

# And beside this... (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Before reading the text that I trust the Lord has given me, I do thank you all for your kindness made known in the collection that was taken on the past Wednesday.
- I can only desire for you that the Lord may bless you and reward you for your kindness to one who is so unworthy.
- I do find at such times that the words of Jacob are mine and I know I have expressed this before, but Jacob on one occasion said this, I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant.
- Well, may the Lord grant to us a day of blessing in our souls and that, to my own soul, will be something that one so desires for you all.
- Now the word that I must read before you this morning, you will find in the second epistle of Peter, the first chapter, and I read the first three words in verse 5.
- [ 1 : 5 3 ]     And beside this.
- And beside this. We have in a very few verses, in this one chapter, a very sacred description of everything that we can possibly need, both for time and eternity.
- And it is upon my spirit to come presently to further truth in this same chapter, which is expressed in these words, wherefore, the rather brethren.
- Now we must then first look, as the Lord may help us, into what the apostle Peter meant.
- We do need to remember that he wrote his epistles by and through the help of God, the Holy Spirit. But in these three words, and beside this, what then is the apostle speaking on?
- [ 3 : 4 9 ]     Well, first of all, he commences this chapter in this way. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.
- Christ. The first thing then that he speaks of is the gift of faith. And he puts it in these words to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.
- how he would first make this clear then that faith, precious faith, is the gift of God.
- And the apostle Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, tells us just how salvation is obtained and this through faith.
- For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.
- [ 5 : 3 5 ]     Now the apostle Peter had received this precious gift of faith. How did he receive it?
- How may we receive it? If we have received it, where did it come from? Well of course the answer at once is this, that faith is the gift of God.
- And as soon as faith is imparted by the Spirit within the heart, then life commences within the soul.

When the Lord Jesus found Peter and others by the sea and called them, we know that the command of Jesus in a very few words which was, follow me.

Immediately life was imparted in Peter's heart. As soon as Jesus had spoken those words, follow me, and immediately he left all and followed Jesus, but he commenced to know Jesus because Jesus had spoken to his heart.

[ 7 : 14 ] The point that we need to consider is this, have we received faith? If we have, then we shall certainly understand truth that the Lord Jesus spoke to Peter at a later date.

And I just read this to you. When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, whom do men say that I, the son of man, am?

And they said, some say that thou John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, oh, that we might know in our hearts this morning that this same glorious person, the eternal Son of God, and yet through condescension, the man Christ Jesus, that we should know in our hearts this very morning that he is speaking to us.

He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? How would we answer this, dear friends?

Do we have an answer as Peter had? Because he possessed life, because he had been brought to know that he was indeed a sinner, but that Jesus was his saviour.

[ 9 : 00 ] Well, he knew this by divine teaching in his heart, and Peter answered immediately, and Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Well, do we know Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God? How can we know him as this?

As he speaks to us and causes us to know that he is the Son of God? By the power that attends his words to our hearts?

Now, the Lord answered Peter, and I wonder how many of us have received the same answer. Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven.

Peter knew that Jesus was indeed the very Christ, the Son of God. He knew this by vital experience in his heart.

[ 10 : 35 ] This Jesus who had commanded him to leave everything and to follow him. This Jesus who had been teaching him and instructing him and reproving him.

Because in the very same chapter, the Lord had to reprove Peter. He had to say to him, get thee behind me Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

And this of course is another evidence of life. If the Lord has reproved us, if we have been chastened, corrected, and this in itself is an evidence of sonship.

For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? Now there is so much in the subject, and I do need divine guidance in what is to be said and what is not to be said.

But here Peter then begins this second epistle, Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

[ 12 : 10 ] See, when the Lord speaks to a sinner, at once there is understanding imparted, there is knowledge that is wrought within the heart.

The first time that this same Jesus spoke to my own soul through his word, it conveyed understanding and it conveyed faith.

Have you ever been made aware of this, that if you have received this gift of faith, it will have brought you to your knees, it will have brought you as a sinner to Jesus and you will have been brought to bow before him and this because you've received life.

I am the light of the world, I am the life of man. And then he goes on and he says this in verse 2, grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

You see, at once the apostle desires this for those that he is writing to. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you.

[ 13 : 40 ] This is just what I desire for every one of you here this morning. Grace and peace. The two are joined together.

The gift of grace, the sovereign divine favour of God to be known in your souls. grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Then he continues, and this leads up to these three words, and beside this, we must speak of what he's been saying, that we might come to this, and beside this, there's something further for us to know and to learn.

And what does he say then? According as his divine power, may we notice this, according as his divine power, hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life.

whatever we have in our life, in a providential way, has been given to us by God. Have we recognized this?

[ 15 : 06 ] Do we know this? But everything that we have today in our life, in our homes, and all that that means, has been given to us by God.

God. It's a wonderful thing to recognize this. Of thine own, said King David, when humbled under the mighty hand of God, of thine own, have we given thee.

All that we have is thine. And this will be the teaching of the Spirit within our hearts, but not only providential blessings, but he goes on and he says, and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

So then every precious gift and blessing has been given, not only providential blessings, but the blessings of his grace.

according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. So every true, every good and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of light.

[ 16 : 35 ] It is given. Every good gift, which really means every blessing that we can possibly have in this life and every blessing that we so need to prepare us for the life to come, eternal life.

And all this through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. And then further, in verse four, 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.

Now we come then to this further sacred evidence of life and blessing. sing. I wonder how many of us here this morning could say, humbly say, that God has given us a promise.

The promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. I hope that the Holy Spirit will go from heart to heart reminding you, being your remembrance, sir.

I just think of one promise that we've read of in the preceding chapter, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

[ 18 : 15 ] This may help you to think about what the Lord has spoken to you. I hope that he, the Holy Ghost, will bring into your hearts the promise or promises that God has given to you.

Precious promises which God has given, conveying to you that you are among his beloved people, that he has given you life, and that he has told you in such words as these, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.

Now, what a promise. promise. And to any of you that have received another very wondrous promise that says this, I need to turn and read it to you that we might have it just as it is found in God's word.

Now, could you come in with this promise? And if you cannot come in with this promise, do you long, but it might be made yours? Well, listen then.

But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine.

[ 19 : 53 ] has the Lord given you that wondrous promise? Or perhaps has he gone on and said this to you, when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee, when thou walkest through the fire thou should not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

Has the Lord given you that promise? have you received such a promise as this? Ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight, but the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your reward.

And so we could go on, you may say, well you haven't mentioned my promise, but the Lord can bring it again into your hearts and remind you that he gave it to you.

Fear thou not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness.

And then there's another promise, indeed there's two further promises that I just read, and you will know if the Lord has given them to you.

[ 21 : 24 ] The first one is this, for I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee.

Has the Lord given you that promise? Or has the Lord given you this one? Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Now the apostle then tells us this, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises. My mind goes to one more promise, and it is this.

Have you ever had this promise? Cast not away, therefore, your confidence which hath great recompense of reward.

Cast not away, therefore, your confidence in God, your confidence which the Lord has given you concerning your own soul.

[ 22 : 37 ] Oh, cast it not away, because there is a place reserved for you in heaven. Think of it.

Cast not away, therefore, your confidence which hath great recompense of reward. Whereby are given unto our succeeding great and precious promises, promises, this is in the plural, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And now he goes on, and beside this. Now, as we turn to this part of the subject, we turn at once to what can be spoken of as practical godliness.

Practical godliness. What is it? What does the apostle tell us? And beside this, having spoken of these other wondrous blessings known through the love and mercy of God alone.

And then he comes and he says, and beside this, the Lord help us then to look at what he says. Giving all diligence.

[ 24 : 22 ] Add to your faith virtue. Now, this, I believe, means that if we possess life, we shall feel our great need of virtue, moral excellence.

You see, people that are thus blessed by the Lord, they are given a very precious grace, the fear of the Lord, and it's put in their heart.

And the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, it will motivate us in our life. It will speak to our hearts.

Then the first grace that we shall feel our need of, and as the apostle puts it, add to your faith, virtue, moral excellency.

It means we shall be very concerned about how we live. We're living in days of awful moral degeneracy, and it's on every hand.

[ 25 : 47 ] Let me just remind you of what is recorded concerning Daniel, and he would have been in his late teens. And may we just consider Daniel for a moment when we read, he would not defile himself with the king's meat.

Why was this? Because he possessed the fear of the Lord. He couldn't have what the king wanted him to have, and if we possess the fear of the Lord, we shall want to live on the things that are right.

We shall be like Daniel, we shall be like Nehemiah when he said, so did not I because of the fear of God. Oh, we shall want to live then rightly before God.

Add to your faith virtue. What a precious grace this is, virtue. you. Purity.

Purity. Purity of life. Now we shall know if we have life that we do not possess these precious graces, but do we feel our need of them?

[ 27 : 10 ] Virtue. And the apostle speaks in another place, indeed we've just been considering it, when he says, that hath called us to glory and virtue.

Now we must go on, and to virtue knowledge. What then is this knowledge? It is surely knowledge of Christ.

To be given precious knowledge of Christ. Christ. The apostle Paul, in writing to the Philippians, takes this up, and this is what he says, For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

discretion, understanding, this is what we shall feel our need of. And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that ye may approve the things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.

[ 28 : 52 ] And then he speaks further in the third chapter of very precious knowledge. And what does he say? Yea, but what things were gained to me those I counted lost for Christ?

Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but lost, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and who count them but done, that I may win Christ and be found in him.

This precious knowledge. And then again he speaks in writing to the Colossians and he says, he speaks to them again out of love to them.

For this cause we also since the day we heard it do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

This is knowledge. and it could be summed up like this, that I may know him. Do you want to know him for yourself?

[ 30 : 18 ] This glorious person, that I may know him. And beside this, and then he says to, and to knowledge temperance.

What is temperance? It is really this. It means moderation, avoiding excess.

Do you feel your need of temperance? If we have been made aware of our own hearts in measure at least, we shall know that we have besetting sins.

We shall know there are certain things in this life that our heart goes after. And we are all different in this. But you see the apostle says, and to knowledge temperance.

And again, we read this, let your moderation be known unto all men, for the Lord is at hand.

[ 31 : 36 ] Moderation, something that is foreign to our human nature, completely foreign to our human nature. But let your moderation be known unto all men, for the Lord is at hand.

Do you feel then your need of temperance? And I feel that perhaps this will sum it up in one of our hymns.

May I from every sin, as from a serpent fly, abhor to touch the thing unclean, and rather choose to die.

Now we shall feel our need of temperance, and to temperance, patience. Oh, what a precious grace is the grace of patience.

I wonder how we feel in our hearts as we consider this, patience. Do you feel your need of patience this morning?

[ 32 : 45 ] Oh, does the Lord show you again and yet again that you just do not have this grace? Some of us more than others are impatient.

I believe it would be right to say that dear Peter was an impatient man, and how often he was ready to speak, and sometimes spoke unadvisedly with his lips, and so do we, if we know anything of our own hearts.

Well, do you need patience? patience. It's certainly something you will feel your need of, the grace of patience.

Isn't it found in the epistle of James, where it says this, let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Let patience have her perfect work. How do we learn patience? We learn it as our trials, our afflictions, our troubles, are sanctified to us.

[ 34 : 01 ] That is the way you will learn patience. Patience one with another, patience in our life. Ye have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise.

And beside this, and so you will feel your great need of godliness. Oh, what a subject this is, exhaustless subject, godliness.

And again, what does the word of God tell us concerning this precious gift? God is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we shall carry nothing out.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. The apostle Paul could say this in another place, I have learned that in whatsoever state I am in, therewith to be content.

Oh, this precious grace of godliness. Well, it's the very essence of true spiritual life, godliness.

[ 35 : 21 ] Everything that is bound up with God himself, in his holy word, and as we are led to consider this great God for ourselves, and to godliness brotherly kindness.

What a word this is. And to godliness brotherly kindness. Now, the apostle Paul in writing to the Ephesians, I remember once this particular word being made mine, and it's this, and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice, and be ye kind, one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Do we feel our need then of this sweet grace, brotherly kindness? May each the other kindly help to run the shining road.

Kindness, brotherly kindness. Brotherly kindness. Where does this precious grace come from?

[ 37 : 09 ] It comes from Christ. All these graces come from him. What do we sing? And I'm just coming to the amen, but what do we sing in our third hymn this very morning?

We sang this, every grace and every favour comes to us through Jesus' blood. Now that is the source. It's the source of every grace and every favour.

It comes to us through Jesus' blood. And to godliness, brotherly kindness. What a precious grace this is.

When we feel it working in our hearts, what will it do for us, dear friends? It will make us feel to be the least of all saints.

We shall take the lowest seat. We shall esteem others better than ourselves. And then finally, and to brotherly kindness, charity.

[ 38 : 20 ] Charity. Do you know the meaning of the word charity? You dear children that are here this morning, do you know the meaning of this word charity?

Well, it means love. But I feel this, that it means love in action. Love in action. Do we feel our need of these precious graces?

And beside this, now what will it do for us then? May we listen to these words of the apostle in verse 8.

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.

[ 39 : 29 ] May the Lord bless his own word. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I conclude our service by singing hymn 1024. Amen. Oh, for a heart to praise the Lord, a heart from sin set free, a heart that sprinkled with the blood so freely shed for me.

1024 1024 1024 1124 1224 1224 1324 1324 1425 1425 1525 1525 1625 1625 1625 1625 1625

Christ is heard to speak where Jesus reigns alone.

[ 42 : 00 ] The handle of the contrite heart be living true and clean which neither life nor death can part from him that dwells within.

Thy nature, gracious, Lord, impart come quickly from above Write thy new name upon my heart Thy new best name of love Lord, can it please thee to bless thine own word to us each.

And Lord, we do ask that thou wilt be very near to our dear friend in her bereavement. Lord, do favour her, do comfort her.

We believe thou hast. And Lord, do grant if it can please thee that our dear friend's death and the funeral service may be a means of grace to our souls.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God with the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

[ 44 : 40 ] Amen. Amen. Good. Amen. Great.

Thank you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.