

May 2008—The Greatness of Jesus Christ for Men

Part 1 of 3

In our travels, Terri and I recently saw a sign in front of a florist, "If your name is Fred, stop in for a free rose." Certainly adds new meaning to "limited offer" doesn't it? In contrast, it got me to thinking about the comprehensiveness of the Lord's dealings with believers. Will you take a few minutes to revel in 2 Peter 1:3-4 with me? *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."*

FIRST WE SEE A PICTURE OF JESUS.

~*He is the Christ of Power* (vs. 3) and we are the recipients. Personally, I strive not only to appropriate His power, but to be consciously aware of my dependence.

~*He is the Christ of Generosity* (vs. 3) and we are partakers of "all things that pertain to life and godliness." Aren't you glad that Christianity is a practical relationship! Peter is saying that Jesus Christ tells us what life is; then enables us to live it. It is not a religious withdrawal from life, but triumphant involvement in it.

~*He is the Christ of exceeding great and precious promises* (vs. 4). Are you digging in to learn of them first hand?

~*He is the Christ by whom we escape the world's corruption* (vs. 4). If we choose to wallow in the world's corruption, then it is just that: our choice. Should we continue in sin? God forbid (Rom 6:1)!

~*He is the Christ who makes us sharers in the Divine nature* (vs. 4). Isn't that amazing! No wonder I haven't felt like myself lately.

SECONDLY WE SEE A PICTURE OF MANKIND EQUIPPED.

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (2 Peter 1:5-10).

It all begins with faith (vs. 5). Our simple belief that what Jesus Christ said is true: that the Bible is true. We can count on it and commit ourselves to His promises. It is the unquestioning certainty that the way to happiness and peace and strength is to accept Him at His word.

Building on our faith, this equipment is sevenfold (we'll look at two this month)~

1. Virtue (vs. 5) This Greek word was used of land that is fertile. It is operative, doing what it is supposed to do. It also means courage. Combine the teaching. Here is a man that has the courage to do what he is supposed to do. A life of virtue is a life effective in the service of the Lord.

2. Knowledge (vs. 5) This is practical knowledge. It is the ability to apply wisdom to practical situations. Gnosis is that knowledge that enables a man to choose wisely in the situations of life.

As missionaries, when we face all the "stuff" that would throw us off track, let's ask the Lord to help us refocus on Him, and enjoy our victorious participation in His mission field.

Bill