



# **1: KNOWING and GROWING** (2 Peter 1:1-10)

Those who *KNOW GOD* are *empowered* and *expected* to *GROW* to spiritual maturity. Today we will discover a practical picture of what that looks like in real life.

## beourguest

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## today'steaching

### **Peter's Reason for Writing**

#### **2 Peter 3:1-4** (NIV)

Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to **stimulate you to wholesome thinking**. I want you to **recall the words spoken in the past** by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

God has been faithful with what He has promised in the past, and He will be faithful with what He has promised in the future. The only question is...will WE remain faithful to the promise we made to Him?

### **Our God and Savior**

#### **2 Peter 1:1-2** (NIV)

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of **Jesus Christ**, To those who through the righteousness of **our God and Savior Jesus Christ** *have received a faith as precious as ours*: Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

1. Note the link between **Jesus Christ** (Christ = "Messiah") and **God**. It is through **KNOWING God** the Father and **Jesus** - God the Son - that you and I can have **grace and peace**.
2. Peter refers to Jesus as "**our Savior**", "**our Lord**" and..."**Our God**"

**James White** (Greek scholar) notes 2 Peter 1:1 and 2 Peter 1:11 have the same grammatical structure in the Greek text.<sup>1</sup> According to the "Granville Sharp Rule", the Greek structure in both verses links the 2 terms to 1 person.

- **Lord and Savior** is linked to **Jesus Christ**. (2 Peter 1:11)
- **God and Savior** is linked to **Jesus Christ**. (2 Peter 1:1)

✓ Simon Peter, the one who said to Jesus "*You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God*" (Mt 16:16), tells his audience that Jesus is not only **Lord and Savior**...Jesus is also our **God!**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-PPCBIKSNw>

Verse 2 shows another incredible claim: those receiving this letter **have received a faith as precious as ours.**

It's easy to think of the apostles faith as being so much more significant than ours, since they *walked* and *talked* with Jesus. Yet Simon Peter says that those who have never heard nor seen Jesus **have received a faith as precious as their faith.** The Greek word translated as "precious" (NIV, NET, NLT) means "equal in value/honor."<sup>2</sup>

### Thomas No Longer Doubts

**John 20:28-29** (NIV) Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; **blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.**"

Thomas says Jesus is not only **Lord** (master/boss), but also calls Jesus his **God!**

### Peter Applauds the Faith of People Who Never Saw Jesus

**1 Peter 1:8-9** (NIV) **Though you have not seen Him, you love Him;** and even though you do not see Him now, **you believe in Him** and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

### Knowing God and Trusting His Promises

#### **2 Peter 1:3-4** (NIV)

His divine power has **given us everything we need for a godly life** through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may **participate in the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

**David Helm** writes: "*These are the fountainhead gifts that all followers of Jesus have in their possession—the knowledge and promises of God.*"<sup>3</sup>

How do we **live a godly life** and **escape the corruption in the world?** We seek to grow in our **knowledge of God** and trust His **precious promises.** He has been *FAITHFUL* to do what He promised to do in the past, and He will be faithful to do what He has promised in the future.

Knowing God and trusting God's promises enables us to live Godly lives and this is how we **participate in the divine nature.**

### Growing to Spiritual Maturity

#### **2 Peter 1:5-7** (NIV)

For this very reason, make every effort to **add to your faith goodness;** and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

**Goodness:** We must grow so that our behavior matches what we say we believe. Our **faith** in God should lead us to lives full of **goodness** instead of sin. The NET translates this term as "excellence" and the NAS and NLT both translate it as "moral excellence". *Is THAT what our Christian lives are looking like?*

**Knowledge:** Christians must grow in knowledge of God, knowledge of the Scriptures, and knowledge of *why* they believe *what* they believe. *Read* and *learn* from the Scriptures and from *others.* Ask your questions. Dig deeper. Become a student who grows in knowledge. Pursue knowledge of who God is and what God says!

#### **Self-Control & Perseverance:**

• **Self Control** is an evidence of maturing faith: trusting God, knowing what He says, and keeping ourselves from doing things we shouldn't.

🌟 **John MacArthur** This term for "self-control" was used of athletes who disciplined themselves to "abstain from rich foods, wine, and sexual activity in order to focus all their strength and attention on their training regimen."<sup>4</sup>

When we practice self-control often enough, this will help us grow in...

• **Perseverance** is the willingness to keep pressing on and trusting God even when the immediate results don't match your desire.

<sup>2</sup> Biblical Studies Press, The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible (Biblical Studies Press, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> David R. Helm, 1 & 2 Peter and Jude: Sharing Christ's Sufferings, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 193.

<sup>4</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., 2 Peter and Jude, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2005), 41.

## Godliness:

☀ **Michael Green** defines godliness as “a very practical awareness of God in every aspect of life”.

• This is exactly how Jesus lived, a human being practicing the Presence of God every minute of His life on earth. How might that impact your thoughts, attitudes, & actions this week?.

❓ **What are YOU doing to train yourself to be aware of God in every aspect of your life?** Paul wrote Timothy, “Train yourself in godliness” (1 Tim 4:7)

**Mutual Affection** [*philadelphia* - brotherly affection] & **Love** [*philadelphia* - unselfish love]:

Jesus treated those who obeyed God as family with **brotherly affection** (Mark 3:35). Further, Jesus modeled the ultimate picture of **unselfish**, sacrificial **love**, as the ultimate servant gave His life as a ransom for others (Mark 10:42–45). HE is the example of what He expects of us.

**BIG TRUTH: Those who KNOW GOD are empowered and expected to GROW to spiritual maturity.**

## **Obedience and the Assurance of Forgiveness**

**2 Peter 1:8–9** (NIV)

For if you **possess these qualities** in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

Those who **possess these qualities** will be **effective** and **productive** both in **knowing Jesus** personally and making Him known to others. People who live in this way have an assurance of forgiveness. They have been forgiven and changed...and it's *obvious*.

But...those who do not possess these qualities are living as if they've *never SEEN the truth*. They are living as if they are **forgetting** what has been accomplished by Jesus to **cleanse them from their past sins**.

✗ Many who claim to be Christians have no real assurance of forgiveness because they don't demonstrate EVIDENCE that they are forgiven.

In fact...every person here...including me...should take a look deep into our souls and see if we really ARE

**2 Peter 1:10–11** (NIV)

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, **make every effort to confirm your calling and election.** For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What's it meant to **make every effort to confirm your calling and election**? Check to make sure you have a room in the King's eternal home before you leave your earthly home.

✓ Take real look at your life to see if there is *EVIDENCE* of your *REPENTANCE*.

Paul writes something similar: “**Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.** Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?” (2 Corinthians 13:5 NIV)

❓ **Have you ever really examined and tested yourself to see if you really ARE a follower of Jesus?**

### **2 things Peter is NOT saying**

1. No one makes it into the Kingdom of Jesus by their own good works. We make it into the Kingdom by turning from our sin and turning to the ONE who did the good works or a) living without sin b) gave His life to pay for our sin. That Christians **do these things** is evidence that Jesus lives in and through them.

2. When Peter writes “if you do these things, **you will never stumble**” - this doesn't mean you'll never sin or struggle again. After all, Peter denied Jesus 3 times and mistreated Gentile Christians in **Galatians 2**).

**James 3:2** (NET) For **we all stumble in many ways.** If someone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect individual, able to control the entire body as well.

Simon Peter is not claiming that Christians live in sinless perfection, as he wasn't able to do it, but that those who live to please Jesus and follow His example **will never stumble** into doubt, despair, nor stumble and fall short of **receiving a rich welcome** when they enter **into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

✓ Until that day, those who *KNOW GOD* are empowered and expected to *GROW* to spiritual maturity.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Do you love Jesus with your life?
- Are you livin' forgiven?
- Are you trusting God's future promises because He's been faithful in the past promises?
- Are you adding to your to your faith...**goodness, knowledge, self-control, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly affection;** and to **unselfish love**?

## TAKE SOME NOTES HERE

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## heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), Jim & Derita Pinkard (850-464-6188), Fain & Linda Poppell (850-464-1282), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

## discussionquestions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged/encouraged you most from today's teaching? Explain why.
2. **Read 2 Peter 1:1-2.** How did learning that the Greek structure in both verses links the 2 terms (**God and Savior**) to 1 person (**Jesus**) help you to appreciate the reality of who Jesus is? How does restructuring the Jewish phrase "Son of God" to "God the Son" help an American audience better understand the Trinity (trinity) of God (ONE GOD in 3 persons - Father, Son, Spirit)?
3. If you were asked to defend the Trinity from the Bible, where would you take others to read? (One passage we saw on Sunday is **Jn 20:26-29.**)
4. **Read 2 Peter 1:3-4.** What are some of the past promises God fulfilled in the Scriptures? What are some of the future promises that are yet to be fulfilled? [**Leaders Note:** You might write out a list of fulfilled promises on one side of a piece of paper (or whiteboard). Then write out the yet-do-be fulfilled promises.]
5. How does remembering God's faithfulness in the past help you to trust Him with the future?
6. **Read 2 Peter 1:5-7** and discuss each of these characteristics. What do they mean and how they are attained? Which of these is most lacking in your life and what can you do to grow in this area? [**Leader's Note:** You might need to kick this off and humbly share where you need to grow. Hopefully, this will lead to conversations where brothers & sisters can help each other in these areas.]
7. **Read 2 Peter 1:8-9** and name some reasons why the person who possesses these qualities (**2 Peter 1:5-7**) will likely sense the assurance of their salvation, while the person who does not possess the qualities will likely struggle to trust that they have been forgiven.
8. **Read 2 Peter 1:10-11 and 2 Cor 13:5.** Why is it good to examine your soul and see if you really belong to Jesus? What would you say to the person who consistently questions whether he/she belongs to Jesus?
9. Share prayer needs. Continue to pray for the Supreme Court decision that could overturn Roe v. Wade