

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

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*8 Essential Steps to a Life of Confidence
in the Promises of God*

DR. DAVID JEREMIAH



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*To my friend Todd Durkin
and his incredible team at Fitness Quest 10*

*Your dedication to the training of the body sets a high
standard for the diligent training of the soul*

• • •

*For physical training is of some value,
but godliness has value for all things,
holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*

—1 Timothy 4:8 NIV

*Dear friend, I hope all is well with you
and that you are as healthy in body
as you are strong in spirit.*

—3 John 2 NLT

CONTENTS

<i>Prologue</i>	ix
Chapter 1: The Promise	1
Chapter 2: Muscular Faith	21
Chapter 3: Moral Excellence	39
Chapter 4: Mental Focus	57
Chapter 5: Personal Discipline	75
Chapter 6: Relentless Determination	95
Chapter 7: Christlike Character	115
Chapter 8: Radical Kindness	135
Chapter 9: Selfless Love	155
Chapter 10: The Blessing	175
<i>Epilogue</i>	193
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	199
<i>Notes</i>	203
<i>About the Author</i>	217

PROLOGUE

People often ask me, “Pastor, what’s going on in the world today? What’s the biggest issue we face?” I have many answers, and each contains the same overarching word—*pressure*.

Family pressure. Time pressure. Financial pressure. Unprecedented pressure to compete and succeed by society’s standards—at work, in school, in our communities, and maybe even in our churches. As Christians, we’re encountering pressures in our society we’ve never faced before. We’re living in unprecedented times, which brings unparalleled tension.

But I’ve been encouraged recently by learning about a peculiar little fish. The Mariana snailfish lives in the deepest caverns of the ocean, where the pressure is a thousand times greater than on the surface. The temperature there is near freezing, and there’s no light at those depths. But God created those fish—which are about the size of a human hand—to thrive in extreme conditions.

How do they do it? These fish possess special features such as flexible skulls and bones. They also produce distinct chemicals that stabilize their constitution, so the pressure inside them is greater than the pressure outside of them.¹

PROLOGUE

Pretty amazing, right? God has given these strange creatures everything they need for where they are and for what He intends for them. He's given them everything they need not just to survive but to thrive.

Could that be true for you too?

Absolutely! There's a particular passage of Scripture I've studied all my life. I've known it and taught it for years. But in recent days when I, like you, have been under great pressure, it's entered my bloodstream like a transfusion.

This passage was written by someone who knew all about fish: Simon Peter. Before Jesus called him and his brother, Andrew, saying, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19), Simon Peter ran a fishing business in Galilee.

After a remarkable three years with Jesus, as recounted in the Gospels, Peter went on to help establish the early church, chronicled in the book of Acts. In spite of the constant threat of persecution, he devoted the rest of his life to extending the kingdom of God. He spent his last days in prison awaiting execution, yet even then the joy within him was greater than the fear around him. He had everything he needed to maintain his faith, optimism, and effectiveness for Jesus—until the very moment he entered heaven.

Peter's last letter was written to "those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours" (2 Peter 1:1 NIV).

What does that mean? It means your experience with Jesus can be as precious to you as Peter's was to him. That's remarkable to consider. And in the verses that follow, he explained how. This is the passage that gripped my heart so powerfully in recent months that it led me to write this book:

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and

PROLOGUE

virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (vv. 3–11)

In *Everything You Need: 8 Essential Steps to a Life of Confidence in the Promises of God*, I'll follow the trail of God's logic that runs through the passage like a needle pulling a golden thread. I'll show you how God's divine power gives you everything you need—not half, or most, or a whole lot of what you need. He has given you *everything* you need to develop a godly life!

That's just the beginning. God has also devised an ingenious way of conveying His power right into the center of your soul through the live wires of His biblical promises, or—as Peter called them—His great and precious promises. These promises energize you and enable you to share His divine nature. In this book we explore how you can receive that energy.

I'll also show you the eight essential steps Peter listed—each building on the other, and every one essential for a life of courage, confidence, and effectiveness. Here's a preview of the amazing character qualities we'll explore together in these pages:

PROLOGUE

- Diligence—the pursuit of the Lord with all your heart.
- Virtue—the sustaining joy of a God-pleasing life.
- Knowledge—accelerated growth and wisdom that come from knowing God better.
- Self-Control—the skill of bringing your habits under the Holy Spirit’s control.
- Perseverance—resilience that casts off disappointment and discouragement.
- Godliness—the mirror image of Christ in your personality.
- Brotherly Kindness—friendliness that draws people to yourself and to Jesus.
- Love—the essence of serving God and others.

In the final chapter I’ll explain how God will bless and use you in truly unimaginable ways as you put these virtues into practice.

Peter wrote, “If these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:8). This is one of God’s great understatements! If these virtues are yours and if they abound in your life—meaning if you embrace them and fill your heart with them—there’s no limit to what you can achieve. And there’s no pressure you can’t withstand.

These eight qualities are indispensable today. Think of them as tools in your backpack for your adventure of hiking through life. The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk said, “The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills” (Hab. 3:19).

If God can equip a small fish in the deepest sea to withstand the pressure it’s under, and if He can keep a single deer surefooted on the summits, then He’s got you covered.

It’s time to unpack all God has given you and commit to cultivating the strength of character you’ll need to face the pressures in this world.

PROLOGUE

Once you master these precious verses of the Bible—or rather, once they master you—you’ll realize you have everything you need!

Even more, you’ll find He *is* everything you need.

I don’t want to pressure you, but what are you waiting for? Is life getting easier? No? Then read on, and let’s get started!

Chapter 1

THE PROMISE

The Pacific Crest Trail is one of the most beautiful but demanding hikes in the world—2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada. It runs through California, Oregon, and Washington, winding through desert wastelands, along breathtaking ridges, and beside glaciated expanses.

In 2018, Katharina Groene traveled from Germany to experience the PCT for herself. She made it northbound over two thousand miles, all the way to Washington State. For a couple of hours on October 22, she fell in with Nancy Abell of Seattle. As they parted, Nancy, a lifelong local hiker, worried about Katharina. The German didn't have snowshoes and wasn't prepared for the next leg of the trip, which negotiated Glacier Peak. Nancy tried to dissuade Katharina from continuing, but to no avail. Katharina was five months into her trip. She wasn't about to quit.

Katharina soon regretted her decision. When conditions turned deadly, she realized she didn't have everything she needed for the elements. Her clothing was soaked, and her shoes were no match for the

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

snow and ice. She became dehydrated and hungry, with only a Pop-Tart left in her pack. One of her two tarps blew away, and she lost two pairs of gloves. Frostbite set in. She had no phone service.

Soon, Katharina came to believe she would perish in the wilds of the North Cascades. She even started composing goodbye messages to her loved ones.

Then she heard a sound through the biting wind: blades chopping the air. A rescue helicopter appeared—a HAWK1 from Snohomish, flying low and sweeping just under the heavy clouds. The pilots had their heads out, following Katharina's tracks in the snow until they finally spotted her in her red jacket near a stand of old timber.

How did the rescue team know to look for her? How did they find her?

The credit goes to Nancy Abell, who couldn't stop thinking about her new friend. Seeing the storm blowing in, she instinctively knew Katharina was in trouble. Nancy notified the authorities, and the search was on. Katharina was saved.¹

Like a hiker in the wild, we sometimes find ourselves stranded and isolated, caught in an unexpected storm, even endangered by life's circumstances. It's dangerous to be ill-equipped for the journey. When we haven't packed the right gear, we're underprepared, overexposed, and at risk of the elements.

That is never God's plan for us. Like a divine Outfitter, He wants to give us everything we need for the journey. He knows how to equip us to be people of character, able to face the ruggedness of the world with dignity and strength. He furnishes all we need for every condition. But we've got to turn from our meager resources and embrace the abundant ones He provides.

In this chapter, I want to share with you a specific Scripture from the writings of Simon Peter. I believe it will encourage you for the rest of your life. No matter what you face, this passage will strip away all your excuses for floundering and flailing. It will boost your confidence and

THE PROMISE

enable you to make the most of each day, week, and year, whatever the weather of life.

You'll find it in 2 Peter 1:3–4. As you read this passage, don't skim over the verses. Listen to each word as if God were speaking just to you.

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

According to Peter, who literally walked beside Jesus, you have been given everything you need for life and godliness. Not some things you need, not many things, not even most things, but *everything*. Believe it or not, God has already provided the resources you need to successfully navigate life with confidence and grace.

So what specifically are those resources? It starts with access to His power.

YOU HAVE GOD'S POWER

Have you ever experienced a spiritual power outage? For many, it's going to the doctor and hearing bad news. It's going to work and learning you've been laid off. It's answering the phone call that says your child is in trouble. It's watching the stock market plunge as you're about to retire. These things and more are bound to happen to you and me, for we have many troubles in this world.

That's why Peter began his letter by telling us about God's almighty power. It's His power that enables us to overcome the trials of life—to live

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

the life for which we were created. If that feels big and inspiring, well . . . it is!

Verse 3 says, “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.” What is godliness? What does it mean to live a godly life?

Godliness encompasses behaviors, words, and attitudes that reflect what God would do on earth if He were to come down as a person—as He did during the incarnation of Jesus Christ. A godly life manifests the purity and purpose of God from the inside out. It’s literally a matter of Christ living His life through us consistently by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Godliness may seem too lofty a goal to attempt. And it is—if you attempt it in your own power. But Peter was pointing you toward a power that will enable you to live a godly life. What kind of power can do that?

IT’S UNLIMITED POWER

Is the sun shining outside your window today? I hope so, because I want you to consider the incredible power of solar energy. Our sun is a blinding star, so huge that about one million earths could fit inside it. It takes only eight minutes for a beam of light and heat to travel ninety-three million miles from the sun to the earth, and it arrives right on schedule and in the exact proportion needed to sustain life on our planet.

The temperature at the surface of the sun is about ten thousand degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature at its core may reach twenty-seven million degrees. The sun never shuts down, though it may occasionally flare up. Essentially, it’s a gaseous ball of continuously occurring nuclear explosions, radiating energy uniformly in all directions throughout the solar system.

Every second the sun produces enough energy to power human civilization for almost five hundred thousand years. Imagine if we could collect and use all that energy! And that’s only one second of its power. The sun has enough nuclear fuel to burn for another five billion years.²

THE PROMISE

Yet the sun is only one medium-size star in a universe filled with trillions of others. Astronomers estimate there are one hundred billion to four hundred billion stars in our galaxy. And images from the Hubble Space Telescope suggest there may be two trillion other galaxies in the universe!

Think of all the energy radiating from all those stars and ask yourself, “What source of power could so animate the universe? Where did all this energy come from?”

It comes from God. His power can light up the universe, fire up the stars, power the planets, move the oceans in their undulating tides, and give life to every creature on earth without being diminished by one kilowatt.

Since God has all the power in the universe at His command, God can do anything He chooses. And here is the incredible truth that should shake you to the core whenever you feel unequipped to handle what life throws at you: God has chosen to give you access to the greatness of His power.

The word *power* was in the vocabulary of nearly every Old and New Testament writer. If you go through the Scripture highlighting this word, you’ll run out of yellow ink.

The Bible says, “Power belongs to God. . . . Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours” (Ps. 62:11; 1 Chron. 29:11).

Consider Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians: “[I pray] . . . that you may know . . . the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph. 1:18–20).

Paul used the word *dunamis* to refer to God’s power toward us, the word from which we get *dynamite*. Dynamite can do many things, but it can’t raise the dead. But that’s what the power of God did in the resurrection of Christ. And that’s the power of God that resides in you.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

God's power is unlimited. Human power gives out, and we ourselves become weary. But the Bible says those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength (Isa. 40:31).

If you're a follower of the Son who shines in all His brilliance, then you're never powerless. There is no problem or situation in life for which God's mighty power, given to you, is not adequate.

IT'S UNLEASHED POWER

When you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior, the power of God Almighty is unleashed in your life. Think what would happen if every follower of Jesus stopped looking everywhere else for this power and instead focused on what God has already given them. That's God's desire.

His divine power has given us all things. What a phrase—*all things!* Jesus said, "With God *all things* are possible" (Matt. 19:26). And Romans 8:28 says, "We know that *all things* work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

And here's my all-time favorite "all things" verse. This verse has more superlatives in it than any other verse in the Bible: "God is able to make *all grace abound* toward you, that you, *always* having *all* sufficiency in *all things*, may have an *abundance* for *every* good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

Do you need joy—a heart of holy happiness that comes from Christ and keeps us buoyant in life? It's available.

Do you need help discarding shame and guilt? His power, applied to your life by the blood of Jesus Christ, is the world's greatest cleansing agent.

Do you need wisdom to deal with your problems? Christ is both the "power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24). He will guide you through the trails and trials of life.

Do you need enough energy to fulfill God's work and will for your life day by day? The Bible says we're "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy" (Col. 1:11).

THE PROMISE

Put simply, you *can* “do all things through Christ who strengthens” you! (Phil. 4:13).

IT’S UNLOCKED POWER

God’s power is unlimited because it’s divine power that energizes you to live a godly Jesus-life on earth. But there’s another aspect of God’s power that meets your needs. This power is unlocked through your “knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3).

Francis Bacon, the sixteenth-century statesman and amateur scientist, had an insatiable curiosity. Educated by Puritans, he once stated he had three goals in life: to uncover truth, to serve his country, and to serve his church. He’s credited with developing the scientific method and helping unleash the scientific revolution.

Bacon is also credited with the phrase, “Knowledge is power.” But that’s not exactly what he said. In his book *Sacred Meditations*, Bacon actually wrote, “Knowledge is His Power.”³ Francis Bacon understood that wisdom and knowledge lead to strength and success—when they find their source in God.

Centuries earlier, another statesman and philosopher named Solomon wrote, “A wise man is strong, yes, a man of knowledge increases strength” (Prov. 24:5).

But I like the way Peter put it best: “By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him” (2 Peter 1:3 NLT).

When Peter talked about the knowledge of Him who called us, he had three things in mind:

1. We must know Jesus personally. It’s one thing to know about someone; it’s another thing to know someone personally.
2. We need to grow in our knowledge of Scripture and the doctrines, truths, and realities of God.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

3. And we must grow in our knowledge of His patterns for our lives. This means integrating our knowledge of Him with our lives.

When you have a personal connection with Jesus Christ, and when you walk with Him and get to know Him better each day—which includes studying His Word with a sense of listening to His voice and meeting with Him in prayer—you grow in your relationship with Him. Through the years you grow closer, wiser, and stronger in Christ.

Donna and I have been married fifty-six years. We fell in love before our wedding, but it was not as mature a love as it is now. Through the years we've gotten to know each other better, and our lives have been fused together with the kind of love that only comes by facing the difficulties of life and maturing as a couple. That's akin to what Peter was saying. As we come to know Jesus better—growing in His Word, growing in prayer, growing in faith—His unlimited power is unlocked and unleashed in us.

Have you ever had the frustrating experience of charging your phone only to realize hours later the cord wasn't plugged into the wall? It can be maddening—all that time wasted and still no power.

In a similar way, if you're not experiencing the power of God in your life, check your connections—you might not be plugged into the right energy source. God's endless energy and omnipotent power radiate from His Word. If you feel overwhelmed with life, immerse yourself in the Scriptures. Spend time with God in prayer. And let His power lift you, sustain you, and strengthen you as He has promised.

YOU HAVE GOD'S PROMISES

In verse 4, Peter went on to tell us that God's power is communicated to us through His promises, and it's His promises that sustain our faith. What does that mean? How can a promise sustain anything?

THE PROMISE

Robert “R. G.” Williams lived with his family—his mother and nine older siblings—in poverty in a rough part of Louisville, Kentucky. As a boy he took the bus to school. From his window on the bus each morning, R. G. saw drug addicts, homeless people, and alcoholics buying their liquor and cigarettes. But inside the bus there was a redeeming presence: his bus driver, Louise Garnett, “a very motherly type.” R. G. sat where he could talk with her, and she always asked about his grades and schoolwork and if he’d been eating.

R. G.’s mother became ill, and at age thirteen, he decided to take matters into his own hands. He thought he would become a bus driver himself to help his family with their bills. Using some of his church clothes, he sewed himself a bus uniform. He took one of the caps his dad had left behind, and he made himself a badge out of cardboard and aluminum foil.

Then R. G. went down to the bus depot, saw an empty bus, sat in the driver’s seat, and started the engine. Telling himself, “I need to do this for my family,” the first-time bus driver pulled out of the parking lot and clipped the mirror of a nearby truck. Feeling panicked, R. G. floored the gas pedal and started going about forty-five miles per hour down the street. The police took off after him, sirens piercing the air. But R. G. was too afraid to stop. He kept to his route. Finally, police set up a roadblock and stopped the bus.

At his trial R. G. was given a chance to explain his situation, and the court was sympathetic. The Transit Authority of River City made an astounding promise. As R. G. recalled, “[They told me] that if I kept my nose clean, I could come back for a job when I was twenty-five. At thirteen, I was thinking, ‘There is hope!’”

R. G. grew up, graduated from high school, and joined the navy to train as a cryptologist. But when he turned twenty-five, he left the navy, returned to Louisville, and asked for his promised job. And he got it!⁴

That promise, made in a Louisville courtroom, stayed with a boy

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

for more than a decade—guiding him, sustaining him, and giving him hope. How much more do the promises of God sustain us! The Lord transmits His power into our lives by His exceedingly great and precious promises.

Speaking generally, these promises are great because they come from a great God and they lead to a great life. But we can go deeper in our understanding because these promises are great for at least three additional reasons.

GOD'S PROMISES ARE INCALCULABLE

God's promises are exceedingly great because they're incalculable. No one can fully count the number of promises God placed in the Bible, although Dr. Everek R. Storms of Ontario decided to try.

"All my life," he said, "I have seen various figures quoted as to the number of promises in the Bible. The one most generally given is 30,000. Since this is a round number, I have always been a little suspicious about it. Furthermore, since there are only 31,101 verses in the Bible, it would mean that there would be practically one promise in every verse."

That inspired Dr. Storms to conduct his own study. According to Storms's calculations, there are a grand total of 8,810 promises in the Bible. About 85 percent of them are made by God to human beings. Only one book of the Bible contains no promise at all: Titus. Isaiah contains more than one thousand promises. What section of Scripture most impressed Storms? "The most outstanding chapter as far as promises are concerned is Psalm 37," he wrote. "Practically every verse is a most wonderful promise."⁵

But with all due respect to Dr. Storms, it gets better. Many verses in the Bible may not be written in the form of a promise—and yet they are promises.

For example, think of 2 Corinthians 1:18, which says, "God is

THE PROMISE

faithful.” That isn’t technically a promise; it’s a statement of fact. But, oh, the promise implied by that truth! If God is faithful, then He will be faithful to you. You can read that as a promise!

The prayers of the Bible are implicit promises. When Jesus taught us to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11), He understood God can and will do that in answer to our sincere prayers.

Even the commands of the Bible are promises turned inside out. When Paul wrote, “Rejoice always” in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, he was issuing instruction, but only God can empower us to keep that command. You could paraphrase that verse to say, “Trust God, for He will enable you to rejoice in all situations.”

So how in the world can you count the promises of God? You cannot! His promises are incalculable because the entire Bible is a virtual vault filled with infinite riches issued to you through every single verse. Somewhere in every single verse, explicit or implicit, is a promise.

GOD’S PROMISES ARE INFALLIBLE

Second, God’s promises are great because they’re infallible. The Bible says, “For every one of God’s promises is ‘Yes’ in [Christ]. Therefore, through him we also say ‘Amen’ to the glory of God” (2 Cor. 1:20 CSB).

In other words, “Lord, have You promised to never leave us or forsake us and to work all things for our good?” He says, *Yes!* and we say, “Amen—so be it!”

“Have You promised to hear and answer our prayers? To watch over us and deliver us from evil? To give peace and strength as needed?” He says, *Yes!* and we say, “Amen!”

“Have You promised us an eternal home in heaven, where sin, sickness, and sorrow can never intrude?” He says, *Yes!* and we say, “Amen!”

That equation works for all God’s promises. For no matter how many promises God has made, they are all yes in Christ, and through us is the *amen* for the glory of God.⁶

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

Thomas Bragg and Eddie Lama served in the same platoon in Vietnam with the army's First Cavalry Division; they were buddies from the start. Thomas was "a twenty-year-old short, brash black man" and Eddie was "a twenty-year-old curly haired, freckled white man." They bonded quickly during the conflict and promised to stay in touch and visit each other after the war. But Eddie Lama didn't make it home. While covering for an American helicopter and trying to fend off enemy snipers, he was struck in the head by a bullet and killed instantly. Eddie was evacuated from the battlefield, and Thomas never had a chance to say goodbye.

Thomas returned home with a sense of loss and pain. He kept a trove of photographs in a cigar box, and over the years he'd pull them out to remember his friendship with Eddie. The pain was always there, but Thomas went on with his life as the decades passed. One day Thomas realized he should keep the promise he made to Eddie to visit him after the war. He began trying to locate Eddie's grave but had no contacts, no phone numbers, no people to ask. Finally, he found Michael Lund, professor emeritus at Longwood University, who led a writing program for veterans. After some research, they located Eddie's gravesite.

Thomas drove from his home in Blackstone, Virginia, to a cemetery in Mundelein, Illinois. Exactly fifty years from the day his army buddy and best friend Eddie was killed, Thomas Bragg stood over Eddie's grave and had a very emotional visit. A journalist who recorded the story said the moment was powerful because it was the story of a man keeping his promise.⁷

That was one man and one promise kept. Now imagine almighty God making a promise to you. You know without doubt He will keep it. The Bible teaches that God keeps every promise He has ever made, and He keeps them fully, totally, in detail, and forever. His Word cannot be broken. That's why His promises are described as exceedingly powerful, because they exceed anything we can compare them to!

THE PROMISE

GOD'S PROMISES ARE AVAILABLE

That leads me to the third reason His promises are exceedingly great: they're not only incalculable and infallible; they're available. No matter how powerful something is, it's worthless if it isn't available. Without the endless treasure of God's promises available to us, we have no assurance about anything: no hope, no security, no safety, no encouragement, and no comfort. But God has given us His Word. His promises provide an endless supply of grace for us every day.

Precious was an important word to Peter. He used it eight times in his two letters. But when Peter used the word to describe God's promises, he didn't mean it in a sentimental way, as in "Oh, how precious!" He didn't mean "sweet," as in adorable babies, kittens, and teddy bears. He was using the word in its truer meaning: something rare and infinitely valuable. Think precious stones and metals. Think gold.

Gold is a unique precious metal. God made it and caused it to be buried in the earth, and He values it so much He used it for paving material in New Jerusalem. Experts say it has special chemical properties. Sure, silver has more industrial uses than gold. And copper is more useful for its electrical conductivity. But gold has a special chemical composition that cannot be destroyed by water, time, or fire. It is malleable (it spreads without cracking); it is ductile (it stretches without breaking); it is rare (all the gold ever mined would only fill two Olympic swimming pools); and of course it is beautiful.⁸

Gold is a precious metal in the way that Peter used the word *precious*. Each and every promise God issues to you in His Word is precious in this sense, so valuable that just one of His promises makes you infinitely richer than one who owns all the gold in both those swimming pools!

You are the recipient of these precious promises. To fully embrace what that means, you must know what it is you have. As you read this book, you'll understand and recognize the life-changing gifts God has given you. Only when you understand these gifts, and how to use them,

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

can you comprehend how well-equipped and abundantly prepared for life you are. You have everything you need!

William Randolph Hearst was a wealthy twentieth-century newspaper publisher and an avid art collector. One day he read a description of some valuable pieces of art, and he decided he had to have them. Immediately Hearst commissioned his agent to find those pieces and add them to his collection, regardless of cost. You can imagine his surprise when he received a telegram from his art agent telling him the pieces had been located—they were in Hearst’s own warehouse where his collection of art was stored!⁹

If William Randolph Hearst had compared the valuable items he impulsively wanted with the precious items he already possessed, he’d have discovered that the very things he longed for were already his.

It’s that way with the promises of God. Whatever you need is already stored away in the vault of Scripture, and you can open it with the key of faith. All the promises of God are available to enrich you and to meet all your needs.

YOU HAVE GOD’S PURPOSE

Why does God provide you with His divine power through His promises? Because He wants to accomplish something in your life. He has a purpose in mind for you. Follow Peter’s logic: “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life . . . that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires” (2 Peter 1:3–4 NIV).

God has a purpose for you: to partake in His divine nature! That doesn’t mean you’re going to be God Himself. Only God is God, and living a godly life doesn’t turn us into little gods. What it means is that His divine power transmitted through His precious promises can make you

THE PROMISE

more *like* Him. He wants to infuse your personality with more of His joy, His patience, His wisdom, His influence, and His priorities.

At the same time, another process will occur in your life: you'll have a greater ability to say no to the corruption in the world that comes through evil desires.

Imagine you draw a graph of your life based on this remarkable passage. The graph has two trend lines. The first line, hopefully ascending, plots your growth in godliness. The second line, hopefully descending, shows the opposite; we'll call it spiritual immaturity.

The more you lean on the power and promises of God throughout your life, the more these lines diverge. The godly line goes up, showing your increasing spiritual maturity. When it does, the ungodly line has to go down.

Put simply, your goal is this: more like Jesus, less like the world.

Have you ever heard that married couples who live together long enough start to look alike? This isn't a myth. Scientists say the emotional interactions within a marriage, a couple's diet and environment, and their hobbies and exercise all can create similar complexions. Plus, partners tend to imitate each other's habits and body language. According to University of Michigan psychologist Robert Zajonc, the happier a couple is, the more likely they are to have increased physical similarity.¹⁰

It's the same in our relationship with God. When we spend time with God through Jesus Christ, drawing from His power and living by His promises, He fulfills His purpose in us bit by bit, making us more and more like our Savior. Through His grace, we become "conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. 8:29).

DOWNLOADING GOD'S POWER

God's power, God's promises, God's purpose—these are a legacy of truth for every believer. But how do you download this power into your life?

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

What practical steps can you take to personalize what you've read about in this chapter?

Here's a simple five-step strategy I've found helpful: analyze, personalize, memorize, verbalize, and organize.

ANALYZE

Take inventory. Where do you need the most help in your spiritual life? What do you struggle with? What are your most difficult challenges? Where are you frustrated and not doing what you intend to do spiritually? What's keeping you from enjoying a life of godliness and joy on your Christian journey?

All of us, no matter how long we've followed Christ, have what the Bible calls "besetting sins."¹¹ Even the great apostle Paul had his struggles. This is how he described it in his letter to the Romans: "For what I will to do, that I do not practice, but what I hate, that I do. . . . For the good that I will to do, I do not, but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. . . . O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me?" (7:15, 19, 24).

So, in this first step, take honest inventory of your life. This is between you and God, and it will help you immensely to write out what you discover. No one else needs to see it, but you'll achieve great clarity in this process if you review your recent days and make a list of things that most concern you about your life and godliness. Don't go crazy; just identify five things that bother you most.

PERSONALIZE

Now that you have your list, start finding the powerful promises of God's Word that deal with your challenges. Build a customized treasure of verses that speak to each of the issues you're facing. If you've never done anything like this before, get a good concordance and look up the key words on your list. You can use a written concordance or do this on the computer.

Many verses you locate won't speak directly to your need, but some

THE PROMISE

will. Write those down, and keep adding verses that speak to your heart. You may only find one or two verses the first week. But that's more than you had when you started! Remember, these precious promises convey God's power directly into your life.

As you read the Bible more deeply and more often, verses you've read before but never really noticed will jump out at you. These will be some of the most powerful messages you'll ever get from God. So stop! Thank God for His promises, and immediately write those verses in your journal.

Slowly but surely you'll build a power source that will serve you every day for the rest of your life. Guard this list with your life! Make copies regularly so the enemy can never take your great and precious promises away. They belong to you alone. There is no one like you, so there will never be another list of Scriptures like yours. You are the object of God's personal love, and His Word will never let you forget that.

And remember, the Bible book with the most promises is Isaiah, and the chapter with the most promises is Psalm 37.

MEMORIZE

There is tremendous value in memorizing Scripture because it's a transformational discipline—it changes us. David understood this value, which is why he wrote, “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Ps. 119:11).

I started memorizing the Bible as a child as part of the Bible Memory Association. All these years later, I still remember verses I memorized back then. There are many strategies for memorizing God's Word, but the one I like best is to create three-by-five-inch cards, writing the Scripture reference on one side and the words to the verse on the other. Periodically throughout the day, prompt yourself by reading one side of the card and trying to recall the content of the other side. If you don't want to carry your cards, consider downloading a Bible memory app to your phone.

The reasons for Bible memorization are many. For now, concentrate

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

on one: when you memorize verses from the Bible, God's promises never leave you. Most of the time when we need one of God's amazing promises, we're not in church or we don't have a Bible handy. But when you memorize the important verses on your list, you can recall the appropriate promise anywhere, at any time.

VERBALIZE

Now, to cement these promises in your heart and mind, speak them out loud. Share them with your spouse or a close friend. Find every opportunity you can to say these promises audibly. Say them aloud and address your problem with them.

Remember, it's one thing to tell God about your problems, but sometimes you need to tell your problems about God. In other words, you need to talk to yourself and let your problems know they're no match for the promises of God.

ORGANIZE

As you accumulate promises, you'll want to organize them. I suggest you find a small journal or notebook and give each page a title. (Hint: If you use a loose-leaf notebook, you can keep the pages in alphabetical order as you add new passages.) The title of each page is the problem or difficulty for which you have collected your promises. Write or type the problem in the upper right-hand corner of the paper and organize them alphabetically. You're building your own custom book of promises.

WHO WOULD GIVE ME A GIFT LIKE THAT?

At age two, Kaden Koebeke had kidney failure. By the time he reached sixth grade, his condition was seriously deteriorating.

Kaden had endured a kidney transplant when he was five. His

THE PROMISE

father donated that kidney, but complications required it to be removed days later. The boy had been on dialysis ever since, with a dialysis/plasmapheresis catheter implanted in his small chest. Doctors told his parents that because of his condition, he couldn't receive a kidney from a deceased donor. He needed a living kidney donor. Desperate, his family sought help through a Facebook page called Kaden's Kidney Search.

Meanwhile, Kaden's sixth-grade technology teacher, Will Wilkinson, was profoundly touched by his ailing student. Will quietly decided to find out if he was a match and, if he was, to give Kaden one of his kidneys. Will was a match, and he became Kaden's kidney donor.

It wasn't until Will came to visit after his own recovery that Kaden and his family learned who the donor was. Kaden's parents struggled to find words to express their gratitude to the man who literally gave their son a chance at a normal life.

"The Wilkinsons moved to the Atlanta area almost the same time as we did," Kaden's mother wrote. "We both chose the same school for our kids. Our sons are in the same class. We have been blessed to call them our friends. This all isn't coincidence.

"God had a hand in all of this. He places us where we need to be, and puts people in our lives that we need. Will, you are such a selfless person, our true hero . . . We love you, we appreciate you, and we just cannot thank you enough."¹²

Pause for a moment and put yourself in Kaden's place.

Is it hard for you to imagine someone loving you enough to do something like Will Wilkinson did? Probably. But it shouldn't be, because Someone already did. Someone already gave you everything you need for a second chance at the life God planned for you. He did it out of love and at great sacrifice to Himself.

So how will you spend the life that was given to you at great sacrifice? The choice is yours. You can live it in a godly way—or not. You see,

EVERYTHING YOU NEED

according to 2 Peter, you have everything you need to live in a way that will make your life-saving Donor proud.

I began this chapter by describing a woman who was ill-equipped for the journey she faced. As a disciple of Jesus, that need never be true of you. Instead, God Himself has equipped you. God Himself has stuffed your backpack to the brim with everything you will ever need not just to survive your journey but to thrive along the way!

Indeed, when the power of God is unleashed in your life, it enables you, as Habakkuk 3:19 says, “to tread on the heights” (NIV). As His power is transmitted to you through His very great and precious promises, you are increasingly transformed according to His purposes. You become more like Him and less like the world.

What power! What promises! What a purpose! I want to tell you with all my heart—you have a God who gives you everything you need because He Himself is everything you need.

*He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us
all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

—ROMANS 8:32