

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of March 11, 2018

**THEME: "God's Promises to Believers"
GOD'S GREAT PROMISES**

Sunday Read II Peter 1:2-9

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." Being partakers of the Divine nature is being restored to what man was in the original creation when God made man in His own image and after His likeness. That meant man had the capability to enjoy both the physical and spiritual world. That was fullness of life! When Adam and Eve sinned, they died spiritually; they lost their Divine nature! Now they were limited to things physical, leaving a void in their innate desire to have fellowship with God. Praise God that His love for man was so great that He initiated a plan of redemption without compromising His holiness. That is vital because man has an eternal soul. It was intended that man and God would have communion and fellowship for all eternity. That plan for reconciliation was to have God the Son take a human body and suffer the penalty of sin for all mankind to restore the Divine nature. A relationship with Jesus Christ does just that and the Christlike qualities of spiritual life are restored into the Christian's life to be a fruitful and productive life with eternal values; quite different from the unbeliever who is limited to the physical world. These qualities are developed only insofar as a person increases in the knowledge of Christ. What a high privilege!

THE BENEFICIARIES

Monday Read Ephesians 2:8-10

"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." The beneficiaries of the Divine nature are those who place their faith in Christ as Savior. There is no other way to have spiritual life restored; it cannot be purchased or earned by good works. Not to enter into a relationship with Jesus is the most foolish mistake anyone could ever make. There is nothing better than getting right with God; and there is no greater tragedy than ignoring God. Not only is there a restoration of spiritual life to enjoy on earth for the fullness of joy, there is a place reserved in heaven for believers. Jesus said that in John 14:3: *"I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you, that where I am, ye may be also."* Peter, one of the apostles who was with Jesus, repeated it in I Peter 1:3-4: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."* So not only do those who have received Christ as Savior to make Him the Lord of their lives have the abundant life on earth with spiritual understanding, they have an eternal home reserved in heaven. To reject Christ means an eternity in hell.

ULTIMATE MOTIVE

Tuesday Read Matthew 5:14-16

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Those who have accepted Christ as Savior have far more to live for than those who never enter into that eternal relationship with our Creator by faith in His Son. Christians now live for the glory of our Heavenly Father. All parents enjoy seeing their sons and daughters compete in sports in which they may be involved, or in drama presentations on the stage, or simply watching them begin to take their first steps. In the same way, God above takes great delight in watching His children compete on the world scene in the greatest battle of all: spiritual war against the rulers of the darkness of this world. His people are the light of this world. His people have an understanding of the cause for evil and the solution for combating wrong. In our age of corruption, increasing lawlessness, and the ever increasing

acts of terror, world leaders are struggling for answers and fail to come to agreement on a proper course of action. The truth is God has given light, but to reject His Word and His Son as Savior is to remain in darkness and confusion.

ETERNAL SECURITY

WednesdayRead John 6:37-39

"All that my Father giveth me shall come to me; and I will in no wise cast out." One of the truly great blessings of the Christian life is the security we have in Christ. There are those who somehow believe that it is possible to lose their salvation. What a shame! We have a loving Father in heaven, and a wonderful Savior in Jesus. Never would either go back on their word. If a child of God is disobedient, the Holy Spirit will work in such a way that the Christian will admit the wrongdoing so he can experience the forgiveness of His Father in heaven, but if he doesn't, God does not disown him. What God does do is what good fathers on earth do: take measures in a loving way to restore the disobedient to fellowship. Have any of us taken back gifts from someone because they may have done something wrong? In Romans 6:23, God calls eternal life a gift: *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Does that not tell us, along with today's Bible reading that true believers have been given to Christ for His keeping. By faith in Christ we have eternal life: a sure thing! He promised us!

PERSONAL SERENITY

Thursday Read Isaiah 26:1-3

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." Just as the believer has the joy of security by faith in Christ, he also has the key to serenity, or perfect peace. This means it is within the power of the believer to counter worry, fear, and anxiety successfully. They are emotions that bring distress upon everyone at one time or another. Our minds bring thoughts that picture the worst; most of which will never happen. The answer is to focus on God: who He is, what He has done, what He has promised, and what He can do. All His promises are sure. Engaging in prayer is vital, for prayer brings God into our conscious level as we talk to Him. These are God's instructions in Philippians 4:4-7: *"Rejoice in the Lord always...Be anxious for nothing, but in everything in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God that passes all understanding will keep your heart and minds through Christ Jesus."* When finished praying, the eighth verse tells us to, after praying, focus our thinking on things that are of *"good report, honorable, and praiseworthy."* In other words, it is vital not to allow your thoughts to go back to the worry, but on things for which you praise God. That is truly *"casting your care on Him"* as we are instructed to do in I Peter 5:7. God really does care!

PEACE WITH GOD

FridayRead Romans 5:1-5

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is wonderful to have the peace of God that defies description, and that is because we have peace with God by our faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus. Sin created a problem in God's relationship with people. Just as human friends can have issues that mar their friendship, and even marriages break up because of fractured relationships, so with God's relationship with humans because of their sin. What a joy to know that reconciliation was important to God, and that is exactly what He offers to all people. It is through the Lord Jesus by virtue of faith in Him as our Savior. That is possible because the blood of Jesus was shed for me, and for you, and for everyone in the world. God grants an eternal pardon to all who invite Christ into their hearts to forgive their sins and be their Savior. All who do that are justified in the sight of God and their relationship with Him is restored. Never will they have to suffer the eternal consequences of sin. We are at peace with God!

PERSONAL POWER

Saturday Read Ephesians 3:16-20

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man...Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us..." To be the light of

the world, which is what Christians are according to the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 5:14-16, they need Divine power. To fight the spiritual war as soldiers of Christ, which is what Christians are according to the truth of II Timothy 2:3, they need Divine power beyond human skill and capability. How do we get this power? Today's Bible reading emphasizes that it is an inner power provided by the Holy Spirit, by Whom we were born into the family of God. It is the Holy Spirit who gives us inner strength. How vital not to quench the Holy Spirit by entertaining un-Christlike thoughts or actions!