

*The Growth of the Christian (II Peter 1:1-11)*

"In this second letter, Peter describes (ch. 2) some twisted versions of Christian truth being taught. Recalling his experience of Christ's glory at the transfiguration (1:17–18), Peter explains the "more fully confirmed" truth of the gospel as an antidote to heresy. The gospel is like "a lamp shining in a dark place" (1:19). In chapter 3 Peter focuses on those who scoff at the idea of Christ's triumphant return and the final judgment. Just as God once destroyed the world with water, he will one day bring his fire to it. In light of this, we should live in "holiness and godliness" as we await his return and the salvation he has promised to all believers. Peter probably wrote this letter about a.d. 67–68, shortly before his death." ESV Bible

**STUDY QUESTIONS:****II Peter 1:1-2**

- ✓ Peter uses the vivid analogy of a servant (or slave) to describe his relationship with Christ. What insight does this give us into Peter's relationship to Christ and his mission to make new disciples?
- ✓ The knowledge a believer has of God is affectionate and personal. How can "grace and peace be multiplied" in our lives by a commitment to grow in our knowledge of Jesus?

**Word Study:** *servant* means, "to bind" to another; refers to one whose will is swallowed up in the will of another. Before salvation, the sinner's will is swallowed up in the will of Satan. And after salvation... his will is swallowed up in the sweet will of God.<sup>i</sup>

**Word Study:** *knowledge* in Greek (epignosis) implies a more intimate and personal relationship; opposed to gnosis (a barren form of epignosis) which refers to a partial or incomplete knowledge.<sup>ii</sup> The knowledge we have of God is not merely intellectual, but of the heart and affectionate.

**Romans 6:22** "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and it's end, eternal life."

**II Peter 1:3-4 & 10**

These verses are best studied together because of their emphasis on our calling AND on what God grants to the believer; combine this with diligence and the believer's call is sure-keeping him from falling into temptation (vs10).

- ✓ Why is Peter purposeful to point us to Jesus' divinity and power? In addition to salvation what is the Christian a partaker of?
- ✓ As we grow in our relationship with Jesus, we have been granted "all things that pertain to life and godliness." Talk as a group to identify some of the "things" that God has given us to live out our Christian life.

- ✓ **How can believers be diligent with what God has granted them?**

**Word Study:** the word *life* here is not bios, “the necessities of life,” such as food, clothing, and shelter. Rather it is zoe, which is used to describe the absolute fullness of life, both essential and ethical -of which belong to God. It designates the life that God gives to the believer.<sup>iii</sup>

## **II Peter 1:5-11**

As a “partaker” of the Christian life the believer narrowly escapes -literally is set free from- the corruption of sin in this world (vs 4). Occasionally the believer’s new found freedom can be misused or misunderstood (Gal 5:13; Rom 6:1), so in protecting the truth Peter encouraged his readers to sure up their commitment by supplementing their faith with virtue.

- ✓ **Discuss the list of qualities Peter provided. Notice how these qualities are different and yet interwoven? What is their significance to the believer’s walk?**
- ✓ **What benefit does Peter link to the pursuit and application of these qualities?**
- ✓ **What warning does Peter give to the relaxing on or neglect of these qualities?**

**Galatians 5:13** “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

## **APPLICATION QUESTION:**

- ✓ **Peter’s letter is filled with spiritual truths that need safeguarded by those who are disciples of Jesus. Identify some of these truths and then share why it is important to protect them.**

### **Truths from verses 1-11**

- Jesus’ divinity and power to give new life. (vs 3)
- Christian’s freedom and victory over sin. (vs 4)
- Knowing Christ is key in fulfilling our calling (vs 2-3)
- An effective Christian seeks to grow their faith (vs 8)
- Believers need to be diligent in their faith (vs 10)
- Promise of eternal life (vs 11)

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