

Series: **Transforming Faith** – week 1  
CDOBC – beginning on 7/3/16  
Today's Title: **“The Present Value of Your Salvation”**

*July 3, 2016 ~ 2 Peter 1:1-4*

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**OBJECTIVE:** To help believers know they received everything they need for spiritual success when they put their faith in Christ.

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### ***Opening Prayer***

Turn in your bibles to **2 Peter 1:1-4**.

Today's title is *“The Present Value of Your Salvation”*

***I want you to know*** that you received everything you need for spiritual success when you put your faith in Christ.

***I want you to know*** your salvation is not only for eternity...not only important for when you die...but it's vital and transformational for your life right now!

Peter wrote his first letter to help believers “stand fast” in the face of persecution.

About 1 or 2 years later, he wrote another letter - most likely circulated to the same churches as his first letter - but the purpose of the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter was a bit different.

In his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter he wanted to warn them of the dangers of false teachers - and how important their knowledge of Christ was in light of false teachers.

The theme of this letter is summed up in the last 2 verses of the letter:

“...take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:17-18)

Beware of false teaching which will weaken your faith.

Grow in your knowledge of Christ, so you will be strong and stable in your faith.

1 “Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, 4 by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”

**Your Faith is greater than your failures vs. 1-2**

This is not directly in the text...but it's a helpful and encouraging reminder when we think of Peter.

Peter's faith was strong...and his failings legendary. His greatest failure was his denial of Jesus, yet knowing he would fail, Jesus told him, “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” Luke 22:31-32

Peter failed...he deserted Jesus in the Garden when Jesus was arrested, and he denied Jesus 3x, yet his faith did not fail!!! His actions failed...but his faith did not fail.

Why? Because of the prayer and promise of Jesus. Jesus prayed (made intercession) that Peter's faith would not fail, and Jesus is making intercession on your behalf. "Christ Jesus is the one who died -- more than that, who was raised -- who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us." **Rom. 8:34**

"I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." **1 John 2:1**

Peter knew what it meant to fail...yet he also knew the grace of God in Christ - and he knew the beauty of forgiveness and reconciliation. No doubt 30+ years after he denied Christ, as he began writing this 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to the believers throughout Asia Minor, the memories of his denial flashed through his mind again. I can imagine when those memories flashed through his mind the smell of the fire which burned that night to keep them warm was still fresh in his nostrils (Mark 14:67; Luke 22:55). The vividness of that night never left his memory...but it was overshadowed by the love, grace and forgiveness of Christ. The morning of the resurrection the angel told the women at the tomb to "...go, tell His disciples and Peter", and on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, the resurrected Jesus talked directly to Peter and told him to feed and tend to His sheep (followers - John 21:15-18). Jesus completely restored Peter not only to Himself...but to the gospel ministry.

The salutation of this letter begins with Peter identifying himself as the writer. Simon (Hebrew form: Simeon) was his name given at birth - it was a very common name in Israel.

Jesus gave him a new name: Peter (Cephas is the Aramaic form). Peter means 'rock' - and Jesus was giving Peter a name he would grow into.

By using his former name...and his Jesus-given name, Peter is reminding everyone of his failures - and his successes. Throughout the gospels, when Peter was acting from his flesh, Jesus would often call him by his birth name (Simon). "Simon Peter" was a mix of the good and the bad. Following his name, he highlights his position as "a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ".

There is a great deal of humility in this first sentence - for the Apostle's carried a great deal of respect and authority in the early church, but Peter wants to send the clear message that before he is considered an Apostle, he is first "a servant" of Christ.

So, as we begin this study - don't ever forget the writer (Peter) was a man of great faith, but also many failures. But his failures did not destroy his faith - his failures didn't cause him to change the truth of Christ to fit his frailty - and they did not keep him from being used by Jesus in serving fellow believers.

Don't let your failures destroy your faith.

Don't let your failures keep you on the sideline of ministry.

Instead, know the love and grace of God - and apply the love and grace of God to your life - roll up your sleeves...and begin serving the Body of Christ!

**Your faith is legitimate - no matter who you are. vs. 1**

Ethnicity...education...family status...bank account balance...thin or not thin...strong or weak...beautiful or average...wise or foolish...smart or not so smart...it doesn't matter - your faith in Christ is legitimate.

Your faith is of equal value as the faith of the Apostles. Why?

Because your faith is not based in who / what you are or what you have or don't have.

Your faith is based in Christ!

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

“by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ”

Your faith is based in Christ - specifically the righteousness of Christ. It's not based in your righteousness, but in His righteousness which not only qualified Him as the one and only sacrifice who could pay the price for the sins of the world - but at the

moment of your faith you received the righteousness of Christ - imputed to you!

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

“For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Peter says “those who have obtained a faith” - the word translated “obtained” is a Greek word that has the meaning of *‘receiving by lot’ - ‘to be the recipient of’* and it highlights the fact that our salvation is not earned or merited by us...it’s a gift from God - graciously given when you put your faith in Christ.

“a faith of equal standing with ours” - “with ours” refers either to the Apostles...or to Jews.

In the early years of the Church, there was a struggle between Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. This struggle was a carry-over from history and the culture, and it took a number of years for these sinful beliefs and attitudes to disappear. Gentiles often felt like 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens because they didn’t have the same understanding of the Jewish faith which is obviously the backdrop to Jesus and Christianity.

Peter’s point is clear: Your faith in Christ for the forgiveness of your sins is just as valid and legitimate as the faith of the Apostles or the faith of anyone else in the church!

As Paul stated in **Galatians 3:28**

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

There are no *‘special or privileged classes’* or *‘secret levels’* in the church. Everyone is on level ground at the cross. Of course, one person’s faith may be stronger than another - one person may have more knowledge or wisdom from their study of God’s Word. But in the eyes of God, those more advanced in the faith are not more important or more valued than others.

We “are all one in Christ Jesus” and your faith is “of equal standing” with everyone else’s faith.

**You need to grow in your faith.** vs. 2

When you put your faith in Christ, it is the end of your old life...but it’s the starting point of your new life in Christ.

So many look upon the day of their salvation as the finish line - they have made it into the kingdom of God. But they fail to realize the call and expectation of God for His children to daily resist the flesh and embrace His truth and follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

They fail to realize their need to grow in their faith so they can live their new life in Christ.

The foundation of growing in your faith is by learning about God...learning about Christ...by studying the bible.

2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

The grace and peace you experience in life is tied to your knowledge of God and of Christ.

The more you know of Christ, the more grace and peace you will realize you have been given!

A caution about increasing your knowledge of God and Jesus...

A mistake many well-meaning Christians make is growing in their knowledge of Christ in a selfish way. Their knowledge of God and Jesus increases and profits only their own mind. It's our love for others which motivates us to serve them - to share the gospel with them - but if we increase our knowledge of God and Jesus and our increased knowledge doesn't move us to love and serve others, our knowledge gain is selfish. Anytime you grow in your faith it should motivate you and equip you to share the gospel with others. God has not saved you so you can grow unto yourself. But this is what we see in the lives of many Christians...they study the bible so they will know more about God and Christ. But their study and



increase of knowledge is selfish and they don't use it to help others...only themselves - and it doesn't truly transform us and if we keep it to ourselves.

***Our spiritual growth is not just for individual growth, it's also for kingdom growth!***

Be patient with your spiritual growth.

As a believer, it takes time and effort to grow in your faith. It requires a humble spirit to grow in your faith as you allow God's Word and the wisdom from God's people to speak into your life and mold you into someone who emulates Christ each day.

### **The sufficiency of your faith** vs. 3

In our backyard I have a nice area of green grass. It's our oasis in the desert...and about 1 month ago I needed to replace a few sprinkler heads, so I went to the hardware store and purchased what I needed for the repairs...at least I thought I did.

As I was digging up the first sprinkler head, the pvc pipe broke...which meant I needed some additional pvc pipe to repair the broken section...off again to the store.

I returned home, ready to finish the job...and after a few minutes I realized I forgot a 90-degree elbow - so back to the hardware store.

What should have been a 30-60-minute job took me about 2-3 hours to complete.

Have you ever started to cook or bake...only to discover you're missing a key ingredient?

Have you ever arrived at the gym, only to realize you forgot your workout clothes?

Forgetting something...or discovering you don't have an essential ingredient or item is frustrating and prevents you from accomplishing the goal.

Do you realize this will never happen in your Christian life?

Do you realize at the very moment you put your faith in Christ you were given everything you will ever need to not only secure your salvation, but to live your new life in Christ? You must develop it...you must learn and grow!

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence..."

At the moment of your salvation, you received *everything* you need to live a godly life.

Even the power of God is yours at salvation! In fact, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in you when you put your faith in Christ.

**Colossians 2:12**

"...you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised Him from the dead."

As a follower of Christ, you don't live a godly life by your own power, but by the power of God in you. God doesn't give us commands to live holy - to live a godly life and then leave us to our own abilities to see it through. He has "granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness".

**Philippians 2:13**

"...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

Your salvation is so much more than a guarantee of heaven.

Your salvation has immense value in your daily life! Your salvation is sufficient in providing you everything you need to not only have abundant grace and peace in life, but to live a life of "godliness" and "power". And the foundation of the grace, peace, godliness and power is your "knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence..."

**Cling to the promises of God vs. 4**

4 by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."

"by which" - is referring to His own glory and excellence..." in vs. 3. By the "glory and excellence" of God, He has given us "His precious and very great promises".

- The life of God in us
- Our future resurrection
- The indwelling Holy Spirit
- Life abundant
- Abundant grace
- Joy in all circumstances
- The power of God in our life
- The Holy Spirit's guidance and help
- The eternal truth of God's Word
- The wisdom of God
- Certainty of heaven
- Excitement of eternal rewards
- Fellowship with other believers
- Comfort of God

Because of God's "glory and excellence" these promises are realities in the believer's life - realities which are unlocked and realized as you increase your knowledge of Him.

And it's through these promises that we are now - in this life "partakers of the divine nature". This is what we receive at the moment of our salvation - and in increasing measure as we become more like Christ.

How is this possible?

How can we partake / fellowship with the divine nature while still in this life?

Because you are a new creation in Christ - the old is gone, the new has come...or as Peter puts it in the last phrase of vs. 4:

“having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire” - (“having escaped” - aorist participle) At the moment of your conversion you were rescued from your sins. This is not looking to the future - it’s already done! (Romans 5 & 6)

### **Apply it...**

Know your salvation came with all the ‘extras’ included.

When you buy a car, you can buy the base model - or you can buy the model with all the bells and whistles...all the ‘extras’.

Well...there are no ‘base model’ salvations.

Everyone who puts their faith in Christ receives all the ‘extras’ needed for “life and godliness”.

So... get busy using all the extras...read the owner’s manual and start using everything God has lavished on you!

You need to grow in your knowledge of God and of Christ. (small groups / listen, watch sermons / Christian music / good, biblically based books, etc.)

*Close in prayer*