

Theme: Faith in Exile – I Peter 1:17-19

Title: Called To/By Faith – II Peter 1:3-4

Aim: God has already given us all we need to live as Christian exiles.

Intro: Have you ever had someone say to you, “I can’t be a Christian; it’s just too hard; I can’t live up to it”? Have you ever thought that way yourself? I wonder if the exiles to whom Peter wrote thought that way at times. “I can’t do it; it’s too hard. Persecution makes it impossible. God demands too much.” I say this not to pat myself on the back but to make a point by way of illustration: Sometimes Ivy & I go shopping, perhaps for Mother’s Day or a birthday. Often she reminds me, “Grampy, I don’t have any money.” “Don’t worry.” We buy a gift for her to give & she pays for it w/money I give her. Every grandparent does that, don’t they? Our grandchildren have means by virtue of being our grandchildren. It’s the same way w/living the Christian life, except God doesn’t have any grandchildren. But His children have means by virtue of being His children. Theme: Faith in exile. We who are in Christ are exiles in a world not our own, but we are not on our own. God is our Father & Jesus is our Lord/Savior. We can live the Christian life (tho we won’t do it perfectly in this life/world) because God has given us the means to do so. II Peter 1:3-4 [READ]. One effective way to study Scripture (I think) is to read a complete passage/book & then to go back to break it down phrase by phrase or even word by word. That’s how I want to walk thru this passage this morning. So let’s consider what Peter wrote to those exiles in Asia Minor & God has passed on to us. Remember that Peter identified himself as Simon Peter, one who hearkened to the call of Jesus to “come follow Me.” He came to understand that Jesus was the Messiah of God & he became a bondservant & apostle of Jesus Christ. He wrote to those whose faith was of “equal standing” w/his & all the apostles, because it was based on the work & righteousness of Christ. He prayed that God’s grace &

peace would be multiplied to them/us “in the knowledge of God & of Jesus our Lord.” **His divine power** – Obviously Peter is referring to God. His use of the word divine emphasizes God’s transcendence/ uniqueness. There is none like Him. No other so-called God is Father, Son & Holy Spirit, 3 in 1. Power is “strength, ability – inherent power residing in God, not given to Him, by virtue of His nature. God’s divine power is unlimited as God is unlimited, it is power greater than any other power, which cannot compare. It is power exerted, not held back. God has exercised His power toward us – the same power that poured out His wrath on Christ at the cross & raised Him from the dead – God has exercised His power toward us in making us new in Christ. This is key knowledge in our quest to live the Christian life. **Has granted to us** – The unlimited God in His unlimited power has given to us who are in Christ, has bestowed upon us, His children, whoever is given the gift of faith, whoever believes & by faith receives Christ as Savior/Lord. God has granted to us **All things that pertain to life & godliness** – All things means all things, nothing left out or held back – the whole of it. All things pertaining to, w/regard to life – we have new life in Christ, the ability to live new, because He lives in us. Jesus said (John 10:10), “***I came that they (followers) may have life & have it abundantly***” (to the full). We have the means of living new life in Christ, abundant life in Christ. All things that pertain to godliness - piety towards God – a transformed life. Life we need; godliness He requires, but He supplies it also. Some of the “all things pertaining to life & godliness” are perfect redemption thru Christ, the righteousness of Christ credited to us (justification), the gift of the Holy Spirit w/in us, the Word of God, welcome into His presence, the communion offered in prayer, the gift of bro/sis in Christ, so that we do not walk alone. We gain these things pertaining to life & godliness **Through the knowledge of Him** – this is the 2nd of 17 times Peter used the word knowledge – not just

awareness, not just intellectual compiling of facts, but precise & correct knowledge, knowing by experience – true knowledge of God which in itself has a transforming effect on the “knower.” A.R. Fausset wrote, “Knowledge of God...is the 1st step to life,” echoing what Jesus said in John 17:3 – ***“This is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, & Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”*** J. Vernon McGee added, “The full knowledge of God & of Jesus...is the foundation on which Christian character is built.” The more precisely, correctly we know God the more the Christian life, the beauty of Jesus, the fruit of the Spirit will flow thru us, emanate from us. David Gudzik wrote, “We need to come to the same place Paul did: ‘that I may know Him’ (Phil.3:10).” Through the knowledge of Him **Who called us to His own glory & excellence** – Peter, whose given name Simon means hearkening, heard & hearkened to the call of Jesus on his life. God has likewise called us. Now, a general call from God has gone out into all the world – ***“...He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed...”*** (Acts 17:30-31). ***“Kiss the Son, lest He be angry & you perish in the way...”*** (Psalm 2:12). But there is also a specific call given to the elect, which the Spirit by regeneration enables us to hear & heed. That word “to” (to His own glory & excellence) can also be translated “by,” or even “through.” If it means by or through, then Peter is saying that by means of God’s glory – His majesty, absolute perfect inward or personal excellency; & His excellence – virtue, moral goodness – God has called us to Himself. That’s certainly true. But if it should be translated “to” then it means that God has called us into communion w/Him in His glory & excellence. I think that is born out in Jesus’ high-priestly prayer in **John 17:21-22** – ***“...that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, & I In You, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. The glory***

that You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one.” We are called to share in His glory, to share in His excellence! That will again be born out by what Peter wrote in vs4. **By which** (by His glory/excellence) **He has granted to us His precious & very great promises** – All God’s promises are precious – of great value, & very great – magnificent. Here, tho, I believe it’s referring to His promises about salvation & sanctification – God’s working in us to make us like Christ, enabling us to live out the Christian life. Rom.10:13 – *“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Phil.1:6 – *“He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”* Phil.2:13 – *“For it is God who works in you, both to will & to work for His good pleasure.”* God will keep His promises, of that we can be sure! Psalm 138:2 tells us that God honors His word even above His name! **So that through them (promises) you may become partakers of the divine nature** – that word “partakers” means sharers in, being brought into fellowship w/. Partakers of the divine nature? A.R. Fausset wrote that this means “not God’s essence” – we don’t become God – “but His holiness, including His glory & virtue. Sanctification is the imparting to us of God Himself by the Holy Spirit in the soul.” We have the promise in Romans 8:29 that God will fulfill His intent: *“For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...”* And we are made one w/Christ, members of His body. Again, Fausset wrote, “The divine power enables us to be partakers of the divine nature.” And Gudzik wrote, “How deeply God loves us & wants to share His life – indeed even the divine nature – w/His people.” Our destiny is to become like Jesus & God is working toward that while we’re here in exile. **Having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire** – Escaped is to have fled from or been freed from. Corruption is destruction, perishing or moral decay. We have escaped from corruption thru our

faith in Christ, brought from death to life in Him. We escape moral decay by following Jesus, giving way to His life w/in, being led by the Holy Spirit & growing into the likeness of Christ. The sinful desires of the flesh certainly pulled against those exiles in Asia Minor, & they pull against us. Knowing Jesus & growing in the knowledge of Him will deliver us day by day. No matter what your identity & no matter your depth of sin, it's what you do w/Jesus that will determine your eternal destiny (humanly speaking). While all sin falls short of the glory of God, it is the sin of rejecting Jesus that condemns. But be sure: confession of Jesus includes (or it's just empty words) surrender to His Lordship, which must bring transformation, however slow that is. Vs 5-7 will guide us in living as partakers of the divine nature. It certainly will be countercultural & it certainly will take faith – faith in exile.