

not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

What do God's great and precious promises such as these provide for our growth in spiritual life and godliness?

NOTHING, unless we take hold of them, believe them, and act on them! But if we do appropriate them in faith and action, then the second half of 2 Peter 1:4 comes into play. Peter says that God "has given us His very great and precious promises so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

Incidentally, participating in or becoming partakers of the divine nature does not mean that we become God or become part of God or are absorbed into God. It simply means that on a created level we become like God, godly. And God's great promises have been given to us so that we might indeed become godly persons!

God has given us seven foundational gifts. Peter says that God has provided these gifts so that we might have everything we need for life and godliness, everything we need to grow spiritually and in godlikeness.

What are these seven gifts that God has provided?

- (1) God has chosen us to salvation by His marvelous grace
- (2) God has given us His dear Son to earn righteousness for us by His saving work.
- (3) God has called us to Himself by His Spirit and Word in the gospel
- (4) God has given us the gift of saving faith in Christ
- (5) God has given us the privilege of knowing Him personally.
- (6) God has cleansed us from our sins through the blood of Christ
- (7) God has given us great and precious promises in His Word.

What marvelous gifts! But why has God given us these provisions? Are we simply to heap them up like great piles of treasure, and revel and rejoice in them as ends in themselves?

Or do these provisions and gracious gifts carry with them a great responsibility? If they do, then what is that responsibility?

That brings us to the second question of this lesson: