

## **Sermon Outline**

### **“Power and Promise”**

#### **2 Peter series, part 2 – 2 Peter 1:3-4 – Joshua Harris – September 25, 2011**

**Main Idea:** Everything we need for spiritual stability and a transformed, godly life is provided for us in Jesus Christ.

#### **There is No Power Apart From Jesus (verse 3a)**

1. Power is the ability to accomplish something. We eat food to give us energy and drink coffee because it gives us power to stay awake. We buy the latest technology because it has greater processing power. We chase after position, status and physical strength because we want the power to accomplish our goals and desires. But none of these forms of power can give us eternal life.
2. The glorious news of the Bible is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has come to make this divine power available to us so that we can live forever and be like him. As it states in verse 3, “His divine power has granted [i.e., freely been given to us] all things that pertain to life and godliness.”
  - a. The word “life” in this verse is speaking of eternal life. And “godliness” is Christ-like character and behavior. It’s saying that all we need for salvation and life beyond death comes by the power of Jesus Christ. And all that we need to be changed and transformed comes from his power.
3. All too often, we start with our human effort, “here’s what I need to do.” The gospel starts with “the divine power of Jesus.” And that’s where we need to start, too.

#### **There is No Godliness Apart From Jesus (verse 3b)**

1. Godliness is being like God. It’s the quality of life we’re to live because Jesus has transformed our hearts. What Peter tells us is that this godliness is something much more than mere behavior modification. It requires divine power. And this divine power comes “through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence” (verse 3b). New life – both eternal life in heaven and transformed life today – come through knowing Jesus.
2. Godliness isn’t just a list of all the bad things we are not allowed to do. Godliness is the way we live when we know that Jesus is worth obeying – that being close to him and loving him is better than the pleasure sin gives. Real godliness, the powerful kind that turns from temptation and leads to radical obedience, isn’t driven by rules; it is driven by an experiential and relational knowledge of Jesus Christ. Morbid introspection leads to hopeless dejection. Knowing Christ leads to hope and new life.

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3. Consider how closely tied godliness is to Jesus. Not only does it come through the knowledge of Jesus, but also new life begins because he called us. Here's why this matters: the basis of our new life of godliness wasn't our choosing, deservedness or responsiveness. The basis of our new life is the powerful, effectual, intervening call of God that awakened us and caused us to see the glory and excellence of Jesus Christ!
  - a. Our godliness is all connected to the person of Jesus. It says, he "called us to *his own* glory and excellence [italics added]." We aren't just called to a standard or a way of life or a code of conduct. We are called to a Person. There is no godliness apart from Jesus. He called us to spiritual life so that we can live a godly life.

### There is No Promise Apart From Jesus (verse 4)

1. Verse 4 begins by saying, "by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises." The phrase, "by which" could also be translated, "through these." It's referring back to the glory and excellence of Jesus Christ. This verse is saying that the precious and very great promises come to us through knowing how glorious and good Jesus is. In other words, the promise and hope of the Christian life is connected to and fulfilled in Jesus. That is why 2 Corinthians 1:20 states, "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." Consider the following promises that are "Yes" and "Amen" in Jesus:
  - a. The promise of new birth? It's ours because Jesus rose from the dead (1 Peter 1:3).
  - b. The promise of our sins forgiven? It's ours because Jesus bore our sins in his body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24).
  - c. The promise of adoption into God's family? God predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:5).
  - d. The promise of reconciliation? Through Christ, God reconciled us to himself (2 Corinthians 5:18).
  - e. The promise of eternal life? It's ours because "God ... gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

### Conclusion

1. For every Christian: Jesus has given us everything that we need for eternal life and godliness. In and of ourselves, we don't have what it takes. But through the knowledge of Jesus, we have a divine power at work in us. We've been called to life. We've escaped corruption. We must remember all we have in Jesus and find our stability in him.

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### **Fellowship Starters**

1. Take time as a Care Group to read 2 Peter 1:1-4.
2. When you think about the power to change some area of sin, where do you typically start – with human effort (i.e., a “to do” list of changes to make), or by crying out for Christ’s divine power? Why is human effort so powerless to bring about heart-level change?
3. Why are loving and treasuring Jesus with all your heart, and finding him all-satisfying motivations to grow in godliness?
4. In your pursuit of holiness and godliness, how can, as Josh stated, “morbid introspection lead to hopeless dejection”? How can knowing Christ lead to hope and new life?
5. What difference does it make to be called by and to a Person (Jesus), instead of a standard or set of rules?
6. What promises of God’s Word are particularly precious to you? How have these promises comforted or encouraged your soul?