

Divine Power Despite the Adversary

2 Peter 1:3-4

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

1 Cor 16:8-9

8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

I. Review/Introduction

1. Last week we preached on The Great Promises and a Great Escape.
2. As we enter the Christmas season, we focus our attention on a Savior that was born, Christ the Lord. But God did not come to earth as a little baby simply to give people a reason to go crazy spending and buying gifts.
3. That is a joyous way to honor how God gave us so much by coming into the world in a manger in Bethlehem.
4. But what Jesus came for was to fulfil some great and precious promises and give us a great escape.
5. And last week we spoke about how sin had an oppressive, prison-like grasp on us, but Jesus made a way for us to escape sin's grip so we can become partakers of His divine nature.
6. The more we know of Him, the more we grow in Him.
7. This morning, I want to put more focus on an attempt to stop you, and then what happens to make that escape possible.
8. If God gave us some great and precious promises of how to escape, how can I make them my own?
9. Divine Power Despite the Adversary

II. Receiving the gift of escape

A. Voice of help

1. Last week we ended with a verse that I would like to start off with this morning:
1 Cor 16:8-9
8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.
9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.
2. God has an open door of escape for us to enter but tarrying for Pentecost is necessary because there are many adversaries that we will have to confront.
3. Both before and after our escape.

4. Something that I have noticed through the years is that two things happen in an individual's life when they begin to make a serious start with God.
 5. First, God begins to confirm His voice to you to help you know His call on your life is real.
 6. For instance, in my very early walk with God, I remember this happening many times. I would read a passage in the Bible, or maybe even think about a question about God or about living for God, and then right after that, God would have the pastor bring up that same verse in his preaching, or would preach about the very question I had considered privately in my mind.
 7. This happened over and over with me in my early walk with God.
 8. Yes we walk by faith and not by sight, but by God's grace, He also confirms our faith by allowing us to see the reality of His dealing with us.
 9. It is like how the apostles preached, but God confirmed the Word with signs:
Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.
- B. Voice of the adversary
1. I said there are two things that I have noticed that begin to happen to an individual when they begin a serious start with walking with God.
 2. First, God confirms He is calling us, and then second, the adversary raises up obstacles to hinder our walk with God.
2 Cor 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.
 3. We are not ignorant of this fact—the devil wants not only to hinder us, but to devour us:
1 Peter 5:8-9
8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
 4. But we know that since others have endured the same afflictions, we can also resist those assaults.
 5. So from the very beginning, God will begin confirming His call on your life, and the adversary will try to cause you to doubt what God has said.
 6. But that devil doesn't have any new tricks. He's been doing that same thing since the beginning when God was daily calling Adam and Eve.
 7. The subtle serpent got Eve's attention by asking,
 - a. "Yea, hath God said?"
 - b. "Did God really say what you thought he said?"
 - c. "Are you really sure about all this god stuff?"
 - d. "You go my way, and your eyes will be opened. You can be like a god yourself. Then you can say what's good and what's evil."

8. The devil will try to throw one of his evil devices at you, through people, sometimes close family and friends, and will try to make you doubt God and the church.
- C. Tarry until Pentecost
1. But remember, a great door for effective work for God is opened wide for you:
1 Cor 16:8-9
8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.
9 For a great door and effectual [effective] is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.
 2. For just a few moments, I want to talk about tarrying until Pentecost.
 3. What Paul meant was that he wanted to hang around the city of Ephesus until late spring, when the Feast of Pentecost was celebrated, because of the great opportunities there was there in the city.
 4. But when we apply a spiritual sense to this passage based on Acts 2, each of us has a great open door of escape from this world opened to us after we experience Pentecost.
 5. Pentecost is not just the name of the church, Pentecost is an experience we have with God when we are filled with the gift of the Holy Ghost.
 6. The first Holy Ghost outpouring occurred on the day of Pentecost:
Acts 2:1-4
2 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
 7. This was the beginning of the church.
 8. This great event drew multitudes of onlookers, so Peter preached the gospel to them, telling them that Jesus had died for their sins and rose again from the grave.
 9. The people believed that and asked Peter what they needed to do to respond in obedience to the gospel message. And Peter gave them very clear directions:
Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
 10. This is tremendously important for us to find the great escape we spoke about last week.
 11. Paul said to tarry until Pentecost for the open door.
- D. Obeying the gospel
1. And that was not only true for him, for Peter who preached on the day of Pentecost, for thousands who experienced the same in the Book of Acts, but it is also true for you and me.

2. For us to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust, we must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
3. That process of repentance and being baptized allows us to obey that part of the gospel where Jesus died and was buried.
4. When we repent, we die to sin. We give it up and let the Lord know we are done with our own way and want His way.
5. Then when we go down in the water in the name of Jesus Christ, we are buried with Him in baptism.
6. But we don't want to remain dead! There is a newness of life that follows our baptism—that is being filled with the Holy Ghost as we just read:
Rom 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
7. So what does that look like? Repenting, being baptized, and being filled with the Holy Ghost?
8. I'll come back to that as we close.

E. It is divine power and nature

1. Last week we read from 2 Peter 1:3-4 about his divine power and divine nature that came with the Holy Ghost.
2 Peter 1:3-4
*3 According as his **divine power** hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*
*4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the **divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*
2. What we have here is a precious promise of us receiving “divine power”. That is exactly what the Holy Ghost is.
3. Divine power that puts in us a divine nature.
4. I don't have to be trapped by my lusts in this corrupt world. I can escape it through that divine power I get in me when I receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
5. But where exactly can I receive this gift of Pentecost?
6. I want to see this escape plan as clearly as possible. And for us, it begins at an altar.

III. Altar for sacrifice

1. So before we end this morning, I want to take you to the altar. I want to look at what happened at the altar in the Bible.
2. The altar was, and is, a place of giving sacrifices and receiving spiritual rewards. There were five types of offerings¹ mentioned in the Old Testament that occurred at the altar: the burnt offering, grain offering, peace offering, sin offering, and trespass offering.

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-sacrifices.html>

3. Those last two offerings, the sin offering and trespass offering, were required offerings.
 4. Every citizen of Israel was required to bring a sin offering and a trespass offering regularly to the Lord because these offerings brought forgiveness.
 5. The sacrifice on the altar brought atonement for sins, including willing sins and unintentional sins, and cleansing for things that defile.
 6. The altar was a place where a sacrifice was laid down, and God blessed the sacrifice with forgiveness.
 7. While we do not bring animals to offer on the altar, we do believe the gospel message that tells us Jesus died for our sins.
 8. So when we come to the altar with that offering, believing Jesus died for our sins, then we can repent of our sins and find forgiveness.
 9. That is how we find the Great Escape we talked about last week.
 10. You see, the control that sin has on our lives, will keep us defiled and out of heaven.
 11. And Revelation 21 describes the New Heaven, the New Jerusalem, the ultimate reward for those who obedient to the Lord. And verse 27 reminds us that not everyone will go there:
Rev 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.
 12. That is why we have been calling this the great escape. For those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life have another fate:
Rev 20:13-15
13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.
14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.
15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.
 13. We are either judged according to our works, or what happened when we had our Great Escape through the blood of the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world.
 14. When Jesus takes our sins away and baptizes with the Holy Ghost, into His body, the church, that is when He gives us His life and puts us in His Book of Life.
 15. That is why this altar is so important to each of us.
- IV. Emergency room altar
1. Now, let me give the church this brief reminder about the importance of the altar and how we must look at it.
 2. We must make the altar a place of spiritual intervention with emergency room intensity.
[image-trauma care]
 3. The altar is the emergency room of the church.
 4. It is there that we meet people who are seeking their own great escape from the corruption of the world, and in order for them to come through, they must fight through the adversaries who would like to stop them.

5. And that is why it is important to meet folks down here as the medical staff meets trauma cases that come through their doors.
6. We must focus rapid and close attention to the urgencies and emergencies that come here, and not make them wait alone without attention.
7. You may have heard and seen how an ER made someone wait hours before helping them, but we need to be a Rapid Response Team offering life and breath immediately to those who come down here.
8. Their escape depends on how we respond at the altar.

V. Conclusion

1. Repent, be baptized, be filled.
2. Repent of our sins. I'm sorry for the evil thoughts I've thought. I'm sorry for the evil words I've said. I'm sorry for the evil things I've done. Will you forgive me?
3. Sometimes people will receive the Holy Ghost as they repent.
4. Baptism. Change clothes, go down in the water in the name of Jesus.
5. Be filled: receive the Holy Ghost with God confirming with allowing us to speak with other tongues as the Spirit flows through us.
6. The gospel message is this: that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and rose to life again.
1 Cor 15:1-4
15 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;
2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.
3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;
4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:
7. The way we respond to that message is to die to our sins in repentance, be buried in baptism, and rise to new life being filled with the Holy Ghost.
Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
8. Time to come to the altar and lay out our sin and trespass offering: our sacrifice of repentance will meet Jesus' blood of atonement, forgiveness, remission.
9. And be filled with the Spirit. Raise hands in worship. Expect to receive!