

Growing in Faith 2 Peter 1:1-11

Introduction

Most believers would agree that the Apostle Peter was one of the prominent leaders in the early church. Under the tutelage of Jesus, Peter learned the importance of being alert and committed to defending the faith and living the Christian life. Peter was often overconfident in his early years, even when danger was present, and he often overlooked the Lord's warnings? Peter would rush ahead when he should have waited, sleep when he should have prayed, and talk when he should have listened. He was courageous, to be sure, but he was also a careless Christian. But thanks be to God, Peter learned the lessons of true faith and then penned these words in his letter so that we might know them too!

In his first letter, Peter emphasized the grace of God, but in this second epistle, his emphasis is on the knowledge of God. In fact, the word know or knowledge is mentioned at least thirteen times in this short letter.

When Peter uses the word *know* or *knowledge*, he doesn't mean a mere intellectual understanding of a truth included in scripture. He means a living participation **in** the truth in the sense that Jesus used it in John 17:3, which says, "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." (John 17:3 NKJV)

The best way to detect fraud is to understand the characteristics of the truth. So, before Peter goes on in this epistle to describe the counterfeits and religious falsehoods, he points out three crucial affirmations about the true Christian life.

I. The Christian Life Begins With Faith

The first affirmation is that the Christian life begins with faith. Peter calls it "like precious faith." It means that our standing with the Lord today is the same as that of the early apostles.

In his second letter, Peter writes, "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: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 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, 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." (2 Peter 1:1-4)

The first Christians had no particular advantage over us simply because they were privileged to walk with Christ, see Him with their own eyes, and share in His miracles. The only difference is that they saw Him in human flesh, which may have even made it harder for some of them to believe. They still had to believe in God just as we do and have faith that Jesus was indeed the son of God.

Peter's point is that the Christian life begins with faith, not in religion, not in church doctrine, not in keeping rituals and tradition, but faith in a person! And that person is Jesus Christ. The Bible says that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; He is the Saviour who came to free us from our sins. From the very outset, Peter affirms the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ by calling Him God and our Saviour. A Saviour is one who brings salvation. It was a word familiar to the people of that day because, in their vocabulary, it meant "deliverance from trouble."

It also carried with it the idea of "health and safety." A physician was considered a savior because he delivered people from physical pain and suffering. A victorious general would be viewed as a savior because he delivered people from being defeated by their enemies.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see how the term applies to Jesus. Jesus not only frees us from sickness as the Divine Physician and gives us victory over Satan, as our King of Kings, but he frees us from death as our Lord of Lords by giving us freedom from the power of sin. Jesus delivers us from the kind of sin that destroys a person's soul and robs them of eternal life.

So Peter tells us that the Christian life begins with saving faith in Jesus Christ.

II. Christ Provides All You Need To Live The Christian Life

When you accept Christ as your Lord and Saviour, He gives you everything you need to live the Christian life. You also experience God's power in your life when you know Christ personally. And it's the kind of power that produces "life and godliness." Colossians 2 says, "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power." ([Colossians 2:9-10 NKJV](#))

Christianity is much more than a religion; it is a relationship with Christ. Christ has provided all that you need to live the Christian life. When you have Christ in your heart, you have everything you need for a life of godliness. Jesus is all you need!

The Bible teaches that when we first become followers of Christ, we start out as babes. But babies don't remain babies forever. Just as a baby is born with everything it needs for life, a baby Christian also receives everything required to inherit eternal life.

Just as a natural baby has a definite genetic structure that determines how it will grow, the believer is "genetically structured" to experience God's gift of 'glory and virtue." Little by little, we grow into the spiritual person God wants us to be for His glory.

You don't have to wait until you get to heaven to start enjoying the blessings of the Christian life. The blessings of God are available for our everyday experiences! When Christ saves us, it's easy for us to give Him the praise for calling us out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Faith involves us in God's promises. These promises are great because they come from a great God and lead us into a great life! God has not only given us all that we need for life and godliness, but He has also given us His Word to help us develop this life and godliness.

Would you like to have a great life? Money, position, or power can't guarantee a great life. Peter says that a great life flows from faith. It's a Faith that believes and receives God's exceeding great and precious promises. No matter what your personal situation or financial position, you can have a great life faith in God becomes precious to you!

By the way, if you want to do a great Bible study, do it on the word precious in the epistles of Peter. (Precious faith, precious promises, precious blood, precious stone, precious savior.) And let Christ become the most valuable relationship in your life.

The Bible says that when an unbeliever becomes a believer in Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to impart the life and nature of God to them. When you welcome the Lord Jesus Christ into your life, you become a whole new person, and Jesus allows you to share God's divine nature.

Just as a baby shares the nature of its parents, a new believer shares God's divine nature. As a sinner, we are spiritually dead. We have no desire for God or church, or spiritual things. But when the faith of God enters our heart, our spirit comes alive, and all of a sudden, our life in Christ becomes important to us.

As sinners, no matter how influential or wealthy or famous we may be, when we die, everything we have is going to go to someone else! We can't take a thing with us.

III. God imparts His divine nature So You Can Live The Christian Life.

Those who have faith in Christ are no longer under the bondage of corruption. They share in the freedom and growth that is a part of possessing the divine nature.

Nature is what determines our appetite. A pig loves slop and 2 Peter 2:22 says that a dog will even eat its own vomit, but the sheep desires green pastures. Nature also shapes our behavior. An eagle flies because it's an eagle's nature to fly and soar at high altitudes. A dolphin swims in the sea because it's the nature of dolphins to swim.

Nature also impacts the environment. Squirrels climb trees, moles burrow beneath the ground, and fish swim in the water. That's their most comfortable environment. And nature also affects association. Lions travel in prides, sheep in flocks, fish in schools, and bees in swarms.

Conclusion

If nature regulates our appetite and we have God's nature within us, then shouldn't we have an appetite for godly character, integrity, holiness, and purity? Shouldn't our Christian behavior be like Christ's? Shouldn't our environment indicate that we are Christ's? What about our associations? Shouldn't they give witness to our faith in Christ?

Because we possess this divine nature, shouldn't we be able to escape the defilement and decay in this present evil world? When we feed the new nature with the nourishment of God's Word, we lose our appetite for the world's junk food. Peter says that if we "make provision for the flesh," our sinful nature will lust after the "old sins," and we will find ourselves disobeying God, abandoning our faith, and destroying the temple of our body to which we have dedicated to God.

Godly living is the result of cultivating the new nature and feeding it with the manna of the Word of God. When we do that, we grow and move forward in faith. If you keep looking back and lusting again after the works of the flesh, you will stumble and fall.

To live the Christian life, you need an abundance of faith.

- Faith in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour.
- Faith in the power of God to produce His life and godliness within you.
- Faith in the promises of God's Word that nurtures the divine nature within you.

Knowing and growing in the Christian life is a matter of faith. You cannot inherit eternal life on your own merits. We need Holy Spirit strength to live a godly life. Put your faith in Christ and trust God's promises to effectively deal with all the circumstances and situations you encounter in life.

Under the tutelage of Jesus, your faith will increase day by day. You will also learn the importance of being alert and committed to defending the faith and living a fruitful Christian life.