

# 2 Peter 1 Notes

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## ***Greeting (1:1-2)***

- The apostle used both of his names to ensure that the recipients of the letter would know exactly whom it was from. Peter identified himself as a "servant," which was a position of submission and obedience. The word is sometimes translated as "slave." Combined with the submission and obedience of a servant, is the dignity and authority of an apostle.
- "Obtained" refers to the process of divine choice. God chose us in Christ to receive salvation by virtue of our faith and obedience. "Like" means "equally valuable" or "of equal privilege."
- "Knowledge" is a strengthened form of the basic Greek word for "knowledge" (*gnosis*). It conveys the idea of a full, rich, thorough knowledge, involving a degree of intimate understanding of a specific subject. Knowledge of the truth ultimately results in salvation, not feelings, intuition, emotion, or personal experience.

## ***Exhortation To Spiritual Growth (1:3-11)***

- The divine calling (1:3-4).
  - Whatever spiritual sufficiency Christians have is not because of any power they possess in themselves, but it derives from "His divine power." The power that operates in Christians is of the same divine nature as that which resurrected Christ.
  - "Life and godliness" defines the realm of sanctification, the living of the Christian life on earth to the glory of God. The word translated "godliness" encompasses both true reverence in worship and its companion, active obedience.
  - Knowledge is the starting point for Christians, and it comes from "Him that hath called us" (John 3:27; Romans 2:4; 1 Corinthians 4:7; cf. Jonah 2:9). Sinners are drawn by the "glory" and "virtue" of Jesus Christ.
  - A promise is an assurance on the part of another of some good for which we are dependent on him. All of these promises are contained the Old and New Testaments. A "partaker" means a sharer or participant. We have the ability to become possessors of God's divine nature (John 1:12; Romans 8:29; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27).
  - "Corruption" denotes an organism decomposing or rotting, and its accompanying stench. The world's moral decomposition is driven by sinful lust. "Having escaped" depicts a successful flight from danger.
- Making one's calling and election sure (1:5-11).
  - Because we have received such wonderful promises, we must respond with maximum effort toward living for Christ. "Applying"

means "to bring in," or "to supply besides" and implies making a strong effort to provide something necessary. Diligence is zeal and eagerness, accompanied by a sense of urgency.

- Christians need to "add" these virtues. In New Testament times the word "add" was used of making a rich or lavish provision. "Virtue," also translated as "moral excellence," means a "virtuous course of thought, feeling and action." "Temperance," or self-control, is self-discipline. We need to be constantly in control of our thoughts, tongue, temper, and actions. "Patience," or perseverance, is a "bearing up under trials." Patience involves more than just temper. It involves endurance and perseverance (Hebrews 10:35-39). "Godliness" is piety, respect, and reverence for God. It is a disposition that does what is pleasing toward God.
- Failure to grow in this knowledge results in spiritual "myopia" and "amnesia." A defect of vision leads one to forget the obligation which grows out of the fact that a system has been devised to purify the heart. Failure to grow is an indication that we forgot why we were redeemed by the blood of Christ in the first place (1 Peter 1:18-19). "Ye shall never fall" does not mean we will never sin (1 John 1:8-10). "Fall" means "to fall into misery, become wretched; cf. the loss of salvation." We will not fall short of salvation. Said another way, we will certainly be saved. This is not an absolute statement. It is only true if we are "giving all diligence" to grow in Christ and thereby "making our calling and election sure." By possessing these eight virtues, we will be able to live victoriously in this life and joyously anticipate what lies ahead.

### ***Reminder Of The Truth Of The Gospel (1:12-21)***

- Peter's concern that his readers know the truth (1:12-15).
  - There is no such thing as brand new spiritual truth, only a clearer understanding of the timeless truths in God's word (Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:23-25; cf. Matthew 5:18). Jesus repeated His message in sermons, parables, and object lessons everywhere He went, exposing His followers to the truth again and again.
  - "Established" indicates a settled condition (cf. Ephesians 4:14). Peter's readers really needed this reminder because they faced a serious threat from the powerful infiltration of false teachers. Peter knew firsthand that even though Christians are grounded in the truth, they need constant shepherding to protect them from wandering into sin (cf. Luke 22:31-34, 54-62).
  - "Earthly dwelling" is the word for "tent," drawing from the familiar image of Middle Eastern nomads. "Stir" means "to arouse completely" or "to thoroughly awaken" from lethargy, drowsiness, or

- sleep. Peter knew that he needed to make these exhortations because his time of "decease" (*exodon*) was near (cf. John 21:18-19).
- Peter, an eyewitness to the truth of the gospel (1:16-18).
    - The apostles followed supernatural revelation (John 1:51; 1 John 1:1-3). They did not follow "cunningly devised tales." These were sophisticated, concocted ideas. The expression also refers to anything clandestine or deceitful. "Tales" (*muthos*, from which the English *myths* derives) refers to the legendary stories of gods and heroic figures participating in miraculous events and performing extraordinary feats. Perhaps false teachers had told his readers that the gospel was just another set of myths and fables.
    - Apparently, the false teachers were not only generally attacking Peter's teaching, but they were denying what he taught about the coming of Christ (cf. 3:3-4). There was no reason to doubt Peter, for he was a preeminently privileged spectator who had been with Christ.
    - God the Father gave honor and glory to Jesus. The "honor" is the public acknowledgment of His being the Son of God (cf. Psalm 2:6-7; Matthew 3:17; Luke 3:22), and the "glory" is the transfiguration of the humiliated Son into His glorious splendor (Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36).
  - The prophets attest to the truth of the gospel (1:19-21).
    - As accurate as it was, God did not merely depend on the oral, eyewitness accounts of the apostles. Peter indicates that the Old Testament prophets spoke the the same truth he did and that their words are made more certain because the transfiguration was a foreshadowing of their fulfillment. The scriptures, in other words, confirm the apostolic testimony.
    - After affirming the reliability of the Old Testament scriptures, Peter exhorts his readers to continue to pay careful attention to the prophetic message. He compares it to a "light that shineth in a dark place" (cf. Psalm 119:105). The morning star is the bright star that at certain periods of the year leads the day, and which is a pledge that the morning is about to dawn (Numbers 24:17; Revelation 2:28; 22:16). It will "arise in your hearts" or sheds its beams on your hearts. The time referred to is when Jesus returns in the full revelation of His glory.
    - No portion of the Bible came into existence in the manner that false prophecies did (cf. Jeremiah 14:14; 23:31; Ezekiel 13:2). "Interpretation" does not refer to the explanation, but the source or origin of the scriptures. Luke used the word "moved" to describe how the wind blows a sailing ship across the waters (Acts 27:15, 17). The only one who knows the mind of God is the Spirit of God (Luke 1:70; 1 Corin-

thians 2:10-13). Paul accepted the totality of scripture and proclaimed it when he stood before Felix (Acts 24:14).