

Name of Assembly: United Apostolic Church

Type of Service: Bible Study

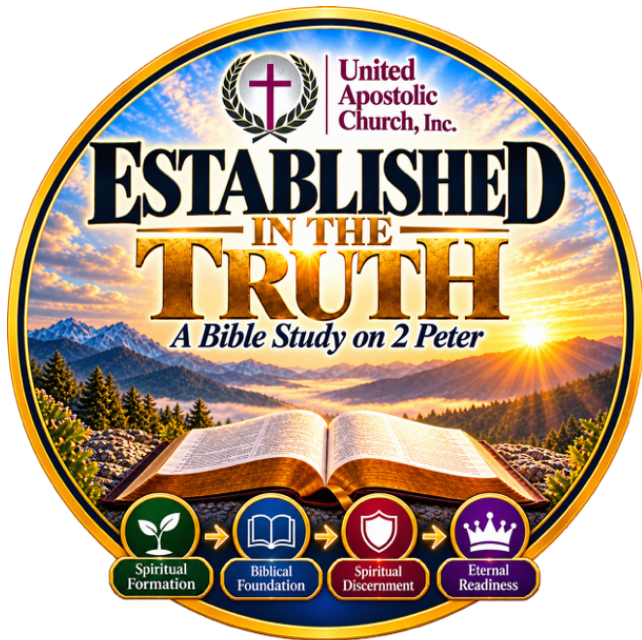
Date: October 13 and 20, 2026

Series Topic: “Established in the Truth”

Lesson 3: “God’s Promises and Christlike Living”

Text: 2 Peter 1:4

INTRODUCTION

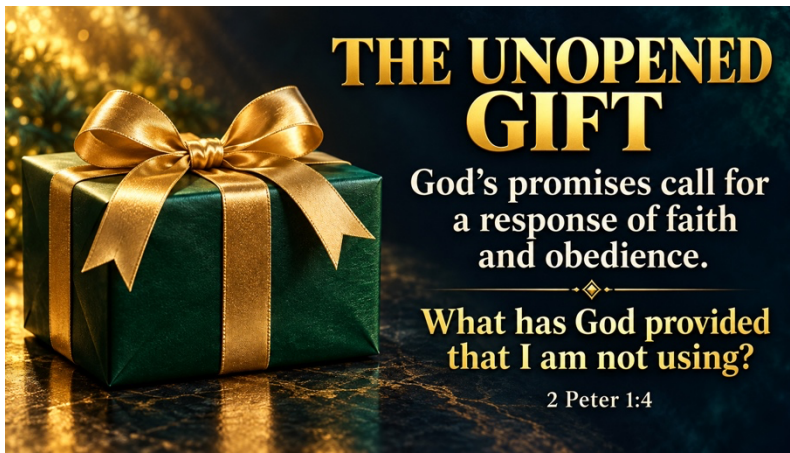


We continue our study of “**Established in the Truth.**” In our previous lesson, we learned that God, through His divine power, has provided everything we need for life and godliness. Today, we build upon that truth by examining how His great and precious promises enable us to grow spiritually and increasingly reflect His character.

To understand this, imagine receiving a valuable gift but never opening it. Although the gift belongs to you, you never experience the benefits

it was intended to provide. In much the same way, knowing God’s promises is not enough; we must respond to them through faith and obedience if we are to experience their transforming power in our lives.

This is the connection Peter makes in 2 Peter 1:4. **What God has graciously provided is intended to produce a change in who we are and how we live.** His promises are not merely words of encouragement or assurances of His blessings; they are part of His divine provision through which we become partakers of the divine nature and increasingly reflect the character of Jesus Christ.



Activity: Am I Leaving the Gift Unopened?

God promises wisdom to those who ask Him (James 1:5). Imagine someone who knows this promise but never asks God to fulfill this promise in their life.

Brief Discussion

1. What is this person leaving “unopened”?
2. What step of faith and obedience could this person take today?

Personal Reflection

What has God provided that I am not faithfully using?

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My Response

As of today, I will respond to God’s Word by:

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Key Truth: Knowing a _____ is only the beginning. God calls us to _____ Him and respond to His _____. (Promise; Trust; Word)

EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” 2 Peter 1:4.

Notice the three connected ideas from the verse:

1. **God’s promises:** “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises.”
2. **Participation in His divine nature:** “That by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”
3. **Escape from corruption:** “Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

Peter is describing the new life made possible through the divine power mentioned in verse 3.

1. **The promises are great.** Their greatness rests in the greatness of the God who gives them. His power and faithfulness make them dependable.
2. **The promises are precious.** They are valuable because they address our deepest need: a relationship with God. They give hope, assurance, direction, and strength to persevere.

Sharing in the divine nature means more than merely ceasing sinful behavior. We must also replace the attitudes and desires that drive our actions with Christlike character.

THE PROMISES CALL FOR A RESPONSE

God’s promises aren’t wishes we merely hope will come true; they rest on His faithfulness. Still, we must read each promise in its biblical context, noting who it was intended for and any conditions attached.

Peter does not name the promises individually in this verse. The following passages illustrate promises God has given that call for a faithful response.

Consider three promises: Acts 2:38-39 says that God promises the gift of the Holy Ghost to those who repent and are baptized in Jesus’ name. First John 1:9 promises forgiveness and cleansing when we confess our sins. James 1:5 says that anyone who lacks wisdom can ask God for it.

These promises call us to respond faithfully. We turn away from sin rather than make excuses for it. We admit when we’ve done wrong instead of hiding it. We seek God’s wisdom rather than relying solely on our own understanding. God’s provision does not mean we can ignore His instructions.

A promise of God’s presence does not mean we will never face trouble. A promise of forgiveness does not make sin harmless. God’s promises strengthen obedience; they do not excuse disobedience.

Brief Discussion:

- (1)How can someone quote a promise correctly yet use it incorrectly?
- (2)Explain the difference between trusting God and demanding that He fulfill our personal preferences.

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“PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE”

Peter’s words describe sharing in the life God gives. Through salvation and the work of the Holy Ghost, believers become more like Him. Christianity is not merely about learning facts about Jesus; it is about becoming more like Him.

Believers do not become God or attain His omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, sovereignty, or eternal self-existence. There is only one God, and we remain dependent on Him throughout the Christian life.

What becomes visible is His moral character: holiness, love, righteousness, mercy, patience, purity, and faithfulness. God works within us so that our choices, desires, and relationships increasingly express the character of Jesus Christ.

For example, someone who once reacted angrily to correction begins to listen humbly. Someone who held grudges learns to forgive. A believer who once concealed wrongdoing begins to speak truthfully and take responsibility. These changes show the practical direction of spiritual transformation.

SALVATION HAS TWO DIRECTIONS

In verse 4, Peter links escape from corruption with participation in the divine nature. We are freed from a destructive way of life and brought into one that reflects God’s character. These two movements belong together.

1. **Escape from corruption.** God calls us to leave sin, destructive desires, and practices that oppose His will. Repentance includes turning away from what dishonors Him. We cannot deliberately nourish the corruption from which He has delivered us.
2. **Participation in Christlike character.** God also forms what should take the place of the former life. Hatred gives way to love. Dishonesty gives way to truthfulness. Selfishness gives way to generosity. Impatience gives way to patience.

Consider a believer who stops speaking harshly but remains resentful within. A necessary outward change has begun, but deeper work remains. God desires a changed heart that produces gracious speech and a willingness to seek reconciliation.

Personal question: What have I stopped doing, and what Christlike quality is replacing it? Spiritual growth includes both separation from sin and the development of godly character.

Ephesians 4:22-32, “²² *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;* ²³ *And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;* ²⁴ *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* ²⁵ *Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.* ²⁶ *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:* ²⁷ *Neither give place to the devil.* ²⁸ *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* ²⁹ *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* ³⁰ *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.* ³¹ *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:* ³² *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”*

- ⇒ The word ‘conversation’ here means our former manner of life or conduct.
- ⇒ Feeling anger is not automatically sin. We must put away sinful anger, uncontrolled outbursts, and resentment, rather than allow anger to govern our conduct.
- ⇒ **Putting off the old life** means turning away from sinful attitudes and practices—lying, stealing, corrupt speech, bitterness, and malice.
- ⇒ **Putting on the new life** means developing Christlike character—truthfulness, honest work, generosity, speech that builds others up, kindness, and forgiveness.

In this lesson, the point is that God does more than help us stop sinful behavior; **He forms His character within us.** The change becomes evident in our speech, conduct, and relationships.

CORRUPTION IN THE WORLD THROUGH LUST

Peter identifies sinful desire as a source of corruption. In this context, lust is broader than sexual sin; it includes desires that resist God's will and seek satisfaction at His expense. The issue reaches beneath outward actions into what governs the heart.

A desire for recognition can become pride. A desire for possessions can become greed. A desire to be right can become hostility. A desire for comfort can become an excuse to avoid obedience. Ordinary desires must remain subject to Christ.

Temptation must not be confused with consent. Experiencing a temptation does not mean we have already chosen to sin. James 1:14-15 describes the danger of desire drawing us away and producing sin. We must recognize temptation and respond before we nurture it.

Ask: What am I seeking? Why do I want it? What am I willing to disobey in order to obtain it? These questions help expose desires that have begun to rule us.

Practical responses include prayer, honest repentance, obedience to Scripture, the removal of occasions of temptation, and the seeking of support from trustworthy spiritual leadership. **We must not continue feeding what we are asking God to help us overcome.**

ALLOWING GOD TO TRANSFORM OUR DESIRES

Lasting change takes more than hiding a behavior we want to stop. We bring the desire behind it to God and follow His Word in our choices. The Holy Ghost gives us strength to choose a new path.

1. **Recognize the desire.** Be honest about what is drawing your heart. Avoid language that excuses pride, resentment, greed, or impurity. We cannot address faithfully what we refuse to acknowledge.
2. **Receive the truth.** Read Scripture in context and allow it to correct your thinking. Ask what response would reflect Jesus rather than merely satisfy your feelings.

3. **Respond obediently.** Take a concrete step: apologize, refuse an improper conversation, change an unhealthy habit, or seek counsel. Prayer should be accompanied by obedience.
4. **Repeat the faithful response.** Continue drawing upon the resources God has supplied. Growth involves ongoing dependence, rather than a single moment of determination.

Case discussion: A believer repeatedly speaks angrily when corrected and later apologizes. What desire might be beneath the reaction? What would repentance and growth look like before the next conversation? Discuss responses without naming anyone.

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PERSONAL REFLECTION AND WEEKLY APPLICATION

1. Which promise of God do I need to trust and respond to more faithfully?

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2. What desire or habit is competing with God's will in my life?

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3. What quality of Jesus Christ should become more visible in that area?

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4. What practical step of faith and obedience will I take before our next class?

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KEY TRUTHS AND CLOSING EMPHASIS

1. God’s promises are dependable because He is faithful.
2. Being a partaker of the divine nature means sharing in the life God gives and increasingly reflecting His character.
3. Believers remain human and dependent upon God; they do not become deity.
4. Salvation includes escape from corruption and growth in Christlikeness.
5. Desires must come under the government of Jesus Christ.

The question is more than, “**What has God promised me?**” We must also ask, “**What kind of person is God forming through His promises?**” His gracious provision calls us into a transformed life.

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