

**I have Value and Purpose**  
Series: God Keeps His Promises  
1 Peter 2:9  
September 11, 2022

Welcome once again to worship.

A pastor was in the middle of his sermon when he noticed a man had fallen asleep with his head on his wife's shoulder.

"Wake up your husband," the pastor snapped.

The wife smiled and replied, "You put him to sleep. You wake him up."

Today, we conclude our series "God Keeps His Promises." For the past several weeks, we have considered 8 of the promises of God: Forgiveness and Freedom, Assurance and Hope, a Calling and Giftedness, Strength and Rest. We have 2 more today.

I want to look at a passage of Scripture that I would normally use for another purpose, but when I came across it, I saw it in a different light. That's what the Holy Spirit often does. When we read the Bible, He will reveal some aspect of Scripture, then later show us something else we've never seen before. That's why the Bible is called the living Word. It continues to speak to us in new ways the timeless truth of the Lord.

I want us to consider 1 Peter 2:9 today, and I will be reading from the New Century Version:

*But you are a chosen people, royal priests, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession. You were chosen to tell about the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.<sup>1</sup>*

In this verse are two promises of God.

**The first, and of course our 9<sup>th</sup> is Value.**

God promises value.

One of the areas of our life that Satan attacks is our value, our worth, to loved ones, friends, other people, even those whom we yet do not know, and of course, to God. He wants to drag us down with various lies, such as "You're too ugly or too stupid or too fat or too skinny for anyone to love you." Or "You can never amount to anything." Or "You've sinned too much for God to ever love you or forgive you."

Satan also uses other people to tear you down. If you have been verbally or physically or sexually abused, you have been treated like trash, like a nobody, and you begin to feel that way. You feel completely and utterly worthless.

Does any of that sound like God? No, my friend. God has a completely different picture of you on His refrigerator. It is one of love, and it is of value. You mean so much to Him.

*But you are a chosen people, royal priests, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.<sup>2</sup>*

God chose you. Yes, you. He not only chose you, but He made you something special: a holy nation. Israel was God's first chosen people; now He has chosen you and me, Gentiles, as well. Thus, all the promises, all the love, all the hope of the Old Testament is yours and mine as well.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter 2:9a (NCV)

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter 2:9 (NCV)

Now, I do not want to confuse you here. This is not a “self-esteem” sermon like what you might hear from some preachers. I do not believe in secular, humanist self-esteem building. For it puts you and me at the center of the universe.

But that is not what the Bible says. Only when God is the center of our universe will our lives mean anything. When we give our lives to the Lord, He begins to fashion us into the likeness of Christ.

Listen to these lyrics from Gloria Gather:

*Something beautiful, something good*

*All my confusion He understood*

*All I had to offer Him was brokenness and strife*

*But he made something beautiful of my life*

When we give it all to God, God gives us all of Him. We are valued.

Ephesians 1:4 reads:

*Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.*<sup>3</sup>

God promises value.

**Finally, number 10 is this: God promises a Purpose.**

There was a woman who went on a short term mission trip to Kenya, helping the missionaries there. Before she left, she stopped at a remote village where she attended a medical clinic. As the native women outside the clinic began to sing together, she found herself deeply moved by their beautiful singing. The harmonies and rhythms seemed worshipful indeed.

She was so moved she began to cry. Since she wanted to capture the moment in her memories, she turned to her bi-lingual friend and queried, "Could you please translate the words to that absolutely beautiful song?"

Her friend stared at her and respectfully replied, "If you boil the water, you won't get dysentery."

Back to our 1 Peter 2:9 passage. It says:

*But you are a chosen people, royal priests, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession. You were chosen to tell about the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*<sup>4</sup>

We have a purpose folks. Sometimes, in the church, we forget what we are all about. We think it is about having pretty music or inspirational sermons. We think it is about programs and classes and bake sales. We even think it is about making a difference in the world through food pantries or clothing banks or missions.

Our purpose is to tell others about the God who called us out of the darkness of sin and selfishness and into the light of His love and purposes. We do those other things in order to tell others the Gospel. If we do them for any other reason, we've got it wrong.

Peter says you are a royal priest. A priest is someone who connects people to God. That's what you and I are to do: bring people to God.

Most if not all of us have heard of St. Patrick. You know, wears green and gets drunk every March 17. Ok, that's not the real story.

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<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 1:4 (NLT2)

<sup>4</sup> 1 Peter 2:9a (NCV)

As a young boy, Patrick lived a comfortable life near an English coastal city where his father was a deacon in their church. But at the age of 16, all that came to an end. Irish pirates attacked his village, abducting Patrick, and many of the household servants. After arriving in Ireland, Patrick was sold as a slave to a Druid tribal chieftain who forced Patrick to work with a herd of pigs.

In the midst of all that pig filth, God began to transform Patrick's heart. In his Confessions he wrote, "I was sixteen and knew not the true God, but in a strange land, the Lord opened my unbelieving eyes, and I was converted." Patrick became convinced that the kidnapping and homesickness were actually opportunities to know Christ better. "Anything that happens to me," he wrote, "whether pleasant or distasteful, I ought to accept with [serenity] giving thanks to God ... who never disappoints."

After serving as a slave for six years, Patrick escaped, boarded a boat, and found his way back home. Finally, he was back on British soil, warmly embraced by his family and his community. In his own mind, Patrick was finished with Ireland for good. Patrick was adamant: "It is not in my nature to show divine mercy toward the very ones who once enslaved me."

But once again, God changed Patrick's heart. Partially through a dramatic dream, Patrick knew that God had called him to return to Ireland – not as a slave, but as a preacher of the Gospel. His family and friends tried to stop him, telling him, "Why does this fellow waste himself among dangerous enemies who don't even know God?"

Despite their objections, Patrick used his own money to purchase a boat and sail back to Ireland in A.D. 432. Patrick then spent the rest of his life preaching the Gospel in Ireland, seeing many people come to Christ, including his former master. He also passionately defended the human rights of slaves, writing a letter of scathing protest to the king after his soldiers had raided a village, slaughtered the men and sold the women into slavery.

Patrick never got over what God had done for Him. In his Confessions, he wrote, "I was a dumb stone lying squashed in the mud; the Mighty and Merciful God came, dug me out and set me on top of the wall. Therefore, I praise Him and ought to render Him something for his wonderful benefits to me both now and in eternity."<sup>5</sup>

Like Patrick, we too were dumb stones lying squashed in the mud, but our Mighty and Merciful God came, dug us out, and put us into His magnificent, holy temple so that together we could bring Him glory the rest of our lives.

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<sup>5</sup> John W. Cowart, *People Whose Faith Got Them into Trouble*. InterVarsity Press, 1990, pp. 31-42