
Into Thy Word Bible Study in 2 Peter

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2 Peter 1: 1-4: "His Divine Power is Given!"

General idea: Peter sends his greetings and blessings with solemn humbleness and intimacy to the people in the faith. He writes his second letter to challenge them to truthful and decent thinking and sends his sincere compliments to those whose faith is real, impacting, and growing. That faith is precious and genuine because it is given to us. We are to take what we are given and then add more to it. We obtain faith then add more faith to it. As a Christian, we have faith to begin with; we are then called to multiply it. Just like the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30), we are expected to invest and develop further what is given to us, not for personal gain, but rather to glorify Christ and bring honor and growth to His Church. The key to faith's multiplication is answered here—our knowledge of Christ. The more we know and then subsequently apply to our lives, the more we grow; this is reciprocal. Peter also sends his blessings so that we can take what is given and make of it ever so much more. Cultivated faith in Him produces immeasurable divine blessings!

Christ has given to us all we need in order to grow. We have His Spirit, His Word, His Fruit, and our faith community. This does not even include the countless resources we have in our modern age. He has called us and empowered us, so what more could we expect? The clincher is that we have the responsibility to make it happen. Our faith is in our hands. He gives us the water, the fertilizer, the ground, the air, the "SON," and the seed. He even plants it! All we have to do is cultivate what He has given. What stands in the way of the cultivation of our faith? Usually, it is not recognizing and taking to heart His promises, which leaves us unsure of what we can do.

Vs. 1-2: Christ has made us right with God. So, how do we live that faith? We can only begin to fathom all the precious privileges and wondrous blessings given to us by Christ. We have the responsibility to act upon them, and for the growth of our faith, character, and maturity.

- *Simon Peter*, the dedicated true servant. This is *Simon* (Acts 15:14), whom Jesus changed to *Cephas*, which means, "Rock" (Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 1:12). (See background material for more information.) He was one of Jesus' first disciples and was a principal leader in the early church (Matt. 15:15; 18:21; Mark 1:26-37; 8:29; 9:5-6; Luke 12:41; John 6:68; Acts 10:18; 15:14; 1 Peter 1:1). Peter was given the special call to be the foundation of the church and to feed the sheep (Mark 1:16-18; 5:37; 9:2; 14:33; John 21:15-19).
- *Servant* means a slave. Here, it refers to the fact that as a committed follower of Christ, I attest that I belong entirely to Christ. He purchased, restored, and

renewed me and He empowers me (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19)! Thus, I will trust and obey Him and follow His precepts!

- *Apostle*, the word (*Apostolos*), means *emissary*, or *sent one*, as in Jesus' personally commissioned representatives (Matt. 10:40; 15:24; Mark 6:7-13; 30; 9:37; Luke 9:1-6; 48; John 4:34; 5:24, 30, 36-38; 6:38; 1 Cor. 1:1; 9: 1-2; 2 Cor. 8:23; Gal. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Heb. 3:1). An Apostle had to have been an eyewitness of the resurrection (Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:8); in addition, they governed the early church (1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Thess. 2:13; 4:8, 15; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14; 2 Pet. 3:15-16). In 2 Corinthians, the words, *representatives/messengers*, are also used for *apostle* in a broader sense (2 Cor. 1:1; 8:23; Phil. 2:25). This title does not apply today; it is reserved only for the original twelve plus Paul. Today, all Christians are emissaries (2 Cor. 5:20). This role is filled in our day by Elders (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11, 28; Eph. 4:11)! Thus, the original Apostles started the church and the Elders today continue to run the church. If someone claims to be an apostle today, they either do not understand the term or are exceptionally full of pride and thus are not of God.
- *Righteousness* here refers to God being Righteous, thus He is ethical and fair in His dealings with us. Also, in Peter, the word is used to refer to people who are *righteous* meaning *virtuous* and of *good character* (1 Pet. 2:24; 4:18; 2 Pet. 2:5, 21; 3:13). Faith is impartial in its acceptance; it sees no race, creed, culture, time, place, or person, for we are purely justified by His will and purpose, vicariously placed upon us (Rom. 3:22-23; 4:6).
- *God and Savior Jesus Christ*. This is a strong testament for the divinity of Jesus as fully God and our Savior. This would have been a great offence to both legalistic Jews and pluralistic Greeks as His Name is today (Matt. 1:23; 28:19; Luke 1:35; 5:20-21; John 1:1, 3, 10, 14, 18; 5:18; Rom. 9:5; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 13:4,14; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15-20; 2:9; Tit. 2:13; Heb. 1:3, 8; 2 Pet. 1:1; Rev. 1:13-18; 22:13).
- *A faith as precious, Received a faith, a faith of equal standing* all refer to real faith as subjective to each person's experience, and is to be true and valuable. Each person grows at a different rate and depth. It also refers to the body of believers (as in Church) who share in a common belief and practice; there are no different castes or classes for those in Christ! Peter will later combat various false doctrines. He is setting up the theme that there is one faith through Christ, and all are on an equal playing field before Christ. There may be varying levels of growth and maturity, but all are equally accepted (John 20:29; Jude 3; 1 John 3:1-3).
- *Grace and peace* is a greeting and a blessing, pronouncing God's special favor (Rom 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:2).
- *Abundance/multiplied*. We are called to stretch and grow beyond what we

think we can do! Peter offers his encouragement for all those who are in Christ to grow in Christ!

- *Knowledge* means the fundamental saving knowledge we need in order to know whom Christ is before He can be our Savior (Matt. 11:27). This refers to what is true and real and that God can only be known through Christ. It denounces what is esoteric, manipulating, or counterfeit. Peter uses this word as a baseline of truth to attack false doctrine (John 1:18; 2 Pet. 1:2-3, 8; 2:20).

Being a servant of Christ means we surrender all of what we are so He becomes more and we become less (John 3:30; Gal. 2:20-21). We do this because what we gain is so much more; it is peace, serenity, confidence, hope, and, especially, His Fruit that impact us as well as those around us. Peter, through a slow and arduous process, found this to be true. He went from being the arrogant, headstrong, and reckless fisherman to calling himself a slave—a remarkable picture of Christ's imputing and impacting work that we can also have.

Vs. 3-4: We are called to partake of His divine nature. He gives us the power to do so, even to overcome temptations and evil. If we do not sidestep corruption and evil, we will become consumed with all that takes us away from Christ and His call to develop and mature our faith! Goodness cannot work when we are distracted away from Him. If we are not living the godly life, but rather are defending our positions from our pride, how can we lead others to Him?

- *His divine power.* The knowledge of Christ increases our faith and power! This is also to counter Gnostic philosophy that states the soul and body are separate and we can do as we wish with our bodies as long as our hearts remain pure. Our hope is not in what we do; it is in what Christ has done for us!
- *Given everything we need/granted to us.* We have no excuse not to grow in Him. All that is important and eternal has already been given to us. What is important is what grows our faith and our spiritual formation—the Holy Spirit, God's Word, other believers who are mature, and most important, Christ's work for us!
- *Godliness* is a synopsis of character that shows our attitude, moral fiber, disposition, and how we treat one another, either good or bad. We are called to virtue; this refers to being pious and living a good, reverent life toward God and others because of what Christ has done in us. This is a response from our worship of Christ with an authentic desire to know Him in a greater way. It creates our desire to be pious, which means to rearrange our priorities, mindsets, and character to line up with God's character and be able to see the importance of virtue, therefore becoming equipped to use it to value

others (Psalm 15; Micah 6:8; Matt. 7:12; Luke 6:31; Eph. 5:1; Col. 3:15-17; 1 Tim. 3:16; 4:8; 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:5; 2 Pet. 1:3, 6; 3 John 11; Rev 14:6).

- *Precious promises/has granted to us.* He gives us precious promises. Knowing the promises of God will help us escape the evils of the world. This is a tremendous way to take hold of our trust in Him and grow our faith through our obedience. A Bible Promise book is a necessity! (Many are in our Devotional channel for free)
- *Participate/partakers of the divine nature* means we partake in Christ. We participate as *sons, children of God* as we are conformed to the likeness of Christ. We are not made divine through our efforts or His, or purification, and we are not little gods. What this means is we have the image of God in us; we have the Holy Spirit, the Divine Nature living in us guiding, leading, motivating, and fulfilling us (Gen. 3:5; John 1:12; Rom. 8:9-21, 29; 2 Pet. 1:9, 11).
- *Escape the corruption of the world.* Our sinful nature creates our sinful desires that lure us with passion to what is deceitful and evil. The decay of our standing in Him and of virtue will cause the decay of our selves and our culture. The question is, *whose lure are you biting into—Satan's or God's* (2 Pet. 2:14; 3:3)?

God has given us the power to live for Him victoriously and with excellence! He feeds us the spiritual food, pays our spiritual debt, and gives us knowledge and the assets to be godly and good. If we truly trust in Christ—not just as Savior but also as LORD—we are given the power and ability to live a life of fullness, distinction of character, and spiritual maturity so He is glorified by our lives and living testimony. He gives us the resources. They are here for us, and are at our disposal. We are not alone or cut off from what we need! But, there is a catch. We have to go for it; we have to appropriate His gifts and opportunities into our lives, as in finding and engaging them. We take firm hold of our faith (make our election sure) when we trust and then obey what He has for us. If we do not, we live a life of waste and even sin, missing out what is soooo good and precious for us. Why would anyone forsake His love and gifts (Deut. 31:6; Phil. 2:13; 3:13-14; 4:13)?

There is a second aspect to receiving and applying His power into our lives. We have the responsibility to practice it. We are not great at it at the start. Just like learning to drive or play a game, it takes time to master, no matter how talented we may be. We have to work at it by learning, absorbing, and then applying what we have learned. In using it, we grow and mature. The price is not too high since Christ paid for it. We have no excuse not to grow and serve Him! Never consider that it is too difficult or that you are not gifted or worthy enough, because the Spirit in you is able to do it (Psalm 87:7; Isaiah 40:29-31; John 14:13-14; 2 Cor. 9:8; Col. 3:23)!

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions see [Inductive Bible Study](#)):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. How do you feel when someone talks or writes to you with humbleness and intimacy? How do you suppose Peter's people felt?
2. How is your faith real, impacting, and growing? How should it be?
3. What difference would it make in your spiritual growth if you were to realize that your faith and what God has given you in gifts and opportunities are precious and to be genuine?
4. What do you think the key is to the multiplication of your faith? What can you do to recognize God's wonderful provisions for you?
5. Whose lure are you biting into—Satan's or God's? How does knowing the promises of God help you escape the evils of the world?
6. How can you be encouraged by the fact that Christ has given to you all you need to grow, as well as the assurance and confidence to pursue Him more?
7. Take an opportunity to recount the wonders that God has given and done for you over time. How can what He has done in the past help empower you to become more vigorous and faithful now?
8. What will it take for you to be a more committed follower of Christ? How does the fact that you belong entirely to Him because He purchased, restored, renewed, and empowered you help you take this call further?
9. God is Righteous. He is ethical and fair in His dealings with us. What can you do to show Him gratitude as you live your life with virtue and good character?

10. There are some so-called "Christian" groups that proclaim prejudice as being from God. How does this thinking match up with this passage or the veracity of Scripture? Faith is impartial, so how can you be better in your treatment of others who are different from you?
11. We are called to stretch and grow beyond what we think we can do! What would this mean to you? How can you apply His power? Remember, more knowledge of Christ increases faith and power.
12. What stands in the way of your faith cultivation, the taking a firm hold on your faith? What do you consider your responsibility to be in cultivating what He has given to make your faith grow better and faster? What specifically needs cultivating? What can others do to help you? What are you going to do about it?

Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.
Deuteronomy 31:6