

Partakers of the Divine Nature and the Development of the Divine Life and the Divine Nature for a Rich Entrance into the Eternal Kingdom**Monday 4/7****Related Verses****John 1:12-13**

12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

2 Pet. 1:3

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,

John 4:24

24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

1 John 1:1-2, 5

1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);

5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

1 John 4:8

8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

1 John 5:11-13

11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

13 I have written these things to you that you may know that you have eternal life, to you who believe into the name of the Son of God.

Related Reading

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). The divine nature, which mainly refers to the constitution of the divine life, the constitution of God, is constituted with Spirit, love, and light...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). At our regeneration, another nature was imparted into us; this is the nature of God, the divine nature. Because the divine nature is in the divine life, the divine life with which we were born again has the divine nature within it (3:3, 5-6, 15). 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). (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 3932-3933)

The greatest blessing in the universe is that we can partake of God's nature...We are partaking of the divine elements of God's being...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). We live the divine life by God's promises. In order that we may enjoy all that He is, God will do many things for us according to His promises... Although we received the divine life at the time we believed, the divine nature must be continually enjoyed by us.

Since we have the divine nature, we do not need outward regulations to adjust our hair, clothes, and behavior. Any adjustments that we make should be made according to the divine nature within...Every newborn child has the human nature. While little babies do not have any knowledge of outward regulations, they still have the human nature that regulates what they eat. You do not need to teach them about sweet and bitter because they have the human nature with its human taste...We [Christians] have the divine nature with a divine taste. We must live a life that matches the divine nature within us.

Since we have the life of God, we also have the nature of God. The emphasis on life is on the capacity to live, and the emphasis on nature is on the inclination of our living. We desire to be heavenly because the nature of God, the inclination of God, is heavenly. We desire to be holy because God's nature and inclination are holy.

We feel uneasy when we are proud, and we feel comfortable when we are humble because this is the nature and inclination of God. We feel uneasy when we take advantage of others and very happy when we share with others, because this is God's nature and inclination...If we realize that the divine nature within us has a particular taste, we will see that it is easy to be freed from the world and not love sin and evil. God is in us not only as our life but also as our nature. Within us He is the capacity to live, and He has also become our taste in our living. His life and nature in us make it very easy for us not to love the world and to overcome sins and evil.

The way to enlarge the sphere of the divine nature within us is to take the word of Christ not only by reading but also by praying, singing, psalming, and thanking the Lord (Col. 3:16). If the word of Christ is to dwell in us richly, we need to open our entire being and exercise our spirit. Then the word of Christ will enter into us, stir us up, and become mingled with us, causing us to be one with the Lord in an actual and practical way. As a result, the sphere of the divine nature in us will be enlarged. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 3934-3937)

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msgs. 1—4

Tuesday 4/8**Related Verses****2 Pet. 1:3**

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 Cor. 12:9

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.

Matt. 28:20

20 Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.

Partakers of the Divine Nature and the Development of the Divine Life and the Divine Nature for a Rich Entrance into the Eternal Kingdom**Eph. 3:20**

20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

1 John 3:1

1 Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

John 3:3, 5-6, 16

3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

Related Reading

Peter...says that God has called us by His own glory and virtue...Knowing our need for assurance, encouragement, and strength, God has given us precious and exceedingly great promises. An example of these promises is the Lord's word to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9...This promise was given to Paul to enable him to suffer the thorn in the flesh. In order to bear with a "thorn," we need the Lord's sufficient grace. This is an illustration of the fact that we need many promises to help us reach the goal of God's glory and virtue.

We cannot reach the high goal of God's glory and virtue by ourselves. For this, we need the Lord. Because we do not know what lies ahead of us, God has given us precious promises. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 40-41)

God has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises for a specific purpose. His purpose is that through these promises we may become partakers of the divine nature [2 Pet. 1:4]. Through the precious and exceedingly great promises, we, the believers in Christ, have become partakers of His divine nature in an organic

union with Him. In Acts 2 and 3 Peter and the other disciples surely were partaking of the divine nature. It is no wonder then that when others looked at the disciples, they saw the expression of God. Because the disciples enjoyed God and partook of God, they were constituted of God.

This should also be our experience today. If we enjoy God and partake of Him, we will be constituted of Him. Of course, we will never become God in the sense of attaining to the Godhead or becoming an object of worship. However, we may be thoroughly constituted of God's nature.

We all are constituted physically of the food we eat...In like manner, we may become so constituted of God that we express God in all that we are and do. We may even give off a divine fragrance. If we partake of God day by day, eventually, we will partake of Him unconsciously. When others contact us, they will see in us the expression of the Triune God.

My desire is that all the saints in the Lord's recovery would be fully saturated with the nature of God. The more we are saturated with God, the more we will express Him.

To be a partaker of the divine nature is to be a partaker of the elements, the ingredients, of God's being. When we partake of God, the aspects of what God is become our enjoyment. We partake of His righteousness, holiness, kindness, love, and compassion. This is to enjoy the constituents of the divine nature. God's purpose in giving us the precious and exceedingly great promises is that we may become partakers of the divine nature.

In 2 Peter 1:4 there is a condition for becoming partakers of the divine nature: it is "having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust." The more we escape this corruption, the more we will enjoy the nature of God. Likewise, the more we partake of the divine nature, the more we will escape the corruption that is in the world by lust. This is a cycle...I can testify that because this cycle of partaking and escaping works within me in a strong, rapid way, it is difficult for me to take in any of the corruption of the world. I partake of the divine nature, and this divine nature strengthens me to stay away from corruption. Then the more I stay away

from the corruption of the world, the more I enjoy the riches of the divine nature. This is the experience of God's economy. What we have in 1:1-4 is actually a full picture of our enjoyment of God's economy. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 42-43)

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msg. 5

Wednesday 4/9**Related Verses****2 Pet. 1:5-6**

5 And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;

6 And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;

2 Pet. 3:18

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.

John 6:57

57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 10:10

10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

John 11:25

25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

Eph. 4:13-15

13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,

15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

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

The Greek word rendered “adding” [2 Pet. 1:5] literally means “bringing in beside.” Beside, along with, the precious and exceedingly great promises given to us by God, we should bring in all diligence to cooperate with the enabling of the dynamic divine nature for the carrying out of God’s promises.

What the divine power has given us in 1:3 and 4 is developed in verses 5 through 7. To supply virtue in faith is to develop virtue in the exercise of faith. The same principle applies to all the other items. The word *supply* here actually means “develop.” Peter is telling us to develop what we already have. We have faith, and now in our faith we need to develop virtue. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, p. 45)

The faith Peter mentions in 2 Peter 1:5 is the equally precious faith allotted to us by God (v. 1) as the common portion of the New Testament blessing of life for the initiation of the Christian life. This faith needs to be exercised that the virtue of the divine life may be developed in the succeeding steps and reach maturity. Faith in 2 Peter 1 may be compared to a seed...In chapter 1 of 1 Peter the seed is the word with Christ in it as life. Now in 2 Peter 1 this seed becomes our faith, which, no doubt, is the equally precious faith. This precious faith is one with Christ as the seed.

After a seed has been sown in the soil, it needs to be developed. The principle is the same with the development of the seed of faith. In our faith we need to develop virtue. Literally, the Greek word for *virtue* means “excellency.” It denotes the energy of the divine life, which issues in vigorous action. If faith is regarded as the seed, virtue may be considered a root that comes out of this seed.

In 1:5 Peter also tells us to supply “in virtue, knowledge.” Virtue, the vigorous action, needs the bountiful supply of the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord (vv. 2, 3, 8) regarding the all things that relate to the divine life and godliness and the partaking of the divine nature (vv. 3-4) for our enjoyment in the subsequent development. 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. Actually, this is the knowledge of all things related to life and godliness...I believe that knowledge also is a primary root that develops out of the seed of faith. With virtue and knowledge we have the growth of the seed.

Self-control [v. 6], or temperance, is the exercise of control and restraint over one’s self in its passions, desires, and habits. Once we have acquired knowledge, it is easy for us to become proud. For this reason we need to develop in our knowledge self-control. Self-control implies restriction. As a tree grows, the roots spread out, but the trunk grows upward in a rather restricted manner.

Self-control is to deal with ourselves; endurance is to bear with others and with circumstances. In order to live a proper Christian life, we need endurance toward those around us and also toward our environment and circumstances.

In our endurance we need to develop godliness. Godliness is a living that is like God and that expresses God. As we exercise control over our self and bear with others and with circumstances, godliness needs to be developed in our spiritual life, that we may be like God and express Him. If faith is the seed, virtue and knowledge the roots, and self-control the trunk, then endurance and godliness are the branches. Here we see a rather full development: out of the seed come the roots, the trunk, and the branches. Eventually, in verse 7 we see brotherly love and love as the blossom and the fruit. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 45-47)

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msg. 6

Thursday 4/10

Related Verses**2 Pet. 1:7**

7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.

1 Pet. 3:8

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

1 Pet. 2:17

17 Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Col. 2:19

19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

Gal. 6:10

10 So then, as we have the opportunity, let us do what is good toward all, but especially toward those of the household of the faith.

John 13:34-35

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 15:16-17

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

17 These things I command you that you may love one another.

Related Reading

The Greek word rendered “brotherly love” is *philadelphia*, composed of *phileo*, “to have affection for,” and *adelphos*, “a brother”; hence, brotherly affection, a love characterized by delight and pleasure.

The Greek word for *love* in 2 Peter 1:7 is *agape*, the word used in the New Testament for the divine love, which God is in His nature (1 John 4:8, 16). It is nobler than *phileo*, human love. It adorns all the qualities of the Christian life...It is stronger in ability and greater in capacity than human love (Matt. 5:44, 46), yet a believer who lives by the divine life (2 Pet. 1:3) and partakes of the divine nature (v. 4) can be saturated with it and express it in full. Such a love needs to be developed in brotherly love to govern it and flow in it for the full expression of God, who is this love. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 47-48)

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Peter's thought in [1 Peter 1] is that the full salvation of the Triune God issues in holiness and brotherly love. Holiness is related to godliness. Hence, the issue of God's full salvation is the expression of God and the love for the brothers.

In quality and perhaps also in quantity, *agape* is greater than *phileo*. Sometimes we may love the brothers in a narrow, limited way with a certain amount of brotherly love. In our love we may have preferences and love certain brothers more than others...Because Peter was experienced and knew the situation among the saints, he did not stop with brotherly love but went on to speak of love, of *agape*, the deep and noble love with which God the Father loves all mankind, both believers and sinners.

In Matthew 5:44-47 the Lord Jesus said, "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. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?...?" As God sends rain upon both the just and the unjust, so we should love not only our brothers but also our enemies. It does not take much strength or energy for someone to love his own brother. But it does take a special strength and energy to love our enemies. We all need to have this noble love.

In the church life we may prefer a certain brother whom we regard as nice and love him, but we may not appreciate another brother as much. We may have love for both brothers, but that love is shallow. Therefore, we need a deeper, nobler love [*agape*]. When we have this kind of love, we love all the brothers the same, no matter what kind of brothers they may be.

In 2 Peter 1:5-7 we have the development from faith to love. This development includes virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, and godliness. Eventually, we 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 the fruit of brotherly love and love.

In verse 8 Peter goes on to say, "For these things, existing in you and abounding, constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." The words these things refer to all the virtues covered in verses 5 through 7, from faith to love. Faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly love, and love should all exist in us. Nevertheless, these are only some of the "all things" that have been granted to us by the divine power. We need to see that all these things are included in the seed. This seed contains the root, the trunk, the branches, the blossom, and the fruit. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 48-49)

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msg. 6

Friday 4/11**Related Verses****1 John 4:16**

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.

Matt. 5:44-45

44 But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,

45 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.

Eph. 3:19

19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

1 Cor. 13:1-3, 13

1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2 And if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

3 And if I dole out all my possessions to feed others, and if I deliver up my body that I may boast, but do not have love, I profit nothing.

13 Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Related Reading

The brothers and sisters in the church life may love one another, but their love may be rather superficial. In their love there may be no life supply and no "antibiotic" to foster healing. This means that their love is lacking in *agape*. But in Peter's love for the brothers, there is another element, and this element is the divine love, a love that supplies us with wisdom to love the brothers in a proper way. Sometimes we love others foolishly, in a way that can spoil them. We do not have the wisdom to love them in a way that will enable them to receive the life supply and be nourished. God's love is not only nourishing but also contains a spiritual antibiotic that fosters healing and prevents illness. If we love the brothers with divine love, we will infuse such an antibiotic into them. For example, you may realize that a brother has a certain shortage or weakness. You know that teaching or correction will not help the brother. This brother needs to be loved with a noble love. If you love him with this kind of love, he will receive the life supply and an antibiotic that can kill the "germs" within him. In the church life we need to love one another with discernment, not foolishly. We need to love the brothers with the high purpose of nourishing them and helping them to be healed. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, p. 59)

Matthew 5:45 tells us that God sends rain on both the just and the unjust. But He does this with wisdom...He loves them with discernment. Likewise, we should not withhold love from the saints. We should love all the brothers, but we should love them with discernment [and also] according to a measure or within a limitation. If we love a brother excessively, that love may spoil him. We need to love him only to a certain extent. But another brother may be in need of a greater measure of love. To love others in this way is to love them not merely with brotherly affection but also with *agape*.

Often our brotherly love is dependent on the tide of our emotions...When the emotional tide of some brothers is high, they will do almost anything to help you. But when the emotional tide is low, they are not willing to help at all...That kind of love is not *agape*. The divine love does not depend on our emotional tide. Because this love has its source in the divine life, it does not change.

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We need to learn to love the brothers with this divine love, not with the love that depends on the tide of our emotions.

God's love is consistent. If we love others with this love, we will also be consistent. Whenever someone contacts us, we will be the same with respect to our love. We will always love others with discernment and according to their need. We may realize that one brother needs a certain measure of love. Therefore, we will measure out, mete out, that much love to him. But another brother may need a different measure of love to meet his need. This is a noble kind of love.

We need to have this divine love in our married life and family life. Peter charges the husbands to assign honor to the wife (1 Pet. 3:7). This requires a noble love.

It is common for sisters to love their husbands emotionally and without discernment or measure. When such a sister is happy or high in her emotion, she will love her husband accordingly. But if she is unhappy or angry, she will not love him. That kind of love is emotional and does not contain the element of *agape*. However, another sister, with more experience in the Lord, will consistently love her husband and children but will always love with a measure and with discernment. This kind of love is surely a noble love. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 59-61)

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msg. 7

Saturday 4/12

Related Verses**2 Pet. 1:10-11**

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.

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. 3:17

17 You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, be on your guard lest being carried away by the error of the lawless, you fall from your own steadfastness.

Eph. 1:18

18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Eph. 4:1, 4

1 I beseech you therefore, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called,
4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Heb. 3:1, 6, 14

1 Therefore, holy brothers, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus,

6 But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are if indeed we hold fast the boldness and the boast of hope firm to the end.

14 For we have become partners of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the assurance firm to the end—

Related Reading

In 2 Peter 1:10...to be diligent is to develop the spiritual virtues in the divine life, to advance in the growth of the divine life. This makes God's calling and selection of us firm.

If we are diligent to develop the virtues mentioned in verses 5 through 7, we will confirm, make sure, our calling and selection...Some may question whether God has chosen them. The reason they have doubt concerning this matter is that they lack the virtues listed by Peter. But if we develop these virtues and are constituted of them, we will have the confirmation that we have been called and selected. This is to make our calling and selection firm. Furthermore, in doing these things we will never stumble, because we have been thoroughly constituted. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 52-53)

The bountiful supply that we enjoy in the development of the divine life and divine nature...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. This is not merely to be saved but, after being saved, to pursue the growth and maturity in the divine life and thereby receive the kingdom reward.

The eternal kingdom in 2 Peter 1:11 refers to the kingdom of God, which was given to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Dan. 7:13-14), and which will be manifested at His coming back (Luke 19:11-12). It will be a reward to His faithful believers, who pursue the growth in His life unto maturity and the development of the virtues of His nature that in the millennium they may participate in His kingship in God's glory (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:4, 6). To enter thus into the eternal kingdom of the Lord is related to entering into God's eternal glory, to which God has called us in Christ (1 Pet. 5:10; 1 Thes. 2:12).

Second Peter 1:11 indicates that we may have an entrance richly and bountifully supplied into the kingdom of our Lord. However, a good number of Christians will not have such an entrance, because they have never built up this entrance by developing the divine seed unto maturity. If we are not constituted of the divine virtues, we will not be able to build up such an entrance. But if we have the development of the divine life and are constituted of the elements of the divine nature, a rich and bountiful entrance into the coming kingdom will be supplied to us.

In order to be kings in the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we need maturity in life. We Christians are destined to be kings in the Lord's kingdom. However, how can someone be a king in the coming kingdom if he lacks the maturity in the divine life?...Even if the Lord would want to enthrone as a king someone who is not mature, that person would realize that he is not able to exercise the kingship. This indicates that even we ourselves know that we need to grow to maturity in order to be kings.

According to Peter's word in 1:5-11, to grow to maturity is to develop what we have already received. We have been allotted the wonderful equally precious faith, and this faith is an all-inclusive seed. All the divine riches are in this seed, but we must be diligent to develop them into virtue. Then we need to develop in our virtue knowledge; in knowledge, self-control; in self-control, endurance; in endurance, godliness; in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love. By developing these virtues we grow, and eventually, we will reach maturity. As a result, we will be full of Christ, and, in Paul's words, we will arrive at the measure of the

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stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). Then we will be qualified and equipped to be kings in the coming kingdom. (*Life-study of 2 Peter*, pp. 53-54, 61-62)

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msg. 7

Lord's Day 4/13**Related Verses****Matt. 13:3-8, 18-23**

3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow.

4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the way, and the birds came and devoured them.

5 And others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much earth, and immediately they sprang up because they had no depth of earth.

6 But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered.

7 And others fell on the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them.

8 But others fell on the good earth and yielded fruit, one a hundredfold, and one sixtyfold, and one thirtyfold.

18 You therefore hear the parable of the one who sowed.

19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand, the evil one comes and snatches away that which has been sown in his heart. This is the one sown beside the way.

20 And the one sown on the rocky places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

21 Yet he does not have root in himself but lasts only for a time, and when affliction or persecution occurs because of the word, immediately he is stumbled.

22 And the one sown in the thorns, this is he who hears the word, and the anxiety of the age and the deceitfulness of riches utterly choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

23 But the one sown on the good earth, this is he who hears the word and understands, who by all means bears fruit and produces, one a hundredfold, and one sixtyfold, and one thirtyfold.

Further Reading:

Further Reading: *Life-study of 2 Peter*, msg. 1

Hymn: #1211

1 Given us, given us, God has given us
Precious faith, power divine, greatest promises.
We believed, we received, now we have all three;
By these we may grow unto maturity.

2 Precious faith in each saint, precious equally,
Precious faith holding us, holding ceaselessly.
Disagree or agree, still it holds us fast,
Day by day, eternally this faith shall last.

3 Power divine wrought in us is the source so great;
Power divine is in us now to operate.
Hence will spring everything for our life within
And for godliness without, expressing Him.

4 Promises, promises, all God's called ones share;
Promises, given us, great and precious are.
These we take to partake of God's nature true,
Having thus escaped the world's corruption too.

5 Christ within, as the pow'r, in our spirit lives;
Christ without is the Word—all God's promises.
Now the key is that we daily contact both,
Calling, praying, reading to produce the growth.

6 Faith and pow'r, promises—these our full supply.
Diligence, diligence, let us now apply;
For if we, to these three, full attention show
From the seed of faith the fruit of love will grow.

7 In the growth from the seed many items come;
By this growth in the Lord fruitful we become.
For this we need to see what the Lord's begun,
Ne'er forgetful be nor blind to what He's done.

8 Diligence day by day will this growth insure;
Diligence thus will make our election sure.
When indeed with this seed we cooperate,
We're supplied the kingdom's entrance, rich and great.

9 For this growth, for this growth, Lord, ourselves we
give,
By the faith, promises, and the pow'r to live.
Nothing more, nothing less, will our basis be
By Thy grace we will cooperate with Thee.

Churchwide Truth Pursuit of Genesis**Level 1—Sequential Life-study Reading**

Scripture Reading and Copying: Gen. 10

Assigned Reading: *Life-study of Genesis*, msg(s). 19-20

Level 2—Topical Study

Crucial Point: The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Scripture: Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17

Assigned Reading: *Life-study of Genesis*, msg(s). 13-16

Supplemental Reading: *The Tree of Life*, ch. 2; *The Divine Economy*, ch. 4; *Truth Lessons, Level Two, Vol. 2*, ch. 13; *Truth Lessons, Level Three, Vol. 1*, ch. 1; *Revelation in Genesis: Seeing God's Desire and Purpose in Creation*, ch. 5

Questions: See the church website at

churchinnyc.org/bible-study