

EXCEEDINGLY GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES

Peter Hay, Presbytery Word for week commencing Sunday 13 April 2025
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

As we approach the Easter Bible seminar, we are going to take some time today to consolidate what we have been considering as the Spirit has been speaking to us in this season. [We will consider] in particular, what He has been saying to us about what it is that we need to forsake in terms of our former gospels so that we can be established in the gospel of God, which is the gospel of sonship.

You will be aware that the gospel of God is the message that declares and delivers to us what the apostle Peter described as 'exceedingly great and precious promises'. The gospel of God is delivering to us these 'exceedingly great and precious promises'. That statement comes from Peter's second letter. This is 2 Peter chapter 1 and verses 2 to 4. It says, 'Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these [these exceedingly great and precious promises], you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.' This is one of my favourite Scriptures today.

If we take our time with this passage, you will see that the whole of the gospel that we have been searching and writing and proclaiming and discussing together is contained in this passage. We are being given everything that pertains to life and godliness through the *knowledge* of Him. We are coming to know the Father, and we are coming to know the Son, but the question is: how are we knowing Them? What is the process through which this is happening? We need to know Him because He has called us to glory and virtue. Through this calling, we are receiving these exceedingly great and

precious promises. What I want you to do is connect 'exceedingly great and precious promises' with the word 'treasure'. Would you agree that a precious promise is a treasure? We are being delivered exceedingly great and precious promises, and what is being illuminated to us is an amazing treasure 'that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature'.

That word 'partakers' is an interesting word. Another translation is a 'sharer', but even that is not quite enough. A better way of understanding it is that it is an 'associate who equally possesses something'. We are a unique, named son of God who has possession of the divine nature. We are not the source of the divine nature, but it is given to us, and we are born of it, as a unique and individual son of God. You are not just a 'bit of God', you are a *son of God*, born of His divine nature with a *name* - a unique expression that is only you - only belongs to you. That is what it means to be a partaker of the divine nature.

How do we receive this? We receive it by birth and then through baptism by the Father into the body of Christ so that we might become partakers of the divine nature. Then he said, 'having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust'. How are we escaping that? We are escaping it through circumcision and through the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, which we join through baptism by water and then we are enabled by baptism with the Holy Spirit. The entire package is contained in this introduction to Peter's second letter.

As we are illuminated to (and are receiving) these great and precious promises, we are being established as part of the kingdom of heaven on the top of Mount Zion. The kingdom of heaven is those who are coming

out from mixture, finding deliverance from uncleanness, because you are being illuminated to a treasure. Jesus said, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a person who finds a treasure and then goes and sells everything that they have to buy that field' - to have that treasure. Can you see if you are being illuminated to exceedingly great and precious promises, you will be full of joy to sell everything to have that treasure? That is an amazing point. The mark of the new creation is joy. For the joy of this illumination, willingly selling everything, being established in the kingdom of heaven, being set as part of a heavenly city on the top of Mount Zion.

We are selling all that previously gave us validation - whether that be our previous salvation experiences; our gospel traditions; our ministry exploits; our appointments or anointing; or lifestyle pursuits. Whatever. All of it we are counting as loss (or selling) to purchase the field in which the treasure is found.

The field in which this treasure is found is called 'the ground of truth' - the ground of truth. That is 1 Timothy 3 verse 15 and that is where Paul describes or details the mystery of godliness. Purchasing this field means that we are coming to Christ to be built on Him through obedience to His word. If you want to know how to purchase the field, if you are being illuminated to this treasure, it means coming to Christ, being obedient to His word. Peter said in his first letter that we know that we are having trouble coming to Christ when we 'stumble being disobedient to the word'. 1 Pet 2:8. Do you want to know how to purchase the ground in which this great treasure is? Come to Jesus. That sounds like 'come out from among them and be separate, and I will be a Father to you'. 2Co 6:17. You will be a son of God. I am taking that point from 1 Peter chapter 2 verses 4 to 5 and verse 8.

This is where we are knowing Him and knowing the Father. If we are coming to Christ to be built on Him, we are obviously knowing Him, and nobody is coming to the Father except through Christ. This is where we are finding the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. We are knowing Him and knowing the Father. If we are growing in this knowledge, it is not knowing *about* Them, it is knowing *Them*. If we are growing in this knowledge, it is the indication that we are walking in the light of present truth. This is important because the knowing of the Father and the knowing of the Son belongs to those who are born of God and found in Their fellowship.

This is an amazing passage - Hosea chapter 6 and verse 3. I am going to read from the King James Version because it is the best statement (or the best translation) of this verse. Hosea chapter 6 verse 3 is talking about those who are knowing the Father and knowing the Son. It says, 'Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.' 'Then we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord.' There is going to be a progressive knowing of Him. So how is this progressive knowing happening? 'His going forth [we have to follow on to know Him, and He is going forth a particular way] is prepared as the morning.' This is the prophetic word that is dawning like the morning star, and it is supposed to arise in you. It is getting brighter and brighter. It is not the full manifestation of it. It is what is being revealed today. 'Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning [this is the present truth dawning in our heart], and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.'

The point is, we are going to know Him if we follow on walking in the light of present truth which is coming like the rain day by day. It means that our understanding or our sonship is not dependent on what has

happened previously. It is dependent on what is being proclaimed today. That is what Paul said. 'Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart.' Heb 3:15.

We know the Lord as those who are purchasing the treasure in the field as we follow on (or walk) in the light of present truth. This is the water of the word that is coming upon us so that we come to fruitfulness as sons who have been born of the divine nature and are progressively changing through regeneration and renewing into the image of the Son. The former rain is the autumn rains that are necessary for promoting the germination and growth of the seed that is sown. The latter rain is the spring rain which is necessary to bring the crops to maturity ready for harvest. The point is - we all need the rain whether we are immature or whether we are mature. This is the water of the word that is bringing us to an inheritance. It is bringing us to a treasure. It was amazing hearing John talk about the way that we can muddy the waters by bringing in a mixture in relation to the word that is coming to us today. Let go of the former understandings and the former rain and walk in the rain that is being proclaimed today.

The gospel of God proclaims and establishes us in our predestination which is to be born of God and made in the image and likeness of God. Our predestination is the inheritance that we are supposed to have. That inheritance is called in the Scriptures a 'rest' or the place of 'entering the promise'. This is the promised rest. In order to enter the rest that belongs to obtaining our inheritance by fulfilling our predestination, it is not sufficient to just hear the content of this message or to agree with its theology. That is not going to be sufficient to enter the rest that belongs to obtaining a predestination. The word must be received and mixed with faith which is demonstrated through repentance and faith obedience. If you want to know

what it looks like to receive the water of the word so that we can walk in the way by which we are obtaining an inheritance, it looks like repentance and faith and faith is demonstrated by obedience.

We remember the words of Paul in Hebrews chapter 3 verses 12 to 15, 'Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.' An evil heart is not just a naughty heart that wants to go and do sinful activities. Paul is saying an evil heart is one of unbelief. As the word is coming, it is saying, 'No, that is not true.' Can you see it is all of a sudden that you do not view the word that is delivering you to a sonship to be an exceedingly great and precious promise? You are not able to sell the thing that you are holding onto as an alternative to the word that is coming. That is unbelief. 'Beware brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "today".' We are going to do that as we go out and share the *agape* meal together. We are going to exhort one another in the word that we are hearing today. Otherwise, if we are doing it in the word that we heard yesterday, we are muddying the waters. 'Exhort one another daily, while it is called "today", lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ.' This is going back to the great treasure which is to be a sharer or a partaker of the divine nature. 'We have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." '

Now you will remember that when Paul was writing this statement, the 'rebellion' there was talking about the children of Israel when they came up to the edge of the Promised Land. This is the land of rest or inheritance and they would not proceed in because of the

giants in the land. The treasure, if you like, was revealed to them - a land flowing with milk and honey; but the impediments, the difficulties of entering into that land were too great for them. They did not believe the word; they did not receive (in type, if you like) a spirit of adoption or a spirit of faith within them to say, 'I can believe to enter the inheritance of sonship' as the word was coming. They saw the treasure - this land flowing with milk and honey - but they came up to it and said, 'I cannot do that. I cannot negotiate that. I cannot sell all. I cannot count the cost.' This is not the season for that. This is the season to be illuminated to the fact that you can be born of the divine nature to grow up as the offspring of God. That is amazing! All the things that are impediments to that, you are well able, through Christ who strengthens you, to endure with Him because He has already negotiated it. The work is already done. You have to be a worker *with* Him. That is what we have to believe - to be yoked with Christ.

We are in a season of amazing illumination that is coming to us, and it is only coming to us day by day. We have to be accepting that that is as far as we can walk in the light of what is being proclaimed to us today. However, that light has caused massive reformation among us as a community. Clarity on the gospel of God has informed the reformation of our wedding services, our baptisms, the dedication of children, the establishment of the *agape* meal and so on. Even our seminars have all changed in the light of the word calling us to be a worthy house and to grow to firstfruits. We are keeping faith with what the word is saying, and it is bringing change. It is bringing a reformation in the way that we conduct ourselves.

Illumination and faith will be evident in our life through the reformation in our conversation and conduct. I am talking personally now here. We as a fellowship and

as a presbytery have been committed to a repentance in the light of the word that we are receiving. Each one of us is demonstrating illumination and faith through reformation in our conversation and conduct, in our marriage, in our household, in relationships from house to house, in the way that we serve in the body, in the way that we relate with those who have rejected the gospel and so on. Testimony of this reformation, the expression or the conversation that belongs to this testimony is the fruit of the divine nature and regeneration in our lives. Can I make the point that we actually do not have much to say if there is no birth and no growth happening as sons of God. The actual testimony that belongs to the love of God is what is *born*. Those who are born of God, love. Can you see that the conversation and the testimony that happens as we meet in our houses and from house to house should be the fruit of what is born, not the conversation that is aspirational?

Now whatever is born of God overcomes the spirit of the world that is at work in the sons of disobedience. Our conversation is not going to be about our misunderstandings or our grievances or our discontent or the difficulties that we are facing about different things. Our testimony, which is the fruit of the divine nature, is one of obedience, because whatever is born of God is overcoming the spirit of the world which is at work in the sons of disobedience. So, the testimony of the divine nature looks like a joyful confession of obedience. Now that does not mean we do not share what we are turning from, but it is because we have been illuminated to something that we are able to turn from it and walk in what is new. This should be part of the ordering of our conversation and our conduct aright.

In the last few minutes, as we gather up these points towards Easter, I want to focus in on the amazing transaction that it is when we

are born of God - what it means to be born of God. This is not the same as when we are made alive from the dead through the ministry of the gospel that is delivering prevenient grace to us. There are many people who are confused on this point, thinking that the amazing miracles that belong to prevenient grace are the evidence of new birth. That is not true. That is not what we are saying. We have detailed in the book that will be distributed at Easter these waypoints. I want to lean our focus today on the wonder of the new birth and to encourage you to faith for participation in what is new.

You will remember that in response to our cry of 'Abba, Father' (which is enabled by the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption), God sends forth the seed of the Spirit of Christ into our spirit. Now this is the unique seed of our name, which was brought forth through the travail of one Seed, Christ. Right now, I have said 'seed' a few times there. We need to unpack what this means. You remember the word is proclaimed - prevenient grace makes us alive from the dead. We begin to rejoice in the word, and we are keeping the commandments of Christ as we are finding deliverance from all the inhibitions to our capacity to hear the word. Because of that, Jesus said, 'My Father will love you and I will manifest Myself to you.' Joh 14:21. We know that that is where the Spirit of Christ in identity (the Person of Christ) comes into our heart, and He comes in with the Father. We also receive the Holy Spirit. So, we have the three Persons of the Godhead dwelling in our heart. That is totally amazing, but it is not the new birth. You have at this point (from prevenient grace to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit abiding in us), an amazing provision; but that is not the new birth. If you are not born again, you are not going to heaven. Even that is not enough. What I want you to catch on this point is that you have the Person of the Father, the Person of the Son and the Person of the Holy

Spirit dwelling in you. This is the *agape* fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim* in your heart. It is Them in identity. When, by the Spirit of adoption, you begin to cry out 'Abba, Father' and the Father sends the Spirit of the Son into your spirit, the Son in identity is not moving from your heart to your spirit. How can you have the Son in identity dwelling in your heart, yet you receive the seed that has come from the Son in your spirit? Can you see the dilemma or the slight theological problem there? This is the amazing point that was introduced to us last week about the travail of Jesus that brought forth a multitude of seed.

I will read the point again. In response to our cry, 'Abba, Father' (which is enabled by the Spirit of adoption), God sends forth the seed of the Spirit of Christ into our spirit. Remember we have the Spirit of the Son dwelling in our heart and now we have a seed that is coming or being planted in our spirit. This is the unique seed of our name which was brought forth through the travail of the one Seed Christ. How did this happen? You will remember that Jesus said in John 12 verse 24, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.'

Jesus was the one Seed in whom all the names of the sons of God were written before, when He was begotten by the Father as the Son of God. This is happening before the creation of the heavens and earth. This is happening in the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim*. You have Yahweh Son, who is emptying Himself by the capacity of Eternal Spirit from the Holy Spirit to reveal the Father, and when He is begotten by the Father through the Father's word as the Son of God, written in that one Son are the names of every single son of God who would ever be brought forth. It is all written in one Seed. You think, one Seed has all the names written in it.

When Jesus comes in the flesh (He is born in the flesh), He is still the only Son of God in the entire universe. He is not birthing anybody, but He is doing a lot of speaking. In three and a half years' worth of speaking, not one person is being born. What changes between Him dying on the cross and rising again so that people can be born? This one Seed in which all the names were written fell into the ground and died through seven travailing, birthing, dying events, bringing forth a multitude of new seeds - each seed with the name and life of a son. It is still in one Person. When Jesus rises from the dead on the third day, He is no longer just one Seed. He is now a Seed in a whole Sheaf of seeds, billions of them, each the seed of the name that was previously written in Him. This is the travail of the Son. That travail is a birthing action, a dying and a living, multiplying this seed life.

Unless He fell into the ground and died, as the one Seed, He would abide alone as the only son of God. The multiplication of the seeds happened through the pangs of death (which means birth pangs) that belonged to the travail of His seven wounds. We could call them seven birthing events. Significantly, when Christ had risen from the dead, He had become the Sheaf of firstfruits of those who had fallen asleep. Now the amazing thing is, He is the whole Sheaf, but He is also a specific Seed in the Sheaf with a whole multitude of seeds. He is the chief One. He is the first One.

Now the one Seed, Christ, had multiplied to many seeds in Him - the one Sheaf; and each seed is the name and life of a person's sonship. Here is an amazing thing - as the one Seed, He has all the names written in Him. He is falling into the ground and dying to multiply from one Seed to all the multitude of named sons (or the seeds of the named sons); but He also fulfills all the works that belong to all the names written in Him. That is totally awesome. He is doing a

couple of things — well, more than a couple of things. He is doing an amazing offering here. What we get is Christ risen from the dead; all the names now are in Him; so, when He begins to breathe on His disciples, He is proclaiming to them the specific word of their sonship. The seed from the Father with their name which has the life of the Son in it is being planted in their spirit. They can have residing in their heart Christ in identity, and now they are receiving what has been multiplied from His travail as the unique seed of their sonship. They are receiving from Him the divine nature, which is the life in the Seed, but the name is specific to their sonship. That identity, when the seed gets germinated within their spirit, gets reborn as a brand-new son of God. They become the brethren - the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. Through this birth, a person becomes the offspring of God - born of God, born of His life.

Now be careful here, we do not become God through that. We become the children of God, the sons of God. We are not born of Christ's identity. He, in identity, is Yahweh Son. We do not become bits of Yahweh Son. What we become is sons of God and our nature is changed. We receive the same nature as Yahweh. What does that nature look like? It looks like love. It looks like the capacity to participate as an individual identity, a named identity in Their fellowship. That is pretty amazing. That is what Satan wanted. He coveted what belonged to those whose inheritance belongs to the sides of the north - this fellowship - a partaker of the divine nature. Can you see this is an exceedingly great and precious promise? For goodness sakes let us easily sell all - all the things that are an impediment. Get rid of the giants and walk in this truth.

By this means, we are conceived as a son of God. We are born of the divine nature and have become a totally new creation. Celebrating this reality, Paul said in

Galatians chapter 4 and verses 6 and 7, 'Because you are sons [we know that is by adoption], God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.' I know I said 'Spirit' there, but remember, when the word is coming, what is it making a division between? Our soul and spirit - right into our heart so that the seed of our sonship, which is from the travail of Christ, is going into our spirit or identity to rebirth it. The fruit of that is that the Son is crying out, 'Abba, Father'. 'Therefore, we are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.'

Through new birth, Christ's life has become our life. The life in the Seed has now become our life, but the expression of this life is unique to our name as a son of God. Can you see that? Through new birth, Christ's life has become our life, but the expression of this life is unique to our name as a son of God.

After we are born again as a son of God, the Father then places us into the church by making us a member of the body of Christ. This is the context where we are to lay our life down in love for one another. The *agape* fellowship of Yahweh is in us. We are then born of that life and able to love. We are then placed in a context where we are able to demonstrate that love. I am saying to you, that should be the nature of our conversation at the *agape* meal. It should be the fruit of what has been born. This is the context where we are to lay our life down in love for one another according to our name as a son of God. This immersion into the body is the first dimension of baptism and we know that it is not by water.

As I finish, I want to quickly highlight that the evidence of new birth (the evidence of new creation), is evidently manifest. Jesus said in the parable of the Sower and the Seed, that the mark of this conception (or the germination) of the seed in the dirt (which is our spirit), is joy. We heard about that today. It is joy. Jesus said that joy was the evidence

that the seed of sonship had been germinated in the heart of a believer, and they were begotten as a new creation son of God in identity. This is the same joy that is expressed by a person who finds the treasure in the field and for joy over it, goes and sells all that they have, to buy that field. That is the mark of new creation.

Here is another point. Joy is the fruit of travail. The reality is that 'weeping endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning'. I am not saying to you, you should be skipping around the place, whatever the circumstances are. I am saying we are joined to a process by which there are things that are needing to be put off and things that we are growing in. Mourning and joy happen together for us. They happen together. I want to make the point that the weeping that precedes the joy is not the weeping of regret for the unfulfilled expectations that you have. I have written it this way: the reality is that we all do have seasons of mourning, which the Scriptures describe as weeping in the night; but this weeping is not the grief of unfulfilled expectations. That would be Judas. It is the grief of godly sorrow as we look on Him whom we have pierced because of our expectations of life and ourselves. The mourning is leading to something; it is leading to repentance and salvation.

I love this passage about weeping leading to joy. This is Psalm 30 verse 5, 'For His anger is but for a moment, His favour is for life.' This is the life of which we are born. 'His anger is but for a moment.' That is what we see initially when we look into His face. We do see the fiery eyes of Christ and they are the eyes of love, but it is not unconditional love. The projections, the sin, the carnality, it does need to die, but it is for a moment. 'His anger is but for a moment, His favour is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.' This is the morning where the light is dawning. We are following in the light morning by morning.

Significantly, this joy is expressed in the context of the fellowship of Yahweh in which we are established by the Father, following our birth from the word being proclaimed by Christ's messengers. John opened his letter, his first epistle by saying, 'That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son. And these things we write to you [or declare] that your joy may be full.' 1Jo 1:1-4.

I will leave it there and we can go and be joyful as we share as new creation sons of God together around His *agape* meal.