

**A PERSONAL
VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

2PETER

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2Pet. 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

Peter identifies himself first as a servant and secondly as an apostle of Jesus Christ. I would tend to consider the title of apostle as more honorable, but I think we are getting God's heart, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the title of servant is most honored before the Lord. The apostles were also servants. As is usually the case in these introductory statements to the epistles, the word for servant includes the idea of slave, bondservant; it's a position of choice. The apostle is a designated ambassador, one who is sent. Jesus identified thirteen specific apostles, but all believers are designated as ambassadors, representatives of the Lord here on earth.

2Corinthians 5:20 "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Who is Peter writing to? Those that have determined in their hearts to follow Christ in faith. The word for *precious* in the Greek indicates "of equal value or honor." In other words, he is writing to those who identify with the same faith he has in the Savior and who esteem Jesus in the same manner.

How was that faith obtained? Through the righteousness of God available to us because of the obedience of our Savior/Deliverer, Jesus Christ.

Wuest: ""The expression *God and our Saviour* is in a construction in the Greek text which demands that we translate, *our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ*, the expression thus showing that Jesus Christ is the Christian's God; this, in opposition to the cult of the Caesar in which the Roman emperor was the god of the pagan Roman citizen."

2Pet. 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

Again, as is often the case in the epistles, the introduction includes a desire for the recipients to experience the grace and peace of God in their lives. Hebrews, James, 1John, and 3John are the exceptions; Jude calls for mercy, peace and love.

Grace – A divine influence in the heart, and its reflection in the life. This is a gift we do not deserve.

Peace – My favorite definition from the Greek is “set at one again.” In other words, our fellowship with the Lord has been restored to the position mankind enjoyed before he chose to sin. We are “at one” with Him again.

As we so often hear, and I have stated in other studies, one can’t experience the peace of God without first experiencing the grace of God.

Peter is wishing his fellow believers grace and peace in abundance. How can that abundance be obtained? Through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. How can we obtain that knowledge? Through the study of His Word and experiencing His provision for us in the different areas of our life—spiritually, physically, materially.

Proverbs 2:6 “For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”

The word for *God* indicates supreme divinity and the word for *Lord* indicates supreme authority, God. This is another statement of the oneness and uniqueness of the persons of the Trinity.

2Pet. 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

His divine power is unlimited. According to that unlimited power, He has gifted to us everything associated with life (our physical existence) and godliness (our spiritual character). How do we receive that gift? Again, through knowledge of Jesus. How do we obtain that knowledge? Again, Through the study of His Word and experiencing His provision for us in the different areas of our life—spiritually, physically, materially.

How did we come to that saving faith? Through the calling of Jesus. Who is called? The following verses give my simplistic logic on God’s calling.

John 1:4 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”

John 1:9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Romans 1:19-20 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.

John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Romans 8:29-30 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Jesus came as the light for **every man** that cometh into the world. Even those born before the time of Jesus or who have not read God's word are without excuse, because God has made Himself known through the wonders of the universe, especially in our world. ALL are taught of God; it's up to the student to hear / learn or not (as every teacher or parent well knows). Those whom He "knew beforehand" (before the foundation of the world) would respond to His teaching were predestined, **called**, justified, and glorified. It was a done deal before creation because God is God; He is all knowing. (No I don't really understand how that can be; I just know it is true because His word tells me so.)

I am not making light of all the learned men who expound with great theological fervor on this subject with wide and varying views. I am just expressing how the Spirit has enabled me to mesh together the truth of the scripture for my own understanding. I keep reminding myself that God meant for all people to understand His word. (See Topical Study – Predestination, Salvation and Security and Journal on Romans 8.)

What have we been called to? Glory and virtue. Glory indicates a position of honor and dignity with the privilege of praise and worship. Virtue indicates manliness and excellence—traits possessed by the original man, but sadly not so much in evidence today. Webster adds the ideas of "moral excellence; integrity of character; purity of soul; performance of duty."

2Pet. 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

"Whereby" – Because of God's gifting and calling...

God has given men and women of faith the greatest and most valuable promises. These promises enable us to be partakers / sharers in fellowship with the divine nature. That nature allows us to escape the corruption / destruction / perishing that is a result of

yielding to lust (longing for what is forbidden). How can that be? Because we are “new creatures” in Christ...

2Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

...and through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:11 “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

2Pet. 1:5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

Recognizing all that we have in Christ we are to give “all diligence” (eagerness and earnestness) to add the following character traits to our lives. These character traits will reflect the growth of our faith. **Faith** is the foundation necessary to acquiring these traits.

Virtue – manliness, excellence (Webster: moral excellence; integrity of character; purity of soul; performance of duty)

Knowledge – knowing, science, understanding (Webster: clear perception of fact, truth, or duty; certain apprehension; familiar cognizance, enlightenment, learning, scholarship)

2Pet. 1:6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

The list continues:

Temperance – Self control (Webster: Habitual moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions)

Patience – cheerful endurance (Webster: uncomplaining endurance of evil or wrong, such as toil, pain, or poverty. The act or power of calmly or contentedly waiting for something due or hoped for.)

Godliness – piety, holiness (Webster: Careful observance of, or conformity to, the laws of God)

2Pet. 1:7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

The list closes with two more traits:

Brotherly kindness – love of the brethren (fellow believers)

Charity – affection, benevolence (Webster: a disposition which inclines men to put the best construction on the words and actions of others; generosity)

It would seem by the order of presentation that these are building blocks, one upon the other, of traits that will become evident in our lives as we grow in faith. The interesting thing to me is that *charity* is the last one in the chain. It would seem that charity, the truest love, is the most valuable trait attainable and is evidenced in our lives through the other virtues listed. This would be supported by Paul's statement to the Corinthians:

1Corinthians 13:13 "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

2Pet. 1:8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we study the various meanings associated with these traits, it is easy to understand how possessing these traits would make us active, useful (the opposite of *barren* in the Greek) and fruitful in our knowledge of the Lord. In other words, our actions will prove our faith. It will be more than head knowledge; it will prove to be heart knowledge as expressed by how we live.

2Pet. 1:9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

The word for *lacketh* implies denial, negative response. That tells me that the believer who lacks these traits has chosen to disobey/ignore God's instructions. He is blind; I think from the Greek that this is a reference to mental blindness. The phrase "cannot see afar off" indicates a decision to "shut the eyes." Again, it's a choice not to submit his will to God. Many believers want to escape hell and experience the love and blessings of God, but they don't want to give Him control of the areas in their life that would require self-control or self-denial on their part. This has to be referring to the believer, since he has "forgotten that he was purged/cleansed from his old sins." He doesn't want to think about the fact that it was his sin that put Jesus on the cross.

Actually, there appears to be no fruit in this believer's life, and scripture says that we are known as His disciples by our fruit.

John 15:2 "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

It would seem that the believers who are lacking in the above character traits would fall into the category of those "saved as by fire."

1Corinthians 3:15 "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

2Pet. 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

Peter encourages the believer to be confident in their position in the Lord through their diligence/eagerness/earnestness to be obedient to Him. Acquiring these character traits and practicing them continually ensure that you will be identifiable as a new creation, a follower of God, and not mistaken for the lost soul you once were.

2Pet. 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This verse continues to speak to those who have cultivated the character traits reflecting their growth in faith and culminating in true love. My paraphrase would be—Your eagerness and commitment to grow in faith allows you to enter eternity with the Lord with great reward.

2Pet. 1:12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

I think Peter is speaking here with recognition of our human frailties and the fact that we are engaged in spiritual warfare. We can know the truth and be active in the things of the Lord but can get distracted from pursuing that course by the cares of this world, the attacks of the enemy or our own sinful nature. We are ever in need of being reminded of and encouraged to follow the truth. Peter is promising to make them accountable; he was determined not be negligent/careless in continually reminding them of God's truth.

The Greek for “established” makes reference to strengthening. The more we put into practice the above-listed character traits, the stronger we will become as Christians, as ambassadors for Jesus.

As I was reading through this section again, I thought about how that is how I view my role as a Mom to my own children and my “adopted” children in the faith and as a daughter, sister, and aunt to the rest of my family. I try to take every opportunity to encourage my family in spiritual things and in the importance of God’s Word.

2Pet. 1:13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

2Pet. 1:14 Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

In these verses Peter is acknowledging the fact that he is nearing the end of his life. As long as he has breath, his intention is to rouse them from apathy or inactivity by reminding them of God’s truth. He knows that his time is short. How? Maybe because of old age or possibly because the Lord had given him a vision or made this fact known to him in some way.

Note from J. Vernon McGee: This is why Peter’s focus was on the second coming and not the rapture.

2Pet. 1:15 Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

Peter is committing himself to work hard to ensure that after he dies, these believers will always be able to call to mind God’s truth. I think part of that endeavor was fulfilled in the writing of his epistles. I’m sure another part of that endeavor involved personally training some of the future leaders in the church.

Another personal application—For as long as the Lord tarries, I consider these journals to be my spiritual legacy to my family for the same purpose.

2Pet. 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

“Followed” = imitated, obeyed, yielded to

Peter is saying that “we” (he and all other disciples) did not derive their wisdom from myth/fiction. When he and the other disciples revealed to them the miraculous power and the truth of Jesus’ coming, they were speaking as eyewitnesses of His majesty / glory.

Guzik: “Some people think the Gospel and the Biblical record are just ancient myths. They may admire their power as myths, but Peter rightly insisted that his message was no myth. It was history, seen by eyewitnesses. We can reliably reconstruct historical events from the testimony of eyewitnesses, who must be checked for truthfulness. The apostles and writers of the New Testament have been checked for centuries and have been found truthful.”

2Pet. 1:17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

2Pet. 1:18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

Since this is Peter writing, I believe this is a reference to his eyewitness account of the transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17, Mark 9, and Luke 9) when Elijah and Moses appeared with Him. At that time Peter was privileged to hear God the Father speak audibly with a voice from heaven declaring Jesus worthy of honor (declared Him precious, highly esteemed) and glory (declared Him worthy of worship). He identified Jesus as His dearly beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased (approved, one who gave pleasure).

2Pet. 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Because of Jesus, we as believers can be extremely confident in the words of the prophets. Why would he say this? I think because Jesus fulfilled so many of the prophecies made by the prophets of old. This fact should make us pay attention to all that they said that has yet to be fulfilled.

Guzik: “There are at least 332 distinct Old Testament predictions regarding the Messiah that Jesus fulfilled perfectly. The combination of this evidence together, from a simple statistical perspective, is absolutely overwhelming. Professor Peter Stoner has calculated that the probability of any one man fulfilling eight of these prophecies is one in 100,000,000,000,000,000 (10 to the 17th power). That number of silver dollars would

cover the state of Texas two feet deep. Stoner says that if you consider 48 of the prophecies, the odds become one in 10 to the 157th power.”

Both Peter and John refer to Jesus as the day / morning star. Although the same Greek words are not used, I think the expectation is the same. It makes me wonder if it refers to a conversation between the Lord and his disciples that isn't recorded in scripture, or is it just the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of the same truth to two different men. Doesn't really matter. The return of the day / morning star is certainly the bright light and motivation in my life.

Revelation 2:28 “And I will give him (the overcomer) the morning star.”

Revelation 22:16 “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.”

2Pet. 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

Here Peter makes a statement of fact that is a blessing to me. Before reading or studying any prophecy, understand this. Prophecy made in the scripture is not meant for the private interpretation of any one man or group of men. It's made for each and every one of us, His children. The only way this can make sense is for all who read the scripture to read it literally. Just as God spoke the Word through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; He also instructs and teaches us to understand the Word through the same Spirit.

As I was listening to Mark Hitchcock one morning, he made a statement regarding scripture that stood out to me. My paraphrase—Revelation is God's impartation of truth to the mind of His prophets. Inspiration is God's control of the words used to express that revelation. Illumination is God's teaching through the Holy Spirit of the recorded scripture.

2Pet. 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The prophets of old didn't speak words that they came up with on their own. These holy men of God spoke through the leading / inspiration of the Holy Ghost—He breathed the words into them.

2 Timothy 3:16 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Clarke: "Far from inventing the subject of their own predictions, the ancient prophets did not even know the meaning of what they themselves wrote. They were carried beyond themselves by the influence of the Divine Spirit, and after ages were alone to discover the object of the prophecy; and the fulfillment was to be the absolute proof that the prediction was of God and that it was of no private invention."