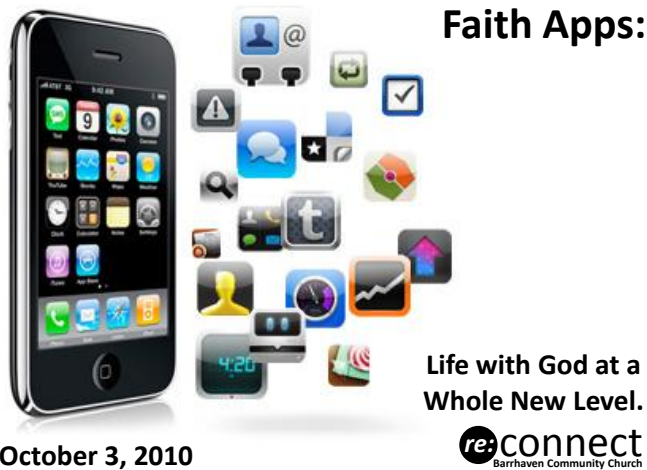


Faith Apps: Life with God at a Whole New Level.

Reconnect – October 3, 2010



October 3, 2010

Text: II Peter 1:3-4, Hebrews 10:22-25

Key Thought: To live an incredible life connected to God, we must move closer to Him.

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvellous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. II Peter 1:3-4, NLT

Pre-Intro: Apps Video

Intro: The most useless apps



- When Apple released the iPhone 3G back in 2008, it made a way for people to develop their own programs for use on it – they could sell them to anyone who wanted to buy, through Apple of course
- This led to the rise of what are called “apps” – applications for your Apple device (though they now have them for any smartphone – Blackberry, Android, whatever) to help you do whatever it is you want to do with your phone
- Apps like Bubble Wrap – Hold the Dot – Light Sabre – Tickle Me – all of them are timewasters – no real value even as timewasters go
- And then there was the infamous I Am Rich App – priced at \$999.99 when the App Store first opened

- We lead such hectic, complicated lives – or such mundane ones – that we need “apps” – add-ons to our technology – to bring it more meaning, or even any meaning at all
- We truly are lost in the machine – and people throw money, a little at a time, at these apps, trying to find one that will do exactly what they need

Christian life like that? A bit lost?



- Sometimes a life that follows Jesus – a Christian life – can become a bit like that – majoring in the minors, getting diverted, not getting the benefit from the real thing
- Next week we’re going to do a Biography, a look at how the Bible describes Peter – one of Jesus’ closest followers during his time on earth, someone known for going big: big heart, big mouth, and big mistakes
- At the end of his life, he’s writing to encourage as many Christians as he can, from his own experience – and we pick up his letter called II Peter very near the beginning:

Read Text: II Peter 1:3-4

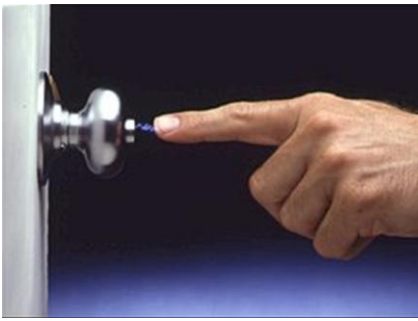
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II Peter 1:3-4, NLT



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- **Q: A godly life – what does that look like?**
- Empowered – customer service word – ZAPP by Byham ([The Lightning of Empowerment](#)) (KFC Peterborough) – what you need to get it done
- Like static electricity – the exchange of energy, through contact with Him
- Therefore, from God’s side, He’s given us what we need, everything we need, to live the life He wants for us
- Problem – most of us, sadly, are either not getting it, or not doing it

We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvellous glory and excellence.



- Simply being His is enough – when did YOU come to know him – not just in a head sense, but a relational, connected sense?
- And He does the calling – we don’t actually go out and find Him without Him calling first – otherwise, we lack in ourselves the desire to look, let alone find – it’s not really hide and seek, unless you’re playing with a three year old
- But do we know Him?

God only knows

Charles Lewis, National Post · Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2010

The United States is considered one of the most religious nations on Earth. But gaps in Americans' knowledge of religion are astounding. The Washington-based Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, a secular group, released its U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey yesterday. It shows a fundamental lack of knowledge of the history, core teachings and leading figures of major religions. More surprising still, atheists and agnostics did better than evangelical Protestants, mainline Protestants and Roman Catholics.

IS THE POPE CATHOLIC? The first clue the Dalai Lama is a Buddhist is that he always appears in Buddhist robes. Like the Pope, he is never seen in street clothes. But clearly style is not everything. Only 47% of Americans could identify the Dalai Lama as a Buddhist. "It shocked the heck out of me," said Professor Charles Prebish of Utah State University. "If there is anyone in the world who is a spokesman for Buddhism, it's him."

SO THAT'S WHY THEY CALL IT LUTHERANISM German monk Martin Luther did what few people in the Middle Ages dared to do: In 1517 he took on the enormous power of the Roman Catholic Church and shattered it. He taught that the Bible, not the Pope or the Vatican, was the sole authority of the Church. Because of Luther, Christians began reading the Bible for themselves. He is to Protestantism what Buddha is to Buddhism and even what Jesus is to Christianity. There is even a Protestant denomination called Lutheranism, another indication of his importance. But clearly his brand is slipping: 53% of people who said they were Protestants could not identify Martin Luther as their spiritual father.

MERE BREAD AND WINE? The Roman Catholic Church's most fundamental teaching is that the bread and wine used during communion are transformed into the body and blood of Jesus. This belief is what separates Catholics from Protestants and is a core sacrament of the Catholic Church. Yet, 45% of Catholics believe the bread and wine are mere symbols. That lack of knowledge is akin to owning a car and not knowing what the steering wheel is for. Father Len Altilia, a Jesuit priest in Toronto, said the real presence of Jesus is the "source and summit" of Church teaching and what brings Catholics close to God. But Father Tom Rosica, also of Toronto, was not surprised: "It is an indication of terrible education and confusion among our people."

FRIDAY NIGHT IS THE BIG NIGHT Americans are strong supporters of Israel but their knowledge of Jewish customs appears to be so-so. Forty-five per cent knew the Jewish Sabbath begins on Friday night, but 30% said Saturday and 7% said Sunday. Only 8% knew about Maimonides, the great Jewish scholar of the 12th century.

Maimonides was the first person to write a systematic code of all Jewish law and produced one of the premier philosophical statements about Judaism.

IT'S A BLESSING THERE ARE NOT FIVE There are only four Gospels, the backbone of the Bible. To understand Jesus, to understand Christianity, these four must be read. It is the user manual of the Christian faith. And the names are not difficult to pronounce: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In almost every church around the world, every Sunday, there is usually a reading from one of the four. Regardless of the frequency of usage, only 45% of respondents could identify all four. "It doesn't shock me," said Joseph Sinasac, publishing director of Novalis Publishing, which specializes in books on Catholicism. "For adult Catholics [for example] their religious education ended in high school."

MOTHER TERESA WAS DEFINITELY A CATHOLIC

The survey was not all darkness: 82% knew Mother Teresa was a Catholic, 71% knew Jesus was born in Bethlehem, 85% are aware an atheist does not believe in God, 72% identified Moses as the man who led the Jews out of Egypt, 68% knew that Islam was the dominant religion of Pakistan and 51% identified Joseph Smith as the founder of Mormonism. However, there is still probably a long way to go: In 2008, the book Religious Literacy found most Americans could not name the first book of the Bible (Genesis), only a third knew that Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, and a significant number thought Sodom and Gomorrah were a husband and wife team, instead of Biblical towns of great debauchery. clewis@nationalpost.com

And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises.

Broken promises don't
upset me. I just think,
"Why did they
believe me?"

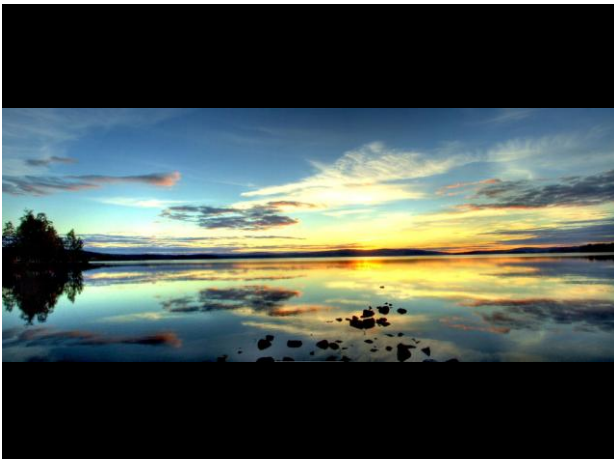
~ Jack Handy

- **Q:** What do you think of when you hear the word "promises"?
- Ill. Election mania – municipal elections all over



- Every politician makes promises, but do any ever keep them? Broken promises... promises
- **Q: What are the promises that God has given? How has He kept them in your life?**

These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature



Q: Divine nature – what’s that? Perfection

- Perfect love
- Perfect truth
- Perfect justice
- Perfect relationship (Trinity)
- Perfect peace/joy/hope
- Perfect healing
- Perfect provision
- Perfect community

(and) These are the promises that enable you to escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires.

- **“caused by human desires”**
- Buddhism sees the way to enlightenment, Nirvana, as the elimination of desire
- But Christianity says that God created desire – and He wants to redeem our desires, so that we can
- once again desire the right things – it’s not about the removal of desire, but to point it towards good desires

Application – how do we “download” (tap into these promises)? (Q)

- by faith – trust – believing even in the face of discouragement or evidence to the contrary
 - “believing our beliefs and doubting our doubts”
- getting encouragement from others on it
- Spending time with God – praying, reading, thinking, pondering, reflecting
- remembering what God has done for us in the past
- Stepping out “in faith” – where we need God to work through us or we fall/fail – taking a step even with a risk of failure
- Giving our desires over to him – “abiding in Him”

Key Thought:

To live an incredible life connected to God, we must move closer to Him.

Let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Hebrews 10:22-25, NLT

TAKE IT HOME:

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we must move closer to Him.**

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Hebrews 10:22-25, NLT

Conclusion: “Standing on the promises”

- Sunday mornings are good – but it’s like using an expensive smartphone once a week: you won’t get near the benefit out of it, and you’re paying way too much
- Getting closer to God involves giving all of yourself – emotions, mind, and what you do – how you spend your time, your thoughts, your habits
- And in return you will not only discover His promises, but be able to “hold Him to them” too
- The old-timers called it “standing on the promises” – “taking God at His Word” – but it’s not just for old-timers, and it doesn’t matter what you call it, as long as you DO it



Response: In Christ Alone (band)