

FIVE PROMISES



If You Come, You Will Have Rest

If you Continue in My Word, You Will Be Free

If you ask for the Holy Spirit, You Will Receive

If you Gather in My Name, I Will be There

If you go and Make Disciples, I Will Go With You

May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has granted to 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, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.

II Peter 1:2-4

Perhaps some time in our past we were blasted out of our lethargy.

Perhaps we saw clearly that there is only one thing worth living for:

God's kingdom.

Bondage to Freedom

We were like the Israelites of old, who after years of grinding bondage in Egypt suddenly saw a door opened by the hand of God, walked through that door of freedom with shouts of praise.

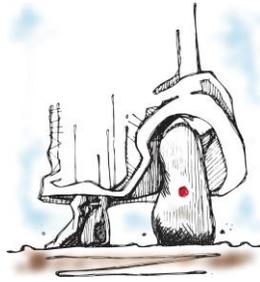
And for a brief season they knew that...

- God was real,
- God was mighty,
- God was gracious.

How they rejoiced in God's grace as they marched through the Red Sea and came to the wilderness!

So with us, there was a flash of divine light. Jesus broke into our darkness, took us by the hand and said,

"Follow me."



Suddenly we were walking on a new road. Egypt was behind us ... old habits were broken, old fears melted away.

We might call it "the honeymoon time" with the Lord

- when our vision is clear,
- when his lordship is real,
- when our hearts are over-flowing with thanksgiving to God.

But for us too, the honeymoon was followed by a wilderness.

Wilderness and Sifting

The Israelites could have traveled through that wilderness in a few months and crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land. But instead, there were many, many delays which they brought on themselves. It took them forty years to learn enough of God's ways to be ready, as a people, to go in and take the land..... forty years!

The wilderness was a sifting time, when gradually God eliminated from the body of Israel all those who were still carrying Egypt around in their hearts. Then came the day when God said, "Sifting time is over! Go in and take the land!" And they did. They left the wilderness behind them, crossed the Jordan and went in and took the land.

In a similar way the Lord has used our wilderness wanderings to sift Egypt out of our hearts.

But now the Spirit of the Lord is saying to us, "Sifting time is over go in and take the land!"

It's not enough to escape Egypt, you need to get beyond the wilderness ... you need to go in and take the heritage which is yours through the death and resurrection of the Lamb of God."

His divine power has granted to 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, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become par-takers of the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:3-4

The Promised Land (partaking in his Divine Nature)

That through these (promises) you may...

- escape the corruption that is in the world through lust ...
- escape not only Egypt but the wilderness too
- entering into the Promised Land and becoming partakers of the divine nature.

We need to get on into the Promised Land

- into the place where we walk in the resurrection power of the Lord
- into the place where we partake of the divine nature.

... by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises...

The promises that brought us out of Egypt are also meant to bring us into the fullness of the life of God.

The time has come for us to take these promises, fulfill their conditions and enter into the divine nature.

Here they are: Five promises. (Every single promise Jesus ever gave is contained in one of these.)

Jesus says,

- 1."If you come to me.... you will have rest."
- 2."If you continue in my word.... you will be free."
- 3."If you ask for the Holy Spirit....you will receive."
- 4."If you gather in my name... I will be there."
- 5."If you go and make disciples....I will go with you."

With these five promises...

We enter the divine nature, not after we die, but in this life.

1. "If you come to me you will have rest."



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.

Matthew 11:28-30

"There is no rest in the wilderness. There is no rest in the in-between region. But, if you come to me and really get under my yoke you will experience the true sabbath peace of God.... Holy Rest."

"Come to me and get under my yoke,"

- means to surrender to the person of Jesus,
- means to trust him like a child,
- means to walk with him in daily life....

...to walk with Jesus as Peter and Mary Magdalene walked with Jesus.

"Come to **me**"

- not to a doctrinal position,
- not to a certain kind of worship,
- not to a certain spiritual experience,
- not to a political agenda,
- not even to a certain lifestyle.

"Come to **me**, Get under my yoke and keep learning, and you will have rest."

Many of us consider ourselves mature, committed, enlightened Christians.

Yet our soul has no rest. It's uneasy, troubled, angry, impatient, self-pitying, fearful.

Listen to his promise:

"I will give you rest if you will come to me and get under my yoke --- now."

2. "If you continue in my word you will be free."

Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 8:31-32



...."If you continue in my word...."

His word is simple and clear. The apostles passed it on to us in four brief booklets at the beginning of the New Testament. A child can learn his word in a matter of weeks. And if we take what Jesus says, not as a list of rules, but as his words from his mouth....his word comes to life.

We know what Jesus has to say about,

- living by faith,
- walking in forgiveness,
- serving God instead of money,
- sexual purity,
- practicing mercy,
- living in prayer.

"If you take this word of mine and walk in it you will be free."

The religious people of Jesus' day were not free. They were slaves of religious legalism. And religious people of Christendom today are likewise slaves of legalism, slaves of convention, slaves of self-righteousness and the fear of men. We all know how hard this slavery can be.

We become slaves when we try to live by the dead letter instead of the living word.

But when we take Jesus' words fresh from his mouth and live in them, and keep living in them, we become free ...

free from sin,
free from Satan,
free from the fear of death,
free from the fear of man...

Free! That's a promise he keeps.

3. "If you ask for the Holy Spirit.... you will receive."



What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

Luke 11:11-13

We don't just ask for the Holy Spirit once, and it's done, any more than a son asks his father for bread one time and lives the rest of his life on the strength of that one loaf.

We ask for the Spirit and receive the Spirit every day.

"Father....

*your Spirit is my life,
your Spirit is the air I breathe,
your Spirit is my health,
your Spirit is my direction.
Without your Spirit I flounder and die."*

In the Lord's Prayer we say, "Give us this day **our daily bread.**" But before we say that we first say, "**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**" Which means,

*"Fill me afresh, O Lord, with your Spirit so that your kingdom can rule in me ...
so that your will can be done by me on earth as it is in heaven."*

Some of us are trying to live on an experience we had with the Holy Spirit ten years ago. That's impossible! We need his fresh life every day. "**Ask and you will receive,**"...fresh life to anoint you to serve God in the place where you are at this moment.

4. **"If you gather in my name.... I will be there."**



Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matthew 18:18-20

**The most powerful and life-giving manifestation of the lordship of Jesus on this earth
is in the gathered Body.**

- When we come together in unity.
- When we agree around him.
- When we tear down every wall between us,

....So that he can come among us and rule us....he comes!... he's with us!

But when, through indifference, or sloth, or bitterness, I withdraw from unity with my sisters and brothers...

I cut myself off from the presence of the Lord himself.

I cannot survive without the Body!

5. "If you go and make disciples.... I will go with you."



Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have com-manded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

Matthew 28:16-20

....."Go make disciples ...I am with you as you go."

Any believer, any congregation that takes this promise seriously and goes,

- even if we feel we don't know how to make disciples,
- even if we feel completely inadequate to baptize and teach,
- even if we stumble and blunder and make a thousand mistakes,

--- we will experience the glory of the Lord going with us.

On the other hand...

- when we stop making disciples,
- when we quit searching the city for the lost sheep,
- when those highways and hedges no longer find us compelling people to come to the banquet,

--- Then we dry up and become an insipid religious club.

It's...

- in the going out,
- in the seeking of those lost sheep,
- in the making of disciples

... that we are visited and sustained by the presence of the risen Lord.

... by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:4

Most of us came out of Egypt long ago, but we still haven't moved beyond the wilderness.

Now it's time for us to come out of the wilderness and enter the Promised Land.

The way into the Promised Land is through these five promises:

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If you go and Make Disciples, I Will Go With You

With these five promises...

**We can enter the divine nature,
now, in this life, even at this moment.**



Message: Richard E. Bieber 1987

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Prayer- Yes Lord, help us to finally leave the wilderness and enter into the Promised Land, into your divine nature. Thank you for these promises that you give us. And yes, may we see and know how very precious and great they are. May we truly desire to follow them so that we may partake of you and truly find fullness of life. We come to you Lord, come to you, we surrender to you, we trust you, we walk with you ...we know you are our true rest. We take your words into our hearts, our minds, our souls ...help us to continue in them and experience true freedom through them. Lord fill us with your Holy Spirit each day, anew. We need it for direction, so that your Kingdom truly rules within us, we need it for our very life. Lord be with us as we gather in your name. Come among us, and yes, tear down every wall between us, help us to find a wonderful measure of your life among us. And Lord give us the desire, the heart to make disciples for you...knowing we aren't alone and your presence is with us as we bring your divine nature to this twisted world. Visit us, sustain us, touch us as we carry out this holy command. Amen.

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