



“His divine power
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2 PETER 1:3





Lesson 6 - 2 Peter 1:1-21

Have you ever taken your Christian faith for granted? Those of us who are not pressing on toward our heavenly goal may find that we are becoming stagnant in our spiritual growth. The miracle of transformation happens in an instant—the twinkling of an eye— but the process of sanctification takes a lifetime! As we learn and grow, we realize that we are the ones responsible to make sure we are adding certain virtues to our lives as we await Christ's return.

Peter wrote this second letter most likely from prison in Rome, around A.D. 66–67. While his purpose in writing the first letter was to comfort those in suffering, his second letter contains a strong warning for believers to recognize false teachers and refute their teaching. As Peter was preparing to die at the hands of his Roman executioners, he encouraged the flock of God to become serious about growing up in Christ.

Memory Verse:

“ . . . His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:3–4

Review this verse often throughout the week. Write it out a couple of times to help you commit it to memory. By week's end, try to notice *how* and *where* you are able to it into practice. Note your results on the last page of your homework.

FIRST DAY – 2 PETER 1:1-2

Begin your study each day with a word of prayer. Read 2 Peter 1:1–21.

There is a difference between the way Peter identified himself at the beginning of his first letter and here as he begins the second one. This difference reflects the transformation that has taken place in his life.

1. Compare 1 Peter 1:1 with 2 Peter 1:1. What word does Peter add to describe who he is?
2. Look up each of the words below and share what each title represents in terms of service for Christ.
 - *Apostle* –
 - *Bondservant* –
3. What does the word *bondservant* tell you about the character God had molded into Peter's life as he continued to follow Christ?

The readers of Peter's second letter were under the attack of false teachers infiltrating the body of Christ. It is clear from his message that his audience needed reassurance that their faith was indeed real. He writes to "those who have obtained like precious faith with us" (v. 1). Literally, he means that these believers had a faith as precious as the apostle's.

Peter's initial greeting in verse 2 is identical to 1 Peter 1:2. When he mentions *grace*, he is speaking of God's unmerited favor. The *peace* he refers to is the peace that comes about as the result of being reconciled to God through Christ. Here in verse 2, he adds to this reassurance by expounding on the blessing.

4. By what measure are *grace* and *peace* given to the Christian? How? v. 2
5. Peter is not talking about the intellectual accumulation of information but rather a knowledge that comes through personal application and experience. Which do *you* possess? Please explain.

SECOND DAY – 2 PETER 1:3-4

Read 2 Peter 1:3-4.

The same God who calls us and blesses us with an abundance of His grace and peace, also enables us to grow spiritually. His divine power is manifested in the life of every believer, coming directly from the Holy Spirit within us. Apart from God we do not possess the resources needed to live a holy life, but Jesus Christ has *given us everything we need* for life and godliness. The moment we become born again, God empowers us to live in a way that glorifies Him!

1. How have we received this blessing? v. 3

2. Personal: What was it about the Lord's glory and goodness that initially attracted *you* to Him?

3. What else have you received? Why? v. 4

The promises of God are assured because they are founded upon the character of the One making them. They come through the character of Christ—His own glory and goodness. We can count on them because His character remains the same; He never changes! When Peter talks about participating in the divine nature and escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust (v. 4), he means we are continually moving closer to God and further away from *self* and the *sinful nature* we were born with.

4. Personal: Can you think of a way you are demonstrating less of your previous sinful nature and more of the character of Christ?

THIRD DAY – 2 PETER 1:5-11

Read 2 Peter 1:5-11 for review.

Verses 5–7 describe in detail what this divine nature looks like and your role in this transforming process.

1. God has asked you to add to your faith characteristics of godliness. Using the resources you have on hand, look up and define each of these qualities:

a. *Virtue*

b. *Knowledge*

c. *Self-control*

d. *Perseverance*

e. *Godliness*

f. *Brotherly kindness*

g. *Love*

2. Personal: Which of these qualities is the Holy Spirit helping to work into your life at the moment? Can you give an example of *how*?

Peter goes on to say in verse 8, “*For if these things are yours and abound . . .*” Literally it means, *if you possess these qualities in increasing measure*, pointing to the fact that the process is never finished but is always ongoing. To remain effective throughout the process, you must stop periodically to take stock of how you are doing.

3. What does Peter say about the person who lacks these virtues? vv. 9–10

- a. What is the potential for this kind of individual? (v. 9) How far will he or she go? Do you know someone like this?

In verses 10–11, Peter issues a word of encouragement and a challenge. The virtues he has just described are what enable you as a believer to *make your calling and election sure*! If you currently have doubt about the validity of your faith, perhaps you have *not been diligent* in your God-given responsibility. If your life does not show positive change, you will probably begin to question whether your faith is genuine.

- b. If this hits home to your heart today, take a moment to prayerfully commit yourself to the Lord, asking Him to enable you to make some changes.

Personal: On a scale of 1–10, with ten being best, how much effort are you putting towards this process of change? What can you do to give more effort?

- c. If you respond positively to Peter’s challenge here, what two statements of truth can you claim from the following . . .
 - v. 10b
 - v. 11

FOURTH DAY – 2 PETER 1:12-21

Read 2 Peter 1:12–21 for review.

Christians need to be reminded—even those firmly established in the faith. Three times in verses 12–15, Peter mentions the words *remind*, *reminding*, *reminder*. Some thirty years earlier, Jesus declared that Peter would die a martyr. As death came closer, Peter no doubt felt the weight of this truth and so, wrote with greater urgency. Those who do have the opportunity to know that death is near will desire to pass on to others that which is closest to their heart. They want others to understand that which is of the greatest importance and benefit once they are gone.

1. How did Jesus speak of Peter’s death in John 21:18–19?

Jesus prophesied that Peter would die a martyr as the result of following Him. The words “stretch out your hands” refer to death by crucifixion. Tradition holds that Peter requested that he be crucified upside down because he did not feel himself worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord.

2. What did Peter determine to do as long as he remained alive? 2 Peter 1:13

In your opinion . . .

- a. What would a *young* believer need to be reminded about?
 - b. What kind of reminder would *you* give to a *mature* believer?
 - c. What reminder would be appropriate for a *backslidden* believer?
3. What did Peter say that he would be careful to do according to verse 15? What do you think he meant by this?

Peter wrote of his impending departure with calmness and courage. He was prepared to leave his *tent*—his temporary body (v. 13) and move into God’s eternal kingdom (v. 11).

4. What does 1 Corinthians 15:42–44 say about the believer’s new body?
5. Suppose for a moment that you knew you had only a short time to remain on this earth. What would you diligently try to pass on to those closest to you? What would you want them to remember after you are gone?

Peter wanted his readers to know that the truth of God’s saving power through Christ was not conceived in the mind of man, rather that it rests solely on the confirmation of Scripture. In verses 16–18, Peter revisits the moment of the *Transfiguration of Jesus*, which he had personally witnessed several decades earlier: “*We were eyewitnesses of His majesty*” (v.16). He had the unique experience of being present when God the Father bestowed honor and glory on the Son.

6. Take a moment to read the account in Matthew 17:1–8, and consider the following . . .
 - a. Who did Jesus take with Him up on the mountain?
 - b. Why do *you* think He chose these three to witness this incredible event?
 - c. Who appeared to talk with Jesus? v. 3
 - d. What did the voice in the clouds declare? Who was speaking? v. 5
 - e. How did the disciples respond? What did Jesus do? vv. 6–7

The Transfiguration of Jesus revealed the true nature of who Jesus is—the glory and majesty of His character. It provided a preview of His Second Coming when He returns in the fullness of His glory. This was God the Father meeting with God the Son in the presence of eyewitnesses!

Peter's retelling of this story emphasizes his authority in teaching about the person and work of Christ. As glorious as this event was, Peter notes here in chapter 1 that we have another assurance regarding Christ—much more reliable and trustworthy than the eyewitness accounts—we have the Holy Scriptures! Peter was so confident about the authority and reliability of God's written Word that he counseled his readers to use the Scriptures as their guide until the day of Christ's return!

7. How does Peter describe Scripture in verse 19?

The “morning star” is a reference to Jesus Christ at the Second Coming (see Revelation 22:16). Peter's intent here is that until the return of Christ, we are to walk in the light of the truth of God's Word. He has described the believer's journey as a *pilgrimage* through a dark world and God has provided the Lamp of Truth to guide us. If we receive His Word and obey, we will be kept from the error of false teaching and discover a way of life that honors Him. How's *your* journey going?

→ Memory Verse Review: Can you recite your memory verse? Have you been able to put it into practice this week?