

## DIVINE PROVISIONS FOR LIVING

2 Peter 1:1-3

Need: To live out of God's Supply

Proposition: God has provided everything we need for holy living through our knowledge of the Lord Jesus

Objective: To encourage God's people to begin to live out of the Divine supply Introduction

The demands upon the Christian are great. The demands come to us from every direction. There is a demand that comes from without. The world about us provides us with a daily test of our faith. The world applies its pressures to make us conform in so many ways. As the pressures build, you are made to cry, "who can stand up to these pressures?"

The demands come upon us from above. From above we hear our Lord saying, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." When we measure our achievements against His expectations we know that we are coming short. We hear Him say, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind." And then He adds, "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." We are made to respond, "Who? me, Lord? But I can't."

Then we sense an added demand from within. As a Christian we have within us the Divine Spirit. His inner voice is ever making us aware of the demand for holy living on our lives. We know His voice so well.

But unfortunately most of us are more aware of the demands than we are of the divine provision. Simon Peter knew about both. He opens this second letter with a reference to these blessed and completely adequate provisions. This reference provides the basic substance of the introduction. Let's consider them, and see how they apply to our lives.

### I. The Measure of the Divine Provisions

The first indication of the Divine provisions is in the greeting of Peter. "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." God's grace and God's peace covers just about every need we might have. Peter prays that they may be multiplied. He desires those who receive this letter to have a full supply of God's grace and God's peace. This is a reminder that the provisions of God expand as our needs expand. There is nothing static about God's provisions.

The thought of the multiplication led to the expanded statement concerning the measure. "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Look at each word in that statement. Can you take it in?

"All things" is an absolute term. It just has the sound of super-abundance about it. But Peter places a limitation upon it. He has given us all things that pertain to "life" The Greek word for life here refers to the life of the spirit, the spiritual life. So we are assured that God has given us "all things" that the spiritual life may require of us. But then he adds the word "Godliness." This word refers to the attitude of a man toward God as it is reflected in his daily conduct. "Godliness" is what God expects of us in our daily life. He expects our attitude toward Him toward Him to be that of reverence. He expects this reverence to express itself in our walking in the fear of the Lord. This would seem then to include anything that might be required for living the Christian life.

Where are you coming short in your Christian life? Are you coming short in love, in courage, in discipline, in victory over some temptation? Whatever you need has already been provided.

The other indication of the measure of the Divine provisions is found in the verb of our

statement. "Hath given" is not the usual word for giving. This word puts a special emphasis on giving generously, giving regally. God has not provided for us like a miser, but like the great and good God that He really is. Another thing about this verb is that it is in the perfect tense. This means that God has already given. The provision is already there for the claiming. It is a finished transaction in the divine economy. So all things that we may need for meeting the demands placed upon us are already generously given to us by the Lord God.

There is yet one other sign of the measure of the supply. It is "according to His Divine Power." This is a clear reference to the Divine Power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since He has been declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead, all that He is as God is committed to us for the living of life day by day. We come to know His provisions as His power is expressed toward us.

This raises a question "Just how much power do you believe Jesus Christ to have?" Ultimately this will determine your expectations in your daily life. If you believe Christ to be weak and powerless, you will not expect much. But, if you see Him as the exalted, Divine Son of the Living God, surely no expectation could be too great. Your expectations will never exceed the measure of the supply.

But how do we come to know this supply in our personal lives? This brings us to the medium for the provisions.

## II. The Medium for the Divine Provisions

Both the greeting and the expanded statement of Peter make clear the identity of the medium. In the prayer expressed in the greeting he prays for "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you." This is basic burden of the greeting, but how is this grace and peace to be multiplied? It is to be multiplied "through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." This makes it clear that an increased knowledge of God will bring about an increase of grace and peace.

The expanded statement sets forth the same truth. We have been given "all things pertaining unto life and godliness." But how? "Through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Obviously it is the "knowledge of Him" that makes the difference."

This focuses our attention on a Person. The Living God is a Person. The Son of God, Jesus our Lord, is a Person. It is the design of God to provide us "all things" through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ultimately He Himself is the divine provision. But I receive that which I need to live the life as I come to know Him personally. The word for knowledge in these verses is built on the root of the word for a personal, experiential knowledge-. So this supply comes to us not through a knowledge "about" Christ, but rather through knowing Him personally. You may have a head-full of religious knowledge about Him, and still have an empty, important life spiritually. You must know Him personally.

The word for knowledge in this text is a strong word. It can be translated "full Knowledge or "complete knowledge." However, here it may carry the force of a personal, growing knowledge of Christ. While all of us who are Christians know the same Christ, we do not necessarily know Him in the same way. If we are Christian, we have come to know Him personally as Lord and Saviour, but we may not have come to know him experientially all that this means in the different spheres of life. In the beginning we knew Him only as the Saviour from the penalty of our sins. We were made to see that He had borne our sins to the tree, and paid the full price for them. But we probably knew little about Him as the Saviour from the power of sin. We did not know the implications of having His very saving life within us. Many of us thought that we were totally on our own in our struggles with the temptation of life. As we grew in our knowledge of Him, we began to experience His saving power in this new way daily. What a discovery.'

This is a process that goes on throughout life. We are ever discovering how Jesus Christ is

all that we need. I have made some new discoveries this week. The process usually goes like this. The God who orders my steps allows me to confront a new life situation. In confronting the situation I am brought face to face with the ugly reality about myself-- I am flesh and in my flesh there dwells no good thing--but then in my moment of brokenness over who I am I discover who He is. Then with Paul I am made to exclaim, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheth me." On and on the process goes. There is always an increased knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord.

The way Peter identifies Him is designed to give us encouragement. He is the one "that" hath called us to glory and virtue." This calling is one that drew us to Him in saving faith. He would not have called us unto faith if He had not desired to make Himself known to us. He wants you to know Himself. He has taken the initiative. We know Him because He called us. Does this not reassure us about our getting to know Him better?

Conclusion:

Would you let me make a personal admission to you? I have always been bothered by a temperamental timidity and fearfulness. I have often allowed it to keep me from claiming provisions that were rightfully mine in human relationships. I have passed up service that was rightfully mine because I was too timid to ask, or because I was fearful of being turned down if I asked. What has been a problem for me in the natural realm is a problem for many of us in the spiritual. Either because of our spiritual timidity or because of ignorance of what is ours in the Lord Jesus Christ we have not been living on the Divine Provisions. We have missed out on the "all things" that He has provided. Let me encourage you to begin to live off of God's resources.