

20221102 2 Peter 1:1-4 Truly Having the Grace and Peace of the Lord

*<sup>1</sup>Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:  
<sup>2</sup>Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,  
<sup>3</sup>as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, <sup>4</sup>by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Let us pray.

There is a logical flow to what Peter tells us in these first four verses:

1. Bondservant of Jesus Christ – a voluntary slave in the Kingdom of God
2. An Apostle – sent out by God with a divine purpose
3. That he (and we) have obtained a divine inheritance by faith through the righteousness of God and Savior Jesus

**\*\*\* His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life & godliness according to verse 3. This truth sets forth the need to answer three questions in vv.2-4.**

1. How does this happen? – Through the “experiential knowledge of Him”. We’ve experienced it.
2. What do we need to understand? – Great and precious promises – that are found in God’s Holy Word
3. Why are the promises important? – Through those promises we are partakers of something divine, escaping corruption that comes through our desires.

**End result: When we know and have experienced the promises of God’s Word, we live out lives of grace and peace. That sounds a lot like an abundant life.**

VERSE BY VERSE ANALYSIS

**The Name Simon Peter – to hear, to understand, and to do**

Tonight, we’re just going to look at these first four verses of 2 Peter. This is the second letter of this disciple. He starts the letter calling himself by his Hebrew name, Simon (Like Shimón). That’s from the Hebrew word *shemah* meaning “to hear, to listen”. It’s like he’s saying “I’m Peter, the one who has learned to listen to God and to obey him.” When we hear the name Simon, it might be good to remember that we too are to **hear** what God says, and to **understand** it, and to **do** it.

## A Bond Servant

Peter next identifies himself as a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ. This is the Greek word *doulos* that means a "bond-servant" or a "bond-slave." Remember this is a person who has voluntarily and willingly submitted himself to a master, giving up any possibility to be set free because he has found a master that is so kind and so wonderful that he wants to just be a servant to him and to no other forever. That's you and me when we come to Christ. We desire to be His bond-servant and His alone because He is such a kind and loving Master.

This whole idea of bond-servants was laid out in Deuteronomy chapter fifteen. When a slave grew to love his master, at some point he or she just decided, "I want to belong to this master. I want to serve this master. I trust this master to take care of me and to do what is best for me." THAT is what it's like to be a bond-servant of Christ. This was all signified by the master putting an earring into the ear of the male or female slave. So let me ask you tonight, "Are you a willing bond-servant of Jesus?"

I'm dwelling on this because it's real important when we come to Christ to see ourselves as bond-servants of Jesus. We should be thinking, saying, and knowing, "I am so much better off being a servant of Christ. He is able to tend to me and care for me like no other. He knows how to care for me because He made me. I just want to pass the days of my life serving Him and serving in the house of my Lord". You know, that's real freedom. It's freedom from the world and freedom from all of the lies of the world. It is true freedom to live an abundant life that is full of grace and peace.

**An Apostle** - Peter then identifies himself as an "apostle". That means one sent forth.

## One in the Faith – Through the Righteousness of Christ

We then read, *"to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."* This is so wonderful because it states that we're all one in Christ and the ground is level at the foot of the cross. This reminds us that there are no "super heroes" in the Church. There are no second class citizens in the Kingdom of God. That means that you and I are of equal standing with Peter himself before God. Peter then says that we've received the righteousness of God through our faith. That's exactly what happened to you and to me when we came to trust in Him.

I want to mention that righteousness is a word that can be interpreted different ways in the Bible. One way is that we are “declared clean” before God when we come to faith in Christ. When we accept Jesus’ work on the cross, we are made clean before almighty God. Then there is a righteousness that means righteous living; doing right by someone; treating someone fairly. Even if Peter is talking about “fairness”, then he is saying that God is fair and He gives everyone the same opportunity to come to Him and have all our sins cleansed and washed away. In that last day, no one is going to be able to say, “God you were not fair to me”. I never knew. I never heard. That is taken care of in Romans chapter one.

### Verses 2-3 – Multiplied Grace and Peace – Lives of Godliness by Divine Power

<sup>2</sup> *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,*  
<sup>3</sup> *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,*

Peter’s honing in on two things that should be characteristic of each of our lives:

**1st GRACE AND PEACE MULTIPLIED** (think of it as perpetual grace and peace), and  
**2nd GOD’S DIVINE POWER FOR REAL LIFE AND GODLINESS**

As we read this, be thinking about whether you’re truly living this kind of life. If you are not, why aren’t you? Do you really understand living in grace and do you understand the divine power within you to free you from the lusts (desires for anything or anyone) the world tells you are necessary for happiness and freedom, which is found in Christ. Peter tells us here that we can experience this kind of life through **knowledge of Him** who called us by His glory. This word “knowledge” in the text is interesting.

### Knowledge gained through Experience of God’s Truths

There are two words for knowledge in Greek. One is *gnosis*. And that’s something that you just learn. You learn it like you do facts. Then there is another word in Greek, *epignosis*, that is in the text here, *Epignosis* is something you’ve learned through experiencing it. That’s experiential knowledge. It’s different than just learning some fact or truth. The “knowledge” that Peter is talking about here is not just learning that God is good, but it is you experiencing that God is good. You’ve lived it. You’ve learned it. You’ve experienced it. It’s something you’ve found out on your own, but it matches up with what you’ve learned in God’s Word. **His Word has come alive because of your living breathing relationship with Him.**

I want to add that we shouldn't believe everything just because we experience it. That is dangerous. Here's an example. Sometimes when we've had a service where we've really been aware of God's presence, someone will say, "Wow, God showed up today". Let's be careful to remember that we don't know that truth because we got goose bumps or because the music made someone cry. We know that God showed up and He is here in our services because the Bible tells us that He's here all of the time whether we feel His presence or not. He promised in His Word that He would be here with us "even to the end". Our faith is based on God's promises. It is not based on how we feel or how we react to what's going on in the sanctuary. Yet, sometimes we learn through our experience that HE REALLY IS HERE ALL OF THE TIME. We have knowledge of that because not only have we read it, but we've experienced it. That's when we know that we know that He is here all of the time!

The positive side of experience is that when we've experienced the reality of God's presence in our daily lives, the "theory" (the book knowledge) becomes very real and tangible to us. I had been taught by my mother to "cast all of my cares on Him for He cares for me" when I was a little boy. But it wasn't until I had some REAL BIG CARES that I chose to cast on Him, that I had experiential knowledge of that biblical truth. It was then that the Bible CAME ALIVE FOR ME! There are great benefits that come with that experiential knowledge. When we really begin to understand who we are in Christ (when we live that out), it gives us an understanding of how we're empowered to live. When a new convert learns in the Word that the Holy Spirit gives them power over sin, it's exciting, but **WHEN A NEW CONVERT EXPERIENCES BEING FREED FROM SIN THERE IS A GRACE AND A PEACE THAT SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING.** That's not just exciting. That's amazing. It is stunning! It is truly unbelievable! **THIS IS A GOOD REASON TO REJOICE WHEN WE GO THROUGH VARIOUS TRIALS AND SUFFERING. I KNOW THIS SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT IT GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE (EPIGNOSIS) THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD INSTEAD OF JUST KNOWING (GNOSIS) ABOUT IT.**

### **Get plugged into the power by deepening your relationship with Jesus**

In men's Sunday School class this past Sunday, Pastor Larry and Scott T accentuated the fact that victorious living in Christ comes from being "plugged in" so to speak to the energy source. It isn't just reading the Bible, but it's being "in a relationship" with Jesus. There is power in holiness and holiness comes from spending time with Him, understanding His Word, and communicating with Him through prayer etc. Holiness is experienced when we let more of Him control us with less of your flesh being in the way. That's the relationship part. We need not only intellectual knowledge, but when we experience it, it becomes real within us. **The result is an abundant life (EVEN IN**

ADVERSITY!) that is surrounded by His grace and peace. Here's how I'd like to sort of paraphrase these four verses.

*I am the "listener Peter" (Jesus called me the "rock") and I am a willing slave to Him. I've given up the freedom to have it my own way because I've chosen Him to be my Lord and Master. And, it is in having that same faith in Him that we're all on equal ground. There are no super Christians. The ground is equal at the foot of the cross. He called me out and He sent me. Now my prayer is that you'll have that true grace and that true peace that comes over and over and over, through experiencing relationship with Him.*

*We can have this grace and this peace when we experience His divine power. His divine power was given to me and it's given to you so that we can have LIFE AND HAVE IT ABUNDANTLY. It empowers us to live lives that are unlike anything the world can give. When we walk in relationship with Him, our lives will be filled with all things that have to do with true godliness and godly living. It is in experiencing His power and being plugged into Him that we can walk in true newness of life. When we get free from our "desires" for this or that, we partake of the divine nature. (Christ-Likeness) (Pastor Faber's Expanded Paraphrase)*

Sadly, many Christians are not walking in grace and peace or in the divine power of Jesus. It is not helpful to blame or shame people who are going through problems. We shouldn't leave this session feeling shame that we've somehow missed what's there for us. Let's just figure out how to get back into that Abundant Life Living. Let's discuss tonight some practical ways that you are able to walk in grace and peace, even in the midst of great trials and trouble.

Question:

- 1 On a scale of 1 to 10 how much peace do you experience in your heart and in your life? (1 is bottom and 10 would be total peace) – Maybe it's time to admit this to God (confess it to Him) and ask Him to change your heart.
- 2 Can you give an example of when you moved from knowing a truth of God's Word (theoretically/theologically) to knowing God's truth experientially? What happened?
- 3 What does Peter mean when he says, "*you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*" Does this mean that our "desires" for people and things can rob of us our peace

and blind us to God's grace in our lives? YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT. Don't focus on what you don't have. Focus on all that He's given and keeps on giving you.

Let us pray.