

# THE SAVIOUR'S INVITATION

## And Other Evangelistic Sermons

by

Hyman Appelman

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### SERMON THIRTEEN

#### GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES

**“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 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” (II Peter 1:1-4).**

Consider with me the encouraging thought of the exceeding great and precious promises of God. There are no truer, and sweeter statements in the Bible than those found in the exceeding great and precious promises.

Some people have a strange conception of faith. Faith is the direct opposite of feeling. If you have faith you must not depend on feeling. If you have feeling you still need faith. Feeling changes. Faith does not. The Bible's greatest statement regarding faith is not **“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”** I can cite two which are better than that. At least they seem clearer to me. Here is the first: **“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”** The second is this: **“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”** The unalterable, unchangeable, eternal Word of God is the source, the substance, the sum of my faith.

If you were to ask me, “Are you saved?” I would answer at once, “Yes.” If you were to ask me, “How do you know you are saved?” I should not say, “Because I feel it.” Sometimes I do feel it and sometimes I do not. I know I am saved because God says so, because the Bible says so, because I have done what God told me to do in His Word, because I have done what God required me to do in His revelation, and I know God will do what He said He would do. His Word is unchangeable, and abideth the same forever. My faith is not based on anything in myself. It is based entirely on something altogether outside of myself. There is nothing in me, never was, and never will be, on which to build any sort of faith, even the slightest.

I have absolutely no hope in Hyman Appelman, no confidence, no trust in him. I tell you I do not have any more faith in Hyman Appelman than I have in the Devil. But I do have faith in Hyman Appelman's Jesus, in Hyman Appelman's Bible. The foundation for this statement, The exceeding great and precious promises, is found in God's Book, God's Word, God's honor.

What makes those promises so exceeding great and precious?

*First, there is their source.* They are promises made by God, not by man nor by some organization or group of men, but by God. I may make a promise to you and fully intend to keep it. Some hindrance may arise. I may become ill or die or lose my ability to perform the deed involved, and thus my honestly intended promise may be broken. It is no fault of mine. I had intended to fulfill it. But I am a man, and circumstances may compel me to break my word. Can you think of any conditions which make it impossible for God to keep His promises? I may make a promise to you, believing in you, in your truthfulness, in your probity. You may be a swindler trying to take advantage of me. I may discover this and find I cannot keep my promise to you. But God knows all about you. You cannot fool God. You cannot mislead God.

He makes us promises knowing in advance everything about us, our sins and shortcomings, all that may happen—and the moment we comply with the conditions in His offer, He will keep faith with us. God is behind His promises. His authority, His immortality, His unchangeableness, His invariableness, His majesty, His power, His honor—all are involved in His pledged word. These promises are exceeding great and precious because they come from almighty God who can perform them under any circumstance, under all conditions, because He knew these circumstances and conditions long before they appeared, long before He made those promises. Nothing can surprise him, or intimidate Him, or render Him impotent. Nothing can alter Him from the course He set out for Himself from before the beginning of time.

*God's promises are exceeding great and precious, in the second place, because of their scope, the area they cover.* They are great not only because of their source but because of their scope. What do you need? Food? Shelter? Clothing? A roof over your head? A job at which to earn your daily bread? God says to you, **“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?”** Paul said at the end of his life, **“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”** Paul put God to the test in every conceivable way.

What do you need? Salvation? Forgiveness of your sins? Adoption into the family of God? God says to you, **“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved . . . If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”** What do you need? You need wisdom. Oh, how you need wisdom in this day when all sorts of suggestions, all sorts of voices, all sorts of philosophies, all sorts of schemes beset you and cry from every page, from every platform, from every radio.

“You ought to learn how to drink properly. You ought to learn how to smoke properly. You ought to learn how to dance properly. If you wear the proper arch supports you will be President of the United States.” True, I exaggerate, but read current advertisements, listen to the vapors of the so-called modern philosophers. See if you are not lost in a maze of foolish speculations. God’s Word is clear: **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”** He will tell us which of the many voices to hear and heed. He will tell us in which of the many programs to engage for the glory of the Lord and for our own eternal welfare.

What do you need? You need assurance that the grave is not the end, that there is life to come. You need hope for the future, something to take away the sting of death and the terror of the grave, something to dispel the darkness, the mystery of eternity. Jesus pleads with you: **“I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”**

From the very first day that we discover ourselves, at some time during childhood, from the very first day we begin to feel our needs, to be burdened with our lives, to the last amen of a never ending eternity, the promises of God are a source of supply for all our needs, for everything we must have physically, mentally, morally, socially, economically, and especially spiritually. Our lives are provided for in the promises of God. Our death is anticipated in the promises of God. Eternity is provided for in the exceeding great and precious promises of God.

*God’s promises are exceeding great and precious not only because of their source, not only because of their scope, but because of their simplicity.* Suppose a man needed a loan of ten thousand dollars. He would have to go to the bank, approach this secretary, interview that vice-president, sign this note and that mortgage. Suppose he had to have something from the President of the United States. We would probably never be able to see him. But the King of kings, the Lord of lords, is not like that. All you have to do is to think of Him—and there He is. When you want Him He is there. You do not have to sign a mortgage, and offer your life as collateral. Draw near unto Him. Step out on His promises. Claim them. See how simple they are. **“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”**

Look longingly, believingly to Jesus, and He will save you. **“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”** A child can understand this verse. **“The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”** He that runs may read and believe and claim the Word. How mighty and how simple are these exceeding great and precious promises! **“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”** Whatever your problem, whatever your difficulty, whatever your need, bring it to God. You do not have to explain it. He understands. Ask Him for what you need. His love is more anxious to give than you are to receive.

You turn to me and say, “If these promises are so exceeding great and precious because of their source, because of their scope, because of their simplicity, why are Christians so poor, so feeble, so unhappy, so disturbed?”

I will tell you a story. There was an Irish woman who had a son named Jack. He drank. One day while under the influence of drink he was shanghaied aboard a ship going to Australia. After the ship docked he went into the interior. He discovered a gold mine and became very rich.

Jack loved his mother and wrote to her regularly, every two weeks. He told her how rich he was, about his wife, about his two children, his automobiles, his homes. The mother grew old and tired, but the son could not leave his business to see her. She finally became too feeble to work. The priest and the people of the parish decided that she must be sent to the poorhouse. The priest went to talk to her about it. They sat over their tea and small poor cakes, talking. The priest had befriended her for many years and knew she was a devout Catholic. This mission pained his heart. Finally he spoke.

“Daughter, I always wanted to ask you what became of your son. He left home. What happened to him? Do you ever hear from him?”

“Why, didn’t I ever tell you?” she asked.

“No,” he replied

“He went to Australia,” the woman related. “He is very rich now. He has a wife and two children.”

The priest asked, “How often do you hear from him?”

“Every two weeks, regularly.”

“But doesn’t he ever ask about your condition, what you are doing, how you are getting along, if you need any help?”

The woman shook her head. “No. He has never asked, and I never mentioned it. I did not want to worry him.”

“Hasn’t he ever sent you anything?”

“No, except for some small presents on my birthday and on the holidays.”

“I can’t understand it,” said the priest. “He loves you. He has written you every two weeks during all these years. Yet he has never sent you a thing.”

The woman replied, “No, except that in every letter there is a little greenish blue slip of paper.”

The Catholic priest was no fool. “What did you do with these slips of paper?” he queried, surmising what they were.

“They looked so pretty. I have pasted them up in my bedroom.”

They walked into the room. Pasted neatly from one side of the wall to the other, from the ceiling to the floor, were money orders covering thousands of dollars. That woman did not know what they were; so she plastered the wall with them. This woman was not nearly so foolish as those Christians who have the promises of God clearly stated in the Word and yet do not have enough faith to claim them.

You may live on the mighty bounties of God. You may live on the fat things of Canaan. Your life may overflow with the abundance and superabundance of God's good things. Claim the promises of God. Endorse them by faith. God's bank is always open. It does not close its doors at three p.m. and on Sundays and holidays.

Now, this minute, come to God. Acknowledge and accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. Read the promises of God in the Bible. Claim your full part and portion in them by faith. God will do the rest. He is not straitened. He is not bankrupt. There is no inflation with Him. You will not embarrass Him by your frequent and great demands. Claim the fullness of God's bounties in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**~ end of sermon 13 ~**

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