

**KEY STATEMENTS FOR THE 2024 THANKSGIVING BLENDING
CONFERENCE**

**Although the subject of 1 and 2 Peter is God's
government, we need to see that everything
concerning God's government
should bring us back to the central focus and basic structure of these
Epistles—the Triune God as our full enjoyment to carry out the
economy of God.**

**The preciousness of Peter's writing is that
he combines the Christian life and God's government,
revealing that the Christian life and the government of God go
together as a pair.**

**“The God of all grace”—who has called the believers into His
eternal glory— perfects, establishes, strengthens, and grounds
them through their sufferings; this “all grace” is the “true grace
of God,”**

**into which the believers should enter and in which they stand.
As believers in Christ, we may become a reproduction of Christ as
our model, and we can experience and enjoy Christ as the
Shepherd of our souls.**

**HWMR: LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE AND CHURCH LIFE UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF
GOD FOR THE ECONOMY OF GOD (Week 6)**

Scripture Reading: 2 Pet. 1:1, 3-11; 3:18

**Partakers of the Divine Nature and the Development of the Divine Life and the Divine
Nature for a Rich Entrance into the Eternal Kingdom**

- 2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
- 2 Pet 1:3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,
- 2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
- 2 Pet 1:5 And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;
- 2 Pet 1:6 And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;
- 2 Pet 1:7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.
- 2 Pet 1:8 For these things, existing in you and abounding, constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Pet 1:9 For he in whom these things are not present is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his past sins.
- 2 Pet 1:10 Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble.
- 2 Pet 1:11 For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you.
- 2 Pet 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and unto the day of eternity. Amen.

Day 1

- John 1:12-13* - But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 2 Peter 1:4* - Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

I. As those who have received equally precious faith, we, the believers in Christ, should be **partakers of the divine nature—2 Pet. 1:4:**

- A. The **divine nature** refers to **what God is**, that is, the riches, the elements, and the constituents of God's being—John 4:24; 1 John 1:5; 4:8, 16.
- B. The divine life and the divine nature are **inseparable**; the divine nature is the substance of the divine life and is within the divine life—1:1-2; 5:11-13.

- C. As the **children of God**, we are God-men, born of God, possessing the life and nature of God, and belonging to the species of God—3:1; John 1:12-13:
1. At our **regeneration**, another nature was imparted into us; this is the nature of God, the **divine nature**—2 Pet. 1:4.
 2. Because the divine nature is in the divine life, the divine life with which we were born again has the divine nature within it—John 3:3, 5-6, 15.
 3. **Whoever believes** into the Son of God is born of God and has the right to become a child of God; thus, a believer has the right to partake of, to enjoy, the nature of God—1:12-13.
- D. A partaker of the divine nature is one who **enjoys** the divine nature and **participates** in the divine nature—2 Pet. 1:4:
1. To partake of the divine nature is to enjoy what God is; to be a partaker of the divine nature is to be a **partaker** of the **riches**, the **elements**, and the **constituents** of God's being—1 Pet. 1:8.
 2. If we would be partakers of the divine nature, we need to **live by the divine life** within which is the divine nature—John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25; 6:57b.

God has given us these promises so that through them we may become partakers of the divine nature. He has called us to His glory and virtue and He has given us the promises for the purpose that we may enjoy the divine nature. To have eternal life is a matter once for all, but to partake of the divine nature is a continual matter. Although we have the divine life once for all, we cannot enjoy the divine nature once for all. During the entire course of our Christian life on earth and even in eternity, we shall still be partaking of the divine nature.

We have seen that the divine nature denotes all that God is. We may use eating food as an illustration of partaking of the divine nature. When you eat chicken, you partake of the chicken nature. What the chicken is becomes your nourishment. When you eat chicken, you are actually eating the chicken nature, which includes various nourishing elements. These elements or ingredients are the constituents of the nature. The principle is the same with the divine nature. Through God's promises, we are partaking of God's nature with all the divine ingredients. Just as we do not eat food once for all, so we do not partake of the divine nature once for all. We eat food daily, and for eternity we shall be partaking of the divine nature. This is portrayed by the tree of life and the river of water of life in Revelation 22. To eat the fruit of the tree of life is to partake of God's nature. God's nature is holy, loving, righteous, kind, and pure. Actually God's nature is all-inclusive. The more we partake of the divine nature, the more we have holiness, love, righteousness, kindness, and all manner of divine attributes. These attributes then become our virtues, which eventually will consummate in God's glory. (CLife Study of 2 Peter Message 3)

Day 2

- 2 Peter 1:3** - *Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,*
- 2 Corinthians 12:9** - *And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.*

- E. We enjoy the riches of the divine nature through **God's precious and exceedingly great promises**—2 Cor. 12:9; Matt. 28:20b; Eph. 3:20.
- F. Being a partaker of the divine nature has a condition—that we **escape the corruption** which is in the world by lust; we need to live in the cycle of escaping and partaking and of partaking and escaping—2 Pet. 1:4.

- G. If we enjoy God and partake of the riches of His being, we will be **constituted with the divine nature**, becoming the same as God in life and nature but not in the Godhead and expressing Him in all that we are and do—v. 3.
- H. As we partake of the divine nature, enjoying all that God is, the riches of the divine nature will be **fully developed**, as described in verses 5 through 7.

In 1:4 Peter continues, “Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises, that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.” We have seen that the preposition “through” here may also be rendered on account of or on the basis of. The relative pronoun “which” refers to the glory and virtue in verse 3. Through and on the basis of the Lord’s glory and virtue, by and to which we have been called, God has given us His precious and exceedingly great promises.

It is not easy to know the meaning of the words “through which” as they connect verses 3 and 4. In order to have the proper knowledge of this, we need experience and also spiritual understanding. Here Peter is saying that through the divine glory and virtue God has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises. This indicates that if God had not called us to His own glory and virtue, there would be no need for Him to give us promises. But God has called us to His own glory and virtue. This goal is great, vast, profound. Who is able to reach God’s own glory and virtue? None of us is able to arrive at this goal. Therefore, there is the need of God’s word of promise to assure us, encourage us, strengthen us, and speed us on our way toward this goal. (*Life-study of 2 Peter, Message 5*)

Day 3

2 Peter 1:5-6 - And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge; And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;

II. We need to experience the development of the divine life and the divine nature contained in the **divine seed that has been sown into us** so that we may have a **rich entrance into the eternal kingdom—vv. 1, 4-11:**

- A. We have been allotted the wonderful equally precious faith, and this faith is an **all-inclusive seed**—v. 1:
 1. All the divine riches are in this seed, but we must be **diligent to develop** them; to grow to maturity is to develop what we already have—vv. 1-8; 3:18.
 2. By developing these virtues, we **grow in life**, and eventually we will reach maturity, be full of Christ, and be qualified and equipped to be kings in the coming kingdom—Eph. 4:13-15; Col. 2:19; 2 Pet. 1:11.
 3. We need to have the **full development and maturity** from the **seed of faith**, through the roots of virtue and knowledge, the trunk of self-control, and the branches of endurance and godliness, to the blossom and fruit of brotherly love and love—vv. 5-7.
- B. To supply virtue in faith is to **develop virtue**—the energy of the divine life issuing in vigorous action—in the exercise of the equally precious faith; this faith needs to be exercised so that the virtue of the divine life may be developed in the succeeding steps and reach maturity—v. 5a.
- C. Virtue needs the bountiful supply of the **knowledge of God** and of Jesus our Lord; the knowledge that we should develop in our virtue includes the knowledge of God and of our Savior, the knowledge of God’s economy, the knowledge of what faith is, and the knowledge of the divine power, glory, virtue, nature, and life—v. 5b.

- D. **Self-control** is the exercise of control and restraint over one's self in its passions, desires, and habits; such self-control needs to be exercised in knowledge for the proper growth in life—v. 6a.
- E. To **exercise endurance** is to bear with others and with circumstances—v. 6b.
- F. **Godliness** is a living that is like God and that expresses God—v. 6c.

In verse 5 Peter says that in our virtue we need to develop knowledge. Virtue requires the bountiful supply of the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord (vv. 2, 3, 8) regarding the things related to the divine life and godliness and to the partaking of the divine nature.

We may have a great deal of knowledge, but our knowledge may be shallow and superficial. We may not know life or know what like precious faith is. Moreover, we may not know anything regarding the divine nature, and we may even oppose it when it is pointed out from the Bible that believers may become partakers of the divine nature. Those with a superficial knowledge also may not know that godliness is the expression of God, that Christ is the embodiment of the Triune God, and that Christ today is the life-giving Spirit. To lack the knowledge of such matters is to be short of the knowledge of the depths of the truth in the Bible. (*Life-study of 2 Peter, Message 7*)

Day 4

2 Peter 1:7 - And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.

1 Peter 3:8 - And finally be all of the same mind, sympathetic, loving the brothers, tenderhearted, humble-minded;

The Greek word for “existing” is *huparcho*. It denotes the existence of certain things that belong to someone from the beginning and thus become his rightful possession to the present. This indicates that all the virtues mentioned in verses 5 through 7 are the possession of the believers and exist in them forever through their experience of partaking of the divine nature in all its riches.

Peter speaks of these virtues not only existing in us but also abounding. The divine virtues are not only existing in and possessed by the believers, but are also abounding and multiplying in them in the development and growth of the divine life. All the virtues already exist in the seed, and now they are waiting for the opportunity to abound. In order for the virtues in the seed to abound, the seed needs to be sown in the soil and then grow and develop until it blossoms and bears fruit. (*Life Study of 2 Peter, Message 6*)

Day 5

1 John 4:16 - And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.

Matthew 5:44-45 - But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, So that you may become sons of your Father who is in the heavens, because He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust.

- G. **Brotherly love** (*philadelphia*) is brotherly affection, a love characterized by delight and pleasure; in godliness, which is the expression of God, this love needs to be supplied for the brotherhood, for our testimony to the world, and for the bearing of fruit—v. 7a; 1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8; Gal. 6:10; John 13:34-35; 15:16-17.
- H. The ultimate development of the divine nature within us is **love—agape**, the Greek word used in the New Testament for the divine love, which God is in His nature— 2 Pet. 1:7b; 1 John 4:8, 16:
 1. Our brotherly love needs to be developed further into a **nobler and higher love**— 2 Pet. 1:7b.
 2. In our enjoyment of the divine nature, we need to let the divine seed of the allotted faith develop to its consummation in the divine and nobler love—vv. 5-7.
 3. When we **partake** of the divine nature to the uttermost, we are filled with God as love, and we become persons of love, even love itself—Eph. 3:19.

It is not possible for our human love to be with the proper measure and discernment. This is the reason that, after speaking of brotherly love, Peter goes on to indicate that in our brotherly love we need to develop love. Some expositors have misinterpreted Peter here and have thought that he is telling us to develop first a love for the brothers and then a love for all men. This understanding, however, is too shallow. Peter's thought is that in our brotherly love there needs to be the element of agape, the divine love. (*Life Study of 2 Peter, Message 7*)

Day 6

2 Peter 1:10-11 - *Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble. For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you.*

- I. To develop the spiritual virtues in the divine life and thus to advance in the growth of the divine life makes God's calling and selection of us **firm**—2 Pet. 1:10.
- J. We should be **diligent to pursue** the growth and development of the divine life and divine nature for a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom—vv. 10-11:
 1. The bountiful supply that we **enjoy** in the development of the divine life and divine nature (vv. 3-7) will bountifully supply us a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord.
 2. This supply will **enable and qualify us** to enter into the coming kingdom by all the riches of the divine life and divine nature as our excellent virtues (energy) unto the splendid glory of God—v. 3; 1 Pet. 5:10.
 3. Apparently, it is **we who enter** into the eternal kingdom; actually, the entrance into the eternal kingdom is supplied to us richly through our growth in life and through the development of the divine life within us.