

Giving Thanks for God's Promises

2 Peter 1:3–4

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Did I tell you about walking the entire parking garage at Columbus airport? Thank you Jesus. When we flew back from Texas we went to the parking garage. I said we were on the fifth level. Lonie wasn't sure. I walked to where I thought the car was located. It wasn't there. I'm glad Jesus loves me.

Lonie started using the key fob to sound the horn. Do you know that in a parking garage the sound of a car horn echoes? We changed levels five times. Each time I would walk around listening. Finally, on level one section F we found the car. I'm glad Jesus loves me.

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. 2 Peter 1:3–4 (NLT)

Hallelujah, God made promises and Jesus saved us. Do you have days when you are uncertain? There is the uncertainty of what could possibly happen next. For a person like me who wants to know what's next, and tries to control what's next, not knowing is troublesome.

Do you have days when you are overwhelmed? When the deadlines approach I feel the pressure in my head, heart, and gut. When the noise gets too loud, I want to turn down the volume, plug my ears, and leave.

Recently, when the adults were gathered together in a small house, the five year old wanted some attention. The adults kept telling her to be quiet or to go away. The uncertainty wasn't as much as the problem. It was the adults talking ever more loudly. I took the five year old, sat down at the table, took out the markers, and we started to make pictures. Jesus was at work in my soul and spirit, calming my heart and my mind.

Throughout my daily activities there are the little things where God keeps showing up. I count on Him keeping His promises. I'm counting on the big promises for the little stuff. I can trust God with the little stuff – uncertainty about what's next, confusion – because He has kept His promise about all the big stuff.

There are some promises of God that I stand upon. They are for me firm ground, that is unshakable, and unchanging. I believe that God's love is big: taller than tall, and wider than wide, deeper than deep, and longer than long. I believe through His love for me, and for every person ever conceived, that He gave His Son to die instead of me. I believe through His love for all the world that any person who believes His Son is the resurrection will live in heaven forever. I believe Jesus gives to all who trust Him the abundant life through His Holy Spirit.

When I am uncertain I claim and stand upon these promises. When I am overwhelmed these promises give me clarity and strength. When I'm walking through my day these promises give me

hope and peace. When I wake up in the morning, close my eyes at night, and am dreaming or tossing and turning these promises are still true.

We can give thanks that God is a promise keeper. From the beginning our God and creator has been making and keeping promises. Nothing has changed in God's nature. Our Creator is still generous, compassionate, and kind. Our Creator knows our needs and takes care of us. Our Creator is always available to us. Our Creator's promises are still true and always will be.

We've changed. We have gone from trusting to disobeying. We've moved from being in a healthy relationship with God to rejecting and pushing away from our Lord. We're not very good at keeping our promises. We can give thanks that our God is promise maker and a promise keeper.

2 Peter 1:4 (NLT) *These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature.*

Hallelujah, God promises to share His nature with us. We will never be God, but His nature has become our nature. There are some people who think they are saviors, deliverers, almost god-like. There is no place for humility, compassion, or forgiveness. They are filled with a desire for power and control. They don't have to be the leader of a nation or corporation. They can be on a sports team, a management team, or a medical team. They can be in a school, a factory, or a church. They will be popular at first. They will be successful. They will never be God. What they have accomplished will only last a short-time. Their glory will fade away. Their nature will not change. They will remain the same. Even if they fail, they may not change.

We either know people like this personally or we have heard others share about their experiences with these demi-gods. My observation is that person exists inside many of us. I see this in myself, and I see it in others. It's easier to recognize in another person than it is in ourselves. When I see it others, I usually move away from them. When I see it myself, I start to make excuses when I should be apologizing. I know then that I have been working for my own glory and not for Jesus.

John 15:5 (NLT) *“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.* This is both a humbling and an empowering passage of scripture. I'm humbled, forced to see myself as insufficient to do anything more than be mediocre.

I am empowered that Jesus wants me. I am empowered that Jesus wants to be connected with me. He is willing to lift me up from my mediocrity to His glorious standard. I am empowered that Jesus wants to produce fruit through me. Jesus dwelling not only in me, but also in every person who trusts Him, His nature, His power, His authority.

The nature of Jesus is to do the will of God, fulfilling all of His plans and purposes. Jesus has given us that nature. The nature of Jesus is compassion, grace, and love. Jesus has given us that nature. The nature of Jesus is wisdom, peace, and mercy. Jesus has given us that nature.

That doesn't make me God, Creator, Savior, or Lord. But it does mean that as long as I am connected with Jesus I will do God's will, be compassionate, wise, loving, and at peace. When I revert back to my old nature, my own desires, my sinful attitudes then I'm not doing God's will, I'm not at peace, I'm not loving. Even though it's not always night and day, it becomes dark and gloomy. That is when I proclaim the promise of Jesus, He is the vine and I am a branch: we are connected.

2 Peter 1:4 (NLT) These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

Hallelujah, God gave us promises to defeat temptations and sins. Our greatest temptation is to put ourselves first. The person seeking to become a god puts themselves first. The person who wants to be the wallflower and never be noticed puts themselves first. We can't escape these temptations and the sins that follow. The temptations are all around us in every form possible. The devil knows our weakness and our desires. Those are the temptations we receive. They are more often than not subtle and slippery. Once we grab hold we go down the slope into the sin.

You've been warned. I've been warned. But, as you know, we still fall for the temptation. We're connected to Jesus as branches are to a vine. We may feel closer to Jesus than anytime before, but then a selfish desire creeps in like the smell of brownies in the oven. Before we can say I didn't do it, the brownies are all gone. Only because we had a desire to fill our mouths with the rich gooey-ness of chocolate.

Whatever your selfish desire substitute for brownies and you will know the truth. Temptations are everywhere. We fall into sin when we follow the temptation.

Hallelujah, God gave us promises to defeat temptations and sins. Jesus told us in **Matthew 7:7-8 (NLT) "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.**

Keep asking, seeking, and knocking on heaven's door. Keep asking Jesus for His power and authority in your life. Keep seeking the nature of Jesus for your body, mind, and spirit. Keep knocking on Heaven's door for compassion, wisdom, grace, and love.

We are not alone. The God who promised to save us is dwelling within us and all around us. This is the God who promises are always true. One failure, one selfish thought, or word, or action is not the end. Our Creator and Savior loves us. He is not abandoning us. He has given us His nature, His power, and His authority to overcome the temptations and remain faithful to Him.

Jesus is the God who hears and answers our prayers. That is what it means that He is the promise maker and the promise keeper. His promises have been given to us so that we might take them seriously. His promises are meant to be claimed, proclaimed, and stood upon like a rock that cannot be moved. Having been given His nature we are encouraged by Jesus to ask for more of His nature, to seek after more of His nature, even knocking on the storehouse of His blessings.

2 Peter 1:3 (NLT)
We have received all of this by coming to know him.

Gratefully proclaim your new life in Jesus Christ. You have a new life. You have been born again. You are in His Kingdom. This has changed everything. You are united with Jesus through His Holy Spirit. You have a new nature that is filled with a desire to glorify Jesus. Think back to when you confessed your sins, turned your life over to Jesus. Everything was new. There was peace in your heart. There was joy in your soul. There was compassion in your spirit. Your body was ready to trust Jesus.

The easiest way to glorify God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is to open your mouth. We all have a voice. Use your voice to proclaim your gratitude for being saved. Use your voice to proclaim the power and authority of Jesus over the temptations and the sin. Use your voice to say Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. It's the Hebrew word for praise God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

What a difference your world would be if people heard you say Hallelujah. Hallelujah I did my job today. Hallelujah my family loves me. Hallelujah I've got a cold and Jesus loves me. Hallelujah the boss doesn't like me, but in Jesus' name I love Him. Hallelujah my allergies and my asthma are out of control, Jesus is my healer. Hallelujah shall I go on?

Our words of praise for God come from a heart, mind, spirit, and body that is filled with His Holy Spirit. Our perspective on each day has changed. Our desires are different. Our lives are being lived for Him first.

Before you were saved the Holy Spirit was calling you. God promised to love you unconditional. That love never ended even though you chose to ignore Him. But God has been calling your name. He knew your name before you were born. God's promise to love you has never ended. He wants to be in a relationship with you.

By calling your name our Lord has become your Savior. His promise is that when you call out to Him, He will save you. There was a day when you said yes to Jesus. Remember that day and give thanks. Wake up tomorrow knowing you are saved. Live today knowing Jesus is your Savior.