



Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 1, 2021

“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.”

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NLT)

*Call to Worship

Promises from Psalm 145:13-18

*The LORD always keeps his promises;
he is gracious in all he does.*

***The LORD helps the fallen
and lifts those bent beneath their loads.***

*The eyes of all look to you in hope;
you give them their food as they need it.*

***When you open your hand,
you satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing.***

*The LORD is righteous in everything he does;
he is filled with kindness.*

***The LORD is close to all who call on him,
yes, to all who call on him in truth.***

*Opening Prayer

God of promises fulfilled, we gather as descendants of Abraham; we stand before you as a testimony to your covenant; we assemble as living proof that your love for humanity knows no limits. When we feel overwhelmed by the stresses of daily life, we need only look at the stars in the sky to remember your abiding faithfulness. When we are overcome with despair by the pain of brokenness in our world, we need only see the light of a single promise to remember the One you sent as our light, our strength, and our salvation. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Share How You Can Present Your Offering to God

Make your offering personal...through a donation or an act of service...bring to God an offering of praise and gratitude!

Sing the Doxology Together

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer for Saturating Our Lives with God’s Promises

Lord, we confess how often we choose—either intentionally or by default—to live our lives trusting ourselves instead of You, relying on our way through circumstances instead of relying on Your promises. Unfortunately, we muddle our way through those times as paupers when we could indeed be living as sons and daughters of the King.

Forgive and cleanse us we pray as we seek Your mercy and grace. Awaken us once again to our identity as your children. Give us eyes to see the extravagant riches You make available to us for our daily living. We are humbled to hear that it is Your heart’s desire to provide everything we need for a life that pleases You and is joyful to us.

So, Lord, may Your promises saturate our hearts and minds. Lord, these promises are like lifelines to us. When our world is shaking, we need those promises to anchor our souls. When our world is spinning, we need those promises to restore peace and order to our scrambled minds. Lord, we can meet You in these promises! Rescue us from wandering through life missing out on the best You have for us.

Lord, one other thing. We see so many other travelers on this life journey—weary travelers—who also need the refreshing provisions of Your promises. Send us to be Your agents to help

them find Your promises and with them to find You. We offer ourselves as Your servants. May others taste the joy of Your great and precious promises because of our genuine love and care. Now hear our prayers for others today...

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

God's Word

2 Peter 1:1-7 (NLT)

The Word of God for the people of God...Thanks be to God!

Message

"Great and Precious Promises"

Pastor Clark

See Message Below

*Hymn of Faith

"Standing On the Promises"

UMH 374

The Lord's Supper

Blessing

May God, who gives us patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. And may he fill you completely with joy and peace as you trust in him, so that your lives overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Go with God!



2 Peter 1:1-7 (NLT)

This letter is from Simon^(a) Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to you who share the same precious faith we have. This faith was given to you because of the justice and fairness^(b) of Jesus Christ, our God and Savior. ² May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. ³ 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. ⁴ 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. ⁵ In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.

Praying for One Another

- Heather Martin, surgery next Wednesday
- Arden Landis home from Children's Hospital after heart tests
- Elizabeth Jones, in critical care ICU at MCE
- Becky Callendar, friend of Paul Owens, recovering from lung cancer surgery
- Jan Smith from Faith Church continuing treatments
- Christina Cuddihy, as she begins her treatments
- Paula Prose, moving to a facility in Illinois to be near her daughter
- Sarah Cory and Guy Cory as they contend with all they are facing
- Brady Martin, 10-year old struggling with leukemia
- Gary Stammer, doing well after pancreatic cancer surgery
- Eileen Moffo, mother of Carla Jay, as they found a mass on her liver
- Community Focus: Children and the supplies needed for school
- National Focus: Resurgence of COVID-19 via Delta Variant
- World Focus: Olympics in Japan

To God Be the Glory

1. *To God be the glory, great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.*

Refrain:

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father thru Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done!*

2. *O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives. (Refrain)*

3. *Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing thru Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. (Refrain)*

“Standing on the Promises of God”

1. *Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
through eternal ages let his praises ring;
glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,
standing on the promises of God.*

Refrain:

*Standing, standing,
standing on the promises of God my Savior;*

*standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.*

***2. Standing on the promises that cannot fail,
when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
by the living Word of God I shall prevail,
standing on the promises of God. [Refrain]***

*3. Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,
bound to him eternally by love's strong cord,
overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
standing on the promises of God. [Refrain]*

*4. Standing on the promises I cannot fall,
listening every moment to the Spirit's call,
resting in my Savior as my all in all,
standing on the promises of God. [Refrain]*

A Service of Home Communion

Greeting

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

Call to Worship

God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

Lord's Prayer

Let us pray together as Jesus taught us to pray: *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

The Promises of Scripture

Hear these portions of scripture: Jesus invites us: *"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls."* **Matthew 11:28-29**

Jesus declares: *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me and anyone who comes to me, I will never drive away."* **John 6:35, 37**

Invitation to the Lord's Supper

We invite you now to spiritually unite with all the members of Faith and Hope United Methodist Churches, and partake of the Lord's Supper.

According to Luke, when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples, he took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him.

Sharing the Bread This is the body of Christ, the bread of life—given for you. Amen.

Sharing the Cup This is the blood of Christ, the cup of salvation—shed for you. Amen.

Prayer after Communion Let us pray: *"We thank you, O God, that through Word and Sacrament you have given us your Son, who is the true bread from heaven and food of eternal life. We lift up to you, this day, these joys and concerns of our hearts: So strengthen us in your service that our daily living may show our thanks, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."*

Parting Blessing May the Lord bless and keep you. Amen

God's Great and Precious Promises

2 Peter 1:1-7; Hebrews 4:13-25 (NLT)

Introduction

The circumstances of life or the promises of God—upon which are you standing?

In all likelihood, you're standing on one of those two...which one are you standing on? As we named last week, life in this broken world is hard. Circumstances like we encountered in the past few weeks, bring us crashing face to face with some of these harsh realities. It causes our world to shake!

What's shaking your world right now? When our world is reeling, when we feel vulnerable, where do we turn?

I would suggest that God has provided a refuge for us: God's great and precious promises.

God Our Promise Maker and Promise Keeper

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.

Here we find one of the amazing promises in all Scripture. God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. By entering into a personal, day-to-day relationship with our Lord, we gain access to all the provisions we need to live faithfully and fruitfully as God designed us to do!

Listen to Eugene Peterson's translation of those verses in the Message:

"Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. The best invitation we ever received! We were also given absolutely terrific promises to pass on to you—your tickets to participation in the life of God after you turned your back on a world corrupted by lust."

Folks, that's staggering in its scope. How many of you have spent hours even days planning for a vacation trip to make sure you have absolutely everything you might need on that excursion? Then, no matter how hard you try, there always seems to be something you forgot, something that you hadn't reckoned you'd need. Well, with God, that never happens. God in his goodness provide everything we need! What a relief!

God is the ultimate Promise Maker and Promise Keeper! It all comes from God's essential nature: **God's glory and excellence(goodness).**

- **"Glory" (Doxa)** speaks of a manifestation of God's true nature, presence, or likeness. He is glorified when He is allowed to be seen as He really is.
- **"Excellence" (Arete)** came to mean quality of life which made someone stand out as excellent. Arete never meant cloistered virtue, or virtue of attitude, but virtue which is demonstrated in life, in action.

His promises are irrevocable because of who God is:

- **God is unchanging.** He sees the end from the beginning. He's never caught off guard by the unexpected. He makes no mid-course corrections. He is not victimized by moods or weather. *"He never changes or casts a shifting shadow"* (James 1:17 NLT).
- **God is faithful.** *"God can be trusted to keep his promise"* (Heb. 10:23 NLT).
- **God is strong.** He does not overpromise and underdeliver. *"God is able to do whatever he promises"* (Rom. 4:21 NLT).
- **God cannot lie.** *"It is impossible for God to lie"* (Heb. 6:18 NLT).

Great and Precious Promises

"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."

7,487. That's right. There are 7,487 promises in God's Word! Someone spent a year-and-a-half attempting to catalogue all the promises God made to humanity.

What are a few of these? Created and blessed...Forgiven...Adopted as sons and daughters...Given grace of all kinds...Gifted with the Holy Spirit...Comforted in the midst of suffering...Strengthened for the journey...Provided for along the way...Healing for our wounds...Bodily resurrection...Eternity in God's Presence...Reign with Christ forever

- **Precious (timios)** to value or honor...describes that which is valuable, highly prized, desirable, costly, as a precious stone, an apt adjective to modify the spiritual riches inherent in the promises of God.
- **Magnificent (megistos)** is the superlative of **megas**. A superlative is an adjective that denotes an extreme or unsurpassed level or extent. The idea of superlative is that it surpasses all others! Superlative speaks of the highest degree. Since **megas** means great (including great in power, authority, etc), you can picture the idea inherent in the superlative **megistos**, which means greatest, exceeding great or preeminent. It is surprising that this verse marks the only use

of **megistos** in the New Testament. Stop for a moment and meditate on what Peter is saying. He is speaking of the incomparable magnitude of God's promises.

Why does Peter call these promises “*great*” and “*precious*”? What makes God’s promises so powerful in the life of believers?

1. God’s promises **jumpstart** us when we are stalled by our circumstances; help us get unstuck
2. God’s promises help us **reframe** our circumstances, see from God’s kingdom perspective
3. God’s promises **infuse** our faith with strength; quicken our faith with divine resources
4. God’s promises **anchor** us when life is stormy
5. God’s promises **open** shut doors and lead us to new pathways
6. God’s promises **awaken** us to our hope in Christ

A nine-year-old by the name of Chris came down with mononucleosis as summer approached...The doctor ordered Chris to stay indoors for the entire summer. Chris was a rambunctious, athletic, outgoing kid. To be told to spend the summer indoors? No Little League baseball, fishing trips, no swimming at the pool, and bike rides? Might as well trap an eagle in a bird cage.

Chris’s dad was a man of faith and encouraged Chris to latch onto one of God’s promises to turn bad things into good (Genesis 50:20 for instance). His dad resolved to find something good in the quarantine. He sold guitars in his drugstore and wasn’t a half-bad guitarist himself. So he gave Chris a guitar. Each morning he taught him a new chord or technique and told him to practice it all day. Chris did. Turns out, he had a knack for playing the guitar. By the end of the summer, Chris was playing Willie Nelson tunes and even beginning to write some songs of his own.

Within a few years Chris was leading worship in churches. And, fast-forward, within a few decades he was regarded as the most sung songwriter in the world. Perhaps you’ve heard some of his music? “*How Great Is Our God*” or “*Holy Is the Lord*” or “*Jesus Messiah*” or “*Love Ran Red*.” My favorite CD I listen to in my car is one of his recordings, “*Never Lose Sight*.” **Chris Tomlin!**

All because a father and son latched hold of God’s promises!

Results of Living a Promise-Filled Life

- ***Partakers of the God’s Divine Nature***: We become more and more like Christ in both our inner beings and our outer actions.
- ***Escape of the World’s Corruption***: quite literally we put away the lust that causes corruption

Becoming People of the Promise

*"In view of all this, **make every effort to respond to God's promises.** Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone."*

Abraham is our travel guide into becoming people of the promise...Romans 4:13-25 (NLT)

"He plunged into the promise and came up strong, ready for God, sure that God would make good on what he had said."

Romans 4:20 (MSG)

Clearly, God's promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God's law, but on a right relationship with God that comes by faith. ¹⁴ If God's promise is only for those who obey the law, then faith is not necessary and the promise is pointless. ¹⁵ For the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!)

*¹⁶ So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we are all certain to receive it, whether or not we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham's. For Abraham is the father of all who believe. ¹⁷ That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." **This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who creates new things out of nothing.***

¹⁸ Even when there was no reason for hope, Abraham kept hoping—believing that he would become the father of many nations. For God had said to him, "That's how many descendants you will have!" ¹⁹ And Abraham's faith did not weaken, even though, at about 100 years of age, he figured his body was as good as dead—and so was Sarah's womb.

*²⁰ **Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God.** ²¹ He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises. ²² And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous. ²³ And when God counted him as righteous, it wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. It was recorded ²⁴ for our benefit, too, assuring us that God will also count us as righteous if we believe in him, the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. ²⁵ He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God.*

Conclusion ...

Russell Kelso Carter was a star athlete of a military academy and an excellent student academically, who went on to be a successful teacher and coach. He then spent several years as an ordained Methodist minister, after which he went to medical school. He spent the last of his professional years as a doctor of medicine. Carter was also a musician and songwriter. Although Carter was a professed Christian most of his life, it wasn't until a medical crisis of his own with his heart that he began to understand the reality and power of Bible promises. At age 30, he was declining in health and his heart was in critically weakened condition. Worse yet, the physicians said they could do no more for him.

Carter turned to God for help and healing. He knelt and made a promise that healing or no, his life was finally and forever, fully consecrated to the service of the Lord. It was from that moment that the written Word of God became alive to Carter. He began to rely upon the promises of healing, determining to believe no matter what his physical condition, no matter how he felt.

Over the course of the next several months his strength returned, and his heart was completely healed! Carter lived another healthy 49 years. Interestingly, his most noted song was written several years before his healing miracle. But those words became more than words and music to him.

'Standing on the Promises' became an integral part of his life.

"Standing on the Promises of God"

*1. Standing on the promises of Christ my King,
through eternal ages let his praises ring;
glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,
standing on the promises of God.*

Refrain:

*Standing, standing,
standing on the promises of God my Savior;
standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.*

***2. Standing on the promises that cannot fail,
when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
by the living Word of God I shall prevail,
standing on the promises of God. [Refrain]***

*3. Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,
bound to him eternally by love's strong cord,
overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
standing on the promises of God. [Refrain]*

*4. Standing on the promises I cannot fall,
listening every moment to the Spirit's call,
resting in my Savior as my all in all,
standing on the promises of God. [Refrain]*

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NLT)

For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!" And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory.

