

All We Need

II Peter 1:3

God better in order to live godly and fend off false teachers. God has provided us with what we need.

I want to begin this morning with some “what ifs”. You will find them to be a bit ridiculous but they serve a point to illustrate the verse we will be considering this morning. Turn to II Peter 1:3.

What if those who are nurses had been trained and hired by a doctor or hospital but were not given blood pressure cuffs or a stethoscope or gauze or other necessities to care for patients?

What if those who had been trained as a truck driver and hired to make deliveries were told to get a product to a certain destination by a certain deadline, but didn’t have a truck to drive or if you had the truck, there was no product?

What if Jim, as a farmer, didn’t have a tractor to plant or harvest his crops, or if he had a tractor but didn’t have any seed?

What if those who are mechanics or engineers or carpenters didn’t have tools to do your job?

What if you run a business and hired employees but you didn’t give them what they needed to make your product?

We could go on with lots of what ifs, but they hopefully serve a point. It would be ridiculous to think that anything could get done without the right tools for the job, whatever the job is.

That’s the essence of our verse today. God has given us the right tools, everything we need for the task of godly living. The question then becomes, are we using what He has given or do they remain unused on the work bench?

Peter is preparing these believers with an understanding of what is available to them to help grow in Christ likeness. He wants them to know

Let’s consider this morning four thoughts:

The source of this provision

The scope of this provision

The significance of this provision

The superiority of this provision

I. THE SOURCE OF THIS PROVISION

“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.”

We read in the opening that the source of this provision is “His divine power”.

Throughout His ministry there was a call by Jesus to follow Him. It’s not some general call, but a very specific call to transfer what we perceive to be our rights to follow Him.

Luke 9:23 “And He said to them all, ‘If any man will come after Me, let Him deny Himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.’” (KJV)

The *Phillips paraphrase* reads “If anyone wants to follow in My footsteps, he must give up all right to himself, carry his cross every day and keep close behind Me.”

The Message puts it this way: “Then He told them what they could expect for themselves: ‘Anyone who intends to come with Me has to let Me lead. You’re not in the driver’s seat--I am. Don’t run from suffering; embrace it. Follow Me and I’ll show you how.’”

That doesn’t mean give up a few things or to give up certain things for a period of time as many do during Lent. It doesn’t mean that the Lord can have these areas of my life over here, but I’m going to keep these things separate over here. It means

giving up personal control of your life, your career, your bank account, your hobbies, your family, everything. He's the one who now directs your life. When you take up your cross it means a fully surrendered commitment to follow Him no matter the cost. It figuratively speaks of dying to self, submitting to Him and His will in all humility. There is a willingness to follow Him wherever and whenever He leads.

In their early 30's my folks surrendered everything they had to follow Christ in order to go into full time ministry at Camp Barakel.

Dad gave up his career as head mechanic for what was at the time the third largest school district in Michigan.

He gave up serving the church as a Deacon and work as its custodian.

He gave up playing on the church softball team, teaching Sunday school.

They both gave up singing in the choir.

Mom gave up her position as children's church coordinator.

They gave up a nice home and regular time with family and extended family.

It was a sacrifice to follow Christ in order to follow the source of the provision for godly living they were given.

Each act in and of themselves did not make them godly. They were an external evidence of what God was doing in their heart. Godly living isn't something you can produce by yourself. They had to rely on its source for spiritual growth.

I can't purchase a lamp, screw in a light bulb, hold the plug in my hand and expect to have the light come on when I flip the switch. It needs to be connected to a power source.

If I have a dead car battery, I can't expect just to hook up the jumper cables to it and have the car start. It needs to be hooked up to another good battery or a battery charger.

If I'm making Ramon noodles for dinner when it's my turn to cook and I get it all ready but don't put it in the microwave or on the stove, it won't cook. It needs to be in contact with a source of heat.

We need a source for life and godly living and that source is God. It can only be produced when we are connected to Him. The ability to live godly is only through God's power, a word that is one of Peter's favorites. Notice what God's power does.

There are verses that strongly emphasize the power that is at work in the believer. Notice that the power at work in us is the same power that raised Christ from the dead.

Ephesians 1:19-21

I Corinthians 6:14

II Corinthians 13:4

Colossians 2:12

His power does more than we can imagine.

Ephesians 3:20

His power helps us please Him.

I Corinthians 3:6-8

Ephesians 3:7

His power brings salvation to those who believe.

Romans 1:16

His power created the universe in the beginning.

His power sets up and takes down rulers.

His power makes happen what He wills and no one can thwart it or alter it.

His power performed the miracles in Egypt.

His power parted the Red Sea and brought food and water daily to the Israelites in the Desert.

His power defeated armies.

His power stopped the sun and caused the earth to go backwards.

His power stopped the rain.

His power tore the Temple curtain.

His power raised Christ from the grave.

His power forgives and saves.

His power transforms a life.
His power is the source of life and godly living.

That God is the source of this power is one thing, but we must know that power. “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.”

We come once again to the importance of knowing God intimately. If I have my lamp but don't know that I need to plug it into a source of power for the light to shine, then the lamp does me know good. Once I understand and know that a power source is required and plug into I am able to receive light. If I don't read God's Word or spend time in fellowship with Him through prayer and worship then I'll not know the extent of His power to help me live godly. As a matter of fact I will live in guilt for times when I sin or I will live defeated because I haven't connected to the source of deliverance. If we want to live a godly life, we must know the source through time spent with Him.

When we begin to more thoroughly know Him we begin to understand the scope of this provision.

II. THE SCOPE OF THIS PROVISION

“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.”

The NIV uses the word “everything”. The KJV says “all things”.

It simply means that when it comes to life and godliness God has made everything available to us. He has withheld nothing to make us spiritually mature. “Everything” doesn't mean He'll give us the tools to help us grow in one area, but the tools for another area are inadequate. God has given us His promise that what He began He will finish.

Philippians 1:6 – “Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Paul is confident, certain or firm in conviction that the work God began at salvation will continue through their lives until Christ returns at which time it will be brought to completion. The power of God not only saves them, it sanctifies them, and it secures them till Christ comes back. At that time there will be nothing else that needs to be done. As a matter of fact, there is nothing else that can be done. His power has made it all possible and His power will complete what He began.

One author writes that “genuine spiritual progress is rooted in what God has done, is doing, and will do. His faithfulness ensures that He (God) will be with believers until Jesus returns. They can have confidence that the God who has saved them will never let them go, and that they will inherit their eternal reward.”

But here's the thing. He's made it available but we have to appropriate or apply it. It's like a person who has a million dollars in the bank, but starves to death because he won't take any money out to buy the food he needs to keep him alive. The funds are there folks for godly living, we need to make a withdrawal and what's been given to us.

If God is the source of power to make it happen and His power is unlimited then the scope of this power is unlimited when it says that His power gives us everything we need for life and godliness.

The hymn written by Annie Johnson Flint helps us to see the scope of God's power.

His love has no limit;
His grace has no measure.
His power has no boundary known unto men.
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth,
And giveth,

And giveth again!

(He Giveth More Grace- CCLI 1292471)

The resources God has given for life and godliness are unlimited.

There is a wonderful and heartwarming story in the Old Testament that serves to illustrate both the scope and power of God in His provision.

II Samuel 9:1-13

The reign of Saul is over and David is now King over Israel. To honor his covenant with his friend Johnathan, son of Saul, David inquired about any remaining relatives. There was one, a cripple named Mephibosheth. A royal invitation was extended to him by the King. It was customary in that culture that when a new king took over, all the members of the ousted royal line were put to death. In this case David didn't do that even though Saul had tirelessly sought to kill him. Instead, he brought Mephibosheth in and adopted him to be part of his family and eat at his table. He even restored the family land. David gave Mephibosheth everything he needed so that he could live his new life just like one of the king's sons.

That's a picture of what God has done for us giving us everything we need to be part of His family.

We can't live the Christian life in our own strength so God has made available what we need through or by His unlimited resources to help us.

The scope of this provision as Paul wrote in Philippians 1:6 and what Peter speaks about in our text begins with salvation and continues throughout our life until we see Christ. He will complete what He began.

Let's consider the significance of this provision.

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROVISION

“His divine power has given us everything we need

for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.”

By significance I mean the outcome that God's unlimited power has achieved in us.

“life and godliness”

“Life” here does not refer to physical life but to spiritual life. It is not life in the sense of God somehow making our lot or station one of ease or comfort per se. As a matter of fact, many might even suggest that since coming to know and believe Christ for salvation, physical life has gotten worse. They know physical hardship, persecution, and poverty. They have been maligned, marginalized, and mistreated. They have lost jobs. Families have ostracized them. Government doesn't protect them. Friends have abandoned them. This is all because of their faith. We may not know those kinds of hardships, but we know bodily aches and pains as we age. These don't suddenly vanish because God has given us life. So Peter can't be referring here to our physical life somehow being improved.

If Peter is not referring to physical life in which God has given us His power, then to what is he speaking?

God has made possible everything we need to grow spiritually. “Life” here is referring to salvation, just as we saw in Philippians 1:6.

Consider what Paul wrote in Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

That just simply means that I don't have any power in myself for salvation, it's all God's power. The transforming power of God in the gospel changes a person eternally. Paul saw the power of the gospel transform His own life and he knew it could transform the lives of others who believed it. That

is the simple message Billy Graham proclaimed for decades. The word “power” is used here in II Peter 1:3, a power that gives eternal life.

I John 5:11-13

John 3:16

John 5:24

God’s power alone is sufficient to save giving to the believer eternal life. So who am I to think that I can add even just one thing that would qualify for helping God save me? If God’s power alone is not sufficient enough where He needs my help in some way to add to what He has done, then God’s power is not sufficient at all to save.

Let’s consider a conversation Jesus had.

Matthew 19:16-30

The rich man wanted to know what he could do to have eternal life. Jesus responded that He should obey the commandments. The rich guy asked which ones. Jesus pointed out a few of them. Hearing the list the rich guy thought he must be on his way to heaven having kept those commands perfectly. But Jesus said he lacked one. Now Jesus didn’t say he lacked one as if to say that if he changed his ways and kept that one also, he would have eternal life. Instead He was pointing out that no matter how hard we try we all fall short of keeping the law, because keeping the law doesn’t save a person. Paul said that the law only points out that we are all sinners. Jesus was pointing this guy to the fact that he couldn’t keep the law and that doing so doesn’t save. He came out of curiosity, but was unwilling to do what was necessary to ensure that he had eternal life. It’s not that he couldn’t follow Christ, he wouldn’t follow Christ.

The disciples who were listening to this conversation asked Jesus then about who could be saved. The response of Jesus is important because it points to the inability of man to save himself. “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

The disciples had a follow up response. “We have left everything to follow you which implies repentance and belief, is that good enough?”

Jesus responds by affirming that they were in fact His disciples with a genuine faith that gave them eternal life, that is, all but Judas Iscariot.

Jesus in His dialogue with the rich young man and Peter in His epistle summarily dismantle whatever it is that man thinks he can do to earn eternal life by stating that it is God alone who has the power to give eternal life. It can come from nowhere else and no one else.

It is God’s power that gives eternal life.

The songwriter affirms for us that there is

No guilt in life, no fear in death
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

CCLI 1292471

The significance of this provision is in the power of God to save, to give me spiritual life when I had none, when I was dead in my sins and trespasses.

Not only is the significance of this provision in the power of God for giving me new “life”, but also for “godliness”.

We have available through a knowledge of Him everything we need to live a godly life, to grow in likeness to Christ.

Philippians 1:9-11

Colossians 1:9-10

God isn’t going to tell us to live a godly life and then not give us the necessary resources.

He has given us His Word.

He has given us His Holy Spirit.

He has given us each other.

He has given us pastors. (Ephesians 4:11-16)
Each in their own way helps us become godly.

Paul encourages Timothy to pursue righteousness and godliness. (I Timothy 6:11)

As we saw from Philippians 1:6 God gives us everything from beginning to end with everything in between to help us live a godly life.

Here's something to keep in mind. We don't need to ask for additional power to live a godly life, it's already been given to us in full measure. We only need to apply it.

We apply it by obeying His Word.

We apply it when we yield to the leading, convicting, changing work of the Holy Spirit who wants to direct us so that we have more of the character of Christ in daily living.

God has given us everything we need.

There is a little phrase right near the beginning of our verse that is important. The KJV and NIV reads "has given". The NAS reads "granted". It means to freely give or endow, stressing the freeness and worth of the gift. That means there isn't anything we can do to earn what has been given to us, a gift that is of great value.

The perfect tense also stresses the certainty of the fact and possession of this gift. We don't have to wonder if or when it's given. Because God is the source of "life and godliness" we have the confidence that it's there. It's the same idea again from Philippians 1:6 in the confidence Paul had that God who began a good work would continue it to completion when Christ returns. It's not something that we have coming to us at a later date or doled out on an as needed basis or if we reach certain "Christian" milestones. We have this right now. It happened in the past on the day of our salvation with continuing results in the present. There is significance to this provision.

As if to sum up this call to godliness Peter closes verse 3 with a reminder of the call of God on us who by faith have received this life that it is all about God.

We close with this point:

The superiority of this provision

IV. THE SUPERIORITY OF THIS PROVISION

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness."

The word "glory" expresses the excellence of God's being, His essence and attributes. The word "goodness" conveys the excellence of His virtue in action. These are what draw sinful man to Him – who He is and what He has done. Our godly character should not point to anything in us, but point to God's glory as we merely reflect his character. There is no better deal out there for "life and godliness" than through God. You won't get it anywhere else. This morning as we celebrate around the Lord's Table, it would be good for us to consider the power that God has given to us for eternal life and godliness, first to thank Him that it's in His power alone we have these and then to ask where we might need to improve in displaying His character.