hand in my heart, I am satisfied with Christ and his promises. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "Whoever believes in me shall never thirst." When my thirst for joy and meaning and passion are satisfied by the presence and promises of Christ, the power of sin is broken. We do not yield to the offer of sandwich meat when we can smell the steak sizzling on the grill.*
 - v. *I have argued that the key to fighting sin is to battle unbelief, and keep the fire of faith in God's promises red hot. The power of sin is the false promise that it will bring more happiness than holiness will bring. Nobody sins out of duty. Therefore, what breaks the power of sin is faith in the true promise that the pleasures of sin are passing and poisonous, but at God's right hand are pleasures forevermore. This way of fighting sin with the hope of superior satisfaction, is called, in Hebrews 11:24-26, living "by faith": "By faith Moses...[chose] rather to be mistreated with the people of God, [rather] than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin...for he was looking to the reward."*
 - b. To summarize, Piper says that the promises of God fight ungodliness by destroying the promises of sin. Sin entices us with false promises, but when we are steeped in God's promises the false promises of sin no longer have any value. So, it is through the promises of God that we can partake in the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
 - c. This is where God's promises being very great comes back. If God's promises are the greatest then they should destroy sin's promises. God's promises are greater than sin's promises.

3. Examples of how to use the promises of God to live godly lives

a. Greed

i. Negative promises

- A. God promises that loving money is a means of drawing you away from the faith - I Timothy 6:9-10 - *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.*
- B. God promises that those who are given to greed will not share the inheritance of Christ - Ephesians 5:5 - *For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

ii. Positive promises

- A. God promises that He will give you the contentedness to endure all situations in life - Philippians 4:12-13 - *I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.*
- B. God promises that He will provide everything that is necessary to sustain your faith - Philippians 4:19 - *And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*
- C. God promises that when we give up things in this life, we aren't losing anything - Mark 10:29-30 - *Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.*
- D. In conclusion, God promises that when we are godly and content, that is truly great gain - I Timothy 6:6-8 - *Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.*

b. Lust

i. Negative promises

- A. God promises that those who are given to lust will not share the inheritance of Christ - Ephesians 5:5 - *For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

ii. Positive promises

- A. God promises that you will be satisfied in Him - Matthew 5:8 - *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* and Psalm 37:4 - *Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.*
- B. God promises that you will be satisfied in your spouse (which is really a picture of being satisfied in Him) - Proverbs 5:18-19 - *Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love.*
- C. God promises that in Christ, we have the power to deny lust - Romans 13:14 - *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.*

- c. Anxiety or worry
 - i. Negative and positive promises are intermixed in one passage we'll look at for anxiety or worry
 - ii. Matthew 6:25-34 - *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*
 - iii. Piper counts at least seven promises in there that can be used to fight against anxiety
 - A. God's promise has given you life and a body. Life is much more than food and the body is much more than clothing, God created both life and body so can He not provide food and clothing?
 - B. God promises that you are much more valuable than birds. God provides for insignificant creatures like birds, can He not provide for you?
 - C. God promises that worry does not lead to any good results, so why do it?
 - D. God promises that you are much more valuable than grass and flowers. God richly clothes the grass and flowers, will He not provide for you?
 - E. God promises that He knows what you need.
 - F. God promises to provide what you need when you are seeking after Him.
 - G. God promises that each day He will give what is necessary.
- d. Anger or bitterness
 - i. Negative promises
 - A. God promises that those who harbor anger and bitterness and do not forgive will not inherit the kingdom of God - Matthew 6:15 - *but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*
 - ii. Positive promises
 - A. God promises to right every wrong, so you don't have to, you can endure wrongs without response - Romans 12:19 - *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."*
 - B. God promises to give you the power to forgive - Ephesians 4:20-24, 32 - *But that is not the way you learned Christ!---assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness... Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*
 - C. God promises to show forgiveness to those who forgive by His power - Matthew 6:11-14 - *Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you,*
- e. If we believe these promises then the power of greed, lust, anxiety and anger are destroyed - we will not be given to these sins.
 - i. So these promises are powerful weapons against sin in our lives
 - ii. We need to focus on believing these promises to fight sin
 - iii. The more we believe these promises, the less power sin will have over us

D. Resting on the promises of God is an minor theme in II Peter (connection to the whole book)

1. Peter mentions promises several times in II Peter.
 - a. An undercurrent in II Peter is that the true promises of God are much greater than the false promises of the false teachers.
 - b. False teachers may disregard the promises of God and hold out their own promises, but God's promises are greater and truer.
2. False promises from false teachers
 - a. II Peter 2:19 - *They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.*
 - b. II Peter 3:4 - *They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."*
3. True promises from God
 - a. II Peter 1:3-4 - *His divine power has granted us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*
 - b. II Peter 3:9 - *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*
 - c. II Peter 3:13 - *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*
4. Peter calls us to examine the promises of God and find them much greater than any other seeming promises. We can fight against false teaching by grasping the promises of God. When God's promises overawe us, we are not going to be led away from Christ.

E. Application: We should use the promises of God to combat sin and fight for godliness

1. We must learn the promises of God
 - a. Ryle (Holiness) - *God is continually holding out inducements to man to listen to Him, obey Him, and serve Him... He has... shown His perfect knowledge of human nature, by spreading over the Book a perfect wealth of promises, suitable to every kind of experience and every condition of life... Their name is legion. The subject is almost inexhaustible. There is hardly a step in man's life, from childhood to old age, hardly any position in which man can be placed, for which the Bible has not held out encouragement to every one who desires to do right in the sight of God. There are "shalls" and "wills" in God's treasury for every condition. About God's infinite mercy and compassion, -about His readiness to receive all who repent and believe, -about His willingness to forgive, pardon, and absolve the chief of sinners, -about His power to change hearts and alter our corrupt nature, -about the encouragements to pray, and hear the gospel and draw near to the throne of grace, -about strength for duty, comfort in trouble, guidance in perplexity, help in sickness, consolation in death, support under bereavement, happiness beyond the grave, reward in glory, -about all these things there is an abundant supply of promises in the Word. No one can form an idea of its abundance unless he carefully searches the Scriptures, keeping the subject steadily in view. If any one doubts it, I can only say, "Come and see."*
 - b. Ryle calls us to carefully search Scripture looking for the promises of God. If we are to use the promises of God to live godly lives, we must know the promises of God.
 - c. So, this ties directly back into last week - I called us to study the Scriptures earnestly to know God because we have been called by God, empowered by His spirit, you have put ourselves in submission to His Word
 - d. Study Scripture to know God. Study Scripture to know the promises of God.

2. We must meditate on the promises of God
 - a. Psalm 119:147-148 - *I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words. My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise.*
 - b. Psalm 77:6-9 - *I said, "Let me remember my song in the night; let me meditate in my heart." Then my spirit made a diligent search: "Will the Lord spurn forever, and never again be favorable? Has his steadfast love forever ceased? Are his promises at an end for all time? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" Selah*
 - c. So, not only do we need to learn the promises of God, we should meditate on His promises. We should steep our minds in them. We should ponder their richness and depth and allow ourselves to be awed by them. We should value them as precious, finding it hard to think of other things. If you desire for the promises of God to have power in your life, meditate on His promises.
3. We must hold fast to the promises of God - we must live all of life as though the promises of God are true
 - a. Precious promises are the object of precious faith
 - i. There is one other thing Peter describes as precious in his letters - precious faith
 - ii. I Peter 1:7 - *so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire---may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
 - iii. Precious faith is what is necessary to obtain or to grasp onto precious promises
 - b. Romans 4:20-21 - *No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.*
 - c. Hebrews 10:23 - *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.*
 - d. Hebrews 11:11-12 - *By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.*
 - e. When we live as though the promises of God are true, that is faith, and we receive the benefit of the promise
 - f. Think about all of the rich promises of God - does your life show that you believe those promises are true? Or does your life demonstrate that you're hope is somewhere else?
4. We must use the promises of God when we are tempted to sin
 - a. Use the examples I gave of using the promises of God to battle sin when you are tempted to sin
 - b. Fight against greed, against lust, against worry, against bitterness, against every sin by focusing on the greater promises of God - God's promises are the greatest and very precious

Conclusion

A. This morning, I've focused on only one small phrase out of II Peter

1. I've spent so much time on this one phrase because I'm convinced there is both great truth and great power in this phrase
 - a. There is great truth in that the glories of Christ are proclaimed in this phrase - He is the one by His own glory and excellence that has granted to us precious and very great promises
 - b. There is great power in that the power of God against sin is proclaimed in this phrase - God's promises give us power against sin
2. We started this sentence last week and saw the first two points
 - a. Who has granted us the power to live godly lives? Christ's sovereign power is necessary and sufficient for us to live godly lives.
 - b. How has He granted us power to live godly lives? Knowing God is the means by which Christ's sovereign power is exercised in our lives
3. This week we've done the third point
 - a. What has He granted us in order to live godly lives? God's promises are the power of God to fight for holiness
4. Next week, we'll conclude this sentence in II Peter looking at the fourth point
 - a. Why has He granted us power to live godly lives?

B. So, what is our take-away for this morning - what do I want you to remember?

1. The promises of Christ are precious and very great! They are valuable on their own merit and they are greater than any other promises that might be made.
2. It is Christ's glory and excellence that have given us His promises. Christ's glory and His perfection made Him the perfect sacrifice that reconciled us to God. Therefore, all of the promises of God are Yes! In Christ.
3. God's promises are the means by which we live godly lives. There is great power in the promises of God against sin. When we believe the promises of God and believe that they are greater than the promises of sin, sin no longer has any power over us.
4. Peter is going to compare the promises of God to the promises of false teachers. Just like the promises of God are greater than the promises of sin, the promises of God are greater than the promises of false teachers.

C. What have I called you to do this morning?

1. Use the promises of God to fight for godliness
2. Learn the promises of God - study the Scriptures and find His promises to you
3. Meditate on the promises of God - steep your mind in them so you are ready to use them
4. Hold fast to the promises of God - live all of your life as though the promises of God are true
5. Use the promises of God to defeat the power of sin in your lives - respond to sin's promises with the greater promises of God