

## Participating in the Divine Nature

When we participate in something we join others in that event working alongside them towards a common purpose and goal. In order to participate in an event we need to have the necessary skills e.g. if we participate in a cricket match we need to have cricketing skills, if we participate in a drama or play we need to have acting skills. In order to participate in a family function we ought to be part of the family or share the values of the family. So what does it mean that we can participate in the divine nature?

2 Peter 1: 3 – 11

### 1) Participating in the Divine Nature through God's Divine Power

- God called us by His own glory and goodness
  - We were called by God's glory and goodness
  - The Greek work "dia" can also mean "to" thus saying that we are called to glory and goodness – or virtue also meaning excellence.
  - Either way if God's nature is glory and goodness and we are participating in that nature then we will also be called to it and not only by it.
- Our nature is one that seeks self glory and does not seek a life of virtue
  - By God's divine power we have been given everything we need for life and godliness
  - So often we look at other people and wonder how they can be so saintly or so effective in their life and witness for Jesus and think that we can never be like that
  - God **has given us everything** we need for life and godliness
  - He has given – we don't have to still ask God for what we need to live a godly life. We need to take hold of what He has given us.
  - Us – Every one of us has received everything we need for life and godliness. God hasn't separated some to receive everything and left other without.
  - Everything – Whatever we need has been given. We need to believe it and take hold of it.
  - When repairing a vehicle we might have all the parts but may be short of a fuse that costs R1. It doesn't matter how sophisticated and expensive the parts are that we have if we are short that vital fuse the engine wont start.
  - We aren't missing anything
- God has also given us His very great and precious promises
  - Some promises:
    - If we believe in Jesus we will have eternal life
    - If we confess our sins we will be forgiven
    - When we accept Jesus we will be given the right to be called children of God
    - We have passed from life to death through Jesus
- We participate in the divine nature
  - The corruption in the world is caused by evil desires – or lust
  - We all have a part to play in that corruption when we live according to our sinful nature.
  - Our lusts after power, wealth, fame, position, etc feed the corrupt world system.
  - It isn't any good blaming others for our corrupt world if we live according our sinful nature – even as believers – because then we are just as to blame as anyone else
  - But we have received the Holy Spirit – we can participate in the divine nature
  - It isn't automatic when we believe and receive the Holy Spirit – we need to yield ourselves to the divine nature that we have received and participate in it

by resisting the sinful nature and choosing to do what is godly rather than what is corrupt

- The divine power within us – given at our rebirth – gives us the ability to make the right choices
- Even though we are saved by grace and not by our own good works we need to make an effort to do what is right before God
  - Make every effort to add to your faith ... (v.5)
  - These are some characteristics of the divine nature (vs. 5 – 7)

## 2) Being effective and productive

- Participating in the divine nature and bearing the qualities of that nature will cause us to be effective and productive
  - Peter has written it in the negative – “will keep you from being ineffective and barren” in your knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ
  - The KJV puts it this way: “ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful”
  - Barren here can also mean inactive, that is, *unemployed*; (by implication) *lazy, useless*: - barren, idle, slow.
- We, thus, ought to be having an effective, dynamic and fruitful relationship with Jesus
  - We constantly see clearly that we live by His grace and that we were doomed to destruction until He intervened in our lives and gave us life along with everything we need to live a life that pleases Him
  - When our lives are barren of the fruit of the Spirit – the fruit of the divine nature the we live in a blindness to God’s glory
  - The Greek word for blindness here means “opaque” as if smoke. We can see but not clearly.
  - Our understanding of Jesus – who He is and what he has done for us is no longer clear.
  - The other word mentioned means “to blink” or “to shut the eyes” to not to see far off.
  - When we don’t live with the qualities of the divine nature it becomes very easy for us to shut our eyes to evil around us. To look the other way and not be bothered with what is going on in our world because the same things are in our hearts.
  - We don’t see afar off – we start living as a people with no purpose – no vision – no hope.
- Participating in the divine nature keeps us from this and causes us to see clearly
  - See the sin around us and want to do something about it – want to save others from it
  - Be people of vision for the kingdom wanting to fulfil God’s desire to see the kingdom come and His will be done on earth as in heaven.

## 3) Making our calling and election sure

- Because of all the temptations in the world and the struggle of the sinful and divine natures within us we need to be eager to make our calling and election sure.
- We are sure of it when the outworking of grace is revealed in the fruit of our lives
  - If someone says that they are saved but continue in sinfulness and do not demonstrate the fruit of the divine nature then his salvation is not sure – it is brought into question.
- The promises of God here is:
  - If we do these thing we will never fall
  - We will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ