

Divine Power

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- [0 : 0 0] You're listening to the sermon podcast of Grace Reformed Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. To learn more about us, visit our website at gracereformed.org.
- And now, today's sermon. Before we jump in this morning, just by means of structure, I have broken these particular passages we're going to be covering this morning down into four sections.
- And we're going to be covering the first three this morning. So if you feel like point three is taking longer and you're worried how I'm going to fit point four in, that's because point four is for next week. So we'll be okay.
- And I feel that I have extra time since we got out early last Sunday, have a little bit more time this Sunday. Is that not fair? I think that's fair. I've spent the last two weeks trying to wrap my mind around Peter's saying to the church.
- And it's a saying that I think we can just breeze over. I know I have for years. The saying is divine power. He has granted to us divine power.
- [1 : 0 5] It's a promise. And what does that mean to the church? And as I begin to contemplate why I was struggling with such a concept, I started to think about the nature of the word itself, power, meaning that there's something that's just there's a force behind it, and the word divine.
- And I think there's a lot of things about the idea of divine or spiritual power that is hard for us to comprehend due to the nature of our own bodies. But I think also the ways in which we've been raised and the influence of our culture upon us.
- We don't live in a culture that believes in what we call the mysticisms of the past, of the Greek mythologies, or we're not really drawn by spiritualities.
- We don't, if you've ever been to an Indian reservation, you'll see a lot of omens and things that they do and put in their home because they believe that the spirits are among them. And we laugh at that as Americans because we know better.
- One of the things that Peter is writing to are people that are made up of three parts to them, to their experience of life. And he writes to these three aspects of their life.
- [2 : 2 5] And when we read them, we only read them through the lens of one, the physical side of our faith, the physical side, what we experience in our nature. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this this morning, but I want to introduce it to you.
- Because of the concepts of revivalism and rationalism in our history and how much it's influenced not only our preaching, but commentaries and the way in which we interpret the Bible, when we read the Bible, we think about it in a physical application.
- How does this apply to me today, right now, and how I'm experiencing life? We don't think past, well, yes, I was saved and there's a heaven, but we don't think any more about it other than that.
- Revivalism really was born out of a denial of the supernatural. There was a belief that one could transform their own heart. They could believe themselves.

And then upon believing, which is an act of human fruition, they could then transform their life. They could stop drinking and sleeping around. They could have good morals.

[3 : 25] And all of this was given to them by means, which we end up calling either pietism or legalism. Rationalism came about the same time where we were questioning the very passages of Scripture that were claiming to be anti-natural.

They were supernatural. Did Jesus really walk on water? Did he really feed 5,000 people? Was he really born of a virgin? Or are these just metaphors and word pictures?

And this started to permeate in our conversations as Americans, which then led to evolution and a fight against evolution. And before you know it, we were fighting for the physical and not even knowing that we had left the spiritual.

So when Peter says his divine power has granted to us all things, we don't have a category for that. It's like a color that doesn't exist. It's like an aspect of food you've never had to eat before.

Do you eat that or do you throw it away? I don't know. When it comes to our spiritual life, I think this is the same situation. In Scripture, we are constantly confronted with three realities, and that is, first of all, the physical reality that we live in for sure.

[4 : 40] But Paul tells us there are three enemies that we face. Actually, Peter does the same thing. He says you face three enemies. Now, in the Reformed faith, and many of you in here are very aware of your first enemy because, well, you wrestle with it every morning when you wake up, and that is your flesh.

It is the first and greatest enemy that we constantly can feel that wants to rebel against God. You can see it in your children. Your children do not have to be taught to have a sinful flesh.

It was given to them by you. It's your fault. They have it. Which goes all the way back to Adam and his fall. So we all can understand the problem.

Our first enemy is our flesh. But our confession tells us there's two other enemies. And these are the two that we often ignore because you technically can't see them in work as you can in physical, and that is the world and the devil.

Those are the two other problems that we face. The world's influence, not necessarily the world in its physical form, but when it talks about worldliness or the world, its meaning and referencing the influence of the supernatural spiritual movement of worldliness in our world and who is the culprit behind it, we already know that he is the father of all lies, Satan, the devil.

[6 : 03] If you do not believe that those are true and real problems that you're going to be facing, that all three enemies are coming after you, and you don't get to pick and choose, well, I know I already have a problem with my flesh.

I'm just going to work on that. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. If your house is on fire and you're like, well, I'm just going to work on the bedroom right now, you don't get to choose that. The whole thing's on fire.

You've got to deal with the whole thing burning up. That's how Peter writes this letter. He's writing it with a spiritual mindset that you have the enemy of your flesh, of the devil, and the world, and the solutions to it are not physical.

This is what happens. If you pay attention to your history or you pay attention to Christianity broadly, the reason why most sermons and books and radio programs are focused in on physical solutions, also known as pietism, here are things, ways in which you can discipline your body so that your body can produce the results, that is because you don't believe in a spiritual faith or a spiritual experience.

I'll give you an example. Paul talks about this at the end of chapter 2 in Colossians where he says it actually even appears spiritual and wise to try and use your body to control the spiritual nature of you because it's of no value.

[7 : 25] It has of no value of stopping the indulgence of the flesh. So sermons and even music, if you listen to what's the theology behind it, it's always speaking towards the physical nature of the person.

Peter starts his letter and immediately goes to the spiritual nature of the person because it's the spirit and its power that actually then controls and governs the flesh.

This is why Paul has to say, I'm not ashamed of the gospel because it sounds absurd that there's something other than the flesh that has to be controlled.

So this morning, we have to look into the spiritual nature of this letter if you're going to remotely understand how does divine power fit into your life today and it's not something that you're going to be doing by means of the flesh.

So I broke this letter down into four parts. Here's the first part and this is really a little bit of a recap and overview of the letter just so we make sure we don't lose sight of why Peter is writing this and who he's writing it to.

[8 : 38] The first point is this. The church's problem. This is what we're going to cover first. The church's problem and it's this. The world is corrupt. This is why he's writing this is that the church is living.

The church doesn't isolate itself from the world. It's actually in the world. It's a part of the world. Look at the latter part of verse four. I'll just read it to you. This is 2 Peter 1.4. It says, The corruption that is in the world because of sinful desires.

That's the introduction to basically the whole issue of the letter. How do Christians live in a corrupt world and it's driven by sinful desires?

This letter and really the rest of the sermon will have no value for you if you can't see the world through biblical lenses. The world fell into corruption thousands of years ago.

And as beautiful and wonderful as it is and I'm definitely going to partake in the wonder of today's weather and be refreshed by it. As wonderful as relationships are and good food is, which I will also partake in this afternoon, our world has only actually been progressing into degradation over the years because, and over the generations, because of the desire that's in the heart of man.

[10 : 02] This is why he is saying that the corruption comes from the heart of men. Listen, I used to think that the world really couldn't get any worse until the internet came into existence and you start to watch how evil people can be.

We invent new ways to destroy our minds and our bodies. Ways that really history has never seen before. We convince children to mutilate their bodies in ways that I don't know have ever happened.

We've murdered babies at the number of levels that the world has never seen before, in the millions. And you know what we call it? We recategorize the murder of children as healthcare.

Now that's a new invention. And that is corruption by means of sinful desires. We're even attempting to call pedophilia an orientation instead of the heinous crime that it is.

These are the new evils that are coming our direction. By the way, this isn't in Europe or in Canada. I'm talking about here in our home.

[11 : 16] See, the world is spiraling deeper and deeper into the wrath of God, into corruption, because they would rather have their desires fulfilled as corrupt as they are instead of living under the truth of God.

So Satan will give them everything that they want. And he will help them advertise it and wrap it in a bow so that it doesn't come across repulsive. It actually comes across enticing.

Otherwise, the church wouldn't be involved in it. I want you to read verse 4 with me again and notice Peter's perspective of what needs to happen to this world.

In order to understand divine power, you have to understand why it is necessary. Look at verse 4. By which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

So we need something new. We need the very divine nature of the king in order to escape what? Corruption.

[12 : 35] Listen, as much as I want to suppress and push back and destroy evil in our world, and I think as the church and as individuals we are called to do that, we understand that it's a temporary relief.

Just like Tylenol doesn't necessarily fix the problem, but it does bring a little bit of relief. And so we need it again. What the point is, is that the perspective the church should have of the world is that it's a place to escape.

It's a place to escape. The thing that gripped my mind and my heart was trying to think, okay, there's a little phrase that Peter uses in here.

He says the desire of the mind, the desire of the flesh. Therefore, there's an infiltration of the mind which then feeds the flesh and then that's where the outflow of the corruption comes.

Peter knows this. He's warning them. One, he's acknowledging it and then gets to the solution. We're gonna get to the solution in a minute, but I was reading this article on Fox Magazine this week. It came up when I was searching for some things related to this topic.

[14 : 01] And they wrote this on May 8th of 2024. And the title of the magazine, or the title of the article was this. Americans are 59% more likely to listen to breakup songs than love songs.

I mean, who wouldn't read that article? It's fascinating, right? Under the title, Breakup Song Key Findings, they wrote that the study finds Americans are 59% more likely to listen to one of these breakup anthems, they had a big old list of them, than a love song coinciding with research suggesting half of the nation finds it harder to date now than 10 years ago.

And why, this is not the article, these are my thoughts, and why would that be? And my conclusion is, I think 41% of the time when we do listen to love songs, they have nothing to do with actual love, but the very thing that Peter's talking about, the indulgence of sinful desires.

Because what happens when you can't satisfy your desire? You don't keep doing the same thing, you do what? You move on.

And then we romanticize it. And we turn it into something that has nothing to do with us. One of the titles of the song, which is really just promoting, literally after a breakup, the number one song was a song about self-love.

[15 : 33] Now tell me, that's not the epitome of sinful desire to love ourself more. Now John, why are you hating on love songs? I'm totally not hating on love songs.

We sang a bunch of them this morning. And I think there are a lot of fun songs out there that point out the true nature and the progression and what can be experienced in love. I'm simply pointing out that our culture is destroying their minds and their bodies because of the sinful desires that they are feeding upon.

And it comes to the indulgence of the mind. And this is the very thing that Peter is fighting back against. It comes from the mind to the heart and then to the actions.

So he's pointing out, do you want to know why they act this way? It's because of their desire. And this wasn't just a problem for, by the way, this concept is not just a problem for our modern day when I'm thinking about the influence of music.

Peter wrote this letter to help the church walk them through a world where they have massive influence coming towards them. Obviously, probably not through things like radio and internet, but that doesn't mean that music and writing and false teachers didn't exist, which is the problem in this church.

[16 : 47] One of the problems we don't have in our local churches these days is necessarily the rise of false teachers. You know why they don't have to go into the church to do their work anymore? Because you'll bring them into the home.

They don't need to come in through those doors because you walk them right into the doors of your house and into the doors of your home. And so I don't think I've ever had to kick out a false teacher out of our church.

I've had one that tried to visit once and I told him he wasn't welcome, but I never kicked him out. That was an interesting conversation if you ever want to come ask me about it.

It was very fascinating. This is why you are constantly having an information war, a truth war, a war of desire because Peter is working towards the internal that fluxes out in the outside.

And this leads us to the alternative that Peter introduces to his church. So we've talked about the problem which is the corruption of the world. Now he's going to talk about the church's protection which is grace and mercy.

[17 : 51] We're going to back up just a little bit into last week. We're going to look at verse two. So number two is the church's protection, grace and mercy. Peter introduces the letter this way and it's not a throwaway statement.

He's going to build on it the rest of the letter. May grace and peace be multiplied to you in what? The knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

So this is a prayer for the church that they would find their protection and source that is outside of themselves. He doesn't point to their performance.

He doesn't point to their actions. He literally says that grace and peace would be multiplied to them by means of a source that is outside of themselves. We will see this next week but he calls us to use this very source for the exact opposite of what the world does.

They use it for sinful desires to please themselves. We are going to end up using this truth of grace and peace upon us for the benefits of others and for the advancement of the kingdom.

[18 : 59] But I do want to break down these words because sometimes we just throw them around. We don't understand their meaning or their meanings have changed. The word grace here is from the Greek word charis and if you did not or charis however you want to say it but because I named my daughter charis we're going to call it charis and that's how I came up with her name.

And in context I don't believe Peter here has in mind saving grace because that can't increase or decrease. Your salvation cannot increase or decrease.

I think that and this word can be used in a multiplicity of ways. I think this is what he has in mind. Another meaning could be goodwill, loving kindness and favor. If you want to write this down this is Acts 4.33 Luke uses this same word grace or charis to describe the impact that the disciples were having.

This is Acts 4.33 it says and with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them. Well it wasn't great salvation right?

No it would be joy and pleasure and delight and a sweetness of power and lovingness that was upon them. And so Peter is writing and saying I want this for you I want you to have this favor and this supernatural delight and sweetness of joy that is upon you.

[20 : 31] And then he uses the other word which is peace the second word is peace. I think the easiest way to contrast this he's already talking about those who are living according to their own desires.

Romans 1.18 I think is a great example of what the opposite of peace might be. It's when the wrath of God comes upon people. This is Romans 1.18 it says for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

So here's the contrast. Those who embrace the truth and have the truth upon them what comes to them in their experience grace and the peace of God.

And I don't mean I don't think he means peace here and necessarily of salvation again but I do believe that as we read the promises of God we can enjoy and realize that we are in Christ's righteousness we are under his love we are under his care and therefore we have the opposite experience of what they have which is wrath.

We have the experience of God's peace. So Peter's about to expound a little bit more now in his letter of how this grace and peace will be ours and it comes to us in a certain way and this is verses three and four.

[21 : 57] So look at that we're already on to point three isn't this exciting? This is where we're at so the church's power now which is through divine knowledge the church's power.

So you have the church's problem the church's protection and now it's power and this is where we'll begin in verse three. So 2 Peter 1.3 it says his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of him who loved us or called us to his own glory and excellence by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises so that through them you become partakers of the divine nature having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desires.

This really these two verses are broken in three sections so we'll go ahead and just and let that flow for us. He starts with how all of this comes to us and he talks about it coming to us through his divine power.

And by the way the his I believe is pointing back to Jesus which is the last reference in verse two and this is Jesus' power and because at times we forget that Jesus is a man and he is the God man why this is so significant to people?

You have to understand Peter is saying yeah I walked with him I watched him die I watched him raise again it's that man's power that gives you this. he is promoting human power in their minds he's like but you're not listening it's not a human power it's a divine power.

[23 : 38] There's a difference between this man and any other man. Because we don't live in the second century Rome we're not going to always see the comparative nature of what Peter does.

Peter is wording these phrases in such a way where it draws a natural comparison where you can see there's one party that he's talking about and in so doing the way he says it is a knock on a second party and that would be the gods of Rome and those who embrace the gods of Rome.

So Peter compares these powers and the function and how they work because there is all around them the majority of the people are not Christians.

This is not a Christian nation. It's not everywhere you go people have I was laughing the person in front of me this morning had a big old magnet that said Jesus is Lord and I almost wanted to honk at him but I was like well do you think I was mad at him?

I wish I had a honk that said praise Jesus you know I was like that's awesome good for you. But that's not normal in Rome they weren't putting on the back of the carts Jesus is our God. As a matter of fact if they were doing the fact is that because they were being baptized and they weren't worshipping in the temples and they weren't participating in the cultural norms they ended up living outside the city because there was less complication outside there that's why Peter is writing to them he's in Rome he's decided to stay and minister he's writing to these churches that are out there.

[25 : 16] So Peter is a part of the witness and why he's writing this letter he's a part of the witness of this divine power and he wants his testimony he knows he's about to die he says this in verse 14 and he knows that he will not be able to stand before the churches anymore and give his personal testimony so he writes it down so that they can have it and they can circulate being reminded the eyewitness of Peter who saw the divine power of Jesus is reminding us of these promises.

I know that as I have been trying to think more and learn more about Roman culture and about what's happening during Rome you understand that the Bible often assumes I'm getting way ahead of myself this sermon's coming like in weeks but I'm gonna go ahead and introduce it now we forget the Bible just assumes you know things at times it doesn't explain things to you do you know that it never explains what a donkey is?

isn't that funny? it doesn't it just assumes that you know it does this a lot in the Bible it often assumes that you know what a spirit is or what necromancy is or talking to the dead you're gonna have to learn that from outside sources and so as we read this Bible we have to stop and ask ourselves who is he writing to?

why would he word it that way if you want the proper and full application? and so as Peter is writing this you have to understand he is contrasting other gods powers that they might be tempted to go back to now if he's writing to the Galatians or Hebrews they're wanting to go back to the law in this particular sense they're feeling the pressure of the culture just so we understand a little bit about Roman culture this is a historian he wrote this success in Roman life was equated with having a good relationship with the Roman gods and goddesses maintaining this incorporated both mystical prayer and business like sacrifices in exchange for material benefit Roman god and goddesses fulfilled different functions corresponding to various aspects of life in Roman belief immortal gods ruled the heaven earth and the underworld so everything about their life what happens up there in the heavens would it would be rain or storms their future what happens here presently in the earth and what goes on in under the earth is all ruled by the gods therefore you do not want to make the gods angry and I think just to point this out it says business like sacrifices and mystical practices of prayer they're a transactional nature of the gods if you want their benefit their protection their power their fertility the land the rain all of it you have to give of your part to get their attention they'll give you of theirs but this is not how Peter sees the relationship with our god and with our king he flips the power from the temporal to the eternal you are embracing the gods because you want the desires of your flesh fulfilled now and Peter says we are thinking far beyond this place because we're escaping it let me talk to you about a divine power that goes beyond this world he is not just seated on the throne man we talked about this this morning we sang about this in our song the psalms constantly talks about this there's a reason for it he is described as the god of gods the god of the nations the god of the kings the ruler of the world it is that power it's not that just you have a god who can control the weather it's he is the god who created the weather he's the god who created the world and he says to you the very thing that you're grasping for joy some kind of significance and favor of god a place for my heart to have peace and a place of such turmoil all of us felt maybe some of the elation of the election over this last week and then it was like okay that's over and reality sits back in of like yeah the world's still kind of a bad place we thought there we had a moment of peace there's no true peace there's no true rest not outside of god and peter is saying but it does but there is and it can and it can come to us now and it flows to us oh this is so important it flows to us by his divine power meaning that it is granted to us notice how the historian says maintaining this relationship with the gods was incorporated by mystical prayers and businesslike sacrifices church

Christians have been influenced by paganism and we don't even realize it how many times have you been tempted to look at your position before god and think to yourself man I don't know if god's happy with me right now I think I need to and fill in the blank if it's at that moment you think you need to pray or you need to read your bible or you need to do some kind of a sacrifice or make some kind of a spiritual resolution that's the exact opposite of granted granted means you're not involved it's given to you which is the opposite and we have treated god like a pagan god for so long and this is this is why they have to say we're not ashamed of our god and his gospel because it's so foreign to any other pagan god that is out there later in the letter Peter's going to address the issue more fully about this embracing and bringing back paganism into the church specifically sensual practices and the return of the god our god

[31 : 17] Jesus but I'm going to leave that for a little bit later but the church is still being enticed to embrace this kind of temporary mindset when it comes to our life and bodies how when we see a mishap or we see something wrong that happens to us we immediately think oh this is god punishing us because of xyz that I have done you're thinking temporary he literally warned you in the opening of the letter that we're trying to escape this world because it is corrupt which means you're going to experience the corruption you're going to experience it in the opposition to your faith you're going to experience it in the corruption of your body which means it's going to be fading away and it's going to be imploding on itself every moment of every day you're going to wake up and want relief and it's at that moment your heart should go relief is coming and I only find temporary relief for my eternal satisfaction in the knowledge of Jesus Christ no sacrifice required that's hard for us right that's hard but man and I'm with you

I am just as weak as you are many of you who spend a lot of time with me know how frail I am and I fall into the same temporary temptations I have the same ambitions as you do and I need the same gospel that you do but it is healthy at times to sit back and say have I been influenced by paganism do I only think about satisfying the desires of my flesh do I want the temporary benefits now and am I willing to make the sacrifices to do it we have parents who are sacrificing time with their children so we can advance our careers and hobbies that is not that is not what comes from divine nature that comes from paganism that's sinful desires we'll sacrifice our morals and the way that we dress and present ourselves in modesty to draw the attention of the world's applause if the world is mocking you most like you you're probably doing something right or you're a jerk okay some of you are jerks put your phone down stop tweeting but some of you are saying no this is not right this is not honoring to the king this is not holy this is sensual this is sexual this is deviant and you know what there's a better way there's a loving way there's a gracious way and the moment you do that you're criticized it's called hate speech you get called all kinds of crazy things even

I'm not going to go there we'll stop right there but we sacrifice the good things that the king has given us so that we can feed the pleasures of our soul and the same results the gods these are the same results that the gods were promising them in the day of Rome make sacrifices to us indulge us give your heart and your mind over to us and we will give you and it is true if you follow the way of the world and you embrace it you will have success you will you will feel the pleasures for a season and so for those of us who know this this is why we turn to a power that helps us to suppress these desires in us and to bring out of us love and goodness and the power that is needed is a divine power so what does that divine that's point number one divine power what's point number two what does it produce what does it give to us what is it infusing us with and it says life and godliness a church

I could spend a year here everything literally the verse says that his divine power has granted us granted remind you not earned granted you everything for life and godliness everything that you could ever need for the existence with god in the new heavens and the new earth and the existence here you got you have it and here's the greatest the greatest part i want you to hear as uneducated old young whatever you think your weaknesses are god does not say that your experience in heaven or your experience in here will be hampered by that he is saying all you need all you need is already been given to you and the power is not your own it's divine it comes from god the creator of the heavens and the earth peter knew the church would be trapped by satan's lies and that the gospel isn't going to be enough that's the lie we need more than the gospel we need more than grace we need more than the truth but peter says it is more than enough because it is divine in nature so often we only think in physical terms as i said before because we have forgotten that the way in which we are controlled is not by the flesh we are controlled by the spirit this is why we have to remember how it functions in that the divine power it starts to flow to us and through us through our mind this is why he connects it to knowledge what i think is interesting i think i have fallen into this i know many have fallen into this in this room we actually want the results of the life and we want the results of godliness but if you'll just turn with me to galatians chapter three i remember when i was in seminary the first time i read this with new eyes with opened eyes thinking about the gospel and its power it really shook me to my core realizing how much my life was dedicated to fleshly means galatians 3 1 paul you know sometimes you guys make comment about how animated and excited i get i don't know how paul said this i mean he may have said it like columbo i don't know but it doesn't come across that way this guy sounds like a fiery baptist because he was one oh foolish galatians exclamation point so i can read it this way oh foolish galatians right it's like hello who has bewitched you okay again because we don't live in a culture full of this type of thinking and awareness of seeing it he literally is saying the way you are acting is of the way of pagan demonic satanism witches follow what the demonic realm he is saying your thinking is satanic you know what we think of satanic like killing bunnies and like doing blood rituals that's what we think is satanic he's like no adding works into the gospel is satanic who bewitched you it was before your eyes that jesus christ was publicly portrayed as crucified let me ask you only this did you receive the spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith are you so foolish

having begun by the spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh this is why he says his divine power has granted you everything that you need so do not turn back to means of the flesh even if you think it's going to grant you temporary satisfaction or temporary progress it's not going to work and not only is it going to work it's satanic so we walk in the same way in which we come to life by believing in jesus now let me rephrase this because i saw this on a something i don't know where i read this recently it's not believing in jesus okay it's believing jesus it's believing him do you believe he is god yes do you believe that he died yes do you believe all of his promises are true yes then you have eternal life and not only eternal life but according to paul you have a life that will be transformed by him as well which leads us to the last point so his divine power life and godliness in this third section is through knowledge this is so helpful paul peter is not unclear so let's just read the whole thing so we're going to take rome and paganism and our flesh and understanding the gospel and let's read it all in just one big chunk verses three and four his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness i got nothing else i need outside of this through what how is it that i know i've got the divine power how is it that i've grasped it i've held on to it he says right here through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence well what specific knowledge what do you mean by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature having escaped from the corruption that is in this world because of sinful desires church it's his promises the knowledge of jesus christ and his promises that comes in it shapes and molds and changes our minds which then his divine power shapes and molds our hearts and our souls and it changes who we are not only eternally but temporarily now again another phrase that we i'm not going to spend a lot of time on this today but divine nature partakers of the divine nature there was only one person in rome who had a divine nature do you know who it was nero they believed that the gods would come and live inside the man and that he would become godlike so peter's writing to the church saying nero nero does not have the divine nature he he's not going to escape this world like you are you through the knowledge of the promises of your king will not only have life godliness but you will have a divine nature all of that is granted to you given to you it is something that is received believed and then experienced versus it's there for the taking now do your part to go take it implanting his promises into the hearts of his people is what brings this godliness out of us and it brings the purpose and the animation of the church just real quickly look at verse 8 with me for a moment peter's talking about this transformation that's going to happen we're going to get into this next week but i want to read it now if you ignore the promises of god and if you ignore this divine power and you continue to

[43 : 18] walk in the desires of your flesh peter tells you what happens look at this verse 8 for if these qualities are yours and increasing they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our lord and savior jesus christ and put it to you this way you ignore the promises of christ in his word the knowledge of jesus that it comes and filters into our hearts and souls you become an ineffective and unfruitful christian you don't lose your salvation you never earned it it was granted to you remember but peter's like you are very ineffective and you are very unfruitful and you have joined the team that is opposing the king ineffective unfruitful is the opposite of good it's bad i think what's interesting is if we want to know what god wants from us he wants us to indulge in his promises he wants us to find ourselves wrapped around his truth because it then shapes our mind and our desires it shapes our hearts it makes us gracious repentant people it does not make us perfect people it makes us people who repent and see our need and dependence upon him i read this from one commentator mcdonald he said unlimited strength is at our disposal through the enabling of the holy spirit the believer can serve valiantly endure patiently suffer triumphantly and if need be die gloriously i love his application he didn't say the divine power will greet you wealth and strength and health and notoriety he's like no you're going to suffer you're going to have slander and most likely die and therefore you have the endless amount of power to endure it to endure it this is why james can say hey count it all joy when you go into a trial why because you get to use you get to put the test the power i mean how many of you dudes get a power tool during christmas what's the first thing you want to do you want to put it to test it's like wow oh that broke honey ha bummer let me go cut it up james saying the same thing you face a trial and you're like okay here we go i'm going to use the divine power the knowledge of the promises of my king and i'm going to watch him give me this ability to endure patiently to suffer triumphantly and if need be i will die growing up one of my favorite scottish bible expositors name is alexander mclaren he wrote this we may have as much of god's sorry we may have much of god as we will christ put the key of the treasure chamber into our hand and bids us take all that we want if a man is admitted into the bullion vault of a bank and told to help himself and he comes out with one cent whose fault is it if he is poor this this is what peter is getting at if you want to indulge yourself you will never reach the bottom of it and you will always experience the benefits of it so his divine nature is coming to us through the knowledge of jesus christ this is the contrast because the knowledge that they this church we're going to get into is indulging themselves in is sensuality and they're worried about the public appearance of believing in a god that has not come back yet and it feels as if it's mockery not only that we're talking about a kingdom and everybody's a part of the kingdom seems to be dying it's like hey join my

kingdom you'll die that's what it felt like rome is advancing rome is dominating and they're engulfing other gods what's interesting is they engulfed the christians and then they're all of a sudden like well that was a bad idea because they're telling everybody our gods are bad nope we're going to put them to death you can either serve our god and ignore the jesus or you're gone so imagine what evangelism looks like in rome you're going to need a divine power to empower you and you're going to need a divine gospel to open the eyes of people around you and it's going to be really hard not to fall prey to give in to the essential desires because it's a part of who we still are and this leads us to point four which then peter takes all of this information and he tells us how it's going to apply in our daily lives which is the church's purpose again that's point four for next week just to remind you so we can all be okay i'll give you this last thought church i am intrigued i've had a new respect and love for god's promises because i want to take peter at his word he's saying that all i need for the rest of my life is in the promise of christ that's it and it's i mean i'm not going to have you raise your hand but if you're honest you're like i really want to believe that too but it's hard to think that's real so you got two options you can keep doing what you're doing remain without peace remain without joy remain in depression or you can say there's a power that will either give me the endurance to go through this or in many ways free me from it and it's wrapped up in knowing jesus christ church i think we prioritize a lot in our life and peter is pretty convincing that we need to by prioritizing the intake of the knowledge of the promises of christ by any means possible and that's just the first four verses so we have much more to go this prayer father i am so thankful that i'm up here talking about your power and not mine hopefully no one today walks away thinking that they can't do it all they need to do is believe they need to trust that you wouldn't lie to them that you wouldn't hurt them and that you are capable of giving every promise without fail lord for those who are weak help us to carry them help them help us to lift them to you for lord for lord those of us who are in sin may we repent may we turn to these promises may we have others comes beside us and mentor and teach and disciple us so that we can be set free from the burdens of our flesh and lord for those who have yet to believe lord open their eyes that they might see the wonder of your gospel in jesus name amen thanks for listening to the sermon podcast of grace reformed church in spring hill tennessee where everyone is in equal need of grace to plan a visit or to learn more about us visit our website at grace.reformed.org you yes you yes you yes you