



**Apostolic Advice to the Modern Saint.**

Layman RandyP

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Dedicated to Lucus Aubree and Cian: *"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children..."* kjv@Proverbs:13:22

As my inheritance is in Christ Jesus my Lord, may each of you have that marvelous and rich eternal inheritance in full measure as well!

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# Preface

## Original Preface From the Author

The "Foundations of the Like Precious Faith Series" began as a reading and study devotional in 2009. In that year I had developed a bible focused content management system for internet called pBiblx2. I was also stepping out into various internet and street ministries, using this specific resource as a point to plug myself and unfruitful believers back into a clearer productive view of scripture. What now remains as the SeriesAppendix section in this book version was part of that Foundations effort from early on.

In the original version I offered very little personal commentary, thinking that the many links to scripture would speak for themselves. I was quick to find that a good many Christians are uncomfortable studying from raw scripture without pastoral guidance. To overcome this tendency, in subsequent rewrites, I added more and more of my thoughts and began teaching it as a group study.

It later evolved into an audio series with study notes. During this audio series phase, I envisioned the structure to be more in tune with actual reader needs. We produced separate installments tailored to needs such as drug addiction or suicidal thoughts or marital problems etc... Each teaching attempted to apply the foundations item by item to overcome that need. I am very confident having taught them this way that they have tremendous value in a broad range of practical applications. This dispersed format was a taxing effort for me however. It felt like there was only time to repeat and apply the basics without time to go deeper into the larger sum. It was the sum of all these things that I felt would help these people the most.

I have never been much of one for self-help messages. Even at churches where

they have the programs and resources for this problem and that, I fear that the destructive trait (example Alcoholism) becomes the main focus in these groups, that the word of God becomes only the quick fix. The intention to help people is good, the means of helping often times not as good. My thought is that instead of plugging the Bible into the person, plug the person into the Bible. I changed the website domain name to likepreciousfaith.us around this time due to the popularity of this series. More and more, the series had become what the site and I were best known for.

In 2019 I decided that the best place for it to be was in book form. Audio is convenient for listeners no doubt, but in this age of audio podcasts and sermons listeners rarely study. It was the study notes that I most wanted to push forward. So from late 2019 on through Covid19 spring 2020 I wrote, rewrote and edited the website HTML version that became this book.

The "Foundations Of The Like Precious Faith Series" has been without doubt my most intensive personal study to date. There is something to be said about the "study to teach" method. It adds the extra responsibility of other souls and digging deep to "rightly divide the word". I have been transformed heart, soul and mind by it. Even now, I direct these words into my own ears before I direct them toward anybody else.

I have searched far and wide for a Christian resource of this type without much luck. I am not sure why a book like this has not been written; I think the topic of living productive faith forward is a most important one. Let me say that I am quite surprised that there are not several. Had there been one suitable I would not need to reinvent the wheel.

This book edition also is the first time I have written for book form. It has been a monumental challenge for me not having been formally trained. It has been like composing for symphonic orchestra instead of jazz quartet. I have had to rely upon the literary and scriptural expertise of many others. I am perhaps the least qualified

person to have written this, if it is by God's hand I am sure that God will make a way of using it. I hope that you will find great personal use for a book like this as well.

May God make you abundant and fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

**(PLACEHOLD FOR SECOND PREFACE)**

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# Primary Text

**Peter's "The Like Precious Faith" Discourse:**



## **2Peter 1: kjv**

*(1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*

*(2) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

*(3) According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

*(4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

*(5) And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;*

*(6) And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;*

*(7) And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*

*(8) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*(9) But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

*(10) Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*

*(11) For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

*(12) Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.*

*(13) Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*

*(14) Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*

*(15) Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.*

*(16) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

*(17) For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

*(18) And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

*(19) We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place,*

*until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:  
(20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any  
private interpretation.  
(21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but  
holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

May God bless our wholehearted examination of HIS Holy word!

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## Introduction

### "I Will Not Be Negligent"

#### **2Peter 1:12-15 kjv**

*(12) Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.*

*(13) Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*

*(14) Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*

*(15) Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.*

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## **Of Servant and Apostle**

The Christian saint is very much in need of the advice and wisdom of this "servant and apostle of Jesus Christ" Simon Peter today. The world is increasing its attack on the Christian faith from every direction. Prophecy tells of extreme times ahead.

This is a much older Apostle Peter towards the end of his service here on Earth that we read from today. He has seen a lot of things since the first day his brother Andrew introduced him to Jesus. At this point it might be better to ask what hasn't Peter now seen? He, too, has known and counseled saints that were under attack. Who better than he to get advice like this from?

Imagine for a moment that like Peter, you were coming to the end of your ministry. The audience that you are preparing to direct this discourse toward are all already Christian. They know the foundations of salvation. Now they need to know how to carry that faith forward into their new life and continuing times. One more time, before your departure, they need to be reminded the foundations of this like precious faith. So you take your pen to hand.

Knowing what you know, having seen what you've seen, being familiar with the types of problems they are likely to come up against, anticipating what you are anticipating ahead for future generations of the church, the extreme forces mounting up against it; what would your counsel to present and future saints be?

It is an interesting question to consider; isn't it? In the space of one letter you wouldn't be able to cover too much in any great detail. You would have to boil it all down to essentials, trust in the work already written and accomplished, put this to them again as succinct and deliberate as one short letter would allow. In other words you'd need to bring it down to the core foundations, but in a style that draws a top down schematic or picture. The busy saint of today could benefit from such concise

apostolic brevity.

The first concern that you would have to consider in such an effort no doubt is the human tendency of all future generations to get too comfortable with what they already know. We tend to become too established in what we know, what we think that we know. We settle into what becomes established as present truth.

It is a danger I say because present truth fades into convention, convention into bureaucracy, bureaucracy into the older ways, the older ways into the archaic, the archaic only to be revived every several generations when the desperation arises.

It is a danger I say because future generations, much like ours, will tend to know what they know for no other reason than they just think that they know it. They will believe either that what they know is consistent with what the earlier generations once knew, or else that what they know is now somehow superior to what was known.

It is a danger I say because much of what they will be basing their knowledge on will rely upon that which we based ours upon, and I am not so sure that we have the knowledge of how to carry the faith forward right.

## **Of The Author's Intent**

"To stir you up by putting you in remembrance" is how this apostle puts it. That is his intent. That is his writing style. Oh, you may know he says, or you might think that you know says I. "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things" he is thus convicted.

Some of what Peter will write we will think that we already know. Doesn't matter, whatever it is we think that we know about faith in Jesus he intends to stir up by putting us into truer remembrance. Plenty of this we will think is already well established as present truth. We would likely tell him "we already know and do this". Do we? Doesn't matter. Whatever it is we think that we know about faith in Jesus,

Peter intends to stir up by putting us into truer remembrance.

Can you guess why he would be convinced that going back over all this is not just time wasted or time being neglectful? It is because though we think that we know what we know about all these same facts and details, the simple fact is that the further we get from apostles like Peter, the further we get from the truer person of Jesus Christ, to whom we have sworn and committed our lives and modern Christianity to. The plain fact is that we know Jesus because of these apostles. It is more than likely that we do not know this Jesus to any such extent as we think that we do. This my friend is human nature. It would take a man so acquainted with Jesus as this Simon Peter to be able to sense this and be able to do something about it.

The very next thing Peter writes after this might be the thing that best describes why an apostolic task such as this would be required and undertaken. It describes the future generation's "know it all" tendencies:

**2Peter 1:16 kjv**

*(16) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

The Apostles were eye-witnesses. It is not anything but real life historical fact to them. Jesus was and is a real person. This was not a religion or a story-line to them, it was the continuance of a very real and enduring relationship. To us, these are words handed down from generation to generation, with each generation there is an entropy towards let's call it fictionalization.

You see, the eventual point that the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ begins to devolve and not make the same influence or impact is the point where it starts to become like a fiction. A sizable portion of the recent Church came to that point when

it adopted the intellectual mindset of theological liberalism and modernism or post modernism. The Word of God became no longer "literal", it became "literature" intended to teach morality. The Word of God became no longer "infallible", it became "relative" to whatever anybody wanted to make out of it. The word of God, especially the New Testament became no longer "historical", it became "mythical". Jesus became only a good teacher, a good servant, a good martyr instead of the living Christ.

It is not that this downward spiral of faith hasn't happened before or that this doesn't happen all the time, this eventual fictionalization is a well proven human tendency. Follow the generations presented to us in the Old Testament. What the older generation witnessed first person of God's movement, by the time of their death or sooner had diminished to the point of little or no substantial impact on either the next generation's Church or nation. I have no doubt that in Peter's time he had already begun to see this same human tendency take hold in various shapes and sizes. Oh, they might believe in Jesus, they might believe in Peter's personal testimony, they might still hope in the good news and have a zeal for the movement's excitement, but little by little there is something more and more missing. Peter has to stir them up more and more to put them into remembrance.

Think of how far beyond that point in our day and age that our generation has slipped. Now, even long after Peter's own decease we must call upon him to stir us up, put us also back into this remembrance.

## **Of The Apostle's Own Wellspring**

The Apostle draws from two separate sources in order to stir this remembrance back up:

1. The Apostolic Witness:

**2Peter 1:17-18 kjv**

*(17) For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.  
(18) And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

2. The Prophetic Witness:

**2Peter 1:19-21 kjv**

*(19) We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:  
(20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.  
(21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

The two witnesses that he draws upon to stir us are very important. One involves us taking the word of those that personally knew Jesus and could testify to the accounts and descriptions of the teachings and miracles and death and resurrection of Jesus; taking their word because we did not experience these insights and relationships ourselves. The second involves us taking the words of the Old Testament prophets; searching the connections between what they said was going to happen and what then did happen in the life and accession of Jesus Christ.

Remember, Jesus after His resurrection spent quite a bit of time with His disciples reviewing all that had been written about Him in the "Law and prophets" (see: kjv@Luke:24:44-48). For us two thousand years later, God in HIS unsearchable wisdom has placed the unique first-hand experiences afforded those first apostles



down to the simple matter of our trust, our remembrance of the testimonies and the teachings of it, our further personal experience of it as guided and convicted by the Holy Spirit given because of it. It is not a weakness that we are not offered these same experiences, it is a blessing that the same Holy Spirit that worked in them continues to work in us, aided by the Apostles grounding witness and testimony.

So then we come to Peter's initial statement about there being such a thing as a "like precious faith". What he means is that we today do have a faith on equal standing with those first apostles - in the primary sense that we both have exactly the same need, and we both have the same exact answer to that need. It is a faith that Christ gave to them then as it is given to us today "through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ".

Those apostles for their first three years as disciples saw and heard so many tremendous things. They had such an interesting relationship with the man Jesus. Yet even with all that, in the end God still needed to give to them something much more.

Night and day they each had plenty of opportunity to make out of this Messiah all that they could have, figure a thing or two out, come into some personal realizations of who they were in light of who He was. Yet even with all that, Jesus still needed to give them something much more spiritual than they could obtain for themselves. What Jesus had to give is the same exact thing that we need to be given by God today. That which has to be gifted to man is above and beyond his powers of intellect and deduction, his formative personal environment and experience; it is that which in this series we will call "the like precious faith". It is all about God's righteousness, what it is, what it has done, what we should expect of it, how to respond, how to carry the faith caused by it forward into the world. This is what we will study to stir back into our collective remembrance.

## **Of Here and Now**

The saints are under considerable attack today. They are being attacked from without. They are being attacked from within. The very core of their most substantial doctrines are being questioned. However, as of yet the saints are not yet able to put up much of any fight. In the Foundations of the Like Precious Faith series I am asking for the Holy Spirit through this writing of Simon Peter to stir us up once again as in times past by putting us back into remembrance of these mighty and essential things.

**2Peter 1:1 kjv**

*(1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*

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# Chapter One

## Fount of Every Firm Foundation - The Aerial View

### **2Peter 1:1 kjv**

*(1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*

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## **Of the Like Precious Faith**

In this "Foundations Of The Like Precious Faith Series" commentary we will be exploring 2Peter chapter 1. This is the Apostle Peter's "Like Precious Faith Discourse". We will explore it in-depth by isolating certain key foundations that each of us could apply to our daily walks.

To begin, I would like to establish the sense from which his discourse flows. All of these things flow from the "righteousness of God and our Savior" in verse one, God Jehovah and Savior Jesus Christ. One can attempt to manufacture these foundations on their own on a human scale, and perhaps in so doing derive some personal benefit. To obtain these things on a productive spiritual plane however, each of these foundations have to be Spirit sourced; given. These foundations that are to follow are better the result of the entire influence of God and Savior's righteousness upon us, nothing less. It is vital to this commentary that we first understand this: their righteousness is the grounds on which all these foundations are built.

"Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ" is writing a second epistle for the expressed purpose of stirring us up by putting us back into remembrance of the key foundations of the "like precious" Christian faith. These foundations according to Peter are things we already know or think that we know but, do not know as well as he feels that we should. I am sure that he has seen a great many things these many years since his time first hand with Jesus his Christ. These are things seen from us that concern him, things which he feels he has to keep pointing us back to.

### **1. What is the "like precious faith"?**

Think of "Like Precious Faith" as being a similar faith to that of the original Apostles. There is even the suggestion in the language that it is on equal

standing with the Apostles. We believe in the same Jesus. We have obtained this similar faith by the same means. This faith has a similar effect on us as it did them. The fruit of it is similar across the board and across the ages.

This is not to say that we are on the same logistical level as the Apostles. It is not to mean that we are apostles in the same grand sense as were those Apostles having been the very first. It does mean that as far as cause and effect and substance our faith is part of the same abiding vine. "Can be" is key here because not all forms of faith in Jesus Christ today are equal, not as we ourselves make it. Only those forms made from the same "obtained" substance as the Apostles can be equal.

## 2. **What is the cause of "like precious faith"?**

The initial root cause of the like precious faith is very well stated by Simon Peter, it is the "righteousness of God and Savior". The combination and interplay of the two persons is very important to our consideration of God's righteousness.

Before the appearance of Christ, the broadest appreciation of the righteousness of God was only hinted at by the prophets. In other words, Christ is the full embodiment or disclosure of God's righteousness. Once Christ did appear, one could look back at all that God had done up to this and see the full declaration of God's righteousness. Now that Christ has appeared, one can look forward to the remaining prophecies and see the full declaration of God's righteousness.

Jesus said "*he that has seen me has seen my Father*" (kjv@John:14:9). Until then "*neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son*" (kjv@Matthew:11:27). Oh, they may have known something about HIM by

historical experience or by covenant but, nothing on this level of righteousness. And it is this level of revealed righteousness alone that now causes such a thing as "like precious faith".

### 3. **How is "like precious faith" obtained?**

The mechanism behind obtaining like precious faith is the same for us as it was for those early Apostles. In the Greek, the concept is that the like precious faith is received as if by casting lots. See, in the Hebrew culture lots were not considered a game of chance as it is with us, it was a means of divining God's will. God's will steered the verdict of the lots to its proper conclusion. Raised in this Hebrew culture, Peter would have understood this mechanism in the same way. If he had meant to say something different he would have used a different word. We receive this similar faith as if by the casting of lots: God's decree of verdict.

When was Peter's lot cast? Was it the moment Andrew introduced him to Jesus there by the boat? Was it long before that? Was it from before the beginning?

When was Paul's lot cast? Was it when he was struck from his mount by a flash and clap of thunder on the road to Damascus? Was it long before that? Was it from before the beginning?

What of the other disciples? What of the publican, the prostitute, the woman at the well? When was the lot cast for all of us?

None of these people were looking for it, none expected for it to come to this, none of them deserved for this to have come, nor did it come as a result of their own intellectual pilgrimage; neither any of ours. How else could it be described and better than "it was received as if by lots"... plain and simple.

4. **Once we receive "like precious faith", how are we to respond?**

The answer to this is best explained in the word translated to English as knowledge. This word in the Greek is not what English readers would first expect the word knowledge to mean however. Knowledge we would expect to mean intellect or rational reasoning or scientific inquiry and deduction. The proper Greek word there would have been "gnosis". Peter didn't use the word "gnosis" because in truth it is not anything like that; gnosis only comes in to play at a future date stated only once in verse 5. The remainder of the time, three times, Peter uses "epignosis" which has more to do with a recognition and acknowledgment.

One can recognize and acknowledge something without being able yet to intellectualize or prove it. Gravity, for instance, had long been such an epignosis to scientists, recognized even though they could not begin to scientifically explain it.

In chapter context this epignosis relates to three specific things: 1. "God, and of Jesus our Lord" in verse 2 referring back to their full mutual disclosure of righteousness. 2. "the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" verse 3, again referring to their righteousness, but expanding it by giving it eternal direction. 3. "nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" verse 8 referring to God's intended righteous effect upon man. So then we respond by recognizing and acknowledging this righteousness of God as having its own righteous effect on us.

5. **What shall our response then look like?**

This is where the "and besides this" of verse 5 comes in. Up until this it has all been about God and Savior, who they are and what they are providing verses 1-4. In verses 5-7 now we are seeing our suitable response to what God and Savior's righteousness has performed. It is a list of actionable items each of us should be adding to our obtained faith, defining actions for us to take. These are actions many would attempt to approximate in their flesh without the proper influence of righteousness, but in the saint's case, these items have the better influence of righteousness written all over them. At this point we have been brought by them into a position of having received, having escaped, now partaking. Then and only then can we perform our daily tasks with any resemblance of these listed things.

Notice now that these items do not describe the actual things that we should do, they describe how we should go about doing all daily things now. THEIR righteousness effects in a spiritual, productive way. It makes us faithful, courageous, rational, temperate, patient, moral, kind, sacrificial. The importance is rightly placed on "how to do" rather than "what to do". It is also given to the "how much" and "how often" as indicated here by Peter's use of the phrase "*giving all diligence add*".

So please now let's remember Peter's stated goal in writing this. It is likely that these are all things that we already know (verse 12). Perhaps we are even comfortable with ourselves having performed some certain measure of all this. Yet, despite how we each feel about our progress in this, Peter feels that the priority (verses 12-15) placed upon his remaining life is to put us into even further remembrance of the loftier heights and deeper depths of these very things. Think of all the many other matters that he could have burdened us with but, still for him it came down to this. This should prove to us the importance of getting this single matter straight.



Part of the reason for bringing up to us what this faith behaves like in its most productive form is to examine what it looks like when it is not all of this by contrast. Peter claims that a person who is lacking these things, let's call them Spirit influenced manners, is "blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (verse 9). Verse 8 implies that this person then would be "barren" and unfruitful not having these manners abounding within. It goes to follow that this man would be this other thing because he is not under the influence of God and Savior's righteousness, not recognizing nor acknowledging, not escaped, not partaking and therefore not diligent about these particular manners.

Rather than lack these things, Peter exhorts us "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (verse 10). This diligence without doubt is the same "all" diligence given verses 5-7 to all this list of fruit producing manners. It is not that one has to earn or prove their way into the "Eternal Entrance" (verse 11); Peter is not saying that. He is saying that because of the certainty of God's righteousness and HIS righteous effect upon us, our entrance is already certain and should be abundant with HIS fruit. If we are to depend upon our own righteousness, nothing at all like this can be certain. Therefore, make your calling and election certain: depend upon His righteousness. It is a tricky phrase to comprehend.

For a moment think of this assurance in terms of Peter as he walks away from the house of a troubled Christian that he has tried to counsel. He asks himself "how do I know that this man has like precious faith"? Many a pastor has asked this same question many a time. The answer is either:

Yes, he can be certain that this man has "like precious faith" because he sees the effects of God's righteousness upon the man. He sees the responding forms of virtue and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness and kindness and agape love beginning to sprout from what was once this neighbor's previously rocky heart.

Otherwise no, there is reason to worry about this neighbor's faith, he does not see the same effects upon him. In fact he sees the opposite: doubt and timidness and recklessness and intemperance and desperation and ungodliness and selfish accusation from him.

The answer is plain and simple that we are not going to know this man's condition unless the fruit of this diligence is evidenced in him. Has this man or woman obtained and built themselves up in this righteousness? They say that they believe in Jesus but, do they recognize and acknowledge the righteousness of God and Savior enough to be effected in full by it?

## **Of Making the Election and Calling Sure**

### **kjv@2Peter:1:10-11**

It is not God that needs to be convinced that a person has diligently made themselves worthy of His calling and election because:

1. No man can make himself worthy of God's calling and election. Only the effects of God's righteousness can do that, and that as if by lots. kjv@Titus:3:5
2. God called and elected the man long before the man ever set out to achieve any form worthiness, again as if by lots. kjv@Romans:8:30
3. Can God's call and election ever fail? No Sir! Why then would God need convincing of that?

Neither is it the man who needs convincing of his worthiness of God's calling and election:

1. He knows himself not worthy, especially the more epignosis of God's righteousness he receives.
2. So the importance here really must be given to the epignosis of God's

righteousness rather than the proving of himself to God of his.

The abundant entrance spoken of in verse 11 is one that is a direct consequence of the righteous "righteousness of God and Savior's" influence. It is the recognition and acknowledgment of this that multiplies spiritual grace and peace. It is divine power then that lends "all things pertaining to life and godliness". Escape has been purchased and the means of partaking secured as promised beforehand. How could any eternal entrance be anything less than this? How could such an eternal entrance be more abundant? It all comes down to and back to the righteousness, that is the fount from where all spiritual things including faith like the apostles' are obtained.

The opposite of obtaining these many foundations and elements of faith is by means of our own righteousness. Should we would seek to come to a grace and peace with God on our own terms, provide for ourselves what is required in life and godliness, make for our own escape, partake of our own better nature, it would not ever mean the same thing. Were we to add to this our own manly valor, knowledge, temperance, endurance, piety, community and charitable love; this would be blindness and shortsightedness. Such a pursuit leaves us barren and lacking fruit in the acknowledgment and recognition of whom better God and Savior actually are, whom they better intend for us to be. There would be no assurance of our calling and election because it is not the measure of God and Christ's righteousness getting us there. We would have called and elected ourselves, it would be our own measure; which often falters. There would be no abundance surrounding our eternal entrance. Abundance on a human scale perhaps, but nothing towards entering the eternal kingdom.

No, "like precious faith" cannot be based upon our righteousness, no matter how righteous or how devoted to the service of God our own righteousness thinks that it might be. I am afraid though that this is the manner in which we most often

approach our Christian faith. It is as if Christ is righteous yes, now it is time for us to by our own summoning righteous be. There can be no doubt why it is that we Christians remain fruitless in this time of great opposition. Nor can there be any doubt as to why Peter is having this discourse with us even centuries after his decease. It is because of our tendency to fight this fight by our power and righteousness and not by God's.

So now friends we have a top down aerial view of Peter's first chapter, his discourse on the "like precious faith". Having the better sense of its flow and direction, now we can begin digging into the particulars of this faith.

Shall we continue?

Appendix Resources:

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# Chapter Two

## Through the Righteousness of God and Our Savior

### **2Peter 1:1-4 kjv**

*(1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*

*(2) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

*(3) According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

*(4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

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## **Of Righteous God and Savior**

"Through the righteousness of" is a very important phrase to our considerations. It is not by our righteousness that any of the like precious faith is to come, it is by or through or as a result of our God's and our Savior's righteousness. This is not how the typical modern faith approaches it.

There is an invasive notion among us that we are the ones generating our faith, that faith is ours, and we do with it what we want. Many of us believe ourselves to muster our faith together, re-purpose it, redirect it; so we perceive. That is not what the Apostle Peter is saying to us though; is it? He is saying that God and Savior give to us faith as if by lots as a result and effect of THEIR particular righteousness. It is a righteousness that we do not have in us without Christ. It is because of the effect of their righteousness that we believe. It is in their righteousness we believe. Even our belief is an act of their righteousness. There are several ways to put it, almost every one of them not the way the carnal self would prefer to see it however.

God created the human soul with the awesome facility to believe; the righteous providence of God has seen to that. The human being for the most part believes what he or she is able to see, what is plain and evident right before their own eyes. Since the time of Adam and Eve though, God's righteousness has not been plain and evident before any human being's eye. There have been glimpses of it perhaps yes. There has been a good deal of philosophical contemplation of it. To a certain extent our human conscience is still reminded by long distant reverberations of it. Oh, the human soul indeed has an awesome facility to believe, to each his own by what has become plain and evident before each our own human eye. We have indeed believed a great many things. However, not one of us have believed in the full scope and stature deserved of God's complete righteousness.

**Psalms 14:2-3 kjv**

*(2) The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.  
(3) They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Thus, by the demands of HIS own righteousness, God set HIMSELF forward to correct this universal human state. That is where the necessity of HIS Christ comes into the picture. There is little doubt that the human being would not have come to this belief on his/her own without there being the intentional insertion of Christ's righteousness to draw our attentions from what other things we would attempt to justify ourselves with otherwise.

When it comes to righteousness, there are two opposite directions for our attentions to go towards: 1. our present direction towards what is right in our own eyes, or 2. our Christ altered direction towards what is right in God's own eye. What is right in God's own eye is HIS beloved Son's sweet-smelling atonement offering: our Savior Jesus Christ. Righteousness for those called by lot to it is now embodied in one specific person: Jesus Christ.

**Hebrews 12:2 kjv**

*(2) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Simon Peter introduces us to what is better for us to believe about God and Savior's righteousness extended towards us:

That it is to bring upon us an ever increasing grace and peace with God and our relationship to HIM in light of HIS own righteous being and character. (see:

kjv@2Peter:1:2)

That by HIS miraculous power it is to provide all things to us pertaining to the spiritual life and godliness missing from our current state. (see: kjv@2Peter:1:3)

That it calls us to an eternal glory and virtue. (see: kjv@2Peter:1:3)

That it promises us the ability (still by HIS divine power mind you) to partake (share in the benefit) of HIS Christ's nature having thus providing the means of escape from the present world's corruption for us through the righteous actions of that same Christ. (see: kjv@2Peter:1:4)

If this does not explain what God and Savior's righteousness towards us is all about, I do not know how better it might be put. Do any of us understand the gravity of what was just said and the potential effects upon us that such a statement of facts carries?

And what is our part to do in any of this? In verse 2 and again in verse 3 Peter repeats the word 'epignosis', which we have already begun to talk about, meaning to recognize and acknowledge. There is nothing said here of our own righteousness. No, I fear rather that our own righteousness may have a good part to do with what Peter is calling the corruption of this world needing to be escaped from. Know then that all of this spoken of by Peter is only through and because of Christ, even our recognition and acknowledgment.

## **Of Righteous Equity and Justification**

The word for righteousness Peter uses is itself very interesting:

Quoted resource: strong's 'G1343'

G1343 @ δικαιοσύνη dikaiosunē dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay From G1342; equity (of character or act); specifically (Christian) justification: - righteousness.



Equity here means equal, fair, balanced, just. God and Savior are equal, balanced, just, both in character and in act. Justify in this sense means to make right with God; the New Testament puts it as a legal term. The defendant did not convince the court that he was in the right, the prosecution has now proven that he was not in the right, the case has now moved on to the sentencing stage. The convict now throws himself on the court's mercy. The judge by proclamation of his mercy declares the convict made right with the court by virtue of this judge's mercy solely. Again, the convict cannot make himself right. The judge's mercy has to proclaim the convict right. The court then treats him as if the sentence can no longer be carried forward. This the court does even though it is plain to all involved that the crime had been committed by the defendant.

This legal sense of justification is important because it helps describe God and Savior's equity/balance of character and act. Their equity suggests a balancing act of law and justice, truth and known evidence, consideration toward both the individual and collective, compassion and mercy. All these manifold elements of THEIR character are balanced and weighed before any divine action. This equity, along with this legal sense of being made right, is what we are fastening together into one word - the word righteousness. This faith stands on equal ground, righteous mercy given through Christ, with the faith of the first apostles.

The convict does not have the right to decide what is fair and balanced for the judge. Fair and balanced to him would be to let him go, maybe let him work off an agreed upon amount of debt to the court or to the victim. Fair and balanced for the judge is that no amount of working will pay off the debt now incurred. Only the judge can determine what is the fair and balanced sentence in each case. In a larger sense God needs also to be able to do this same thing for any other man or woman that pleads for his mercy in an equitable unbiased manner as well. God's only bias is

towards HIS Son, therefore HIS equitable mercy extends to those placed under the righteousness of the Son.

## **Of Righteous Compassion**

The biblical concept of equity of character and act is much different from the more popular modern nebulous view of an "all compassionate non-judgmental God". Their view strips away God's right to judge, God's right to convict and sentence, God's potential decision towards mercy and true compassion, God's right to do so to anybody else at any other time. This view does away with God's equity of character and act. Instead, the convict gets to decide, he is his own judge. It is not he that needs to be made right with God, it is God that needs to be made right to him. The idea of an all compassionate non-judgmental God suits the convict just fine but, no one else. I would counter that the all compassionate non-judgmental God has rather no compassion at all.

We are either heading towards justifying ourselves by our beliefs and actions or else we are heading towards Christ making us right with the Father by His. God shows HIS compassion in that with deliberate intention in order to satisfy/balance the holy and just demands of all HIS good character, HE sent HIS Christ our Lord and Savior to all of fallen mankind to once and for all meet all the irreducible requirements of true righteousness. Where we could do none of this for ourselves, HE provided HIS Christ. HIS Christ has done this; this rather is such a great and compassionate thing.

To the many saints called to glory and virtue, God gives the ability to recognize this righteousness of God and Savior and to acknowledge it. The grace and peace of it multiply in this ability given to recognize and acknowledge it. God's divine power gives us all things pertaining to life and godliness, through this channel of recognition and acknowledgment. And because of the extreme effect of said righteousness and the

given recognition and acknowledgment to it, we become neither barren nor unfruitful because without it we are blind and shortsighted and have forgotten that we have been purged by it from our former sins. Plain and simple just a Peter here states.

So now, as an exercise for all of us to run through I would like to take some verses that contain this word Dikaiosune (righteousness) and I would like to replace our word righteousness with the better understanding "equity of character and act toward justification".

kjv@1Corinthians:1:30 @ But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and "equity of character and act toward justification", and sanctification (purity), and redemption (full ransom):

kjv@2Corinthians:5:21 @ For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the "equity of character and act toward justification" of God in him.

kjv@Romans:3:25 @ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (means of expiation/atonement/mercy seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his "equity of character and act toward justification" for the remission (toleration) of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

kjv@Philippians:3:9 @ And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the "equity of character and act toward justification" which is of God by faith:

Now, don't these verses take on a whole new light with our increased recognition and acknowledgement of what the Apostles mean for them to say?

## **Of Righteous Judgment - The Larger Picture**

One further point I would like to add into Peter's outline here concerning God and Savior's righteousness. Most of this comes from Peter's fellow apostle John's

BookOfRevelation and what his top down picture of prophecy presents. There he describes the final vanquishing of 'Mystery Babylon The Great' ( kjv@Revelation:17:2-5) - 'Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth'.

From man's vantage point God's righteousness is a judgment of individuals. From prophecy's vantage it is more so a judgment upon one particularly corrupt spiritual influence:

**Revelation 17:2 kjv**

*(2) With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

Satan and 'MYSTERY BABYLON', his historic throne of influence, are well protected by the popular concept of the "non-judgmental all compassionate" God. With this concept it could be theorized that God has been compassionate and will ever be, even toward the primary cause of deep dark worldwide spiritual sickness. It says either that God is wanting this resultant death and disease to plague us, or else that HE powerless to do anything about it. That is the what the very popular concept has to say about God's righteousness. How offensive must that view be to God.

We could be short-sighted concerning God's righteousness as well if we leave this only to the judgment of individuals and not the judgment of Satan and 'Mystery Babylon'. It is obvious that this is a very important matter to God as it consumes a great deal of focus in prophecy. It sure to consume a great deal of focus in God's eye towards righteousness.

Our God is compassionate, compassionate in a very righteous way. Our God can be judgmental, judging in a very righteous way. This same God can be merciful, showing mercy in a very righteous way. God can be all of these things toward us and

more. HE can be these things at the same time, one thing need not subtract from the other. And HE can be equitable and just without ever once compromising. This is God and Savior's righteousness and it is irreducible to our further considerations because it is the very basis of the "like precious faith" of which Peter is describing.

Christ is the center point at which all the uncompromising demands of God's manifold righteousness meet together. At no other point in our universe does the meeting of these requirements completely converge or emanate. It is either found in Christ Jesus or nowhere else.

It is time for us who call ourselves Christians, who have perhaps known these things but have been stirred now into fuller remembrance, to recognize and acknowledge exactly these very things!

Appendix Resources: [DikaiosuneRighteousness](#) [TorreyRighteousnessOfGod](#)

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# Chapter Three

## Grace and Peace Multiplied

### **2Peter 1:2 kjv**

*(2) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,*

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Could it be as simple as the more I become familiar with the righteousness of God and Savior (now Lord), recognize what it is and acknowledge it, the more at grace and peace I will be? Why then is not everyone familiar?

"Because the carnal mind is enmity (hostile) against God..." kjv@Romans:8:7

## **Of Enmity**

To this very day I can still recall the feeling of this enmity in my mind prior to this "obtaining". It felt as if God and I were like magnets turned onside, pushing so hard against one another so that we could not be brought together. The closer HE got to me, it seemed the further I would move away. Perhaps you have sensed this opposition in the eyes of a wild horse about to be broken and tamed. The horse desires to see itself as wild and free; for whatever that means. Yet it sees the other horses coming alongside him, mounted, confident, loyal to their human riders even into the fiercest of battle. Little by little it is the trainer's intention to bring the foal to into a grace and peace with its greater purpose. Turned now magnetic face to face, what was once irresistibly opposed to, the very same two objects all of a sudden became attracted.

There are two forms of grace and peace available for our considerations today, grace and peace with God, grace and peace with the world. The world is much like the wild horse. It knows no better. It does not have the experience of anything other. It fears and resists what it knows nothing of and the changes that this foreign mysterious thing might bring. Like the horse, it is willing even to resort to violence if corralled and cornered. But why is this? Is it all because of who is in charge and who then is not?

The Apostle James wrote "*...know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of*

God " kjv@James:4:4. Well there's that word "enmity" again. Grace and peace with God and Lord is a fearful mysterious thing. The natural instinct is to resist it at all costs. Doesn't God intend something much better for each of us? Isn't our typical reaction to God then a feral impulse?

Our first task in this next section of commentary is to develop this idea of "Grace" and "Peace" being "multiplied":

- Grace meaning God's gracious manner or act causing a grateful influence over us. (see: dict:strongs G5485 )
- Peace meaning a joining back together or setting as one again. (see: dict:strongs G1515 )
- Multiplied meaning substantial increase. (see: dict:strongs G4129 )

Influence, setting as one, ever-increasing, the three things all moving hand in hand is the way to think of this.

Our second task shall be to focus this much-needed and increasing spiritual state of the redeemed heart and its reflection upon life upon the conditions of possessing and growing the EpignosisKnowledge of God and Jesus Christ. Knowledge here meaning to recognize and or acknowledge. In other words, the multiplying factor behind this grace and peace is the recognition and acknowledgment of God and Christ. What is being recognized and acknowledged connects the reader back to the original statement of the "righteousness of God and our Savior".

## **Of Enmity - A First Hand Look**

I would like to share with you an experience I once had with enmity that first reopened my eyes to its human size and shape and significance. Until this odd occurrence, I had not made the connections of it to Peter's statement of grace and



peace.

My wife and I were in New Orleans with friends and family the night before embarking on a Caribbean cruise from that port. We decided to take a stroll early evening through the French Quarters before all the drunks and crazies infiltrated. About sun down as we were preparing to leave, I met upon a group of Christian men from Baton Rouge setting themselves up right outside the club, out in the middle of the pedestrian street, with a tall wooden cross. They stood with arms locked around that cross silent unless inquired of. The Cross of Christ Jesus was left to do all of the talking. I stepped out to meet and speak with them. What I saw ensue out there made immediate connections from the stark evidences of world's spiritual enmity to the better meaning of Peter's grace and peace multiplied statement.

Enmity was coming at this cross from all directions, believe me; even directions that I did not expect. These men were spit on, called every single name in the book, laughed at and scorned. Yet they remained silent, perhaps an occasional bible verse or a quiet hymn hummed acappella. As I spoke to one of them, getting to know better their courageous story, I too became the object of the passing crowd's many insults. I even observed what I believe to be demonic activity. It was not this expected type of reaction however that most disturbed me.

It was not just the anti cross pagans that made it very clear that we (now I am included) had no business making such a spectacle in the Quarters. There are Christians that respond to this and similar occurrences even years later with "What was it we expected"? That Cross at sunset on Bourbon Street offends their Christian sensibilities by it provoking the masses to anger, disturbing the civil peace, putting other Christians image and safety at danger.

Later, in the bedtime comfort of our dock side hotel, I had chance to gather my thoughts and draw my mind to more meaningful conclusion. I thought of Apostles such as Paul and Peter and John, peaceful and loving men. They were so often

mistreated, not only by the pagans whom they expected this treatment from but, from Jews and Christians within their own ranks. They did not hide themselves from abuse, no, doing so would have meant hiding from God. While there are cases of evangelists pushing too hard, conveying the wrong message, it is plain to see that not all cases can be lumped together; by some Christians though they are thus linked.

You see, there are those believers that are not so much focused on grace and peace with God and Savior as they attempt to remain at grace and peace with this world. In one unplanned incident, while embarking on a simple personal vacation, I not only experienced the overwhelming evidence of the world's vile enmity against the Cross of Jesus, but also the hostilities from Christians compromising grace and peace with God to grace and peace with the world. One cannot serve the ideals and intents of two opposite masters. Peter was at a grace and peace being a "servant and apostle of Jesus", not servant and apostle of "getting along".

I have since seen many more evidences of this enmity from both opposition camps, enmity in its more subtle and more violent forms. It is a disturbing understanding now I must learn to keep myself at grace and peace about. Jesus had warned us of it early on to not take offense to these inevitable hostile public and private reactions ( kjv@John:16:1-4). To do this, I must keep myself at grace and peace with God and Lord Jesus Christ through the increasing EpignosisKnowledge recognition and acknowledgment, regardless what might ever come from these others.

**Of "...my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth,  
give I unto you" kjv@John:14:27**

"Grace and peace" is a very common greeting in Peter's culture, other apostles have used the phrase in their introductory writings as well. If left to that we wouldn't need to take further notice. However, "*...multiplied unto you through the knowledge*

*of God and of Jesus our Lord* " makes this common greeting much more of a theological statement and therefore worthy of much contemplation.

If grace and peace means grace and peace with the world, what business on earth would the EpignosisKnowledge "of God and our Lord Jesus Christ" have multiplying it? We are not talking about something intended to take the peace that the world already has and make it better or make more of it. Understand that the two are at complete enmity with each other. If however grace and peace with God and Jesus is meant, then that kind of grace and peace is something new and divinely given.

The simple fact is that God desires grace and peace with us. We should desire grace and peace with HIM, not grace and peace with this animus disrespectful world. In order for this to occur though, several important things about our relationship with HIM have to change. These are changes that in the past times, before this "obtaining", we would have taken much offense to and very much resist. Grace and peace with change makes for grace and peace with God. To make those changes easier for us the process requires more and more EpignosisKnowledge of the person and work of God and Christ. Thus, there is a multiplication, an easing more and more into it, an additional relief of the tension continuing between us, the more we come to recognize and acknowledge who God and Christ are.

The righteousness of God and Savior has made it possible for us now to come to a grace and peace in a very real sense. It is a grace and peace that would not be possible for us any other way. THEIR righteousness has brought about the regeneration of the spirit that has long been dead within us. The sacrifice of Christ's own blood purges us from the sins we have long carried in us. The purchasing of our souls from the clutches of sin and death, the imputing of Christ's righteousness over top of us making us right with God, the indwelling of His Holy Spirit to set us apart and to guide us and to comfort us, the calling to further glory and virtue, all of these gigantic changes are necessary before there can be any hope of any real grace and

peace. Only the righteousness of God and Savior can do all of this for us.

Before we even knew that God and Savior were doing all of this, THEY had already procured this possibility for change. Divine mercy and grace are the key components of this righteousness that have made this great thing possible. We were not looking for this righteousness. We do not deserve this grace and peace. It is all given by their mercy and grace. It is not a grace and peace as the world would know or want it; not in any way shape or form.

It was not long after my own "obtaining faith" experience that I began to realize that the more grace and peace the righteousness of God and Christ brought me into, the more that my close friends became at odds and opposed to my new faith as a result. Friends with whom I had been at most grace and peace with in this world were pushing me away, not by my choice mind you, by theirs. The magnetic polarity works both ways you see. I can not blame them however, before my "obtaining" I would have reacted the same way if this had happened to another of my buddies first. It took me a long time to come to grace and peace with this additional consequence. One will find that there are many such stepping stones along the path to greater grace and peace there to try us. It is not just a one time step forward for us into grace and peace, neither is the process stagnate. It comes in stages, with sacrifices, each step challenging. Therefore in this sense it multiplies.

**Of "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me". kjv@Mark:8:34**

So what else can we say about this grace and peace?

When Jesus called Peter, Jesus asked Peter to leave his wife, his dad, his nets and boats, his entire life up to this calling behind. Jesus offered very little indication of where Peter would be heading, or when he would be back, or even if he would be

back. All that was left Peter was to trust Jesus (whom he had just met). Maybe that then is another way to explain grace and peace: overwhelming trust in Jesus.

Did Peter have this trust beforehand or did Jesus give Peter this trust?

Now Jesus does not always call everyone to the same drastic thing. He does in the ultimate respect require complete surrender, but not in the same illustrative way. I recall Paul exhorting one of his congregations to stay in the station of life where they were first called ( kjv@1Corinthians:7:20). Oftentimes that station is just as difficult. If they were farmers, they were to remain farmers. Married, remain married. Slaves, remain slaves. That is not to say that they are not disciples and apostles of Christ, ambassadors of the gospel. It is to mean that they are to be this "like precious" form of servant to Jesus Christ from within their present stations of life. In so doing they will still surrender all of themselves just as much as Peter did to Christ. These stations of godly service require an overwhelming trust in Jesus as well, especially the more extreme of them.

Did the Corinthians have this trust beforehand or did Jesus then give this to them? Do we? Will HE for us as well?

### **Of Trust - Many Smaller Stepping Stones**

Jesus, after Peter had crossed several of these stepping stones, told Peter that there would be one major stepping stone added to his path in the end. Jesus spoke of a baptism similar to His own that this future Apostle would be baptized into: death for the Gospel's sake. Imagine having to come to grace and peace with that. This would not be something any of us would easily be at grace and peace about. It is rare that one is asked at the start to dive from this high and intimidating of a cliff without having practiced from safer rocks. Trust on this ultimate scale is a progression of smaller prerequisite steps. God's design is to stretch our ability to trust further and

further beyond our current self imposed comfort level.

Let's remind ourselves that the object of our trust is better focused on God and Lord rather than what might happen to us. It is to say that no matter what should happen, it is God and Lord that we will ultimately trust. While Peter wrote this epistle to us, there are a whole lot of pressures still on his plate, the type of pressures that the majority of us shy away from. Yet, his focus fixates on the gracious influence that God is having on his heart and its reflections of life. Our focus should be much like his.

Life means something different to Peter now under this righteous influence. He sees things in terms of God's divine power having given him all things pertaining to life and godliness. He sees things in terms of a calling to Christ's glory and virtue, as promises made and fulfilled allowing for his and our escape from the corruptions of this world, the ability to share in the benefit of Christ's most holy nature. He has every reason to be diligent about moving this obtained faith forward into his daily world. By now having this gracious influence, he can respond with extraordinary courage, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, kindness, sacrificial love. He can see an abundance building up around him as he makes his way toward the Eternal Kingdom, giving him a most blessed assurance. It is this epignosis of his righteous God and Lord that is multiplying his grace and peace. This can be our outlook just as easy: "like" and "precious".

This modern age seems to expect grace and peace to appear as something more like calm and quiet, smooth sailing, no trouble from without and no trouble from within. Christians of Peter's day had nothing of the like, society hunted them down, oppressed and persecuted them, at times being most savage. What the "like precious faith" asked of these men and women was to come to an additional grace and peace with God regardless of what was to happen. One of the last things Jesus had told His disciples was:

**John 15:18-21 kjv**

*(18) If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*

*(19) If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

*(20) Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*

*(21) But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*

To disciples of the earlier ages "grace and peace" had a different meaning than it has for most people today. "Grace and peace" was much more about God and Christ and what God and Christ were doing. It was about the powerful influence that the Godhead was having, bringing like precious believers together under their wing. Despite all the world's resistance against these believers, God's influence and unification was substantial and multiplying. Grace and peace are not what everyone else would expect to feel in a similar troublesome position about their present truth and condition. It is where God and Christ are found in the midst of all this other by believers familiar with HIS righteousness.

When we speak of being at grace and peace in this modern-day, sad say it is more to do with our finances or with our relationships or psyche or emotional stability. Grace and peace like this are for but a moment and a moment later what we thought we had is fleeting. For some grace and peace are an expectation we place upon others, it is their responsibility to put us at grace and peace and keep us there, be it a parent or a spouse or a pastor or political party; and it is their fault if we are not. For others, grace and peace are for a date always in the future. Rarely does it have anything to do with what God has already done or is doing.

What we are trying to do there is build a grace and peace based upon our own requirements and comfort levels. Not the same things as Peter here is talking about.

I think it better to say that because I know God and Savior to be righteous in these many manifold ways, because I am coming to know more and more of who they are and how they operate, yes I am at grace and peace with them, and yes that grace and peace are multiplying even in the face of any stepping stones THEY still have for me to cross".

### **Of The Embodiment Of Grace and Peace**

Before Christ came and proved Himself, men and women around the world would greet one another with some form similar to this wish for grace and peace. Many have continued in the same vein ever since. Sincere though they are, neighborly, what is it they mean by that? Do they mean be at grace and peace with the way one's life is in rebellion to God's? To be at grace and peace with one's spiritual lifelessness and dirtiness. To be at grace and peace about accepting the ways of the world?

For some people grace and peace are grace and peace with the Law of Moses; which no man has ever been able to completely keep and it is his constant accuser. For others, it is relief from whatever ill at the moment troubles them that they are seeking grace and peace about. What if that trouble is actually the light of the pesky truth trying to break through our bleak darkness? Should we be at grace and peace about trying to hide ourselves from that light? It can be a very tricky thing this grace and peace.

Christ, when He finally entered into the picture, became for us the embodiment of grace and peace. By the ransom price paid with His own blood He is for us grace and peace. Jesus Christ is the gracious manner and act causing divine influence upon



the heart and its reflections of life. Jesus Christ is the setting as one again.

I would venture to guess that the majority of people around us do not have this influence and union upon them. I would venture that in some shape or fashion or degree that they are all at enmity with the very notion. Without Christ there is none of this influence or rejoining, there is only the Law. Grace and peace of this magnitude are only embodied in Christ Jesus.

### **Of An Often Overlooked Fact**

There is another consideration that we must give to this "grace and peace" before we move on. This is essential to the larger picture.

It is easy for us to get caught considering this from only our human vantage point, the grace and peace we now feel towards God. Yes it is important in a certain sense to ask ourselves: are we at grace and peace with God and Savior? There is a second and more important vantage point from which to consider grace and peace, God's vantage point: How does God now feel about us? Is God now at grace and peace with us? Could HE ever be without there being HIS Christ to intercede?

It is obvious to me that the God of the Bible is not a God who is at grace and peace with the world. When it says "for God so loved the world that HE gave HIS only begotten Son" that is not to say that God is in any way at grace and peace with us. Just like you and I, we can dearly love another person and not yet be at grace and peace with them. Our hearts can be torn at the seams by their callous and disrespectful thoughts and actions. Are we to be at grace and peace with them during all of this? Is God?

It is very difficult to be at grace and peace with man when man is so at enmity with the one true God. Why do they have such enmity? Because HE needs them to change so that HE can once again be at grace and peace with them. But they will not

change. They see little need to change. They would just as soon change HIM into their own vain images as change themselves. And without a proper image of HIM it is very unlikely significant change is even possible.

God will not be satisfied (at grace and peace) to leave man in this state, HE is determined to move them towards a much better situation. At the very moment Christ fulfilled all that this program so righteously demanded, then God could forgive those men and women who cling to this Christ to be set at HIS grace and peace again, having the righteousness of Christ imputed on to them. They could not be this righteousness for themselves, they had to borrow or "partake" of it from Christ's.

This is a remarkably holy God the Bible speaks of here. Holy because of such a great love; a real and enduring eternal love. Holy because of such a great insistence upon the just demands of HIS righteousness has been kept intact without compromise. Holy because of such tremendous plan to recover as many souls as possible back into HIS love and yet meet HIS own just demands necessitates sacrificing the life of HIS own Son to accomplish this very holy and divine purpose.

God's grace and peace with us has come at a very steep price to HIM. But, our grace and peace with God has come at no cost to us; only our simple belief and submission to HIS intended change. Now in His resurrection we have a most worthy chief priest, Lord and intercessor. The more each of us come to recognize and acknowledge what righteousness it took in order for God to come to grace and peace with us, the more our grace and peace with HIM should begin to multiply.

Appendix Resources: CharisGrace - Word Study EirenePeace - Word Study EpignosisKnowledge - Word Study DikaiosuneRighteousness - Word Study

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## Chapter Four

### Power and Providence and Calling

#### **2Peter 1:3 kjv**

*(3) According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

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Notice the punctuation in the English? Verses 1-4 are all part of the same sentence; one complete thought. Chapter and verse markers were not added to the Bible until the 16th century. While verse marks are very handy for us to reference and quote from, if we are not careful, they also can chop up the author's intended meaning. Therefore, we have to consider that the power, providence and calling that Peter is about to describe to us also has a direct connection back to righteousness of God and Savior and the grace and peace being multiplied through epignosis.

Righteousness directs divine power, what it is, where it is to go, what it is to do, how it goes about doing it. God directs HIS providence and calling by the same means. If it is not sourced in righteousness and or does perform righteousness it is not divine by its very nature. "All things pertaining to life and godliness" could, if we let it, paint a much broader canvas in our minds than righteousness would better have for it. Not all things that we consider having to do with life and godliness fit the source nor destination of righteousness.

One might interpret Peter's statement as "whatever I think that I need, God is going to provide it". No, HE will only provide what is righteousness sourced and righteousness directed. To interpret this as Peter meant it, one has to place power and providence and calling back into the entire context of what he has said and the righteousness in which we must consider it.

## **Of Righteousness - Still**

Let us begin on the topic of righteousness. In context this righteousness is best understood in that it has:

- brought about a special and costly like precious faith (v1).
- brought about a special grace and peace (v2).

- provided for us all things pertaining to a special life and godliness (v3).
- promised the means of escaping the corruption of this present world (v4).
- allowed for us to partake of a special nature only available in Christ (v4).

This is a good list of details to be starting off with. All of this is righteous in its conception, its implementation, its execution and end result. Divine power and providence could stand firm without hesitation or compromise in support of all this. Not everything that we would define as needing or wanting by us meets this clear of a definition however. Many of the things that we would be asking HIM for would work against or in opposition to these stated divine objectives. Why would God provide us that which works against HIS objectives? It is obvious that "all things pertaining to..." does not mean "all things" according to us.

For instance, there are many people and religions that view God as a magic gum ball machine. They insert their personal merits in the coin slot, pull down on the handle of prayer, bingo - what they have asked for appears. What does this type of view say about God in concern to HIS righteousness? It says that HE is a machine, and we are the machine's operators. It says that gum balls are a matter of having enough merit; and we get to decide what is and what is not a good enough merit.

What? has God worked against HIS own stated objectives? HE meant for us to have a special and costly like precious faith, a special grace and peace, all things pertaining to a special life and godliness, the means of escaping the corruption of this present world, to partake of a special nature only available in Christ; but these silly gum balls are all that we ever asked for? What does this then say about HIS power to do anything other than what we ask?

No sir, only the righteousness of God can be viewed when considering the divine actions of power, providence and calling. The source and destination of all this action is the righteousness of God and Savior. We in turn connect to this

righteousness through EpignosisKnowledge - our recognition and acknowledgment of God and Lord.

Neither can we eliminate the person of Christ from any of this equation as most the people of this world do. Without Christ there is not the like precious faith. Oh, there is faith like any other man or woman could imagine for themselves, but that is not like faith obtained through the righteousness of God and Savior. Without Christ there is not this multiplying grace and peace. Oh, there is grace and peace as any other man or woman could make for themselves, somewhat, but that is not like the grace and peace brought about through the death and resurrection of God's only-begotten.

Christ redeems man from the sin debt incurred. His cleansing and regeneration affect the soul so completely. His setting apart and re-purposing of a man and the assurance of hope in Him, these are the things that bring a man to a suitable Christ influenced "like precious" form of faith, grace and peace.

It follows then that without Christ, there is not the receiving of a Christ given life nor godliness. Oh, there is a life as any other man or woman would presume is a godliness for themselves, but there is not the life and godliness that divine and miraculous power would bring upon us. That form of life would have a form of godliness, its own, but deny the true power thereof - God's (see: kjv@2Timothy:3:5). That would be because of there not being the righteousness of God and Savior received by us in the EpignosisKnowledge of Him (Christ) who has called us to glory (His glory) and virtue (His virtue).

How easy it is for us to chop this whole message up and not see all this as one thing better as we should.

## **Of Power**

"Power" is dict:strongs G1411 "Dunamis" meaning miraculous power, and

"hath given" dict:strongs G1433 is "dōreomai" which is to bestow gratuitously or give without charge or payment.

Throughout His life on Earth, Jesus exhibited this miraculous power to every person brought to Him. Not only did Jesus use this power, He did so free of charge or expectation in every case. These two things, miraculous power and bestowing to each by grace, point Jesus out as having this DunamisPower like no other person in history. These many divine personal exhibitions were only preparatory to our understanding of the further power it would soon come to mean for all mankind.

In Jesus' death and resurrection the Father exhibits even more miraculous power. Like no other person on record, the Holy Father has confirmed and glorified of HIS Son by such miraculous power. So miraculous is it that it is hard for most of us to grasp and believe. Peter himself struggled to believe it early on, even though Jesus had told him in advance of it on several occasions. Peter and others even had a personal glimpse of it shown on the mount of transfiguration and still found it difficult. It is a hard thing to wrap one's head around no doubt, but shouldn't such a confirmation and glorification of God's anointed savior so be? If it had not been such, what reason would there be for us to take notice of it?

We should not limit the divine power of God to some future date: the glorious day of our eternal salvation. The text here makes it clear that God exerts this power towards everything pertaining to life and godliness here and now as well. We are not left to our own resource and determination until that glorious day.

There is a long distance we will need to travel between here and there that will daily require this divinely given provision in our daily affairs. It is too far a distance and too steep an incline for us to go it alone, yet how many of us operate our Christian faith as if this further need is not so. We must recognize and acknowledge the person and the power behind the person calling us to these lofty heights, rely upon Him and His power to get us all the way there.

Consider everything that God's power has to accomplish in order to transport us into this calling to glory and virtue. It has to:

- sever the reigns of sin and death to which we have been bound
- ransom us from the debt and enslavement to corruption we have for so many generations owed
- quicken our lifeless spirits
- transform and make us into the kind of men and women capable of receiving and partaking in His glory and virtue
- conform us as predestined to the image of God's Holy Son.

It is no small task being asked of God here. God must exert this much miraculous power and righteousness else the calling we are on would fail. It is certain that we could not have performed this ourselves and by natural means?

## **Of Life and Godliness**

"...all things pertaining to life". Life is dict:strongs G2222 "Zoe". ZoeLife means life both figurative and literal. This is not just the life that you and I possess for ourselves to do as we see fit, it is a life that is called to a special glory and virtue. Our lives are now called out away from the existence that we once knew into a new life, like a seed sown in the compost of that former life and has sprouted. Divine power has provided everything required for this new life to continue growing onward, the sun and air above, the nutrients and moisture below.

"...all things pertaining to.... godliness". Godliness is dict:strongs G2150 "Eusebeia". EusebeiaGodliness means piety or the reverence with which that life is lived. This is not our former life nor is this our former godliness. We had a godliness then, so we imagined, but look where that godliness got us. The Pharisees also had a



godliness, but look where it got them. Their type of righteousness lead them to oppose and deny the very Christ that stood face to face before them, to do away with Him in whatever fashion that they thought that they could. No, this godliness Peter speaks of is a godliness God has handed down to us. We must recognize and acknowledge the person and the power calling us to this glory and virtue. Everything pertaining to this godliness is thus given.

## **Of Glory and Virtue**

The word for glory that Peter chose to use dict:strongs G1391 "Doxa". DoxaGlory is a word often associated with God; God is this glory, not us, not anything we do. If there be anything that we would consider ourselves to glory in, it is that we would rather "glory in God's glory". God does have a considerable amount of glory for us to glory in. Compared to HIS glory our own personal glory is next to nothing.

Not only is God glorious, everything surrounding HIS presence is glory. God cannot escape HIS glory. Christ is the express image of God's glory:

### **Hebrews 1:3 kjv**

*(3) Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

Not only is Christ the express image, He has been raised back into this immediate presence of God's glory:

**1Timothy 3:16 kjv**

*(16) And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*

**Hebrews 2:9-10 kjv**

*(9) But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.  
(10) For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

Here again there is the glory as we once knew it. How easy it still is for us to glory in the "faith" itself not in Jesus, in the "Law and Moses" not Jesus, in "Mary" not Jesus, in the "Church" itself and all its comfy trappings and not Jesus, in icons and symbology and rituals and works and missions and repetitions and feasts and observances etc... not Jesus. These things, while they do have their place in our new life and godliness, they do not have "the place" or take "the place" nor share "the place" of "the glory" found alone in God the Father and God the Son called Jesus. Let us not ever lose sight of that.

Virtue dict:strongs G703 "Arete". AreteVirtue means manliness, as in being a man of valor or intrinsic/attributed excellence. It is also translated once as praise or praiseworthy. God and Christ indeed have been this for us. This we should also become for our brethren sake in response to God. We cannot summon this form of valor up from within ourselves but, it comes as God and Savior's righteous effect deposits it into us. We can only become this as a result of God and Lord's miraculous

power which has been given (without charge or expected repayment) through the Epignosis Knowledge recognition and acknowledgment of HE who called us into this.

I fear again that we confuse the valor of the new life with the manliness of the past life. It is one thing to be courageous towards a moral excellency. So many world religions and cults exhort its followers to be such. Even the majority of non-religious point themselves to be of a virtuous fabric. It is not that people are not trying to do what is right, it is that they are only trying to do what is right in their own eyes. What is right in each of our own eyes or in the eyes of the majority may be right as it concerns us. That does not guarantee that it will be right in God's eye, it might well be a corrupted right or a right that only goes so far.

Virtue is a two-sided coin. On one surface it reads "knowing what is ultimate and right", on the other surface "the valor to actually do it". Each coin carries a certain value or worth based upon the sum output of these two things. The world's coinage is worth a great deal among its own, however, it is worth very little in comparison to God's. On the one side of it the world knows little of what is right in God's eye, on the other it lacks the valor to overcome the extreme forces that come against it getting its mission done.

The history of the universal church body is a road paved by frequent boulders of worldly virtue masquerading as like precious faith virtue. It has stood out virtuous as the world would see it in its political inquisitions and military conquests but, not virtuous in God's. Other sections of the road have been ruts knowing what is right but, lacking the courage to fight the odds and opposition of making it happen. Peter could well have reminded the followers of his time the evidences of this already exhibited in the faith of the universal body. So much more now today can we.

## **Of Calling**

We live in a day and age that suffers from both the lack of direction and the means of getting there. It is as if our calling is to life and godliness instead of glory and virtue. Self empowers our lives and godliness instead of God's DunamisPower. We suppose that our calling is to be the best person we can make ourselves to be. Nowhere in this text is this notion expressed.

Our calling is not to be the best people we can make ourselves to be, it is to be in the presence of the remarkable person who has called us be with Him. We have not the power within ourselves to live a life or perform a godliness worthy of getting us into this glorious and virtuous presence. DunamisPower has to provide unto us the "all things pertaining" to live such a life and godliness that is instead worthy. It is then not our worthiness that brings us, it is His worthiness, His power that brings us into His glory and virtue. Self has no part of this equation other than to recognize and acknowledge who it is performing all of this.

"All things pertaining to" the life and godliness points us to His life and godliness. His miracle filled life and godliness are more than sufficient get us to where He has called us to go. He has sacrificed His life and godliness, and in return has received it back from the Father confirmed and glorified. Now that same life and godliness of His is graciously shared to benefit those of us who are without a valid life and godliness of our own. We now sacrifice our lesser life and godliness as has been modeled so well for us; for no other reason than it is right for us to do so.

How different this faith is from the way that we today approach it. It is little wonder that we are fruitless against the growing corruptions and false teachings within the faith that oppose this.

## **Of Epignosis of Him Who has Called Us**

The recognition and acknowledgment of Christ is important to the glory and

virtue that our lives and godliness have now been grafted into. Just as important as it is to the multiplication of the grace and peace needed to operate in it. This epignosis is aware and sensitive to both the righteousness at the source of all this and the miraculous power which drives and sustains it.

This righteousness is not just another righteousness. It is "the righteousness", the only righteousness, the one all others attempt to counterfeit and assume for their own. Miraculous DunamisPower is not just theoretical, symbolic, mythological or allegorical. It is the inherent abilities found in the actual divine person of Jesus Christ. It is the divinely confirmed and glorified Christ resurrected whom for us all things have long been promised including our escape and partaking.

Appendix Resources: DunamisPower - Word study ZoeLife - Word study EusebeiaGodliness - Word study KaleoCalling - Word study DoxaGlory - Word study AreteVirtue - Word Study TorreyCalling - Doctrinal Study TorreyGodsGrace - Doctrinal Study

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## Chapter Five

### Great and Precious Promises

#### **2Peter 1:4 kjv**

*(4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

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Four verses, one sentence; Peter's compound thought continues. To understand this next section, I would like to first approach the concept of corruption.

## **Of Corruption**

What is it that we are to escape, lust or corruption? The casual reader is likely to interpret this statement as an escape from lust, as in sexual desires or perversions. If this is so, then the use of the word corruption makes little sense. Corruption is seldom associated with sexual desire. More times than not it pertains to criminal behavior, a crime boss, a politician or the like. Lust must point toward spiritual corruption rather than corruption pointing to physical lust; how driven one is to be corrupt.

Now that is not the easiest thing to explain. Very few of us in our right mind feel driven toward corruption. That is because we have known nothing in our lives other than the driving forces born of this world and self. It also is because we know not what the measure is that our lives are being compared against. Not having this knowledge nor the comparable standard makes us assume that neither our drive nor our end product are in any way corrupt.

It would be better for us to think of this corruption in comparison to perfection. Corruption would be the measurable distance between perfection and our present imperfect state. No matter how close one is to the mark, not being on the mark involves a measurable distance of corruption.

Self would say that there is no perfect measure and be right in terms of human behavior, but wrong in its conclusion that mankind is the only available standard. No, the standard to be compared to is of God, HIS intended design for man and woman. How far are we off from that? How much are we driven not to meet that design standard? The Bible leaves us with very little doubt. Even those patriarchs closest to

that standard were a considerable degree off. Nor could they stay close to that mark for any duration.

The argument then is that God has given us too high of a standard. I am going to answer that with something that may shock you. The standard was not set high for us, it was intentionally set that high for Christ. You see, from the time of Adam, the mode of operation has been for self to become a god in its own eyes. Gods not in the sense of creating whole new universes, gods in the sense of determining its own standards, set to levels that it can achieve for itself. Having achieved its own standards, self thinks itself justified and in no need for a Christ. This is the way it wants things to be. Self drives itself towards this position with its every hunger and lust.

From day one, God had promised to Adam that his generations would be brought successfully back out of this by means of a Christ. Man was now dead of spirit, he would not be able to pull himself back out of this. This unconditional covenant was sealed with a symbol of blood sacrifice, in this case of an innocent animal, whose skin would then be provided as a covering for the guilt of sins. That same symbol became the fulfillment of Christ.

The comparable standard cannot be one's own self. It cannot be the standard of this world. It cannot either be the Law of Moses, for only by the Law can it be proven that no mortal man can ever attain to this standard. No, the standard of the Law was given for Christ alone to attain to so that then the dead "gods in their own eyes" mindset can be extracted by means of spiritual regeneration.



**John 15:24 kjv**

*(24) If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.*

We can also think of the lust behind corruption as hate. Self has developed an image of God all its own. It does not hate the image that it has made for itself. It loves that image because it suits self's high opinion of itself very well. Instead, it hates the image of God that God has HIMSELF revealed, the image that includes the person and work of Jesus Christ HIS only begotten. The act of producing its own image is hateful to the correct image of God., not as self sees it, as God sees it.

Corruption in the Greek points to dict:strongs G5356 (see: PhthoraCorruption - decay that is ruin). In one important sense corruption has brought about the death and decay of the spirit. In an equal sense it continues to bring the decay and ruin of the physical and emotional and intellectual world that yet remains. Each generation gets further and further away from the faint echos of that long ago living spirit. Still, the "desire to be wise", "to have their eyes opened", "surely God did not mean it" hunger for the forbidden fruit continues even stronger. In turn this drive hastens the final decay and ruin of both man and his self created society.

The physicist would tell us that all matter is in a state of decay; they call that being in a state of entropy. The physiologist tell us that all the cells in our body are on the course to decay. With each replication, the body is one step closer to being unable to support the vital health and life of the human body. We can take this Greek idea of decay and apply it to the world. It is the world's lust that makes for its decay (see: EpithumiaLust - longing for something forbidden).

It is not only the lusts of the flesh and mind that we are talking about here, if it

were, we could escape by our own measures. It still comes down to the image we prefer to have of God versus the image that Jehovah conveys of HIMSELF through Christ and the hunger with which we seek to continue imagining it.

## **Of Partaking**

Why does God's righteous endeavor need to be by such miraculous power? Couldn't HE bring about our escape by more familiar and natural means? No, regeneration requires new life to enter the soul. Couldn't we partake by less foreign and radical means? No, partaking requires the divine nature of Christ of which we have not ever experienced at all. If it seems that Peter's verbiage is overkill that is because the self is still attempting to protect its place in the heart. Self is trying to minimize what all it has done and is not about to give up yet. God's effort is miraculous because has to overpower self's.

You'll notice that it is not the evolution of some super human nature like the utopians would imagine. It is not us making ourselves better and better to the point of some imagined perfection. You'll notice that it is not some evolved political or economic system. It is not any nature of yours or mine or science's or technology's or pharmacology's or philosophy's making. No, the answer is in the truly escaped partaking of His true divine nature.

Now some would think that this means that we will each become Gods or Christs in our own right. Partaking does mean anything of the sort. It means that it is His nature alone, and it remains His nature alone, only that we share in the benefit of His nature being as it is. HE is who He is, and friends we are then all the better for it. This is partaking.

Up till now we have partaken of our own nature which is not entirely ours, it is mostly Adams. We have taken it on and made our own, as has the rest of the world.

Along with this partaking or influence, there is the world's righteousness and there is ours. There is the world's grace and peace, its formulations of life and godliness. There is even its own calling towards its own glory and virtue. Yes there is all of this, but it is the world's nature that is partaken of; the corrupt world remember. It is also the individual influence of man or woman's nature; corrupt man or woman no doubt. Can anyone say that by their own nature and resource they have escaped this world's corruption, or that they even see the need to try, or that divine influence has even been sought for?

The Greek word for partake used by Peter is dict:strongs G2844 koinōnos - a sharer, associate, companion. It means to share in the benefit of another's wealth. Peter is using it to build on the sense of escape. Where we could not associate with God prior to this escape due to HIS holiness and our corruption, now, because of Christ, we can. It is not our nature that we now benefit from, it is Christ's nature, and Christ's alone.

One way to think of this benefit is with justification. My nature will never justify me before my God, no matter how high I think of myself. The world's nature will never justify it before this God, no matter how worthy we all think of it. Only Christ's nature is justifiable before God; as proven by His resurrection and ascension. I benefit therefore from His nature covering over me. What I could not do for myself because of my nature, He has done for me by His. I am as if I was a dead man six feet in the grave who, if not for God's grace sharing the good nature of Christ upon me, would have no escape from this decay both in this life and in the life then to come.

What an amazing statement of faith Peter encapsulates into one complete sentence kjv@2Peter:1:1-4 in this regard of partaking:

1. We partake only because of the righteousness of God and our Savior.  
Now that the recognition and acknowledgment of who is who and what is what

has been given Peter, he cannot help but commit himself to the "like precious faith". It is in this righteous nature of God and Savior Peter gets benefit from.

2. In partaking there is an increasing grace and peace through the recognition and acknowledgment of God and our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace as in God's gracious influence over Peter's life, peace as in being set back as one again with God, with himself, with those around him, with whatever situation the worship and service to this faith leads him into. It is this new influenced and united nature that Peter gets substantial benefit from.
3. Partaking involves a recognition and acknowledgment of having been called into this righteous God and Savior's glory and virtue and that THEIR divine power has provided everything required to make that happen. It is this purpose driven and Spirit empowered nature that Peter gets benefit from.
4. Partaking is not just a desperate hope. All of this is part of a series of great and precious promises made by God Eternal to raise HIS children out of this present world's corruption on the wings of HIS Son's own good nature. These promises are considered great because they exceed the aims of any other human faith or religion. Precious because it cost its Savior His very own blood to secure. It is this long promised and now achieved Christ nature that Peter benefits from.

Does this mean that Peter has escaped all forms of corruption? Well at the very least he has escaped the world's. He is in this world but at the same time he is not of this world. This world is not his, his is a world to come. This world means little or nothing to him, he is no longer a friend of this world and this world is no longer a friend to him. He knows now for certain having witnessed Jesus return from the grave, firstborn of many brethren, for him there is now much more opened up to him beyond this world. Like Peter, there is a glory and a virtue beyond this world's that we

called to, and a path provided for.

Does this mean that Peter is free from his own personal corruptions? Bible context suggests that he must still be on his guard and watchful of his former self. We can be purged of the former nature as he states (verse 9) and yet somehow forget that we have been purged from it. Elsewhere, we are exhorted to crucify self, to mortify sin, to not be entangled again by it, to not make any occasion again for it, to not again give ourselves over to these still possible corruptions.

Does this mean that he is always partaking of Christ's divine nature? Elsewhere, scripture exhorts us to abide in it as if we might not, to persevere in it as if we could retreat, to walk in it as if we stumble, to confess and repent to God and even to one another at every opportunity, to encourage and strengthen one another so as to not fall back into it. No, partaking involves us being escaped and being escaped involves us partaking. Too much of the time too many of us act as if we are neither escaped nor partaking. Without Christ's miraculous influence there is no experience of the grace and at peace. Without Christ's miraculous influence neither is there the receiving of all things pertaining to a quickened life and godliness. We might become blind and shortsighted and forgetful. Our all diligence might become lack. To this escape and partaking we might still be particularly vulnerable and for others quite contagious. Isn't this what Peter is attempting to put us all back into remembrance of?

We know these present truths and yet Peter feels he must be vigilant to be remind us of this.

### **In Review - Verses 1-4**

My mind keeps going back to Peter and the needs that he was attempting to address in the Church in his day and age. The young Church of that day was already facing its own fruitlessness and set backs to the faith. In our day, I fear, we have

institutionalized this ill into our modern religion even more so. How did Peter go about addressing this problem? He used the tools of stirring and remembrance.

Seems that in this day so little stirs us. We speak righteousness as if we know everything there is to know about it; how much of an influence does it have over us? We speak of grace and peace as if we already hold to it; how much of its influence are we actually under? Escape; why does what we are calling escape so closely resemble the corruption of this world? Partaking; is there any similarity in nature between us and Christ? How can the facts on the ground not disturb and stir us?

If we fail at these few core foundations, if our lack of fruit proves our failing, what else then are we failing at?

How did Peter seek to address this? In the opening sentence of this epistle he comes out with guns a blazing, bullet point after bullet point. I would put his opening sentence up against any modern writer's opening. I would put his opening sentence up against their entire sermon or 500 page best-selling book. Peter then continues his counter attack on fruitlessness in his second sentence. Here he lists the specific things fruitful people would add to this special faith. The very same things that unfruitful people neglect.

Peter is using very specific concepts here. The concepts he is using are like bullet shells packed tight with explosive material. When he fires off concepts like "the righteousness of God and Savior" we know that there is so much more to understand than we currently do about it. A Jewish reader might have more of a familiar acquaintance with these concepts than we, but not in conjunction with a risen glorified Christ. Peter does not wait for our minds to unpack each meaning however, he shoots off the next bullet in rapid succession.

It is not so much a lecture of everything we will need to know that he is giving us as it is a brief composite view that we will have to take home, study and then digest. He is stirring us into looking into this further and at the same time drawing upon our

previous remembrance.

I have gathered my study notes on several of these bullets into a resource appendix (see: SeriesAppendix) for your further examination. In fact, I consider these appendixes of greater worth than my own words because they are packed with much essential Holy Scripture; it is the scriptures that I most want to turn your attentions to. Please, please avail yourself of these many resources.

Appendix Resources: PhthoraCorruption - Word study EpithumiaLust - Word study KoinonosPartake - Word Study TorreyDivinePromise - Topical study TorreyDivineNature - Topical study TorreyCovenant - Doctrinal study TorreySin - Doctrinal study TorreyRedemption - Doctrinal study

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## Chapter Six

### The Furnishings of this Faith Top Down

#### **2Peter 1:5-8 kjv**

*(5) And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;*

*(6) And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;*

*(7) And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*

*(8) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

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Second sentence. We begin a very expansive section between verses 5-8 now. This may take us more than one chapter to explain but, first I would like for us to see it for the sum of its parts.

In verses 1-4 Peter has laid down the foundations of the "like precious faith" as Peter sees it. In that section it is all about God's righteousness, God's influence on the heart and oneness, God's divine power providing, God's calling and fulfillment of promises. These things make for our escape from corruption and partaking divine nature. This sturdy foundation is God's doing.

Now in verses 5-8 we have a list of items that we are to furnish this building with. These things are God given fruits of the Spirit, but notice each one is also an actionable item. In the recognition and acknowledgment of who they are and what they have done, we add these things, making for a fruitful productive faith.

You'll note that the list goes from this same Pistis Faith mentioned in verse 1 onward through the list toward Agape Love. Love is the ultimate destination for the "like precious faith. However, what we call love is most often not the agape form of love at all, as evidenced by our fruitlessness. For instance, our lesser form of love is often not compounded by the addition of virtue. The faith train is attempting to make its way down the tracks toward agape, but it derails at the point of virtue, manliness or valor in the pursuit of God's moral excellence. If not there, it jumps the track at the point of knowledge, or else self-restraint, etc.. on down the list. Agape Love cannot be agape without having these agape defining traits.

The lesser form of love goes wherever it wants to go, wherever it is comfortable going. It does things just as it always has done, as best as it can think to do, to the best of its own power and resource. There is not much difference between its output and the output it would have had before these God given foundations became an influential part of it. There is very little question why this effort would come up short and fruitless as far as God would view it, because it lacks HIS influence upon it. It

lacks these defining traits as listed.

## **Of Diligence**

The first and most telling sign when diagnosing our fruitlessness in Christ is our lack of diligence. Diligence means eagerness/earnestness/speed/dispatch. It is not that one does not have faith, it is that they give very little dispatch to the active production of these further things. Faith in Jesus merely for eventual salvation alone is enough for them, nothing broader. Faith like that has difficulty translating into a day to day diligence. Human love, not AgapeLove becomes its export.

Salvation is by faith and faith alone; the sum of all scripture is in agreement. Faith however is meant to be much broader than just salvation, it is to extend into the produce of daily life. It is not that we work to earn or sustain our salvation. It is that we are saved, and so we do all that we can to do with much dispatch in recognition and acknowledgment of the person of our Savior. His love for us is now to be our love for others. His love is defined by this list of actionable items, so then must we define our love with earnestness.

"All" is the key word here suggesting that the Christian should do nothing but these things and do this adding to/furnishing with earnest haste. All is not telling us what specific things to be doing as much as it is how "all" things should be done. All things should be done at all times in this prescribed "like precious" manner.

People are often ask their Pastor "what is God's will for me"? We tend to think in terms of employment or location; perhaps God wants me to go to seminary or bible college or the missions field etc... Before counseling a parishioner one way or the other, the pastor should be looking for signs of these productive faith traits. Does this woman or man show evidence of this "all diligence"? The diligence of adding to their faith these things? A person can be a busybody, but still not be diligent about these

things. Are each of these steps evident as established in the heart and being further developed? If not, why should this person be steered toward the pastorate or the missions field etc...? Lord knows, we have enough of those fruitless people in those positions already.

There is a disconnect between what Peter is describing here and these well intended believers Pastors often find. The believer knows that what Peter is saying is important to someone. They do not see yet however how it could be of importance to them, not being in God's direct employ. It is the perception of who and what job titles are in God's employ that is confusing them.

Peter did not address this "like precious" discourse to employed Pastors and deacons and missionaries etc... He addressed this to "all who have obtained like precious faith with us". Therefore, we are all to add these things because we are all in God's employ, and we are all assigned with the task of producing well defined AgapeLove toward each other and the world at large here and now regardless of any job title. We must give all diligence to add these defining things all of the time in all present and future situations. No further delay or commission is yet necessary. If one was ever to be assigned a mission or pastorate, the task at hand would still remain the same, just that much bigger.

Take the word "All". All is not saying come back to this only when we are having personal problems. It is not saying do this only when it is convenient. It is not saying let your Pastor become all of this for you.

Take the word "Diligence". Diligence is not saying when you get around to it. It is not saying that it will be easy. If it was going to be easy to drive faith all the way to agape, it would not require from us valor or knowledge or temperance or endurance or piety or kindness. No diligence suggests that it is going to require an all consuming effort on our part. That is why most all of us never do it.

Part of the problem might be that in our modern theology we see faith as

standing on its own, it is what is, it is all that it needs to be. What this faith believes in is very nebulous and what it is willing to achieve is very self-motivated. Diligence does not mean self-motivated, it means motivated by God to the point of self-sacrifice; in the better sense.

### **Of Besides This**

"And beside this" should never escape our notice. This clause does not separate the first idea from the next. It states that because of the first idea (the foundations of 1-4) the second idea (furnishing what the foundations have built 5-8) walks alongside as a companion.

The two could be thought of independent of each other in one sense. The foundation can exist without there being the furnishings of it; we see this all the time. The diligent furnishings can exist without there being the rock solid core foundation of "obtained" belief; we see that also. But when the two entities come together, there is something more substantial than either the of two can supply alone. If allowed to do so, the foundations can influence radical transformation upon the secondary actions. The actions become a more accurate recognition and acknowledgment of the direct object for which both entities move forward - God and Savior. This "and beside this" is what it means to "have these things in you and abound". This "and beside this" is what it means to be "fruitful in the knowledge of Christ", so let us not neglect the "and beside this".

Any person, regardless of their belief in Christ, can make themselves appear virtuous, knowledgeable, temperate, patient, pious, kind, charitable. Their diligence towards these matters can be as extreme as the infamous Pharisee or local zealot.

Any person, regardless of their belief in Christ, can make it appear that they believe in the righteousness of God, the influence and oneness of God, the provisions

of, the promises of, the partaking. Their faith can be as extreme and unshakable as the Rock of Gibraltar.

Rare is the person though, except for humblest of all Christians, whom the two entities walk alongside each other with. Now it is not just valor then, it is valor brought upon by the righteousness of God and Savior. It is a valor to see the righteousness take hold, be lived out, presumed and defended.

It is not just GnosisKnowledge then, it is GnosisKnowledge born of the intimate EpignosisKnowledge of God and Lord's righteousness along with grace and peace multiplied. It seeks to know who is who and what is what, how to advance the Lord's banner forward into the spiritual battlefield where the production of AgapeLove stands out.

It is not just temperance, it is temperance backed by righteousness and grace and peace that is born of excellent promises and calling. It is undistracted, disciplined, self-restrained, focused, taking aim to run its course and hit its mark.

It is not just enduring, it is enduring with the joy of righteousness, of grace and peace, of promises and calling, cheerful in the light of such liberating escape. It partakes of a nature so divine, called to a glory and virtue, surpassing any nature it could manufacture on its own. An endurance willing to not only stand for this person Christ but endure for this person Christ in the same fashion that this person of Christ stood up and endured for us.

Shall we continue through piety and kindness and agape? These things are all so much more with the foundations than what we could try to make them without. Favor one side of the "and besides this" and you might be loosing out on a "like precious" experience of obtained faith. The foundations of this faith are like the theology and the sturdy structure behind all things. The furnishings of this faith are like the practical implementations to our daily lives in which to apply it. Together they are the habitat that makes for fruitful produce in the EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus

Christ.

## **Of Being Fruitful**

And in verse 8 we come back to "in the Epignosis Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ". This is what we are supposed to be fruitful in; all of us.

In the Bible, it was the common everyday people that were shown as our ensamples. Some were nomads tending their herds and flocks. Some were slaves and prisoners. Some were widows or barren. A few were kings and another a queen in a foreign land. There were fisherman, tax collectors and even harlots. Some people were known for their skill at making tents and some for their treasured purple fabrics. These once living examples are our education into who God is and how HE works; through whom HE works.

Do we think our case too difficult for a God and Savior of Dunamis Power? Do we think ourselves fortunate to have been saved and leave it at that? Do we think this a different age, distant from the faith and age of clear Apostles? Do we think the many branches of this most holy institution too far apart now that it cannot be stirred back into remembrance though we know and are established in the present truth? Do we think it impossible or unlikely that God would use a common man or woman to stir what Peter had been stirring back up?

Well if we think these things to be so, then there is no use for this discourse to continue. Our thoughts would no longer be biblical, why then even consider this? If however there is even the slimmest of possibilities that these things outlined by Peter are descriptive of God's ways and means, then each of us would have to decide "will I allow for these things to be in me and abound" for the glory of this God and this Savior. If so, then you and I have reason to continue on into this Apostle's discourse "like precious faith".

Appendix Resources: PistisFaith AgapeLove EpignosisKnowledge  
GnosisKnowledge DunamisPower

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## Chapter Seven

### Add To Your Faith

#### **2Peter 1:5-7 kjv**

*(5) And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue;  
and to virtue knowledge;*

*(6) And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience;  
and to patience godliness;*

*(7) And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness  
charity.*

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Let's now explore the conduit "like precious" PistisFaith must travel through to be fruitful. You'll notice that the pipeline begins with PistisFaith and ends with AgapeLove. This is as it should be, love is the goal of all Christian effort. Love is the single thing worth us becoming fruitful in.

It might help to picture a sheet of paper divided in half. The first column lists all the things that God through Christ has provided the believer (see: kjv@2Peter:1:1-4). These things PistisFaith holds dear and seeks to process into tangible AgapeLove. The second column lists all the things the believer adds to the process (see: kjv@2Peter:1:5-7). PistisFaith seeks to move forward toward producing AgapeLove, Peter maps out for us the outbound connections for it to go through between here and there.

At first it seems that Peter lists all these things as singular items, faith virtue knowledge temperance patience godliness kindness charity, each independent of the other. One might be led to think that they could do any of one these single things and benefit would come. Do several, even better; maybe so.

Upon further examination though the pipeline is sections of pipe connected in sequence, one pipe builds upon the next, the effect of the two compounds. Let's think of these as compounds like KnowledgeableVirtue and TemperateKnowledge not just knowledge and virtue or temperance and knowledge. It is these compound structures that I would first like to address.

## **Of VirtuousFaith**

So the first connection for PistisFaith to make is AreteVirtue, meaning manliness or valor. Valor is essential to the production of AgapeLove at first, more so than even knowledge or temperance or patience or godliness or kindness. For if PistisFaith is not willing to step out into the unknown and trust God even in the most

foreign and hostile of situations then PistisFaith has not boots on the ground nor skin in the game.

I think that most people, myself included, would prefer having knowledge connect to faith first. We want to know what we are going to need to know before we step into a situation. Think about it. How many bible saints can you recall that were given all the necessary information by God upfront before going in? Not any, can you? One almost has to step into the situation before one can see the landscape and determine what is needing to be known first. We also have to ask would any of these saints stepped into what they stepped into had they known beforehand all that they were about to step in?

Sure, the realm of the unknown and unplanned is scary business. Sure, the foreign lands can be very dangerous places. Yes, one has to take risks. Yes, there is spiritual war, and in spiritual warfare people and reputations are bound to get hurt. No, that does not stop true PistisFaith from entering in. Why? Because PistisFaith must make it to its AgapeLove destination. Because PistisFaith has grace and peace multiplied in the epignosis of God and Christ, divine power has given it all things pertaining to life and godliness, it has escaped the corruptions of this world enough to partake/benefit from Christ's divine nature as promised it. That is what PistisFaith is and that is how PistisFaith must continue to act.

Why doesn't knowledge connect to faith first? Because logic and reason are most prone to fear and most leery to proceed with valor. Logic and reason are more than sufficient to talk one out of something, rarely though do they talk us into something virtuous. Valor is not the absence of fear, it is fear placed into its proper perspective so as to not allow it to distract us from the most God glorifying effort.

## **Of KnowledgeableVirtue**

This is not to say that knowledge won't be crucial to play its part. In fact, it comes up second on this list. This is GnosisKnowledge now not the previous and often repeated EpignosisKnowledge. Where EpignosisKnowledge is more the big picture in which we are to produce abundant fruit, the recognition and acknowledgement of the person and righteousness of God and Savior/Lord, GnosisKnowledge is more the dynamic and changing details on the ground day to day.

It is one thing to brave out into the unknown country and battle the dangerous battle. It is another thing to be there and not survey the situation and strategize what is best to get through it. Granted you are not going to know until you step into it but, once in there you have to gather much needed intel, you have to discern and reason, you have to develop a plan and move forward. Much of this GnosisKnowledge will have to be sought out and received from God HIMSELF. Both God and the experience itself are the steady teacher. In one sense reverence towards the LORD is the beginning of whatever knowledge or wisdom or instruction there is. In another sense one needs to be walking about with their eyes wide open, they need to observe and absorb, not take the least detail too lightly. Therefore, this knowledge itself must be temperate.

## **Of TemperateKnowledge**

PistisFaith has moved far enough along now that we need to be talking about TemperateKnowledge. The concept of knowledge is far far-reaching. What most people would call knowledge, rather in God's eye is not knowledge at all, nor is all wisdom is wise. Paul once reminded the Corinthians that "the world by wisdom knew not God" ( kjv@1Corinthians:1:21). The carnal mind then has out-smarted itself in it's own quest for knowledge, not to know the omnipresent and omniscient God, and to the point where the wisdom of God to them has become as foolishness. God will

confound the wise of this world so that no flesh shall glory in HIS presence ( kjv@1Corinthians:1:27).

**1Corinthians 1:19 kjv**

*(19) For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.*

There are massive libraries the size of stadiums filled with all sorts of knowledge; man made knowledge that is. Some of it is good, some of it obvious, some not so good, some down right reckless, all of it soon to end. There are great scholars who have attempted to fill their heads with any and all knowledge, but not temperate knowledge. Shouldn't we ask to what end is this intemperate pursuit?

What kind of knowledge is it that the saint is seeking? To what lasting objective will his knowledge serve? The ultimate goal in the saint's case differs from the others. His goal is to produce Christ-like AgapeLove, and by doing so glorify God. This situation he currently faces, this is an opportunity to produce AgapeLove. Faith and valor got him here, now it is how to produce this love within this situation that he now needs to know. He therefore must be temperate with his quest for knowledge that it stays on target to get this present AgapeLove opportunity going. In other words he must seek mission temperate actionable knowledge.

Temperance is self-control or self-restraint. If you cannot restrain yourself from what keeps you from producing AgapeLove, who else can do it for you? Temperance is Olympian-like focus, one body of many moving parts working in concert as one. It is a disciplined life both on and off the field, always in training, always preparing for what is next to come.

Temperance, like most of the items in Peter's list, is a fruit of the Holy Spirit working within us ( kjv@Galatians:5:22-23). Paul in that same chapter gives us a list

of works of the flesh. Flesh or Spirit. Which is it going to be? How can the saint be Spirit temperate if he knows not what the flesh is capable of? If he knows not from where his flesh has tendency to attack? How can the saint fight the temperate fight without knowing the weapons and armor and coordinated battle plans of the Spirit?

Valor? Ah yes, can't do without it. We would not be to this point of the discussion without having first had it. Now that we are here, now there is the need for knowledge. Not just any knowledge, Temperate Knowledge.

Temperance? Ah yes, but to temper knowledge, not to temper valor.

## **Of Patient Temperance**

There are only a few mentions in the New Testament of this egkrateia form of temperance. (see: dict:strongs G1466 or strkjv@STRING:G1466]

Paul was said to have reasoned temperance in his defense of the Christian faith before the court of Felix and Drusilla ( kjv@Acts:24:24-25). On this occasion he reasoned temperance to be on a evangelical par with righteousness and the judgment to come. This should give us an indication of how important and convicting he thought egkrateia or temperance to be.

The word Peter uses translated for us into English as "patience" is also worthy of note:

Quoted resource: strongs 'G5281'

G5281 @ ὑπομονή hupomonē hoop-om-on-ay' From G5278; cheerful (or hopeful) endurance constancy: - enduring patience patient continuance (waiting).

This word not only gives us the sense of enduring and continuance but, doing so with cheer and hope. Those are three very important elements for our

consideration: cheerful, enduring, continuance. It would not be enduring if there was not something coming up against it. It would be continuing if it all was to be over in short order. It wouldn't need to be cheerful if it was already much desirable and gleeful.

Peter's construction of this suggests that forward moving faith will encounter resistance. Faith that does not meet with resistance is not faith that is moving forward. What he is asking from us is no different from what he has asked of himself. A large part of what he is asking of us requires enduring, continuing, and this with cheer.

**1Peter 4:12-14 kjv**

*(12) Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

*(13) But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

*(14) If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

This exhortation is for every Christian that is moving faith forward towards agape, not just Pastors and Evangelists and clergy. How easy it is for us to say "this should not happen to us this way" or "this was not expected" or "we must be doing something wrong". How easy it is for us to pull off to the side, get out of the other's way, not stand out any more than we have to. This is not TemperatePatience as Peter means it, this is us at a highway rest stop with our emotional radiators over-heating.

Jesus in His "Parable of the Sower" gives a heart wrenching description of such an obtained form of faith meeting up against such a resistance just as is a sprouting seed by the birds of the air and the other harmful natural elements ( kjv@Matthew:13). Some of this resistance comes from without, say the birds of the air

and the scorching heat of the sun. Most of this resistance though comes from within, how the seedling sees itself, the expectations it places upon the story-line, how it feels this new growth is to go.

Patience, endurance, continuance, who needs them? They are not needed if faith is not moving forward. They are not needed if one plans on bypassing this particular step to get to the producing of agape love. But then it is not AgapeLove that they are producing.

## **Of GodlyPatience**

Faith does not just sit at the Kingdom bus stop bench sitting on its hands waiting to leave. Faith moves forward with valor, with acute and reverent knowledge, with focused temperance, it endures all resistance put against it and continues its steady march onward. How so? In what fashion? To what measure? Here Peter calls upon the word we've translated "godliness"; EusebeiaGodliness.

Quoted resource: strong's 'G2150'

G2150 @ εὐσεβεία eusebeia yoo-seb'-i-ah From G2152; piety; specifically the gospel scheme: - godliness holiness.

It's not GodlyPatience if in its piety it is not willing to endure. It's not GodlyPatience if in its cheerful endurance it is not willing to conduct itself with an uncommon piety.

Piety is a word that in our generation carries a strong negative connotation; the concept has seen a great amount of abuse. In the time of the King James translation, scholars considered piety desirable and noble, else they would not have used the word. We as modern thinkers cannot surrender the public perception of piety over to

the immoral buffoonery of its many imposters. This is too important of a concept in both Old and New Testaments when done right.

It is very much a temptation for otherwise carnal men in key religious positions to pose as pious. There is great power in it for them to do so. It should not come as any surprise to us. In both of his epistles, Peter talked about it happening in his day. He has warned us about it happening more and more in the ages to come .

The pious waters are muddy because of these counterfeits. How did Peter teach us to approach this? He taught us first to be aware of those imposters and second to point them out and stand against them. The Apostle Jude exhorted us to contend for the faith. How is it then that the waters became so muddy? Because not enough real pious people are on the watch for and stand firm enough to do this. The pious waters are muddy because of these counterfeits. The pious waters are muddy because of us.

It is not only watching and pointing and standing against however. There is already too much impious finger pointing going on in the Church. In order to do this particular thing that Peter taught, defending the faith from imposters, one has to be able to do all the things Peter has taught, as modeled for us in the "like precious faith". We cannot separate living the faith from defending the faith. Living it always comes first. Because we live it, we are best suited to defend it. The tangible fruit of our daily experience in Christ supports our further words and actions. Others have seen us, others know us, others know the types of fruit our faith in Christ has exhibited. By Christ's fruit abounding in us, they know to trust, they know that there is weight and substance. The case against these imposters is much easier to make. The others know our love for Christ and for the brethren, that it is this agape type of love. They are in solidarity, abiding in Christ by the same equal standing like precious obtained faith.

What we should observe in these many counterfeiters is the impossibility of producing true piety without first there being the occurrence of spiritual regeneration and the setting one right with the heart of God. They seek the power and glory of the



position without seeking the radical change of new life within them. Paul tells Timothy that personal gain is their godliness. Jude calls them spots in your feast of charity, feeding themselves without fear, clouds without water, trees with withered fruit. So then they have the appearance of godliness, but they lack the substance. Yet, at the same time, they have crept in to positions of power without our notice. Is that their problem or ours? Which of us will be accountable for this in the end?

So there is a massive importance given to godliness. So too there is this connection Peter makes with it to patience; GodlyPatience. To live the faith and to defend it requires endurance, continuance, cheer. We spoke of resistance coming up against faith as it moves forward towards its destination AgapeLove. Now we know where a good part of that resistance will be coming from, from within our own ranks, likely from the top down.

## **Of BrotherlyGodliness**

Philadelphia is known as the city of brotherly love. Brotherly love is what the word in the Greek actually means.

Quoted resource: strong's 'G5360'

G5360 @ φιλαδελφία philadelphia fil-ad-el-fee'-ah From G5361; fraternal affection: - brotherly love (kindness) love of the brethren.

The first thing that I would like to point out about this compound BrotherlyGodliness is that there is a very thin line between philadelphia love and the love of institution. Institutions consist of bodies of brethren of course, but when the focus becomes the institution and not the persons within that body, it becomes easy for philadelphia to become the odd man out.

You'll notice that no where in Peter's well chosen words here does it say the love of Church or denomination; not even AgapeLove suggests that. My feeling is that if one focuses their kindness upon the brethren, each one of them, one does not run the risk of looking passed the brethren in their greater admiration for the institution.

The institutions of Church are vast and admirable. Some stand tall like the Pacific Redwoods, centuries old and generations wide. Cathedrals of stone and marble, vessels of silver and gold, rituals and traditions, testaments of grandeur and hope and time are what they are. In the past, many have fought for the honor of these institutions, even in times when the institution itself was not all that honorable. Some institutions have recently sprouted, and like their ancestors before many men and women pour their time and their hearts into making the institution something others can admire as well. Ah, but there you see in both instances the need for there being a truer godliness; BrotherlyGodliness.

It is a thin line; a very thin line between this love for brethren and love for institution. We must remember what it is that makes us brethren in the first place. We are brethren because of our common mutual state, sinners who have obtained as if by lots a like precious faith on equal grounds with the apostles through the righteousness of God and Savior, are experiencing the multiplication of grace and peace, finding that divine power has provided all things pertaining to life and godliness, called to glory and virtue, reliant upon the tremendous promises for escape and partaking God has given us in Christ. Besides or along with this we seek to together become fruitful in the recognition and acknowledgment of Christ Jesus by adding to our faith these stated agape defining elements. The kindness here is best stated: "how can I be of help to you brother in your pursuit of this? The opposite forms says: "there's the nursery, here's a bulletin and coffee, please make yourself comfortable, feel free to ask me if you have any questions".

One kindness is person to person, a mutual relationship to Christ. The other is

come and try what we have going, come try to fit in. The modern church tries to be all things to all people. It tries to build as many things as possible into its programs and outreach, consumers can pick and choose what self-improvement they want from a cafeteria style menu. This is not to say that PhiladelphiaKindness cannot be found occurring in these things, it is to say that these things tend to hide Christ behind an institution. Instead of us being in the body of Christ it becomes Christ being in the body of us.

By compounding godliness with kindness, Peter forces us to look at agape defining need in a much more serious light. The life of piety as compounded so far includes the valor to stand firm and move forward, the knowledge to search and find out and get a job done, the temperance to stay on track and not get distracted, the patience to endure the inevitable resistance and opposition, and to do all of this with a healthy form of piety. Now that in itself is something, but to connect all of that to a kindness to brothers and sisters, that friend is serious business.

What happens when we are not all of that and yet will still congregate and still institutionalize? What does that look like?

It looks a lot like what we have at present. Can Peter still at this late date stir us up and put us back into remembrance of what the true faith and kindness are? Knowing the true faith is essential to living it. Living the true faith is essential to promoting and defending it. It cannot be the lesser faith lived and defended. How can we make a proper defense without having lived this faith to the point of bearing a corresponding fruit? How can we bear a corresponding fruit without there being a true valor and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness? How can there be all this without there being set a firm foundation of faith obtained through the righteousness of God and Savior?

It is obvious that Peter when he is writing us is focusing his kindness direct upon brethren and not institutions. Institution comes about only when the souls and

the needs of individuals and Christ are being met. It is not love for love's sake. It is not love for institution's sake. It is not love for our own sake. It is love for God's sake, shed upon all of us for brethren's sake. And for the brethren's sake, we must keep ourselves above the fold with godliness.

## **Of AgapeBrotherliness**

Looking back at all considerations up to this, I find it startling that we now finally can come to this. The "like precious faith" has pushed us hard. It has given us several actionable items for us to be diligent about adding to it. The effect of each of these things compound the effect of the previous item and the next. PistisFaith has now reached its destination. To get here it has had to become these many transformative things. Now it has reached the possibility of it producing tangible AgapeLove. Done right it will be abundant and fruitful, this EpignosisKnowledge of Christ.

Jesus Christ is our best example of AgapeLove. It is what the righteousness of God and Savior set Him out to become. Charity is the way that the King James translators chose to explain it. Sacrifice might be an even better way. We are not just talking about our Lord's sacrifice, but also the Father's.

"Behold, what manner of love (agape) the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God..." kjv@1John:3:1

We are now "Sons of God" because of this sacrifice. HIS benevolent love was willing to sacrifice a tremendous sacrifice. Sacrifice has brought about a love feast for others. Now their love is willing to sacrifice as well.

AgapeLove is like no other love.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

kjv@1John:3:16

This type of love is not based upon sentiment as most other loves, it is a sacrificial act of the will. If we were to base it on sentiment or attraction, it would likely never come about. The person receiving it may well not deserve the least bit of it just as we did not from Christ, yet Christ gave it to us, therefore we give it to others in like manner. It wasn't like we were just that close to God and just needed a little extra boost to get us the rest of the way there. No, this act of benevolence was by His sacrificial love in its entirety; we were most vile to HIM at the time. We were not anywhere near to God. We were actually heading in the opposite direction, therefore Christ was sent as an atoning sacrifice to grab us and to bring us back.

Now we see others in a similar opposing situation as we once were, therefore we AgapeLove them as does Christ. We AgapeLove them with Christ's ultimate AgapeLove. We AgapeLove them with the full influence of His AgapeLove upon ours. We also AgapeLove them with the full influence of His AgapeLove upon ours as a body of "like precious" brethren.

Why, you may be asking, does AgapeLove require PistisFaith? Why does it require valor or knowledge or temperance or patience or godliness or kindness as brethren? Because it is not AgapeLove without these things defining it, its just plain love or affection when the setting seems right. Nothing has been fought for. Nothing has had to be established or sustained or moved forward. It has come at very little expense and there is very little that has been sacrificed to keep it there. That is not AgapeLove.

Where love is often viewed with a sense of it filling or fulfilling, agape carries the sense of it emptying or pouring out. The glass had to first had an ample supply of

this itself in order for it to now be drawn into another empty vessel. Christ has an ample supply from the Father, He pours into us out of His ample supply. We now receive His supply, it fills us, we pour it out. Similar to a series of pools along the busy mountain river, the supply is from Christ and it flows into us and then out to those pools further detached filling them in order that it flow back into the river, by this the entire valley is fed and made lush. This is AgapeLove. This is its love feast.

Appendix Resources: AreteVirtue PistisFaith EpignosisKnowledge  
EgkrateiaTemperance HupomonePatience EusebeiaGodliness PhiladelphiaKindness  
AgapeLove

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## Chapter Eight

### These Things... They Make You

#### **2Peter 1:8-9 kjv**

*(8) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*(9) But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

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The words "if" and "but" are the two most important words to the consideration of this next section. "If" is a conditional suggesting the possibility that "these things" might not be in us or they do not yet abound. "But" prepares us for the underlying cause behind this lacking condition.

How do we know when these things are not in us nor abound? We know by our idleness and fruitlessness. Peter describes the evidence of this as a barrenness (dict:strongs G692 meaning inactivity/laziness/idleness) and a fruitlessness (dict:strongs G175 ). It is not just any lack of effort, a person might otherwise be the most active person on the face of the earth. It is a very specific idleness that even the busiest person could lack in: "the EpignosisKnowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ".

Why then are we idle and without fruit? Peter says that it is because in one sense or another we are either being blind, short-sighted or acting from our former nature. We are not courageous with our faith, neither knowledgeable, nor temperate, nor enduring, nor pious, nor kind, nor sacrificial. It's a pretty cut and dry case is it not?

## **Of Fruit**

Let's speak for a moment about the type of fruit Peter would be looking for.

First and foremost, Peter concludes that it's to be fruit in the EpignosisKnowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (verse 8), who He is, His righteousness with the Father, His grace and peace, His provision of all things, His calling of us to His glory and virtue, His fulfillment of promises made for our escape from our former natures and our partaking of His.

Second, Peter is looking for the fruit of the AgapeLove form of love as a result of this epignosis of Christ. One can say that they recognize Jesus as all that the Apostle has described, they can say that they acknowledge this same Jesus in their



daily living, but if there is not His fruit produced from them, there is strong indication that they are not abiding in His influence.

**John 15:4-5 kjv**

*(4) Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*

*(5) I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

It is worth considering that in verse 8 Peter states this fruit in the negative "neither be barren nor unfruitful". He doesn't say that having these things will make you fruitful; no Jesus alone will make you fruitful. He says that having these things in you will make you so that you are not unfruitful. It is as if fruit is natural and expected to abound on Christ's vine, all that we can do ourselves is keep it from happening. How do we keep it from happening? We don't add the "and besides this" compounds with all diligence.

The New Testament makes extensive use of the concept of fruit over and over. Jesus uses it in His illustrations more than anybody. It is a familiar concept to most people. It is well understood. It explains a difficult spiritual concept in easy to digest form. A seed is planted. The seed sprouts and grows into a plant. The plant buds and becomes fruit laden. The fruit contains seeds of itself. The process replicates itself and is multiplying and self-perpetuating. One seed produces several more of the same seed, each of those individual seeds capable of producing hundreds more.

So when we were asking what this fruit might look like, the answer is more of itself. Add this to the concept that in Christ this is bound to happen as long as we don't do things to stunt it. The seed is not sprouting nor growing itself, growth is a natural response to the design and processes exerted on and in it. The seed knows

little or nothing of these processes or this design, but becomes this as designed anyway.

If the seed planted in you and I is from the tree of "like precious faith" obtained through the righteousness of God and Savior, its fruit will be what our fruit looks like, no different. If at our core is the grace and peace spoken of by Peter, so then will our fruit have this. Providence of all things pertaining to life and godliness, calling to glory and virtue, promises fulfilled regarding escape and partaking, our fruit cannot help but be an exact copy. This is because it is not our fruit, it is our Lords, this is His doing, and we are the witness and testimony of it.

If the seed planted in you or I is from another type of tree, its fruit is going to be different. The only other tree that this seed can come from is the tree of self. There are a good many people that are determined to produce a fruit of their own; which in the grand scheme is no fruit at all. Oh, it produces somewhat of a fruit as in a successful career or extravagant lifestyle or the such, carnal fruit in other words. It replicates and spreads its seed, propagates as do weeds. In the grand scheme though it results in no fruit, no fruit of any worth

There are others that seek to produce Christ's good fruit, but produce it in their own way. They'll attempt to do this without the valor or the knowledge or the temperance or the endurance or the godliness or the kind affection; they will love, but it won't be the AgapeLove. In the grand scheme, they have taken an otherwise guaranteed process and rendered it barren and fruitless.

Jesus also explained His good seed as becoming a tender young plant up against the fowls of the air, the dry scorching of the sun, the cares of this world. Notice that He did not pray that these potential harms not come against us. His desire was to pull us through these, to have these things refine and strengthen us. Why? So that we could one day bear the type of fruit that carries forth the very same good seed.

## **Of Barren and Fruitless**

Barren and fruitless in the Greek are two very similar words. Both mean barren, the first meaning inactive or unemployed or idle, the second meaning without fruit. One means not doing anything or that there is nothing he feels he needs to do. The other might be doing something, but is not producing anything. They are similar in output but not exact in method. In order to produce, we have to do. The object of doing is to produce.

What we are not doing and not producing are the few remaining things that have kept Christ's fruit from ripening, to drop, to seed other plants. We are resisting the final surrender of His fruit from our branches by not employing this valor and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness and kindness leading to sacrificial love to the extent it needs to be. We are clinging tight to His fruit for ourselves, for our own good, for our own self-worth.

In doing so, Peter says that we are being blind and short-sighted. Seems like a harsh way to put it, but if we already know these things and are established in the present truth as he so well put it, why then does it take his constant reminder pushing us onward?

## **Of Purged but Forgetting**

This is the oddest phrase in the sentence. It seems to come out of nowhere. Nowhere else in this discourse has there been a mention of purging, the closest we have come is escape. The Greek word is curious:

Quoted resource: strong's 'G2512'

G2512 @ καθαρισμός katharismos kath-ar-is-mos' From G2511; a washing off

that is (ceremonially) ablution (morally) expiation: - cleansing + purge purification (-fying).

The definition of most interest is expiation - the act of extinguishing guilt incurred, also known as atonement. So when Peter writes "and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" we could read it "and hath forgotten that the guilt of his old sins have been extinguished". Guilt has burned through the man's entire abode and landscape like a wildfire but, he of course is the last to know it. If you asked him, he wouldn't know the first thing about his guilt. He sees himself as king of the hill, God sees him as a refugee on a heap of ashes. Christ has expiated, extinguished the guilt incurred by this man's old sins. That old guilt is no longer an ember left smoldering. Does the man realize this? Does he stop to consider before striking the next match what his Lord has so completely done for him?

(note: It is not for certain in this text whether there is expiation made yet for sin. Theologians have wrestled each other over that for ages).

It's an odd phrase because in sequence it comes after blind and short-sighted. Harsh as it is, we can understand how we are being blind. The picture here is of a man closing his eyes tight, refusing to see. Painful as it is to admit, we can understand how this is short-sighted. The picture is of a man holding an object close up and seeing only that object. But in the forgetful man the picture is of a Christian, one already having had his guilt expiated for past sins, yet he acts as if his guilt still rages.

Has not this man been told of the righteousness of God and Savior? Has he not come to a grace and peace that is multiplying? Does he not know of the miraculous power that gives him all things required of the new life and new godliness? Does he not understand that he has been called to glory and virtue, that he is liberated from the corruptions of this world, and can partake in the benefit of Christ's divine nature? If he did know all of this, how then could he forget the expiation of his sin guilt?

I once thought of these three elements of lacking as three separate diagnosis: blind or short-sighted or acting as if not purged. The English translation doesn't say "or", it says "and". Could it be that these three elements are all part of one complete diagnosis? Why would the man close his eyes tight and refuse to see? Why would he only open his eyes enough to see the immediate close up object in front of him? Could it be because he is refusing to see the expiation of the guilt caused by his former sins?

You answer me... is it?

## **Of These Things - They Make You**

Make you:

Quoted resource: strong's 'G2525'

G2525 @ καθίστημι kathistēmi kath-is'-tay-mee From G2596 and G2476; to place down (permanently) that is (figuratively) to designate constitute convey: - appoint be conduct make ordain set.

There is a sense of placement or delegation or constitution to this word that is not conveyed in the English. It is this appointment that I would first like to settle.

It might help us if we were to straighten out the statement into the grammatical positive and add in some of the definition that we have already discovered. Here's my humble attempt:

"For you shall be designated as employed and bear Christ's fruit if these additional things are in you and make for more increase".

It is much easier now to see the appointment behind the word "make". It is the designation of employment being made, and in that employment comes the ability to bear Christ's fruit. Such a designation does not exist if these things are not in you and

do not make for increase. It is Christ alone that makes this appointment. He will only appoint those who exhibit an earnest (diligent) effort towards these things.

Now these things are high marks to achieve and maintain. We are not always going to be able to meet these standards in full measure. Some would think that they are a long way from meeting such high standards for employment. But it is not like this appointment cannot be made day one of a man's regeneration, because it is the existence of these things within him and his diligence to make them increase that is the mark determining the appointment.

In kjv@Acts:16:14 Lydia received her designation by Christ to bear His fruit day one unto her entire household. These things must have already been in her to an infant degree and increase sought by her for there to be such an appointment.

### **Of In the Knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

Peter brings us full circle back to the word "epignosis". We know it well by now I hope; recognition and acknowledgement. He has referred to the epignosis "of God, and of Jesus our Lord" (verse 2), "of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (verse 3), and now "of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 8). GnosisKnowledge in verse 6 is more along the lines of deductive reasoning. "Eidō" dict:strongs G1492 (verse 12) is to see or consider. Very different meanings for very different words in the Greek not showing up as strong as they should in the English.

In verse 1 it is the recognition and acknowledgement of "theos - the supreme divinity" and "kurios - the supreme authority". The name of the supreme authority is "Jehoshua Christos - Jesus Anointed Messiah" (verse 8). Jesus Anointed Messiah is who SimonPeter is a servant and apostle of (verse 1). Jesus Anointed Messiah is Peter's and our "sōtēr - deliverer". Our deliverer happens also to be our supreme authority; if you didn't already notice. It is "Him that hath called us to glory and

virtue" (verse 3).

Shall we go further?

It is His vine and His fruit. It is His designation whether to employ us or not in His fruit delivery and planting business. He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is the beginning and the end. All things were created through Him and for Him, and all things are being gathered back unto Him. It is His righteousness that is imputed upon us. He is the firstborn from the dead, the first among many brethren. In Him, we have our being and our rest. In Him the Father is well pleased.

Given who we recognize Him to be and all that He has done to put us right with the Father, is it too much to ask that we add just a bit of diligence to have and increase in valor and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness and kindness? To fully pursue agape as it meant to be? To allow His fruit to be presented to others through us?

What say you?

Appendix Resources: KatharismosPurge GnosisKnowledge SimonPeter

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## Chapter Nine

### Diligence Made Toward Assurance

#### **2Peter 1:10-11 kjv**

*(10) Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*

*(11) For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

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## Of Election and Calling and One's Assurance

"...make your calling and election sure" ( kjv@2Peter:1:10)

There are two ways to interpret this phrase, mirror images facing each other, the one appearing opposite of the other. The one image is more and more diligent to earn or maintain the assurance of his calling and election. The other has assurance of his calling and election and as a result becomes more and more diligent. Which comes first, the diligence or the assurance?

There are various schools of thought surrounding this quandary. The answer to this is important to the fruitful production of AgapeLove in the EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus Christ. I'll explain that in a moment.

Election is a hot box topic that few brave to touch in polite company. Exactly when did God elect "*them that have obtained like precious faith* "? The moment they believed in Christ Jesus as their personal savior? Before creation in eternity past? At the Day of Judgment when the prosecution and defense both conclude their case? Can God's election be resisted? Once elected, can one fall from election?

Calling on the other hand is much less contentious. Many people of many religions feel as if God has called them. We might dispute which of them have and have not received God's calling, but rarely do we dispute the general principle that God does place a calling upon some if not all.

Assurance. How assured can we be of our election and calling? Some people would say that maybe it is better that we do not feel assured of our election and calling, that way none of us take it for granted. Why then would Peter be telling us different, to make our calling and election sure?

Looking back on all that Peter has already said, I think that it could well be said that we are blind and shortsighted when it comes to the assurance of our calling and

election. It is after all a good part of His righteousness. We don't understand it. We avoid the topic altogether. We make out of it what ever we are comfortable making out of it.

This blindness and shortsightedness can and does leave us barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The key phrase to that though is "the knowledge of Jesus Christ". Is there something that we should recognize about Jesus Christ that we are not recognizing enough to bring about a full acknowledgment?

### **Of "Wherefore the rather, brethren"**

#### **John 15:12 kjv**

*(12) This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

Blindness and shortsightedness are not desirable descriptions of our "like precious faith"; having these things in you and about is. Verses 1-4 laid out the rock solid foundations of the faith. Verses 5-7 plans out our actionable response. The actionable response there never states any other intention than to produce a well defined Christ-like AgapeLove.

It can never be said of Jesus that He did not love. One could not say that He was not at all times supremely confident of His calling and election. Neither can it be said that Jesus' love of the Father was barren and unfruitful. What made His love stand out was that:

- It had uncommon actionable valor towards a moral excellence, assured of His elected position with God and calling back to glory and virtue.
- It had a knowledge not only of what the Father wanted Him to say and

do, what He had been elected and called to do, but also who and what the person was about receiving it.

- It had a strong temperance, on point, on message, intense, never distracted, uncompromising, assured of where He was from and where He was going and how to bring us along with Him.
- It endured all things with cheerful expectation, assured of His Father's control of all things.
- It exhibited a godliness like no other, not like the stuffy burdensome Pharisee, with a real and genuine backbone, obedient to the Father not man, assured of His faith and standing.
- It exhibited a gentle kindness to His brethren, a more stern kindness when appropriate. It was all about brethren whether of the twelve, the seventy, the multitudes, the nation, the Jews, the Gentile world at large. His election and calling was to be firstborn and Shepherd of many brethren; of this He was most certain.

And so when it came to the production of AgapeLove, it was agape because it was defined by all of this. It sounds odd to say that Jesus had a PistisFaith and that He drove it all the way to Agape, but that essentially is what He did. He did it over and over again no matter where He was, who He was with, or what situation He was presented with. It was not just a hope in His calling and election, although He was very much hopeful for His brethren, it was a strong assurance in it that made His agape love to us what it was.

So where then does "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" come in?

## **Of Making Sure**

Agape is not the effort to win or maintain one's calling and election. It is the actionable response to one's calling and election. The assurance of one's calling and election results in the production of agape. Not having that assurance produces a forcible human effort to win that calling and election back or else no effort at all; barren idleness. In other words, one then stumbles or falls from the ability to produce agape by not having this assurance.

It might well be that I do not have the same level of confidence in my election and calling as did Jesus. Then again, I do not have the same election and calling as does Jesus. My primary confidence has to be in the assurance that Jesus had of the Father and of His standing with the Father, the righteousness of that, the grace and peace because of that, the all sufficiency of divine power giving all things pertaining to life and godliness because of that, the calling of us into that, the escape from and partaking in of that (verses 1-4). Of that I need to be so sure that I am willing to become this (verses 5-7) in recognition and acknowledgment of that and not be blind or shortsighted of that in the process. That is what makes me to produce Christ's fruit: abiding on His vine.

As Christ produces more and more of His abundance through me, I become more and more assured of my calling and election into His fold. It is assurance by active participation.

Regardless of how or when I was elected and called my assurance of it grows the more that I participate with it. Like the mirror images left to right and right to left, both images can be true at the same time. I am assured and therefore, in recognition of that, I acknowledge this tremendous grace with my diligence. By being diligent about doing these things, I therein come to recognize and acknowledge more and more of this blessed assurance for myself. Nothing earned. Nothing forced or burdened. Everything remains Christ's and is a product of His AgapeLove to the glory and testament of God and Savior's righteousness.

**1Corinthians 13:4-7 kjv**

*(4) Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,  
(5) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;  
(6) Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;  
(7) Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Paul and Peter sound like they're on the same page; don't they? Well then:

**John 14:15 kjv**

*(15) If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

**Of Our Abundant Entrance**

Why then is it important to get this preliminary understanding right? Because "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you". Notice that it is an entrance being ministered to you. So is it the diligence or assurance that is doing the ministering? Or is it DunamisPower that is ministering?

It seems that the issue is not whether the Kingdom will be entered now that there is election and calling, rather how abundant the entrance will be into it. Well, that would depend on whether it is your diligence providing for it or Christ's all sufficiency. Judging by my personal effort, I would have to say that my entrance has been nothing approaching abundant at all. Indeed, even the best of my righteousness is but filthy rags. Pitiful sinner that I am, I am a man most urgently in need of God's undeserved mercy. Judging by Christ's effort though, I see a great amount of abundance that I would not have otherwise seen as I approach that entrance; HIS

abundance. I see an abundant provision of all things pertaining to life and godliness. I see an abundant grace and peace that daily is multiplying. I see an abundance of exceeding great promises fulfilled. I see an abundance of benefit partaking of HIS divine instead of my corrupt nature. Yeah for me... plenty of abundance here for this lowly sinner to see!

Not only is it an abundant entrance according to the number of things I now see, it is abundant according to its overall size and impact. It is no longer limited to the minute amount of human diligence that I am able to provide it. I see an increasing utility and fruitfulness. HIS influence over me is substantial enough to give me an uncommon valor to produce this agape even in situations hostile to it. Because of it I seek now to know how to produce this, restrain my baser nature from corrupting it, endure with the process through the enviable resistance, keep and defend and support the better piety and kindness. The entrance into the Kingdom has become a multitude of abundances.

AgapeLove is another way to make this point clear. Two men go about pouring this agape form of love out to a needing brother, one with this understanding, the other without. One says "I love you brother on the slim chance that this will get me into the Kingdom... You will have to soon do all of this as well if you want to get in". The other says "Let me point you to the all sufficient love of Christ... there you will find your answer I know because this is where I have found all of mine... can I help you to understand how much of an abundant entrance this tremendous Christ has provided"? Which man has shown their brother the greater agape?

## **Of Everlasting Kingdom**

The concept of Kingdom is much neglected at present. Jesus spent a good deal of His effort attempting to present to us His Kingdom in its many aspects. Why so

much time and effort? The Apostolic writers after Jesus kept to His insistence as well.

The concept goes as far back as Old Testament prophecy and as far forward into the future as the New. It is both here and at hand, in our hearts and in Heaven, also yet to come on the day of judgment and remain forever after.

The modern believer conveniently replaces the Kingdom concept with a more secular notions of mere Heaven. For the most part this has become a utopian idea where all the negative things of this life are stripped away, leaving each of us back at our intended glory. There isn't much formal substance to this concept, it is what ever we want it to be, whatever we imagine it to be.

In the Bible though, Heaven is always pictured as the place of God's throne; the holiest place in all of existence. That throne has always existed. Surrounding that throne is the place of the holy Angels abode. The Kingdom of Heaven signifies the rule or reign of God placed over that location. At one point there was a war in Heaven and a third of the Angels were expelled from it. According to the Lord's prayer, God's will is always done there in Heaven.

The Kingdom is much more than the fluffy clouds and pearly gates and reunion we have with deceased friends and loved ones in mansions. It is Christ's exclusive and complete dominion. For us the Kingdom takes hold anywhere that people are in allegiance to the reign of God and the will of God. I can tell you why it is that so many believers have neglected this well-defined concept of everlasting Kingdom in favor of their own nebulous concept of Heaven: it is because the carnal self is not so quick to give up its own reign and will.

Carnal self you see is more than willing to generate whatever it can to guarantee for itself safe harbor. If need be, it also is willing to be virtuous and knowledgeable and temperate and patience and godly and kind and charitable as long as being so does not interrupt its autonomy. But if these things are to correctly be in us and increase, eye must be given to the Kingdom sense of these things Christ's rule

and reign; else we are blind and short-sighted.

God's will is for us to be conformed into the image of Christ (see: kjv@Romans:8:29). It is for us to be holy "for I AM HOLY" (see: kjv@1Peter:1:15-16). One does not enter into this holiness without first being elected then called and made holy. Man of course cannot make himself holy and therefore requires the robe of Christ's own righteousness to cover him before he can enter in. Man cannot be a citizen of this Kingdom without being willing to wear this other man's robes and place themselves entirely under the dominion of this Most Holy King.

The perspective that this proper concept of Kingdom places over the "like precious faith" is essential. Anything less than this perspective is an effort to counterfeit what is "like precious" about it. Both the foundations and the furnishings to those foundations depend upon the perspective of Kingdom and the submission to that perspective. The further our approach into this Kingdom perspective progresses, the more awareness of its abundance we will have. This is because the King has chosen His Kingdom to be His recipient of His abundance.

## **Of The King's Kingdom Perspective**

Jesus gave us several similitudes to help us better comprehend its concept and meaning:

- kjv@Matthew:13:24 "*... is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field ...*"

Jesus later gave His disciples a better explanation:



**Matthew 13:37-39 kjv**

*(37) He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;  
(38) The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;  
(39) The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.*

This parable is from the Angel's perspective. Notice that until it came to the first appearance of fruit, both the good seed (children of the Kingdom) and the tares appeared indistinguishable from each another. The children were children before having produced any fruit. Christ had only sown children of the Kingdom, and for the purpose of them producing fruit for Him. Christ commands the reapers to leave what He had sown to grow together with the tares until the final harvest. He did this so that the fruit of the children of the Kingdom would not be rooted up.

This parable receives the Lord's direct explanation as an aid to help us interpret His other parables.

- *kjv@Matthew:13:31 "is like to a grain of mustard seed ..."*

While the sower and the field remain the same here, the Kingdom is now considered from the children's perspective. The concept of Kingdom that the sower has planted is perceived by us to be small but growing large. It is not the Kingdom that has changed sizes of course, it is our perspective of it. The field of wheat is not the child of a tiny mustard seed. The importance of Christ allowing His wheat to grow to full harvest is that in the process the wheat's perspective of Kingdom and dependence on it grows.

- *kjv@Matthew:13:44 "...is like unto treasure hid in a field ..."*

This Kingdom parable is from the perspective of Christ the Redeemer

who has to buy His treasure back. He did not bury His treasure in this world, Adam did that. He has to sell all that He has to buy that back.

The Parable of the Pearls is much like this ( kjv@Matthew:13:45-46).

Note though the emphasis He placed on one pearl (not several pearls) costing the merchant everything that he's got. The one Kingdom is the one pearl was what He was willing to do this for.

- kjv@Matthew:13:47 " *...is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea ...* "

The perspective now switches to the judgment that the Kingdom must eventually go through. The children of the Kingdom have been given time to grow and be fruitful. Their perspective of Kingdom size and scope immeasurably expanded. Their Redemption secured as one. The net now drags through the water (also a symbol of judgment) and the Angels/Reapers separate the wicked from the just.

- kjv@Matthew:20:1 " *...is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard "*

Until this parable, we have yet to see what the children of the Kingdom are doing. Here they hired as laborers for one day in Christ's vineyard. Vineyard, field, garden, they all describe the same world. The laborers you'll notice are not otherwise employed, they cannot supply adequate work for themselves. The owner hires them at different stages of the day. Yet it becomes an issue when they find that their perspective of a fair wage for this work differs from the owner's.

- kjv@Matthew:22:2 " *...is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son ...* "

This parable speaks to a large group of people that are too busy with their own affairs and too put out to attend the wedding of Christ to His bride. It is the perspective of the children's proper priorities, what they see as important versus

what is Christ and His Kingdom's priority. Along with this comes the concept that by accepting the invitation to this wedding, one must at the same time accept wearing the all important attire of Christ's imputed righteousness leading to justification.

- kJv@Matthew:25:1 "*...likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom ...*"

Added to this wedding, is not only the priority of being there and in the right attire, but also the idea of being in the anticipating wedding party prepared for the bridegrooms sudden return. The perspective is one of preparation and devotion to the priority before the event finally happens.

By these many vantage points of the concept Kingdom, Jesus defines the foundations of the obtained "like precious faith" like nowhere else. Before this understanding, we could not have advanced our productivity in the recognition and acknowledgment much further. Now that we have a much broader view of this Kingdom for which Christ stands, we have to rethink everything that we have learned up till now and define our AgapeLove much better by it.

This is why Jesus spent so much time teaching on it. Why Peter fought so hard the remainder of his life to stir us back into the remembrance of it. Best put, when it comes to the Kingdom and our election and calling into it, the righteousness of God and Savior is the cause, the effect of which brings about His fruit fruit in us and therein our most certain assurance.

Appendix Resources: SpoudazoDiligence EklogeElection BebaiosSure PtaioFall

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## Chapter Ten

### Like Precious Faith - Stir You Up

#### **2Peter 1:12-13 kjv**

*(12) Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.*

*(13) Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*

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The Apostle Peter has covered a whole lot of doctrinal ground so far in the first eleven verses. This next section of Peter's "Like Precious Faith" discourse is very important because it grounds us back to the real lives of real people. The "like precious faith" always comes down to connecting real people to the real life real love of a very real God.

Peter had been given a charge by Jesus ( kjv@John:21:15-17); not a charge as in "ok... now you are the top boss", a charge as in "if you love me Peter... feed my sheep".

Feed my sheep what?

## **Of Present Truth**

The truth is that because of the righteousness of God and Savior and all that that has come to mean to me, my present truth is much different than the present truth that I once was part of long ago. I think that Peter would say the same. Even considering the three years that he followed along with Jesus town to town, that was a man without regeneration and the Holy Spirit. So too was I.

In the past, when my faith reached out to love other people, it had a form of virtue and of knowledge and of temperance etc... It was a faith in myself and my abilities, a faith in luck and good fortune, a faith that I somehow would be able to help somebody. You know what? That kind of faith and love worked well for me. It wasn't this kind of faith/love that Peter is describing however.

Back then, I very much questioned God and Savior's righteousness. I wasn't at grace and peace with them, nor any form of religion. I provided for my own life and godliness. My calling was to be the best person I could make myself to be. I knew little if anything about any great and precious promises, and my escape was from divine nature rather than from the world's corruption which I was so eager to partake of. This then was the present truth I had established myself in, and though that present

faith and love did often reach out to others, it did not reach out in the same way as now. It had a much different lasting effect (if it had any).

My current present truth is different in every respect. Because of what the righteousness of God and Savior have done to and for me, I have obtained a much different type of faith. THEY have quickened the once dead part of my soul. THEY have brought my soul back into a growing grace and peace with them. THEY have provided all things life and godliness related, called me into THEIR glory and virtue, fulfilled the promise of escape and partaking at great cost to THEMSELVES. This now is my present truth.

And because of this present truth, the faith and love THEY have given to me, I can share with those in need of it as well. What THEY have done now gives me the valor to extend it, to establish it, to sustain it, to advance it forward again. Moving it forward necessitates more and more practical knowledge and discernment that I would not of otherwise had to have. It develops in me a spiritual temperance unlike before, and an enduring patience, and a unfamiliar piety and reverence, along with a brotherly kindness. These things I did not have in me to this living and vibrant extent before THEY did what THEY did to me.

By the end of this diligent effort it presents itself as an AgapeLove like unto Christ's. THEIR work upon me produces THEIR fruit through me. It is clearly a different faith and a different love, and it is not so much what I am sharing as it is what I do not wish to hold back that is coming from THEM. This is the present truth Peter shall continue to remind us about.

The ultimate goal is to be established in the AgapeLove and EpignosisKnowledge of God and Jesus Christ. In order to do that we must recognize and acknowledge who God and Savior are, what THEY have come to do, who we are to THEM in that light (verses 1-4). We must also respond to THEIR considerable influence with all diligence adding these defining characteristics of "like precious

faith" to our daily existence, thus allowing Christ's inevitable fruit to increase and abound (verses 5-8). Should we stumble attempting to establish ourselves on this better course (and we will) we know from whom our election and calling comes, how it comes, and that it is immutable; we get back up, repent, learn from our mistakes, move forward towards His loving arms again. This should be our "present truth"!

## **Of Established**

So if this is our new present truth, is this the present truth that we are currently established in? Why do we not see this established in any considerable form at present?

Quoted resource: strong's 'G4741'

G4741 @ στήριζω stērizō stay-rid'-zo From a presumed derivative of G2476 (like G4731); to set fast that is (literally) to turn resolutely in a certain direction or (figuratively) to confirm: - fix (e-) stablish stedfastly set strengthen.

It is interesting how Peter puts this phrase "established in the present truth". It is a compliment, I am sure, that these readers both know and are established in this present at hand truth. At the same time it is curious that in the same breath he is saying it will take him being diligent the rest of his life and beyond to stir this back up into our remembrance. It is kind of a two-edged statement; isn't it?

Is it as easy and frequent as he makes it sound for us not to keep up with this better present truth? Establishment of this type does not seem to carry any permanence to it. My own personal observance of this is that it is quite easy to oscillate and vacillate between the two present states. If I told you any different I would be lying to you. It seems to be part of our fallen nature.

I also fear that alongside of the purer type of present truth over the centuries that we have also developed a institutionalized form of present truth that we often fall back on out of familiarity and public safety. We do "these things" in a lesser way because that is the way others do it, that's the way our denomination has done "these things" for centuries now, it is the only way we know to do "these things". Established? Yes we are. In something similar, but not the same.

Here is part of the problem: we live in a much different age. The saints of that day had the Apostles to establish them from the start. It all was new. There was no model other than Judaism it had to compete with it. Most of Peter's readers were Jewish converts. Most Jews at the time considered Christianity as a compatible sect of Judaism early on. This compatibility soon wore off and it became more and more the problem and hardship that the community was having to address. But, there was no original intent to separate the two until it became too difficult to continue side by side down that path. Peter would be addressing his original readers to overcome these growing concerns in this "like precious" manner with "these things". Theological yes, but in a very organic person to person daily means.

In our day we have over two thousand years of settling. Occasionally there will be a revival or reformation to stir the pot up. For the most part though we are in a state of settling back down into our sedentary forms of worship and faith. Tradition and ritual have taken root and become the trunk. "These things" exist in a more compromised peaceable uninspired form. They are the influence of institution rather than the influence of the righteousness of God and Savior. Peter's counsel to us would be exactly the same. Theological yes, but in a very organic person to person daily means.

The modern problem has gotten worse recently. Affluence has replaced influence. Christians are willing to be virtuous, as long as it has little consequence on their affluence. They are willing to be knowledgable, as long as what they know



doesn't set them apart from the world. They are willing to be temperate, temperate as in so not to disturb. Patient, as long as it does not require them to endure. Be pious, in an acceptable impious way. Be kind to brethren, as long as the brethren do not put them in an unfavorable light. They are willing to love, as long as love doesn't mean too much sacrifice. There are entire mega-churches filled with this type of affluent Christian. In comparison to Christians in less affluent parts of the world, I guess that we all are this type to one extent or another.

What we lack is the influence of Christ, the immediate recognition and living acknowledgement of who He is, what He has done, why He did it, what and how much that is to mean to us. We lack the knowledge and establishment of a better spiritually driven present truth. And I can tell you how it is that we could prove this: our lack of fruit in the Epignosis Knowledge of Jesus Christ. Theological yes, but in a very organic person to person daily means.

The present truth that has established us is one more of emotionalism and self improvement, of relativism and post-modern liberalism, scientific and economic enlightenment, of worldliness and nationalism. The influence of Christ, if ever mentioned, is the influence of a good teacher or prophetic icon.

This is not to mean that the Apostles cannot again regain their establishment. There is the "like (as in equal standing) precious faith" after all, and there is the Holy Spirit; it is just that we have to tune into a different voice and go deep into the scriptures to get back to it. It was Peter's intent by writing these things down that these things would make it through the centuries to where they could be re-establishing to us. He as much as says so in verse 15. The Holy Spirit had instructed him to do so. The Holy Spirit has seen to it that this writing would stick all this time. In this writing Peter attempts to "stir" us up by putting us back into "remembrance" of these Apostolic faith type things.

## Of Stirring Up

This is as good a time for some stirring as any other; is it not?

Who is it that goes about to do this stirring? From day one of the Christian movement it has always been the Holy Spirit. Who has it been that has set about to instruct and put us into remembrance? The same Holy Spirit. So when Peter says "*Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance*" (verse 13), he is speaking of the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **John 14:26 kjv**

*(26) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

We have not spoken much yet of the Holy Spirit, but HIS role in all this we must now know.

### **John 16:13-15 kjv**

*(13) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.  
(14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.  
(15) All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

Given the roles indicated here, we can see how essential the Spirit is to the "Like Precious Faith". For instance, take the question of EpignosisKnowledge, from where does this recognition and acknowledgement of God and Lord come? Answer: "he shall teach you all things", "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you". Take the question of these Agape defining acts of diligence,

where do they come from? Answer: "he will guide you into all truth". In fact most all of these actionable items are listed elsewhere as "fruits of the Spirit".

Now before you go thinking that the Holy Spirit has not been doing HIS job, consider that we have an equal responsibility to "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" ( kjv@Romans:8:1).

**Galatians 5:25 kjv**

*(25) If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

**Ephesians 4:30 kjv**

*(30) And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

**1Thessalonians 5:19 kjv**

*(19) Quench not the Spirit.*

Many of late have claimed to be speaking from or guided by the Holy Spirit. It has become a tired and vacant part of Christianized speech. That is not to say that it does not happen, just that have been burnt by these false claims far too often. This however should not discourage us from the pursuit, the direction of the Holy Spirit is vital to the validity of our "like precious" faith. Discernment of the Holy Spirit is key, distinguishing HIS voice from all the many others out there is the function of the Holy Scriptures; which the Holy Spirit wrote. The best way to know HIS voice is to know and be able to compare it to HIS Holy Scripture.

Even the comparisson of Scripture has its problems. The Pharisees for instance

had scripture memorized and had centuries of oral tradition to help interpret it, but were not able to do so when it came to Christ. What it comes down to is a believer's absolute sincerity towards the Lord.

Now you and I are not going to know that other man's sincerity, we are only going to know our own. We cannot trust that man's sincerity in the same respect as we can our own, therefore we must be willing and able to search these things out for ourselves from the Holy Spirit before committing ourselves to that man's words. This is the opposite of how most Christian's operate nowadays, they place a pastor or evangelist as their proxy in place of the Holy Spirit. This might be why we are seeing what we are seeing from our "present truth".

There should be no doubt at all that a sincere man will be met by the Holy Spirit and answered. You and I must be those sincere men on our own and not take such a meaningful personal obligation inconsiderately. The influence of Christ through His Holy Spirit is for each of us to seek out as individuals first and foremost and then in a congregation of other like-minded sincere brethren; we should hope.

## **Of Remembrance**

Theological yes, but in a very organic person to person daily means. this is what I percieve Peter to be stirring up into our remembrance.

Person by person, each person is responsible to God for their corresponding sincerity; sincere to the Lord, sincere to themselves, sincere to one another. Sincere as in "Lord... make me right with you", as in "Lord... where am I off?", as in "tune me into to the voice of your Holy Spirit", as in "Lord... may your Spirit guide me into serve you better?".

Person by person, each person is responsible to God to reach HIS love out to others; not with their own love, though that might come alongside of it, but God's love

shown in full by Jesus Christ. It is risky business. Who would have thought reaching out with God's love would be so often ill received? Valor, knowledge, temperance, enduring, pious, brotherly? You bet, every bit so and more. This is after all a righteous God and Savior influencing us, and this is part of THEIR most righteous way.

Times past, times present, times future, it will always be the same way for sincere born again Christians. We will all encounter the same challenges and same or similar difficulties. How shall we handle these times? Just as the Holy Spirit via the pen of Peter had stirred up the saints of his time, by pointing back to the remembrance of these core foundational "like precious" things.

Appendix Resources: AgapeLove EpignosisKnowledge SimonPeter

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## Chapter Eleven

### Avenues for Epignosis

#### **2Peter 1:16-21 kjv**

*(16) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.*

*(17) For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

*(18) And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

*(19) We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*

*(20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

*(21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

"For" ties us back into the previous statement, that Peter will endeavor the rest of his remaining time to make it possible, even after his decease, for us to have these crucial foundations back in our remembrance. He will remain diligent to this particular cause "For" or because neither he nor any other Apostle has set out to deceive us. They know what they know because they have seen what they have seen, and their continuing search of scriptural prophecy has made what they know all the more clear. This tells us a lot of what we need to know about the avenues available to us to pursue our further EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus Christ.

I would like to approach this complex section of Peter's "Like Precious Faith" discourse from the standpoint of EpignosisKnowledge. You will recall that Peter has used this word three times connecting it to the multiplication of grace and peace, the receiving of all things pertaining to life and godliness, plus identifying it as being the vehicle in which fruitful abundance is established and maintained. Epignosis is in essence what we recognize the persons, characters and righteousness of God and Christ to be and how we proceed from that to acknowledge this in our daily living. A very important concept for the Christian to get a proper gasp of.

It helps me sometimes, when I am having difficulty determining the direction or meaning of a passage, to do a word study and translate the passage into my own more consumable words. The first passage I was having difficulty with I translated to this:

For we have not imitated plausible but fallacious arguments with the purpose of deceiving you when we declared unto you the miraculous abilities and soon returning presence of our supreme authority Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his magnificence.

The main avenue of our Epignosis has to be what the Apostles have declared unto us. Jesus was not attempting to deceive the Apostles; there was no deception on

His part involved. He was who He said He was. He accomplished what the Father had sent Him to do. Both the Father and the Holy Spirit gave full confirmation of Him multiple times. His miraculous abilities proved Him. His claims of messianic identity were confirmed upon glorification back into Heaven to the right-hand judgment throne of God. These Apostles were all eye-witnesses of every one of these details. They had not been deceived into thinking this true. It would have been impossible for Jesus to manipulate these physical evidences unless every bit of it was every bit true.

Likewise then, since Jesus did not deceive the Apostles, the Apostles are not imitating the deception of Jesus, nor are they producing a deception of their own; not according to Peter. We therefore have a very substantial base of Apostolic testimony to build our productive EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus Christ upon.

Not only do we have this testimony of the power and coming of Jesus Christ declared by the Apostles, we also have the testimony of the power and coming of Jesus Christ given by the prophets of the Old Testament. You'll remember that one of the most important times Jesus spent with His disciples days prior to His ascension were the days that He went prophecy by prophecy and law by law through the scriptures reviewing what the whole of scripture had said about His person and mission for the disciple's fuller epignosis. It is this epignosis handed to them that they in turn are handing down to us.

Now it is certain that we have not been eyewitnesses to these facts as were the Apostles. Should it matter though who else saw what, as long as this Apostolic testimony and description of the facts and events are true and accurate? Does every single person who has ever lived need to be eyewitness to these proofs before these proofs can be deemed true and reliable? eyewitnesses before every soul that has lived can be held accountable for it? That is what every living soul will have to decide because; that is all the proof that has ever been given us by Jesus Christ.

What is it then that the testimony of these apostolic eyewitnesses is attempting



to make known to us?

## **Of Power**

We have encountered this Greek word before in this chapter when Peter wrote: "*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness* " (verse 3). DunamisPower is miraculous ability. Miraculous ability should come as no surprise to us; omnipotence is a defining attribute of God.

People nowadays like to think in terms of supernatural power and natural power. They accept the familiarity of the one in order to reject the unfamiliarity of the other. In actuality these powers are both part of the same thing; they are both together miraculous in one entirety.

When one thinks of natural power and order, consider that it is a result of God's miraculous word "*Let there be* ", "*and there was* ", "*and it was good* ". It is miraculous that natural power and order even exist. Indeed "*all things pertaining to life and godliness* " have been given by Divine DunamisPower.

In the Apostle's mind, Jesus Christ has proved to be the conduit from which God's miraculous power is coming through. It followed Him everywhere He went. It was exhibited in everything that He said and did. He even shared this ability twice, once with the twelve disciples, once with seventy more. Having witnessed hundreds of physical healings without fail every day for three years straight, having seen extractions of demonic influences without fail, having seen climatic and oceanographic manipulations, having seen thousands of people on a distant hillside feed from near nothing, having even observed resurrection from the dead and ascension into the parted skies into heaven; how could these Apostles not know the conduit from which this unexplainable power was emanating from?

Has this ability evidenced itself in any other person at any other time? Now

some would say "that is why I cannot believe in this... because no one else has ever exhibited this... there is no logical explanation as to how it happened". I would say "that is exactly why you should believe in it... because no one else has ever exhibited this... there is no logical explanation as to how it happened... only that it was foretold by the prophets". It would be comical if it weren't so sad how often the Pharisees and Saducees asked Jesus for a sign when they hadn't believed any of the signs surrounding Jesus all of this time.

The Apostles could not stare at each other after seeing what they just seen and explain it as it really didn't happen. Dismissal of the occurrence would not be intellectually plausible. Does the occurrence however need to be intellectually explained by them before there can be an epignosis recognition and acknowledgment in them of whom the conduit was that performed this wondrous event?

*"Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power..."* Peter says speaking of DunamisPower. Of all the many things Peter could have set himself to make known to us for our eventual EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus Christ, I find it most interesting that miraculous DunamisPower is the first of two.

What other avenue does he make available?

## **Of Coming**

Quoted resource: strong's 'G3952'

G3952 @ παρουσία parousia par-oo-see'-ah From the present participle of G3918; a being near that is advent (often return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem or finally the wicked); (by implication) physical aspect: - coming presence.

Of all the times this word shows up in the Greek New Testament texts, it is most often associated to our Lord's second coming. What is it that we are supposed to recognize and acknowledge about our Lord by pursuing this given avenue?

I think it says a lot about the person of Christ that He is coming back. It means that everything that He accomplished here the first time is preparatory to a desirable conclusion in the second. He is not done yet!

In other words He didn't leave it as a three-year flash in the pan, here and gone, now it is up to us to figure what it all meant for ourselves. It doesn't mean that he came and visited and we treated Him so bad that HE won't ever come back to us. No, it means that it was all part of a well-designed plan to get us to where He needed us to be in two large comprehensive steps. He could not achieve the second step without having first achieved the first. Come, plant a seed, foster that seed into a mature plant via the Holy Spirit then given it, return in the fall for its harvest. Everything Jesus did on the first visit sets us up for what will be done on the second.

We could go item by item with everything the first visit accomplished. Paul devotes the first two chapters of his letter to the Ephesians to such a comprehensive list of completed tasks ( [kjb@Ephesians:1-2](#)). It is an amazing list, highly recommended reading. Let us not lose sight though that those already completed things are preparatory to what is coming next; it qualifies Christ to return as "Victor", "King", "Judge".

Ah, to think how considerable the benefit of partaking in Christ's divine nature has been to me so far, to think beyond that how considerable it will become upon His next return! How is it that so many people think of this Second Advent as a terrible and judgmental thing, when the child of Christ will be transformed by the total image of Christ, seeing Christ in total as He really is? It is because they fear that they are not a child of Christ, and they refuse His influence over them. In that case, and that case

alone, the Second Advent is a fearful thing.

These two avenues, Christ's power and Christ's soon coming are perhaps the two quickest tracts toward a true epignosis of Jesus Christ. These are not mean to deceive you; the Apostle is most sure of that. The deceptive heart considers all things impure; not the heart that seeks the EpignosisKnowledge of Christ.

### **Of "This Voice Which Came From Heaven"**

Why would Peter bring this event - on the "Mount of Transfiguration" ( kjv@Matthew:17:1-13) up in this context? Only three of the Disciples even heard it and they were told at the time by Jesus to not speak of it until after His resurrection? What does this have to do with our consideration of epignosis?

It is evidence, at least evidence to Peter's own heart, that God the Father recognizes and now acknowledges HIS son Jesus before these three men (five if we included Moses and Elijah), and is very pleased with Him. Peter did not wish to leave this pleasant state after seeing and hearing this amazing confirmation, but that was not to be. No doubt Peter would want to tell others of this, for surely they would be as convinced of Jesus as he was; yet he was forbidden to do so. In a sense Peter was forbidden to share his personal epignosis until Jesus had completely shown His.

I can think back on times that I was attempting to make known the power and coming of Jesus to others. Looking back, I see my over-excitement devulging personal glimpses of Christ's awesome magnificence without first devulging the entirety of the work of Christ. It is like putting the cart in front of the horse. What I thought would be most convincing raced past the ears of who it was intended. We each have our personal times when Christ allows us brief glimpses. They refresh us. They inspire us onward to be so much more. There may be a time when it becomes effective to share those tastey personal morsels, but not until the full plate of Christ has been made

known and accepted.

If we are talking about becoming more fruitful in the EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus Christ towards others, this consideration might be one of the most important initial lessons for us to learn.

The Father does recognize and acknowledge Jesus to be HIS only begotten son. Not just by voices and prophets and living personal testimonies, but by resurrection and ascension to the right-hand throne.

## **Of Dawning Light**

There is also much to gain in our recognition and acknowledgment of God and Savior via Bible prophecy. It is a defining characteristic that THEY announce what will happen long before it does happen with intricate detail and flawless precision.

Do not get prophecy confused with prognostication. It is not that THEY are predicting what will happen, THEY are telling us. From our vantage point the time train has not arrived at that station; these appear to be predictions. From God's vantage point the station already has existed, that is why the train is going there. These are not so much guesses as they are descriptions of what it looks like when we do approach and arrive at that station. Think of it as a well written travel guide.

Here is another defining characteristic: THEY wrap THEIR descriptions in mystery on purpose. There are several thoughts as why THEY do this. One thought is that if they did unveil the details, cunning men could go in and alter the outcome. I do not believe this explanation; most cunning men are not even paying attention to the already known details. Another thought is that it make it easier for the prophecy to come true when it is vague and nebulous. I do not believe that either; the prophecies that have come true, looking back, appear to be very complex and well detailed and shrouded mainly by the ways that we beforehand tried to interpret them.

The third thought I find the most feasible, it is more long the foundations of what Peter has been teaching us. The proper way to view prophecy is that it first must be received by faith; most people will fall off the wagon right there. To that receiving faith there must be added a valor towards a moral excellence, just as much valor as was required of the prophet delivering the message; the wagon now is almost empty. Then there must be a knowledge, for instance familiarity with the prophetic language and established use of symbolism. Then temperance and patience etc... resulting finally at fruitful AgapeLove.

Part of the valor involved is the simple admission that we do not know how all this will come about happening, we only know that it will. It has to, God said it. How do we know it was God that said it? Well because HE has used this man or woman before with complete accuracy; smaller things, more current things. The lines of communication have been established and verified.

### **Of Private Interpretation**

Again, prophecy and prognostication are not the same thing. A prophet does not examine the available evidences and project forward into their future implications. That would be a private interpretation. A prophet does not fear the worst and imagine a way the worst could happen. No, that also would involve his/her interpretation.

One does not set themselves out to be a prophet of Jehovah. Think of a king's official message courier. The king tells him what to say. It is his responsibility now to faithfully execute the king's charge and deliver the exact message as issued verbatim from the king's lips. He must carry the king's message across hostile territory, to ungrateful ears, to sworn enemies, at risk of his own life to suffer whatever response the recipients offer. A king would go through a whole lot of messengers at this rate; it

was not an enviable position to have in the king's court. Prophet of Jehovah was an even tougher task than that.

There were times when some of these prophets were directed by Jehovah to lay on their sides in one position for three years, or to eat dung, or to marry adulterous wives to make an analogy. There were times when it was one prophet against eight-hundred false prophets, times when their heads were served to the queen on a silver plate, fiery furnaces and cages of ravenous lions they were fed into. They were despised by enemies and by the nations, by kings God had pardoned with to protect. Monuments and shrines would be built to them after the fact yes, but only so that their credibility with God would cover up the nation's own incredibility.

This treatment of the Prophets has something to say about the character of God and Savior as well. It says something that most people today are not willing to admit. It is and should be a tremendous sacrifice for any of us to serve this God in any capacity. Compared to God and Savior's sacrifice, our sacrifice pales, there is no comparison only similarity. Prophecy is not a matter of private interpretation because no prophet would sacrifice what they had to sacrifice to predict such a private "interpretation". Likewise, apostleship is not a matter of private interpretation because no apostle would sacrifice what they had to sacrifice to make known what they themselves "interpret" to be true. Evangelism, missions, orphan and widow and destitute ministries, etc... etc... in their purest form all have the very same attribute: sacrifice beyond what we could personally interpret as humanly possible or expected. It says so much about God and Savior that THEY would want it to be this way.

Knowing this about our God and Savior, how then is it best that we respond?

**2Peter 1:5-8 kjv**

*(5) And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;*

*(6) And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;*

*(7) And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*

*(8) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Of "Moved by the Holy Ghost"**

Nowadays people are moved by themselves, by ill-conceived passions and private interests, by peer or herd pressure, by habits and traits etc.. This is not new, people have always done this, it is all they can be moved by else they do not move at all. What is new is that, because of the work of Jesus Christ, this is no longer our only option.

It is interesting that the Holy Spirit which now indwells the saint could not be given any man until Jesus had died for that man's sin and raised to the right-hand throne (I speak of women as well).

**John 16:7 kjv**

*(7) Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

Until then the Holy Spirit did have influence with certain men and women such as the prophets, but did not indwell them; HE only indwelled the consecrated national Tabernacle. A few centuries before Jesus the Holy Spirit left His residence in the



national Tabernacle for good. Once the redemptive work of Jesus was complete, the man cleansed and changed whole, the Spirit was then sent by the Redeemer Jesus to take up residence in the man.

In the times of old the prophecies did not come by the will of man; not one man, not a group of men, not of mankind. The Holy Ghost or Spirit moved a few men. This has something to say about God and Savior's character also. Why didn't the Holy Ghost move all men instead of a few?

Think of it this way: God has to be very careful how HE proceeds to move because at present man's heart is in direct opposition to HIM. If HE moves to the left, man defiantly moves to the right. If HE sits, man stands. IF HE moves closer, man withdraws away. God acts, man responds in opposition to it. There is no rational method behind it on our part, it's just that the "carnal mind is enmity against God" (kjv@Romans:8:7).

The prophets however appear to be a slightly different breed, most of them called to be such even before birth. They are men and women no doubt with every human failing as do we, the first to confess that they are of unclean lips, unworthy to stand near to the Lord's most holy presence. Somehow this breed is softer in heart toward God; not perfect, softer. God does not choose to perform this in the same sense as the prophets for every human. The idea is that if HE does this in a few select cases, and has the people in those cases point the masses direct to the anticipated Christ, that Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit will be able to soften the others by the masses.

So when we think of prophets being moved by the Holy Ghost we think of a few select people who have been called forth and softened to be not as resistive and opposing as the rest that will make the tremendous personal sacrifice to get Jehovah's Christ message out and across. This all is the work of the Holy Ghost.

It blows my mind away to think that there is so much to God's plan and

approach to us that I have yet to consider. The offense that I take to some of this is quite natural given the carnal state of my mind. I do not always see in part because my mind often refuses to see. All in all now however, because of the work of Christ's Holy Spirit, I know at least that absolutely everything God and Savior have done and their approach towards me for getting it done is nothing but righteous.

This is as good of an explanation for what has caused my faith to be obtained as any I can come up with to date... as if by lots!

Appendix Resources: EpignosisKnowledge DunamisPower ParousiaComing  
GrapheScripture

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## Chapter Twelve

### Apostolic Advice to the Modern Saint.

#### **2Peter 1:1 kjv**

*(1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*

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## Why The Emphasis On "Like Precious"

The second epistle of Peter is three chapters long. Like any good writer, Peter says what he has to say and not one chapter more. In the Foundations of the Like Precious Faith Series we have had time to consider only the first chapter. With the help of additional Bible context and a Greek language concordance we have rediscovered what the "like precious faith" means and how it behaves, but not the why it is needed. I have saved this explanation of why until last because now it will make that much more sense. There is a reason Simon Peter has addressed us in the first chapter as he has. A reason very important to us here today. I will be skipping the context of his second chapter for the moment to get immediately to the context of the third.

### **2Peter 3:1-4 kjv**

*(1) This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:  
(2) That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:  
(3) Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,  
(4) And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

Peter establishes the first, the "like precious", in order to show us what it is that the "like precious" will be up against - the "scoffers". We need to become more like what Peter and the Apostles and the Prophets exemplified to us, because these other folks are going to become so much more of this other. It is not as simple as general scoffers, as we find out in the build up in chapter two. There is also at this time a massive problem within the Church making it difficult to defend it from these

scoffers.

I hate to leave things at "they", it makes things sound so conspiratorial. "They" is the world at large and more specifically a subset of Christians who have at one time "*escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* ) just as we have. Somehow however, "*they are again entangled therein, and overcome...* " ( kjv@2Peter:2:20). This condition is brought about by the pernicious ways of many "*false teachers* " among us "*who privily shall bring in damnable heresies...* " ( kjv@2Peter:2:1) whom "*many shall follow* " ( kjv@2Peter:2:1). This is why we cannot remain as simple in the faith as we now are. We have to become more of what the Apostle is establishing as "like precious".

Every generation has suffered its own version of false prophets and teachers. Church history is replete with constant struggles and controversies with reprobate heresy; not an entirely victorious struggle against them either. The true saints are rarely in the majority position. Though few in number, by God's hand they have somehow been able to stand their ground, guard and advance the better faith forward. At some point however the opposition comes to a climax. We might be nearing that point now. To combat that overwhelming insurgency we have to become more like Peter reminds us.

It is not so much for the unsaved that we are diligent to add "these things" unto our faith, though that is extremely important in that regard. It is more for the battle within our own Church protecting it to carry it on. This is why the EpignosisKnowledge of Jesus Christ becomes so important.

The process begins with false teachers, propagators of erroneous Christian doctrine (dict:strongs G5572 ), who surreptitiously (by stealth) introduce damnable (ruinous/destructive) heresy (disunion). What would qualify as disunion? Anything resembling up to and including the denial (contradicting or disavowing) of the Lord that bought (redeemed) them ( kjv@2Peter:2:1).

Jude puts it this way:

**Jude 1:4 kjv**

*(4) For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

There is enough similarity between these two Apostle's statements to consider that they are speaking of the same teachers or ungodly men who have with stealth crept in. Note that Jude adds that they were of old ordained (prescribed) to this condemnation and that they are attempting to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (unbridled excess). There are a number of ways that they could pursue this. The best indicator that they are doing this is if they or their doctrines are contradicting the Redeemer's and or exchanging His Grace for their own excesses.

"...Denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ", as Jude puts it, is a discernment that very much requires the Epignosis Knowledge of Jesus Christ on our part to sort out. A person very well could believe in the Lord God and Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation and at the same time by act or deed or lifestyle or doctrine deny that same God and Christ at every occasion. Denial is the measurement of a person's recognition and acknowledgment of the persons and works of God and Savior. In this case it is the lack. It is Christ that determines this measurement, not us nor the carnal mind.

Notice also that a person can be of the mind to accept the one Lord God and deny the other Christ Jesus as so many religious faiths do. As Jesus explains the logic is quite simple:

**John 5:23 kjv**

*(23) That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*

And later in the same quote:

**John 5:39 kjv**

*(39) Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*

**Of Damnable Heresy**

In order to comprehend the size and scope of this last days heresy or apostasy, we have to familiarize ourselves with the Greek word 'agorazo' (dict:strongs G59+ ). It means to go to market to purchase or buy back (see: AgorazoRedeem). In other words we are talking about redemption. The primary indication of this heresy is the denying or contradicting the redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ.

There are several quick ways for false teachers to achieve this disunion with God in their teachings:

1. By putting Jesus on the level of other men. If so, Jesus then is just as indebted and enslaved as the rest of us, unable to buy himself, let alone every other believer out of this world's pollutions.
2. By placing Christ's redemptive work on an equal plane as the work of other religions; the "all paths lead to God" or "alternate path" type of argument. If so, the sacrifice made by Jesus then becomes unnecessary for most. Sin debt

and enslavement then are redeemable by much lesser means.

3. By basing salvation on human works, ethnic blood or moral character traits. If so, these things then buy ourselves back into God's good graces, not the blood and obedience of Christ.
4. By saying that it is a combination of Christ's redemptive work alongside our personal works, or the Churches good works, or a Church recognized Saint's extra merits. If so, then the same diminishing effect on the "all sufficiency" of Christ's work and the over-estimation of our good works is put into heretical effect.
5. The denial of the existence of sin and sin debt. The denial of Christ's innocence. The denial of Christ's divine nature. The denial of incarnation. The denial of resurrection. Etc.. Remember that these denials are coming from people that once knew better, but now have left.

Think of how many modern teachings and beliefs come immediately to mind under this preliminary examination. Polls suggest that a majority of confessing Christians now believe that Jesus is not the only way to Heaven, that Hell does not exist, that God does not judge, etc.. Think of how many people today are what we would call antinomian, abusing the grace and forgiveness of God as license not to obey the Law and general commandments taught by all scripture. Think of how much disunion has been perpetrated of late. These many Christians, Christian mind you, are getting this fallacious mindset from somewhere. Where from? False teachers. This is what the "Like Precious" are up against; and that's just the tip of the ruinous iceberg.

Jude seems to add to this an even clearer definition of what is occurring; pinning it to the turning of God's Grace into lasciviousness and denying the one and only Lord ( kjv@Jude:1:4). We have met with this word for grace "Charis" before in Peter's "Grace and peace" statement ( kjv@2Peter:1:2). It means divine influence



upon the heart and its reflection in the life.

Grace is often misinterpreted as a permission to do what other non-believing people are not allowed to do. It would be like saying "because I believe in Jesus as my savior, it is okay for me or us to do this, I am no longer accountable to the Law, but not for anybody else". That is why the word "lasciviousness" makes so much sense in this context, it ties it to the influence of the flesh rather than the influence of God in Christ. Look how much of this allowance is being permitted by the teachings of the Church in this modern age.

The simple fact is that believers are not permitted any of this that they were not allowed before believing. If anything, these flesh influenced behaviors are more severely judged now that one is Christ's than ever before. One cannot read the "Sermon on the Mount" and take from it that Jesus made any allowance for this permissiveness on any grounds or basis. One cannot read in the Gospel of John and conclude any different:

**John 15:10 kjv**

*(10) If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.*

Yes, justification is by faith and faith alone, grace and grace alone. Justification and Grace in no way however are license for disobedience. If anything, the heart should now be more willing to obey now that its eternal redemption and justification are settled. We cannot ourselves win or earn this Grace, we certainly though can better show our appreciation and reverence towards it by better conforming to the image of this obedient Son.

Divine influence upon the heart is divine influence upon the heart and none other. The flesh's influence upon the heart is the flesh and the world's, nothing else.

That is why one must be born again, first of flesh then of Spirit, so that the Spirit can influence the heart and its reflection on life, not the Spirit influence the flesh and its self motivated perceptions. It is the divine influence upon our hearts that makes the heart not want to surrender to these flesh willed things; none of them. How can they teach that one doesn't have to be born again, when without it there cannot be God's gracious influence upon the heart?

Grace is something that has to be given. We do not have it otherwise. God has given us HIS grace in the person of Jesus Christ, having sent Him to redeem us from the curse and sin debt of the flesh - all of it. Grace and redemption together are all sufficient. It would mean very little if God gave us a Christ, but this Christ was only partially sufficient. It would mean little if the redemption graced to us in Christ came up short and needed our additional action. Separate the two to any extent, by any fashion, and we would find ourselves on the verge of intentional flesh driven disunion with God and the Apostle's "like precious faith" teaching.

In this all sufficient Grace and Redemption we now have a better grasp of what Peter meant when he said "...obtained through the righteousness of God and Savior. Promises were made beforehand, the means for their fulfillment established and accomplished since, every iota righteous in every detail, proof of their righteous character and act. Therefore, having all that presented before us, in recognition and agreement and acknowledgment of this their righteousness, we are now fully convinced of this as being our chance at imputed (partaking) and divinely influenced righteousness as well.

One further consideration we can make of this turning from Redemption/Grace is that once redeemed in the market, that object becomes the redeemer's possession. The buyer does not buy the item in order to leave it there on the seller's table unavailable to any further purchase or theft. He/she buys the object to take it with them, take it into their own possession and environment, to serve their

own pleasures or purposes.

Many people today act as if they are still on the seller's table, untouchable, at liberty to do whatever self wishes. All these many plaguing things are the direct result of false teachings. False teachers have been with us in the past, they will be with us in the future; if we are willing to look for them today we would see them all around us in various destructive shapes and sizes.

## **Of Reprobacy**

The next insight into this heresy is to consider those many others who will turn to follow these teachers' pernicious ways. One could say that it is the blind leading the blind, but more so it is the reprobate leading the masses into reprobacy; much more serious.

Why would these others follow along? Because they have not developed the discernment required to identify false teaching. They follow where they are lead, for some what tickles their ears. Because of these many others, the truth shall be spoken evil of. By whom? By people (scoffers) outside the Church.

Wait! There is more.

*"And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you..."* Peter then states ( kjv@2Peter:2:3). The "you that he is referring to is "you the like precious"; they will make merchandise of you. The Greek idea of this word means to travel into a country for the purpose of pedaling or trading goods. They will pedal your good character and influence to their advantage with their inflated fictitious words. The defining characteristics of your diligent effort towards AgapeLove will be the only things that will make you fruitful in such a hostile environment. Your "like precious faith" will stand out and apart from their reprobate faith because of Christ.

**2Peter 2:9 kjv**

*(9) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*

It is the reprobate nature of these teachers and the eventual reprobacy of these many others that we must combat by "like precious" means; all while contending for "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints " (see: kjv@Jude:1:3). The battle does us no good if we battle for the sake of the battle, but in so doing we fail to defend the original apostolic faith. We cannot use reprobate means ourselves in the fight against reprobacy. It is not always a fair "eye for an eye" battle.

The best text describing reprobacy is Paul's summary in kjv@Romans:1:21-32. Preachers often place the emphasis on the sodomy listed in this passage, but you will notice that the list is much more inclusive than just sodomy. Everything on that list, not just sodomy is receiving the action of God's judgment because all these things listed are the direct result of one's (giving themselves over) reprobacy.

In order to be reprobate, one must first have known God enough to now not glorify HIM, neither be thankful. As Peter has said:

**2Peter 2:20 kjv**

*(20) For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*

Once one gives themselves over to this, given ample time to repent then, God gives them over to what they have already given themselves over. HE is giving them over to their chosen nature and as a consequence to HIS judgment. HIS judgment is

on the account of their choice to no longer know or worship HIM, regardless of which of these excesses on the list they choose to perform in substitution for God's Grace.

## Of Our Response

Like Peter, Jude prescribes a valid Christian response, a proper manner of contending. I will break the passage up into manageable portions:

1. *"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, "* kjv@Jude:1:20

Very similar to Peter's idea of "adding to with all diligence" is this concept of "building up. Your "most holy faith" would be the same as your "like precious faith". Response number one, Jude points to the necessity of the Holy Spirit.

The scoffers do not have the Holy Spirit kjv@Jude:1:19.

2. *"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. "* kjv@Jude:1:21

Love here is our word AgapeLove front and center. Response number two equals "keep yourselves", which means to guard yourselves from producing their type of love, or keeping an eye on the Agape form love you are now intending to produce. It's not so much keeping an eye on their love, but keeping an eye on the mercy/compassion of Christ unto eternal life.

Spirit, Agape, guarding, looking forward; are you with this so far?

3. *"!And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.!"* kjv@Jude:1:22-23

Divine Grace is what compassion means in this context, the extension of it. Response number three involves drawing a distinction as to whom is better

off receiving your extension of Divine Grace and who is not. Two different brothers could require two opposite approaches. One might respond well to Grace if there is the chance. The other may not respond to Grace in the slightest and therefore would require us to protect the other brethren against him. Remember that it is Divine Grace, not our own personal grace that compassion is extending to them. Minus this discernment we too often leave it at the one kinder personal approach thinking that it was more compassionate, but is that so? The path of least resistance seldom is the compassionate course, especially when the influence on brethren as a whole is considered.

Spirit, Agape, guarding, looking forward, discernment and action are always our proper response. Spirit, Agape, guarding, looking forward, discernment and action, these all require faith, valor, knowledge, temperance, enduring patience, piety, brotherly kindness; do they not?

I find it interesting that both Peter and Jude bring up the point that our effort to respond should not cross the line into "railing accusation" ( kjv@2Peter:2:11 kjv@Jude:1:9). It was not the Angels' place with the Devil to do so, it is not our place with the apostate. God deals with these final matters as only God can. Our duty is to continue conducting ourselves in everything already established in the "like precious" faith and increase in it all the more. Accusation plays well into the apostate's and the scoffer's hands.

## **Of the Presence of His Glory**

*"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power,*

*both now and ever. Amen. " kjv@Jude:1:24-25*

Can you imagine being in the "presence of His glory"? How glorious will it be to see the faces of the many other "like precious" that we have battled alongside with glorying in the presence of our victorious commander in chief?

Some of us would think that just staying out of these ugly Church matters would keep us faultless and from falling. This cannot be, for then neither of these Apostles' passages would make any sense. It would be like saying "equip yourself for battle, but don't go into a battle and get your hands dirty". If the fear is of getting one's hands dirty, the better opposite fear should be being made merchandise of.

It is not a passive statement, it is active in every sense. The reason that the Lord needs to keep us from falling is because we are out on the battlefield actively fighting for His righteous name engaging in His righteous fight. The reason that He needs to present us faultless in the presence of His glory is because in the eyes of these scoffers, because of our difference and opposition to them, we are in the blame.

## **Conclusions**

Simon Peter, servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ, writes to all born again saints of a faith that is on equal standing with the faith of the Apostles, a faith that historically tends to settle and go back to what it peaceably would rather be doing, requiring the Apostle to stir it back up into our remembrance. Remembrance of these foundations is essential because of the imposing resistance of many scoffers within the Church, who follow after the false teachings of spiritless reprobate minds that constantly seek positions of power and influence within it by stealth. Because of these people and teachings, the true way of Christianity and therefore Jesus Christ its Lord is spoken poorly of; its true daily saints are pedaled by them as common merchandise.

This equal faith is the direct result of the righteousness of God and Savior and is given to us as if by lots; not one of us having deserved it, not one of us was looking for it at the time, but here it is upon us anyway by God's mercy and grace. It is given for the purpose fulfilling several great precious promises made very early in God's dealings with mankind to redeem man back out of his current fallen state.

In the fruitful abiding recognition and living acknowledgment of the successful establishment of this all important righteousness performed in Jesus Christ, "like precious" saints are to respond in proper measure by adding certain actionable AgapeLove defining elements to their obtained faith with immediate and total diligence. The lack of such a fruit is the evidence of them being blind and shortsighted as to the need and application, or that the saint is carrying on as if the righteousness has yet to be established in them.

The need for this engaged participating form of faith is great and universal among all sincere "like precious" Christians. This is not just for the clergy and church employed. Each of our personal efforts to recognize and acknowledge Christ and reach His AgapeLove to the Church and world at large must be defined by these specific prescribed and compounding spiritually influenced elements: valor, knowledge, temperance, enduring patience, unfeigned piety, kindness to the brethren as a whole.

"These things" should be in us and be increasing, not as we would define them, but as Christ Himself has influenced them to be. It is Christ's vine and Christ's fruit, these elements are simply the means for us not to get in the way of His extending His fruit to others through us.

The Apostle expects that we know and are established in the present truth of our current state and condition, that there is an intense spiritual battle being waged all about us on all fronts. Yet, he still feels it required of him the remainder of his life and beyond to continue putting us back into remembrance of these foundational



things, because, we frequently settle back into not doing them as evidenced by our wartime fruitlessness.

The time is now and always at hand to establish ourselves in this mindset and diligence. There are always those among us who having known the grace of God and escaped the pollutions of this world, choose to entangle themselves back into it, turn their back to their God, giving themselves over to the reprobate mind. These are the ones especially to keep an eye on to guard and protect the flock against, because they will seek to turn the masses their direction and steer them against us. We cannot resort to reprobate means to guard and protect. We must have "these things" in us and increasing at all times.

Brethren, we cannot step aside from the battle at hand, fearing to get ourselves dirty, hoping for those better equipped to fill in for us. There are not enough "like precious" footmen active on the battlefield to give ourselves such a self appointed indulgence. We cannot contend for this faith via the proxy a gifted Pastor or denomination. Each one of us has his/her responsibility to God and to the rest of the saints to be this and to be this now.

Having obtained this equal ground faith through the righteousness of God and Savior, it is now our responsibility to live out the full effects of said righteousness by the means of reflecting Christ's well defined AgapeLove. That brethren would make this saintly type of faith both "like" and "precious".

**2Peter 3:17-18 kjv**

*(17) Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*

*(18) But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Appendix Resources: CharisGrace AgorazoRedeem SotareSavior SimonPeter  
DoulosServant ApostolosApostle TorreyRedemption

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## **RandyP**

Layman Speaker/Apologist/Writer, pBiblx2  
Developer, Musician

### **My Bio**

By the Spirit's overwhelming leaning I was led to salvation and grace in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ October 1979. I wish I could say that in these many years that I've become a mature forty plus year old Christian; that would not be true. Only in past decade or so have I actually sought to be more than a "tag along" and "lone ranger" in the glorious "obtained" faith. In large part, this new growth stretch is a result of 2Peter 1 and the attempt to live forward his type of bold and productive faith.

Recently the Lord prompted me to commit myself to various levels of street ministry. I am learning humility, sincerity, servitude, trust, perseverance, even some street life, so much that could not be learned from theory and books. Gods word has become living by immersion and need, study and practice. I have also found great comfort and direction in these challenging times in the Psalms of which I often preach from and write about. I know with all certainty that Gods hand has moved upon my life by the profound changes that he has made in me and those around me, in so many areas, in so little time. I would not have chosen the direction nor the means of this myself without being led by His Spirit. My joy overflows!

I want this bio to not be so much about me and my qualifications. Better it is that this bio be my testimony to the fruitful abundance produced by Christ on Christ's vine. I know with all certainty that it is the hand of God by the way it seeks to pour through me and out into the world around me. It is warm, it is always loving, it is so

far beyond what I could ever imagine. It is as if my heart has become like a magnet turned right side up now, being insatiably attracted to Him. It is amazing and I am very much thankful.

God be praised!

### **Other Featured Releases:**

BackToPsalmsSeries - Audio commentary from the Back to the Psalms Series  
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