The Provisions for the Christ-Centered Life

Lesson for Sunday, August 10, 2025

INTRODUCTION: *This week’s introduction is used to set-up the entire lesson. You will also return to it near the end…*

* Let’s suppose your phone rings this week and an attorney informs you that a distant relative has left you in their will a fully functioning farm. (Did I mention that this was your dream come true?)
* What would you do first? Allow for some feedback from the class…
* Supposing this was your dream come true, the first thing a thinking person would do is to travel and *explore the farm*.
  + Is the farm operational? Is it in good shape? Are you going to have to mend fences and paint barns? Does the machinery work or will you have to buy more?
* To your surprise everything is there and fully functional! Now there is only one thing for you to do: You have to *work the farm*.
  + Crops don’t do well when they are unattended. Farm animals need attention, too!
  + While God is the only one that can make corn and wheat grow, He has also set up the world that *we must do something with what He has provided*, while simultaneously depending on Him to give us what we need to do what He asks us to do.
* Our text for this series is 2 Peter 1:5-7. In these verses, Peter is going to tell us to *work the farm* – to give diligent effort to cultivate the essential virtues.
* But before he does that, he tells us in verses 1-4 that we must *explore the farm* first – we must examine the provisions that God has made available to us to do the work.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. Provision #1: The Person of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1-2)
   1. God’s first provision is His own Son. Notice that Peter mentions Jesus specifically three times in the first two verses.
   2. In verse 2, Peter makes the point that he repeats often in his epistle that the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ is central in our Christian growth.
   3. The word “knowledge” means “to know by experience.” It describes a deeper and more intimate knowledge and acquaintance.
   4. Peter is telling us in these verses that multiplied grace and peace come through a deeper, more intimate, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
   5. If we were to read the entire first chapter, we would learn that Peter presents this deep relationship with Jesus as the antidote to both worldliness and false teaching.
   6. Paul teaches the same idea in Philippians 3:7-8. We must see that this intimate, personal knowledge of Jesus is central to everything truly important in our Christian lives.
2. Provision #2: The Promises of God (vs. 3-4)
   1. What is your favorite promise of God? Allow for some discussion…
   2. What makes God’s promises important?
      1. First, they reveal God’s intentions for us. The promises tell us what God wants to do on our behalf.
      2. Second, God’s promises show us God’s disposition toward us. If He did not care for us, He would not bother to help us.
   3. In verses 3-4, Peter teaches us that through Jesus, God has given us “exceeding great and precious promises.” There are two purposes:
      1. First, to make us “partakers of the divine nature.” This is a reference to our salvation.
      2. Second, to assure us that we are escapers of the “corruption that is in the world through lust.”
   4. These two purposes are flip sides of the same coin. The salvation that God promises is designed to have certain sanctifying effects on our lives.
   5. Genuine saving faith moves us away from the world with its lusts and toward the likeness to Christ.
3. The Promises at Work
   1. The promises of God are not magic bullets that unlock some mystical power. They work hand in glove with God’s commands. Consider verses 5-7 that we will be unpacking in coming weeks…
   2. Promises for cultivating virtue.
      1. This is a command to pursue the likeness of Christ in our lives.
      2. Are there any promises of God that can motivate us in that pursuit?
      3. Consider: Luke 9:23-24; John 12:24-26; 2 Peter 1:11
   3. Promises for cultivating knowledge.
      1. Consider: Jeremiah 29:13; Deuteronomy 4:29; Psalm 119:105, 130
   4. As we “work our farm” in cultivating the essential virtues, we can trust the promises of God that He will do His part as we obey.

APPLICATION: *What are we to do?*

1. Working the Farm
   1. The key is in verse 5 and the word “diligence.” Notice Peter writes that we are to “give all diligence.”
   2. Peter’s point: We cannot be causal about our spiritual growth.
   3. Peter is calling his readers to single-minded, wholehearted commitment to loving and becoming like Christ.
   4. Can you say that you are giving all diligence to your Christlikeness?
2. Cultivating the Conditions
   1. Consider the big picture of these intro verses. Peter is making the point that our pursuit of Christlikeness is a joint venture.
      1. Verses 1-4: God has given us everything we need to be Godly.
      2. Verses 5-7: We are responsible to “add” certain things to what God has done.
   2. We do not produce the fruit of sanctification ourselves, but we are to earnestly and wholeheartedly cultivate the conditions whereby God can and will work out these qualities in our lives.