

Who likes change?

Mark Twain, author of famous books like Huckleberry Finn, often receives credit for saying, "The only person who likes change is a baby in a wet diaper." To which I add this observation, "Even the baby makes a lot of noise about the change." Change happens. You cannot avoid it, prevent it, dance around it or protect yourself from it. People watchers have observed that there are basically three reasons we choose to change.

1. Pain so great we are forced to change (most common)
2. Perspective, a new point of view or a new principle so compelling we can face change (less common)
3. Promises so wonderful we welcome change and activate faith (least common)

I can be very pessimistic

A couple of years ago I discovered I live in a tension between optimism and pessimism.

We all lean toward living from problem to problem.

"They always come in threes." What comes in threes? Why don't we expect good things to happen in threes? When was the last time we heard someone say, "You got a raise? Great! I hope I'm next. They always come in threes you know?"

Promises

2 Peter 1:1-4 NIV

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

God's Priceless Promises

- Belong to us along with the gift of our precious faith (v. 1). Jesus purchased these irreplaceable favors by becoming one of us, dying on the Cross and rising to reign on the throne of heaven forever.
- Bring us abundant peace (v. 2). This peace carries freedom from fears, disturbing passions and moral conflicts as well as everything we need for a healthy spirit and soul.
- Overflow with God's mighty power (v. 3). The power that created everything out of nothing and that raised Jesus from the grave to never die again works in us through God's promises when we trust him.
- Give us complete provision to live the lives God created us to live (v. 3). Our excuses and attempts at blaming others evaporate in the light of these words. God gives us everything we need to live as Jesus lived and as he taught us to live. We receive this life miraculously by getting to know Jesus personally and intimately.
- Raise us up to participate in God's nature (v. 4). These promises open the door for us to cooperate

with the Holy Spirit as he restores, renews and rebuilds the lives of people like us.

- Provide powerful protection from sin's corruption (v. 4). Turning our backs on God poisons, corrodes and eats away at our souls, our spirits. God's promises set us free to turn back to him and to enjoy the well-being only he can give.

Share

Sermon in a Sentence: Jesus can make your life a promise to promise promenade if you trek with him.

You need to develop a "Promise-to-Promise" Mindset.

You may think, "They always come in groups of three." You might expect to hear of three family or friends having problems – unemployment, illness, deaths or divorces. Perhaps you look for a pattern of problems in life. But you can look for a pattern of promises because Jesus guarantees and confirms ALL of God's pledges.

"Yes" in Christ

2 Corinthians 1:20 NIV

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

Living from Promise to Promise

How can you learn to take this trek with Jesus? What do you need to do?

- Start with God's nature and character. Do you believe God knows what is best for you and your loved ones? Do you trust in his love for you and your loved ones? Do you believe his power can do what is best for you and your loved ones?
- Seek the Promise-giver! Spend time reading the Bible and praying as many times a week as you can. Like eating physical food, daily Bible reading and prayer are the best way to the full, personal, precise, and correct knowledge of Jesus our King.
- Speak your heart and claim a promise for what you're facing. In what area or areas of your life do you need to activate promises from God right now? List your needs...then go to the Bible to find His promises that apply (a good topical index or concordance will help you).
- Search for a prayer partner. Jesus promised us that if we would agree together in prayer, our Heavenly Father will hear us and do the thing we ask for (see Matthew 18:18-20). Read that passage...what conditions do you see here for activating God's promises? Who can you ask to "agree" in prayer with you? Make it a point to meet God's conditions and pray with a prayer partner to claim God's promises soon!

We can live with hope-filled optimism

Jesus can make your life a promise to promise promenade if you trek with him. The choice is ours. We can be so convinced that we have all of God's love, wisdom and power on our side that we no longer fear the future.