

STUDIES IN II PETER

"HOW TO WIN THE GAME OF LIFE - WRITTEN BY ONE WHO DID"

INTRODUCTION:

Colonel Jack Broughton in his book Thud Ridge describes his frustration as a fighter pilot with the Vietnam War, "The recommendation for a planned bombing campaign was ignored but the bombing was started, hedged around with so many restrictions and limited so severely by the policy of gradualism, that it was, except for brief periods, largely ineffective. Instead of striking 94 targets in three weeks, the power of the United States Air Force and Navy was applied in dribblets over three years. Some of the 94 targets have not yet been hit. Initially, even the Russian-provided and Russian-directed SAM (surface-to-air missile) sites could not be bombed at all. Later, only if the SAM's endangered our aircraft. The tank farms at Haiphong were on the forbidden list for months. The enemy had ample time to disperse and conceal his fuel supplies before we bombed them. Power plants were similarly spared until it was too late. Airfields were prohibited targets until late in the war. MIG's could and did take off and land directly beneath the bombsights of our aircraft and rule forbade their destruction until they were airborne. Key communication bottlenecks like the Paul Doumer Bridge across the Red River at Hanoi and the Haiphong docks through which funneled most of the food, fuel, oil, trucks, bulk materials, weapons, ammunition and heavy equipment essential to Hanoi's survival were forbidden targets. In short, the United States pulled its punches in North Vietnam. Hanoi fought a total war. And Russia and Red China provided the massive aid, without which Hanoi could not have survived. The result was inevitable. Military and psychological stultification and an increasing pilot and aircraft loss rate as Moscow helped Hanoi to establish the most sophisticated air defense system ever tested in war-- a far-flung complex of missiles, ground guns, interceptors, radar and communications and control centers."

I think we have learned that you will never win a war by being tentative; nor will you ever win in the game of life unless you are willing to give it your best shot and to go for it with all you have.

Find An ideal marry it And raise A Family!!

Philippians 3:12-14

"Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on, in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet, but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

*when the post,
today is the first day...*

Simon Peter is the author of the letter which we are going to study. This is Peter's last letter. And when we consider the career of this man, we can't help but stamp his life with MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

He was a fisherman, disciple, apostle, preacher, writer-- and most of all--a totally committed individual to Jesus Christ.

In highlighting Peter's career he was a FISHERMAN on the Sea of Galilee, he and his brother Andrew, along with James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

It was early one morning that Jesus sought to borrow his boat for a pulpit because of the crowds at Capernaum.

After preaching, the Lord Jesus invites Peter to go fishing. In the next scene we see the nets full and Peter on his knees in the bottom of the boat saying, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man."

Peter then became a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus, along with his brother Andrew and James and John.

Peter is the president of the organization and also a member of the Executive Committee, along with James and John.

His colorful career as one of the 12 Disciples is dotted with many highs and lows. One moment we see him walking on the water to the Lord and in the next sinking in the waves.

It was probably Peter who said, "Carest thou not that we perish while you lie asleep" as their boat was tossed in the storm on the Sea of Galilee; and in the next to hear the words of Jesus whisper, "Peace, be still," and the sea became calm.

It is Peter who says, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." He hears from the lips of the Savior, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee;" and in the next because he rebukes the Lord about the cross, the Savior has to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan, you mind not the things of the Spirit of God."

How many times shall I forgive my brother? --

In the UPPER ROOM he's not going to allow the Lord to wash his feet one minute, and then the next, he wants the whole bath.

In the GARDEN he sleeps through prayer meeting, and in the next he has a sword whacking a guy's ear off. On the way to the garden he promises that he will never fail the Lord. A few hours later he denies that he ever knew Him.

Peter must have taken CALVARY awfully hard and felt that the reason it happened was a failure in his own leadership.

The RESURRECTION must have been a phenomenal experience for Peter, and then to know that the Lord was reaching out His arms of love forgiving him and pointing him to the future.

It was a meeting with the Lord on the shores of the Sea of Galilee after a fruitless fishing expedition that Peter really got his act together. The Lord asked Peter if he loved Him three times, and with Peter's acknowledgment the Lord responded with:

1. Tend my lambs
2. Shepherd my sheep
3. Tend my sheep

It's almost like meeting a different man when you come to the Book of Acts. You see Peter, the powerful preacher, presenting the Gospel of the risen Christ. There will be thousands in heaven because of his faithful preaching of the Gospel and in exercising effective leadership in the founding of the early church.

Peter ultimately had the courage and fortitude given to him by the Spirit of God to suffer martyrdom for the cause of his Savior.

Case closed what a man!

When we come to the study of 2 Peter, we come to Peter's good-bye, his farewell address to the troupes, his swan song, his upper room discourse.

In 2 Kings chapter 2 we see a similar experience for Elijah, who is about ready to go to glory:

"And it came about when the Lord was about to take up Elijah by a whirlwind to heaven, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal."

After Elijah preaches his farewell sermon to the school of the prophets at Gilgal, Bethel and Jericho, it is recorded in verse 11:

"Then it came about as they were going along and talking that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven. And Elisha saw it and cried out, 'My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen.' And he saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. He also took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and returned and stood by the bank of the Jordan."

Peter is dropping the mantle on others at this point.

2 Peter is a book teeming with just the basic essentials. There's lots of love and emotion involved in this letter. It is back to the basics. When all is said and done, what has been most meaningful through it all.

the Challenge

BOX 580
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO 80901

... a biweekly letter from the heart of a man to men

December 15, 1983

Dear Friend,

MOSES...LESSONS FROM A LEADER OF MEN

MY VERSE: "So Moses finished the work." Exodus 40:33

MY COMMITMENT: "I determined never to stop until I had come to the end and achieved my purpose."

--David Livingstone

MY MEDITATION: It is the last stride that marks the winner! There are many men who are creators...inspirers...achievers...inventors...and believers---but where are the finishers?

That hardy band of fellows that settle a matter decisively; the tiny tribe of leaders who can terminate a project; a 20th century Moses who can give the ultimate touch; I love to meet the employee who hands in his CSW...Completed Staff Work!

Moses started...and Moses finished! Perhaps he learned this from his Divine Creator: "In the beginning, God created...thus the heavens and the earth were finished...and on the seventh day God ended his work." Genesis 1:1, 2:1,2.

And the wall was finished in 52 days. -

How many times Henry Ford, Sr. was asked by young men: "How can I make my life a success?" Here was the timely tip: "If you start a thing, finish it!"

When we persist, against all odds and all reasons, this "hang in there" attitude leads us through. Quitting makes a dead end of any road...often just as it is ready to open. Transfer if you must; catch another wave length; change your level to a higher one...but finish...don't quit!

Moses started a fantastic chain-reaction. Moses finished the Tabernacle in the Sinai desert; Solomon finished the Temple. II Chron. 5:1. Ezra finished rebuilding that same Temple. Ezra 5:16; about 500 years later Jesus was talking to his men about "finishing the job."

"No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9:62

Jesus came to finish and so He cried from the cross: "It is finished!" John 19:30. Paul came to finish and so he writes at the end of his career: "I have finished the course." II Timothy 4:7.

The Moses Principle: Be a finisher!

The benefit of finishing your God-given task is found in Exodus 40:34-38. Immediately "the Shekinah glory" covered the finished work. God's touch upon that which was done in His way and in His timing.

"Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith..." Hebrews 12:2

Navigatin' for Him

Robert N. Foster

It is the final checklist before the flight to glory.
It is the apostle Peter finishing his course with joy.
His has been a steadfast stewardship.

It is the battle strategy. It is the memoirs of a good soldier of Jesus Christ who has been led in a pageant of triumph.

It is the game plan for a winner, the map for the rest of the way. It is a man who is telling us how to run the race who is a finisher. These are words from a man who is leaving.

These words indeed are the final acts of a faithful man. It is COUNTDOWN TO KICKOFF.

* When you pick up the book of 2 Peter, you almost feel like you are going to a postgame locker room show with a winner.

These are Peter's proverbs telling us to continue to pursue the path of holiness.

Much of life's failures can be explained as quitting too quick.

* Peter is just a tough old bird who hung in there and finished strong, overcoming countless numbers of obstacles along the way.

It would be well to ask ourselves the question at this point: If we see ourselves so much like him in his biography, shouldn't we expect the same Lord to do the same work in our lives as we are willing to seek His face and trust Him to do so?

When it comes to DATING this particular letter, we see that it is probably written a brief time before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 A.D. It probably was written sometime around 67 A.D. And thus it becomes Peter's final will and testament.

Paul's second letter to Timothy was also written about this same time.

OUTLINE:

"How to Win the Game of Life - Written by One Who Did"

- Offensive*
Defensive
Game Strategy
- I. Study #1 - "Here's What You Have" 1:1-4
 - II. Study #2 - "Here's What You Do" 1:5-11
 - III. Study #3 - "Here's How I'll Help" 1:12-21
 - IV. Study #4 - "Here's What You Are Going to Face" 2:1-9
 - V. Study #5 - "Here's How They Look" 2:10-22
 - VI. Study #6 - "Here's What You Need to Remember" 3:1-7
 - VII. Study #7 - "Here's What's Going to Happen" 3:8-10
 - VIII. Study #8 - "Here's the Keys to Winning" 3:11-18

CONCLUSION:

It would be well for us to reflect on the words of Vince Lombardi when he speaks to the issue of the "Habit of Winning." "Winning is not a sometime thing. You don't win once in a while. You don't do things right once in a while. You do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing. There is no room for second place. There is only one place in my game and that is first place. I have finished second twice in my time at Green Bay, and I don't ever want to finish second again. There is a second place bowl game, but it is a game for losers, played by losers. It is, and always has been, an American zeal to be first in anything we do, and to win, and to win, and to win.

→ "Everytime a football player goes out to play, he's got to play from the ground up, from the bottom of his feet, right up to his head. Every inch of the man has to play. Some guys play with their heads. That's OK ~~OK~~ you've got to be smart to be number one in any business. But more important, you've got to play with your heart, with every fiber of your body. If you're lucky enough to find a guy with a lot of head and a lot of heart, he's never going to come off the field second.

"Running a football team is no different from running any other kind of organization--an army, a political party, a business. The problems are the same. The object is to win, to beat the other guy. Maybe that sounds hard or cruel. I don't think it is.

"It is a reality of life that men are competitive. And the most competitive games draw the most competitive men. That's why they're there--to compete. They know the rules and the objectives when they get in the game. The objective is to win--fairly, squarely, decently, by the rules, with sportsmanship, and in truth. I have never known a man worth his salt who in the long run, deep down in his heart, did not appreciate this kind of discipline. There is something in good men that really yearns for moods of discipline and the harsh realities of head-to-head combat.

"I don't say these things because I believe in the brute nature of man or that men must be brutalized to be combative. I believe in God and I believe in human decency. But I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, his greatest fulfillment to all he holds dear is the moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle, victorious."

STUDY #1

"Here's What You Have" 1:1-4

TEXT:

Key Verse: 1:3 "Seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by means of His own glory and virtue."

- v. 1 Simon Peter, a bonds slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
- v. 2 May grace and peace be yours in ever greater measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

- v. 3 Seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of His who called us by means of His own glory and virtue,
- v. 4 Through which (things) he has generously given to us His precious and exceedingly great promises, in order that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire.

INTRODUCTION:

Robert E. Lee's Farewell to the Troops:

"After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed. With an increasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

Cary N. Weisiger III points out, "One is deeply impressed by the beauty, present relevance and power of this epistle. The letter is a strong appeal to Christians to develop a character and conduct consistent with a true faith. As Peter writes, he has his eye on his own approaching death, but even more upon the glorious coming of Christ. He warns against false teachers and their destructive influence. He refutes the scoffing of those who deny the possibility of the day of the Lord and closes with a series of moving exhortations for true believers."

John Brown points out, "This epistle is plainly addressed to the same persons as the first, the Christians, many of them of Jewish origin, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. In the inscription of the first epistle they were described as strangers, as pilgrims and sojourners, as elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, as begotten again to a living hope to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for them."

It was John Calvin who said, "The majesty of the spirit of Christ exhibits itself in every part of this epistle. There is a strong probability that it was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. Otherwise, such an impressive instance of divine judgment could scarcely have been left unnoticed in alluding to the retributive justice of God. At the same time, the errors and dangers described in this epistle which bear a strong resemblance in some respects to those referred to in the pastoral epistles, prove that it could not have been written much sooner than A.D. 70. The allusion to Paul's epistles as known to his readers leads to the same conclusion as does also the frequency of the expression 'put in remembrance' and 'kindred words' which indicate an advanced period in the apostolic age as well as in the life of Peter."

J. Sidlow Baxter points out, "Whereas the emphasis in the first epistle is on hope amid trial, the emphasis running through the second one is on growth in the true knowledge. Though here again the Lord's return is also prominent, Peter is distinctively the apostle of hope, as is Paul of faith; James of works; and John of love."

The very seriousness of this epistle gives a keen edge to its teachings. Here is no mere doctrine for doctrine's sake, but for the vital issues at stake between the false and the true. As above shown, the dual emphasis of the epistle is the true knowledge and the sure hope. But clinging to this, there is a momentous significance which may well startle every eye. Namely, that just as true knowledge and sure hope are inseparably linked together, so are false doctrine and final destruction. What is more, just as true doctrine and holy living are linked together, so are false doctrine and unholy living.

Gaebelein points out, "Peter himself states the purpose when he wrote this second epistle in chap. 3:1 'This already, beloved, is the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder.'"

William Barclay, speaking about 2 Peter says, "It may well be said that 2 Peter is one of the neglected books of the New Testament. It is a book which very few people will claim to have read, still less to have studied in detail.

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"E. F. Scott says of it that it is far inferior in every respect to 1 Peter, and he goes on to say that it is the least valuable of the New Testament writings."

J. Vernon McGee points out, "2 Peter is the swan song of Peter, just as 2 Timothy is the swan song of Paul. There are striking similarities between the two books. Both epistles put up a warning sign along the pilgrim pathway the church is traveling to identify the awful apostasy that was on the way at that time and which in our time has now arrived. What was then like a cloud the size of a man's hand, today envelopes the sky and produces a storm of hurricane proportions. Peter warns of heresy among teachers. Paul warns of heresy among the laity."

"The Christian life is more than just a birth. It is a growth and it is a development. The key to this entire epistle is the last verse, "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Throughout the years of my ministry I have often made this statement, That I am not an obstetrician, I am a pediatrician. An obstetrician brings the little baby into the world. I thank the Lord that hundreds of people have been converted through listening to the Word of God. But actually I began my radio ministry of teaching the Word of God with the intention of helping believers to grow up in the faith. I am not an obstetrician bringing babies to birth but a pediatrician whose job it is to give believers the milk of the word and then to try to give them a Porterhouse steak now and then."

Lewis A. Barbieri points out, "The characteristics of the Christian life are protection and progress."

Blair points out, "One cannot read far in the second epistle of Peter without sensing the theme of living faithfully. Doubtless, Peter had never forgotten his extreme failure to live faithfully at the time of his outspoken denial of Christ years before. As a warning to other believers to help prevent them from falling into the same satanic trap, he writes this brief epistle. He passionately admonishes all true Christians to beware of false teachers and apostasy, and steadfastly to follow the Lord in the life of holiness and obedience."

Harry Ironside points out, "The date of 2 Peter is somewhere about A.D. 67-70. Like all second epistles, it is corrective. In the first epistles we hear the voice of the teacher as a rule. In the second epistles it is rather the prophet or the exhorter who speaks. The theme of this letter is faithfulness in a day of apostasy. The three chapters form three distinct divisions."

It is going to be our joy now to turn to the text of the epistle of 2 Peter and see Peter in his farewell words tell us "How to win the game of life - written by one who did."

The very first basic essential to winning in any game is to consider our RESOURCES. We are going to be talking about the issue of "Here's what you have" 1:1-4.

A coach must first of all check all of the equipment and evaluate the players on the roster before he can begin to put a team together.

Pre-Season
Exhibition Game

v. 1 Simon Peter, a bondsman and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

The letter begins with the author, Simon Peter. In this letter Peter uses both his old name Simon and his new name Peter. It has only been as a result of a work of God's grace in the life of Simon, that he ever realized what it was to become Peter.

John describes Peter's first encounter with the Lord in chap. 1:40-42 -

"One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ.) He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas (which translated means Peter.)'"

Born into The world
Heading The wrong
Direction...
Born Losers

Before you can ever plan to win in the game of life, the old Simon must become the new Peter, the Rock, as a result of God's work of grace in each of our lives.

IF We Are Going to win There Are going to be Some Changes Made..

Peter uses a two-fold title when referring to himself;

1. First, he calls himself a bonds slave.
2. Secondly, an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Peter has learned well his lesson of failure in servanthood in the Upper Room when he did not wash feet, and now he feels qualified to be called a bonds slave as well as an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Jowett, when speaking on the subject of a bonds slave, quotes the following,

O! How he
has Grown!!

"His not to reason why,
His not to make reply,
His but to do and die."

English points out, "The apostle began by identifying himself with the old name Simon as well as by the new Peter, as if he would remind himself as well as his readers of what grace had done in his own life. He was, indeed, an apostle now, but he had been also Simon, the vacillating fisherman disciple. His present place of usefulness was a testimony to the forgiving grace and limitless power of the Son of God."

Takes us so long to learn that Serving
is the key

Simon Peter a servant--This reminds us of the Upper Room experience and the Lord washing his feet. More than once the disciples had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. The Lord Jesus had told them, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Peter, realizing the full obedience of the One who took upon Him the form of a servant in order to minister to the world by His death on the cross, had himself grown in spiritual stature in Christ to the place where he counted the fact that he was a servant.

- ① God
- ② Work
- ③ Marriage
- ④ Family

Servant Leadership!!

Richard DeHaan points out "that the apostle laid the foundation of the entire epistle by establishing the fact that genuine salvation is a supernatural act, the work

Let Me Be Your Servant

S = Sacrifices

E = Endures

R = Responds

V = Valuable

A = Available

N = Near

T = Thoughtful

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served,
but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

1. Serving Jesus
2. Serving Mate
3. Serving Family
4. Serving Church
5. Serving Country
6. Serving Profession
7. Serving Friends & Associates
8. Serving Those Without Christ

Let Me Be Your Servant

Scriptural Meditation for the Conference (NET Bible):

Job 1:8

So the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil."

Job 2:3

Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil. And he still holds firmly his integrity, so that you stirred me up to destroy him without reason."

Psalms 31:16

Smile on your servant!
Deliver me because of your faithfulness!

Psalms 86:4

Make your servant glad,
for to you, O sovereign Master, I pray!

Psalms 116:16

Yes, Lord! I am indeed your servant;
I am your lowest slave.
You saved me from death.

Psalms 119:17

Be kind to your servant!
Then I will live and keep your instructions.

Psalms 119:125

I am your servant. Give me insight,
that I might understand your rules.

Psalm 119:135

Smile on your servant!
Teach me your statutes!

Psalm 119:140

Your word is absolutely pure,
and your servant loves it.

Daniel 6:20

As he approached the den, he called out to Daniel in a worried voice,
“Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God whom you continually
serve able to rescue you from the lions?”

Daniel 9:17

“So now, our God, accept the prayer and requests of your servant, and
show favor to your devastated sanctuary for your own sake.

Matthew 20:26-27

It must not be this way among you! Instead whoever wants to be great
among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among
you must be your slave

Matthew 23:11

The greatest among you will be your servant.

Matthew 25:21, 23

His master answered, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave! You have been
faithful in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into
the joy of your master.’ . . . His master answered, ‘Well done, good and
faithful slave! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in
charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.’

Mark 10:43-44

But it is not this way among you. Instead whoever wants to be great
among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among
you must be the slave of all.

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Luke 12:35

"Get dressed for service and keep your lamps burning;

Luke 12:43

Blessed is that slave whom his master finds at work when he returns.

Luke 12:47

That servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or do what his master asked will receive a severe beating.

Luke 16:13

No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

John 12:26

If anyone wants to serve me, he must follow me, and where I am, my servant will be too. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

2 Corinthians 4:5

For we do not proclaim ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her

Philippians 2:7-8

but emptied himself by taking on the form of a slave, by looking like other men, and by sharing in human nature. He humbled himself, by becoming obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross!

Philippians 2:17

But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice together with all of you.

Philippians 2:22

But you know his qualifications, that like a son working with his father, he served with me in advancing the gospel.

Philippians 2:25

But for now I have considered it necessary to send Epaphroditus to you. For he is my brother, coworker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to me in my need.

Colossians 4:12

Epaphras, who is one of you and a slave of Christ, greets you. He is always struggling in prayer on your behalf, so that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

2 Timothy 2:24

And the Lord's slave must not engage in heated disputes but be kind toward all, an apt teacher, patient,

Focused on Serving

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

1. Serving Jesus
2. Serving Mate
3. Serving Family
4. Serving Church
5. Serving Country
6. Serving Profession
7. Serving Friends & Associates
8. Serving Those Without Christ

2 Timothy 4:7

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

Philippians 3:13-14

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 25:23

"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Here are the words of "The Servant Song" by Richard Gillard:

Brother, let me be your servant
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant, too

We are pilgrims on a journey
We are brothers on the road
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load

I will weep when you are weeping
When you laugh I'll laugh with you
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through

When we sing to God in heaven
We shall find such harmony
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony

Brother, let me be your servant
Let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace
To let you be my servant, too

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of God from start to finish. This alone distinguishes the real thing from its many counterfeits. The new birth involves a divine call, the implanting of a divine nature and the impartation of divine power for successful Christian living."

Smith points out, "The apostle was now an old man and knew that the end of his life was drawing near. He therefore, as some suppose, uses his full name. The first was his original name here given in the Aramaic form which implies that he addressed himself chiefly to Jewish Christians. The second was the name given him by his Lord and was expressive of his character as it ripened under the influence of the grace of God. It was a grand name, the Rock, and in the end, though not at the beginning of his career, he proved himself worthy of it. He built upon the rock of ages and became himself a stone, a rock, which no persecutions could move from its place. He calls himself here a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ. The servant first; an apostle afterwards--the former denoting his relation of dependence; the latter the dignity of his office. Though every servant of Christ is not an apostle, yet not one but a servant can become a true apostle. The rest of the apostles, including St. Paul, were true servants of Christ and deemed it their highest honor to occupy that position, for theirs was a willing and a ready service; and with a holy pride they listened to the divine commands and then fulfilled them with a joyful heart."

A good servant has these characteristics:

- quick eyes
- listening ears
- ready feet
- working hands
- and an honest heart

"To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours"

Some have said that the letter was written to the same group of believers that the first epistle was written to, and this certainly is expressed in chapter 3. But we would seem to have some indication here in this first verse that this letter is more universal in nature.

Whereas Paul writes his final letter to one young Timothy, Peter seems to write his to everyone.

Paul writes to one--Peter writes to a bunch.

John 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name."

It is written to those (who have received a faith of the same kind as ours) The letter then is written to fellow believers.

No Labels
Key!!

God says Here's the right. You need!

This faith is only made available by the instrument of the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Faith is exercised when you take it!!

He was made
sin so we
could be made
righteous!!

2 Corinthians 5:21 "He made him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

Rom 1:17 For in it is the righteousness of God revealed From Faith to Faith; as it is written, The Just Shall live by Faith...

I think probably the starting point for Peter was when he was sailing with the Savior after his boat being used for a pulpit. The Lord on that occasion filled the nets with fish and Peter dropped upon his knees before the Lord and acknowledged, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

It is Thomas in the Upper Room, falling upon his knees before the risen Christ in John 20:28

"Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God.' Jesus said to him, 'Because you have seen me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see and yet believed.'"

Smith points out, "For it is like precious faith with theirs, the same faith in every respect, though in some of us it is not always equally vigorous and strong. It is like precious faith and may become as precious to us as it was to them when triumphant over every foe it lands us on the eternal shores. It is precious even though it

Linda Gray: "I've Always been a Christian".

be as a grain of mustard seed, for it opens to us the same mysteries, puts us in possession of the same benefits, imparts to us the same power and gains for us the same victories. A little faith is precious and must never, therefore, be despised. Yet, our prayer should ever be, Lord, increase our faith. The more faith we gain, the more precious it becomes, and the more valuable our spiritual possessions will appear."

Criswell, in commenting on this verse, says, "God's holiness and righteousness are imputed to us who have obtained a like precious faith and the righteousness of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. So the righteousness that we have is imputed to us. We obtain it. It is not something we possess or that we inherited by our fallen natures. When I come before God and stand before Him with my works, my righteousness, the Lord looks upon my goodnesses as filthy rags. We can never stand before God and tell Him we are worthy to mingle with the angels in glory and the redeemed saints because of the good works we did in our lives."

✱✱ Romans 1:16,17 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, But the righteous man shall live by faith."

Westwood points out, "Sectarian ideas have overspread the Christian community to the extent that many groups of God's people are claiming places of special nearness to Christ, special light as to their pathway with a high wall of separation to keep others out of their company. Here on the threshold of this edifice of truth we find the Spirit of God places all Christians on one platform as those who have obtained a like precious faith with us. The word precious is a favorite in these epistles and here it is applied to that faith which all believers in Christ share in common with one another. Thus, upon the very threshold of his second epistle, Simon Peter asserts the deity of our Lord Jesus, as well as His saving power."

Harry Ironside says, "God desires that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The reason that some men have not faith is that they will not give heed to the word, and 'faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God' (Romans 10:17)."

Nieboer points out, "While faith is not the Savior, it is important, and Peter calls it precious. It is precious because it links us up with the precious One. Peter calls Christ precious three times:

1 Peter 2:4
2:6
2:7

He calls His blood precious too:

1 Peter 1:19

He also calls the trial of our faith precious:

1 Peter 1:7

And speaks of precious promises:

2 Peter 1:4

To Peter the Lord and all things related to Him are precious. It should be so with us as well."

Everything has been done in righteousness. He has forgiven us all our sins, lifted us from the gates of hell, and made us His children. No one can accuse Him of being unrighteous in the least in it all. He could not now righteously refuse salvation to anyone who would put his faith in the Lord Jesus. He cannot righteously demand payment twice for the same sin; once of His Son, and then again of those for whom He has paid on the cross. So we have obtained our faith through His righteousness, rather than in spite of it, as we might suppose.

Kierkegaard was right. We choose to lock the door of our hearts because we want to live in the wretched doghouses of our life.

-17-

The hymnwriter says it so well:

"My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ the solid rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

v. 2 May grace and peace be yours in ever greater measure
in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

The wish of the apostle for these fellow believers is two fold:

1. The first is for grace.
2. And the second is for peace.

And he wants this to be theirs in ever greater measure.

You will never find grace and peace reversed in any of the epistles, for a man must first have an experience of God's grace or unmerited favor in the provision of the gift of His Son, in whom we place our faith before he can ever experience the peace which only comes through the blood of His cross.

Throughout the epistle we find that Peter is never content with the status quo. He is speaking such phrases as:

'ever greater measure'
'every intense effort'
'be all the more diligent'
'be paying attention'
'keep on stirring you up'
'looking for and hastening'
'constantly be on your guard'
'be constantly growing'

Revealing His Passion!

Peter sees the Christian life as an ongoing process, and in it we can experience in greater measure His grace and peace as we learn to trust Him.

Need More The Farther You Run...

Peter goes on to say that this grace and peace can be "ours in ever greater measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

The More You Know Him the Greater will be Your Grace + Peace !!!

Jowett points out, "Out of this advanced and advancing knowledge there is to come a multiplication of grace and peace. Grace is to be multiplied. The single drops are to become showers. The solitary rays are to glow like the moon. And peace is to be multiplied, deepened, heightened and enriched. Is not this the very genius of fraternity. What thing more beautiful can brotherhood grow than wishes and intercessions like these?"

English points out, "Grace and peace be multiplied." The enthusiasm of the apostle did not wane through the passing of years and he showed how this multiplication of grace and peace can become real through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. How true this is! Those choice saints whose very countenances reveal the sufficiency of God's grace in whose lives the peace of God is obviously operative, are those who have gone on and on in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

John Brown points out, "Here we are taught first that Christians have grace; secondly, they have peace; thirdly, that they need to have their grace and peace increased or multiplied; and finally, that this increase of grace and peace is to be obtained through or in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord."

All mankind may be divided into two classes:

They who have

and they who want

grace and peace.

How much more of heaven might you enjoy on earth by an increased measure of grace and peace. Remember that grace and peace are to be increased as they were commenced in the knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

J. Vernon McGee points out, "I remember hearing the late Dr. Herbert Bieber make the statement that after he was saved, he went to seminary to find out what had happened to him. That's good and that reveals that you can trust Him and still not really know His Word."

Smith points out, "The very element in which grace and peace are multiplied is this superior knowledge of God and of His Son. We grow in grace as we grow in an intimate and experimental acquaintance with Him, and our peace abounds as we realize more fully a sense of His greatness, majesty and love. True knowledge, or divine wisdom, causes our peace to flow as a river and our righteousness to abound as the waves of the sea."

Psalm 9:10 "And those who know Thy name will put their trust in thee, for Thou, O Lord, hast not forsaken those who seek Thee."

Philippians 3:10 "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death."

Blair points out, "The word 'multiplied' suggests constant growth under the fulness of the blessing of Christ. We are not full-grown. We are growing. As we feed upon God's Word daily, we increase our knowledge of Christ. As we learn more and more about Him, we increase our measure of His grace and peace. There's no other way. It must be through Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). He is the source of all things."

"When Billy Sunday was just a young Christian, an old minister said to him, 'William, if you'll do these three things every day of your life, they will never write 'back-slider' after your name:

1. Spend 15 minutes a day letting God talk to you through the Bible.
2. 15 minutes a day talking to God in prayer.
3. 15 minutes talking to someone else about God.

Billy Sunday determined to do that and 'backslider' was never written after his name."

Ironside points out, "There is an abundance of grace and peace available for all who rest in simplicity of heart upon the testimony God has given."

Kaaren Witte in a book called Great Leaps in a Single Bound points up, "The secret of singleness at its best is not having somebody love me, but my loving others. The only thing that matters in life is what we do with Jesus Christ.

"Kaaren, I have an adventuresome, beautiful plan for your life. I'm going to bless your life and ministry above and beyond anything you could ever dream or hope for.

Oh, you might not like it in the beginning.
You'll think I don't love you.
You may not understand me.
You'll hurt, you'll cry, you'll call for help
And I'm asking you to trust Me.
I'll always be there.
I'm going to ask you to go through
Sorrow,
Pain,
and some suffering.

But I have chosen you to show your world that I will carry you through the bleak, frozen winters of your life. The world will be sure nothing will ever grow again. But put your hand in Mine. Show the world you're a victor, not a victim!

"I answered, Jesus, there will be times when I won't be brave. I'll want to bail out. I'll tell you I don't care about any great ministry. But I know you'll be faithful to me. Even when I disappoint you.

Dear God,
I give up.
Love,
Kaaren

"He read the note. We joined hands across the desk and I repeated his prayer after him:

'Dear God, I accept your plan for my life. I trust you completely and believe that you only have my best interests in mind. I will believe that whatever you do, you do in love--even when I don't understand you. I believe you are the God of miracles, so today and always I will dream! And please cause your Holy Spirit to remind me of my focus, Jesus Christ himself.'

"God was waiting for me to give up--not on Him, but on myself.

"Secretly, I felt proud that I wasn't like the other women sitting in the kitchen talking about labor pains, Pampers, and the PTA."

Keep Jesus At The Center And Spend All Your energies Getting to know Him better & better

Nieboer points out, "Men by nature are at enmity with God. Their hearts and minds and wills are set against Him. They love their sin and do not want the Lord to interfere and will resist any overtures on the part of the Lord or His servants. They have no peace in their hearts nor are they at peace with one another. However, by the Spirit many are led to see that they are fighting a losing battle and they surrender to the Lord. The moment they trust the Lord they have peace with God. The expression 'multiplied unto you' tells us that it is possible to have grace and peace in various degrees. Our desire should be, like the apostles, to have them multiplied."

Smedes in his book How Can It Be Alright says, "Grace is not a ticket to Fantasy Island. Fantasy Island is dreamy fiction. Grace is not a potion to charm life to our liking. Charms are magic. Grace does not cure all our cancers, transform all our kids into winners or send us all soaring into the high skies of sex and success. Grace is rather an amazing power to look earthly reality full in the face, see its sad and tragic edges, feel its cruel cuts, join in the primeval chorus against this outrageous unfairness, and yet feel in your deepest being that it is good

and right for you to be alive on God's good earth. Grace is power, I say, to see life very clearly, admitted as sometime's all wrong, and still know that somehow, in the center of your life, it's all right. This is one reason we call it AMAZING GRACE."

Grace and peace is experienced in greater measure by the increase of the knowledge of God and His Son. As we are taught by the Spirit of the Father and Son, the greater will be our grace and peace.

The more you know Him, the greater your grace and peace.

v. 3 Seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by means of His own glory and virtue,

Here is the key verse to study #1 "Here's What You Have."

When it comes to a consideration of how to win the game of life, we must first consider what we have, and this glorious verse tells us that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness.

He has taken care of everything. He has made every provision for the journey.

Philippians 4:19 "And my God shall supply all your needs, according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

All that we need for life and godliness is provided by His power.

"Seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything"

Loaded us up with every thing we will ever need.

It is so good for us to focus on 'everything.' There is nothing which is lacking or which we will need.

Someone has said, "The task ahead is never greater than the power behind."

Colossians 1:11 "Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience joyously."

2 Timothy 1:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity but of power and love and discipline."

Ephesians 3:20 "Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us."

It is generously given, and this is the way you can always recognize the Lord's hand in a provision. It will always be exceeding abundant, above and beyond what we are asking or thinking.

The key word in the third verse is the word EVERYTHING. Everything came to us through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou Art...

Never us Getting more but Him Getting more of us...

You have everything you need to be a winner in the game of life.

Peter says, "Everything pertaining to life and godliness."

John 10:10 "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly."

He is the author and giver of life, and He is the one who knows how best to ultimately bring life to triumph in His presence.

col. 3:11
Hunts the
Lord where
you look
somewhere
else!!

His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life, but Peter does not stop there. He also says, 'everything pertaining to godliness.'

He alone is capable of producing within us that which He requires. Life First = John 10:10 Godliness = Col. 2:6

Peter says that this divine power that has generously been given to us is supplying everything pertaining to life and godliness. This power comes to us through the true knowledge of Him, that is, Christ, who called us by means of His own glory and virtue.

We learned in verse 2 that grace and peace can be ours in ever greater measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

And now we learn in verse 3 that all of this which has been given to us pertaining to life and godliness comes through the true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Peter wants to emphasize the true knowledge because of the fact that he is going to have to speak quite at length in chapter 2 about the false knowledge of Him.

It is Jesus Christ who called us by means of His own glory and virtue.

Glory was His vertical witness
And virtue His horizontal.

Glory was the manifestation of the divine
Virtue the manifestation of the human.

It is His power and His person which has 'generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness.'

* * who called us ... Rom. 8:30 "Predestinate, called, Justified, Glorified"
Just as Adam was confronted with the call, "Adam, where are you?" so we too have been called to a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The question that comes before each of us is Have we responded to that call and availed ourselves of His divine power and His person to generously give to us everything pertaining to life and godliness?

The tools for His calling are His own glory and virtue.

Don Francisco in his song "Adam" well describes it:

"Unashamed and naked in a garden that had never
seen the rain.
Rulers of a kingdom full of joy, never marred
by any pain.
The morning all around them seems to celebrate
the life they've just begun,
And in the majesty of innocence the king and
queen come walking in the sun.
But the master of deception now begins with
his dissection of the word,
And with all his craft and subtleties the serpent
twists the simple truth they've heard.
While hanging in the balance is a world that
has been placed in their command,
And all of their unborn children die as one
of them bows down to Satan's hand.
Then just before the evening, in the cool of
the day, they hear the voice of God as
He is walking.
But they can't abide His presence now, so
they try to hide away,
But still they hear the sound as He is
calling, 'Adam, Adam, where are you?'
'Adam, Adam, where are you?'
'Adam, Adam, where are you?'

In the stifling heat of summer, now, the
gardener and his wife are in the field,
And it seems that thorns and thistles are
the only crop his struggles ever yield.
He eats his meals in sorrow 'til he sinks
into the dust.
Once he came, but all down through the ages
he can hear his maker calling out his name,
'Adam, Adam, where are you?'
'Adam, Adam, where are you?'

And though the curse has long been broken,
Adam's sons are still the prisoners of
their fears,
And rushing helter-skelter to destruction
with their fingers in their ears,
While the Father's voice is calling with an
urgency I've never heard before,

'Won't you come in from the darkness now before
it's time to finally close the door?'

'Adam, Adam, where are you?'

'Adam, Adam, where are you?'

'Adam, Adam, I love you!'

God wants to meet you every day! Maybe He is calling Your Name.

Jowett points out, "This is supremely interesting as coming to us from one so human, so altogether akin to us as the apostle Peter. When he flings his mind back in the contemplation of his master, he summarizes his ever-fresh impressions in the words power, virtue, glory. That is what Peter found in the Lord, and that is what we may find in the Lord today."

It is M. R. James who says, "Christ called them to Him by showing them His glory, as at the transfiguration; and His virtue, His inner perfection, through His life and teaching."

Weisiger says, "Christ manifested His divine nature and His supreme moral excellence, or strength, or purity, during His incarnation. This manifestation makes a demand upon all to be like Him."

English points out, "Observe that Peter did not say that His divine power will give us all things, but that His divine power has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. How wonderful the power of God! By it we were saved. By it we were kept. By it we are strengthened. By it He who raised up the Lord Jesus Christ shall raise us also. And by it we have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness--all things--they are ours."

Acts 8:18 "Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, 'Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.' But Peter said to him, 'May your silver perish with you because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money. You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Therefore, repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that if possible, the intention

of your heart may be forgiven you, for I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity.' But Simon answered and said, 'Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said may come upon me.'"

Lenski points out, "Divine power was required to give all these spiritual presents. They are priceless. Their very source is divine. To prize them as much is certainly to also use them accordingly. More than this, by using them, we certainly shall obtain the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Lillie points out, "Whatever is needed for the production, preservation, growth and perfection of life and godliness is provided through His divine power."

J. Vernon McGee says, "It is only through the knowledge of Christ that you can really learn to live down here and grow to be a more godly person. The only way in the world that you can become the kind of person with a fully developed personality is through knowing Jesus Christ."

Thomas J. Oyler says, "The Christian possesses unlimited potential for progress. At the point of salvation each believer is granted all he needs to grow."

Smith points out, "What has He done for true believers? He has bestowed upon them all necessary things, and especially the precious promises of His word, by which means He would raise them from their lowest estate, into blessed union and fellowship with himself. Because God has all strength, all might, all majesty, He can bestow upon His people these needful gifts. His resources are illimitable because His power is infinite. There is nothing which He cannot do. There is nothing too hard for Him to accomplish. 'Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that did He in heaven and in earth and in the seas and all deep places.' (Psalm 135:6) And whatsoever He pleases, He now does in and for all who put their trust in Him. But our God is in the heavens and possesses

all power over all things and in all places, and therefore, none can repair to Him for help in vain.

Are you feeble? He can give you strength.

Poor? He can make you rich.

Sinful? He can cancel all your guilt.

Dead? He can call you from your grave and

breathe into you again the breath of life.

What comfort and consolation may not the most dejected of us derive from the contemplation of God's power. Let us trust in and rest upon it, and we shall want nothing that will really contribute to our highest good."

What a fountain is this to which the believer is invited.

The Lord God is the sun and shield. The Lord will give grace and glory, 'and no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.' (Psalm 84:11) That

we should be satisfied with so little when we may have so much is greater folly than that of a man who, having a large draft upon a bank, should draw but a few pence in the midst of his greatest need. Let us ask God for all that we require, and He will honor our prayer and endorse our confidence. All that we have to do, therefore, is to take them, to apply them, to trust in them; and thus to make them truly ours. They are precious to us, not as we read them in the sacred page but as they are treasured up in our hearts and become the food of our spiritual life, all the promises are ours by faith in Christ Jesus.

Blair points out, "As Peter writes his second epistle, he is cognizant of the many lessons learned over the years as a follower of Christ. There is one very special lesson to which He gives due recognition in the verses for our present study. It was this essential truth that brought overflowing blessing to His heart, resulting in abundant usefulness for the Lord. Peter is an elderly man now. No longer is he the self-centered crafty individual he once was, motivated by the wisdom of the flesh. As we see him in his later years, he is God-controlled and God-directed, giving due recognition that God is the source of all blessing. Peter is convinced that there is nothing, absolutely nothing inherently good in the flesh."

A young engineer accidentally fell into a ten-foot water hole deep in the Grand Canyon. He was marvelously rescued by a helicopter. Had it not been for the outside help, he could not have been saved. There was a wall of rock on one side and a fifty-foot dropoff ledge on the other. For two long nights this young fellow anxiously awaited help. After being lifted to safety by his rescuers, his comment was, 'I feel as if I have been born again.' As the young engineer had to be lifted from his trap by someone other than himself, so one can become a child of God only by divine intervention, the mighty power of God. The divine power not only produces new life in the believer but godliness as well. Peter was very careful of the order of the two. He does not put godliness before life, but rather, life then godliness. Some feel that by living like Christians they will become Christians. Thus, they work hard trying to earn their salvation, seeking to gain the right to heaven.

Westwood points out, "Peter is here giving us the background of the golden excellence of God's goodness, against which he is about to depict the awful horror of the judgments which God is going to pour out upon this present creation and upon the ungodly in the world. Keeping this in mind, the Christian heart naturally arises in gratitude to the Lord for the riches of His grace. In this third verse Simon Peter is setting forth the grand truth that by divine power the Lord has given to His beloved people everything that pertains to life and godliness."

Glasgow points out, "All the movement and the message of the letter center in God's promises. These promises embody God's grace. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan remarks that grace is sufficient but only operative when we obey its laws. Knowledge is a strong and frequent word in this letter. It is our first step. Peter urges that we have the knowledge of God's promises and we are to remember them, believe them, obey them. And thus we grow. Possibly we might state the underlying thought of the letter thus: God's promises believed, received, obeyed make us godlike. His promises are precious and exceeding great. He sounds them out upon the ears and into the heart of men. When they are believed and received, received with a willing spirit and forever trusted, they make us to become partakers

of the divine nature, and they deliver us from and fortify us against the corruption that is in the world by lust."

Elisabeth Elliott in her book Discipline: the Glad Surrender points out, "He offers us love, acceptance, forgiveness, ~~aweigh~~ of glory, fulness of joy. Is it so hard to offer back the gifts that came in the first place from the wounded hands? body, mind, place, time, possessions, work, feelings. We have not, of course, exhausted the list of things to be surrendered. We have included only a sampling as an aid to perceiving the principle of self-offering that works this way. If we suffer with Christ, we will reign with Him. If a grain of wheat dies, it produces fruit. If we relinquish our mourning, God gives us a garment of praise. If we bring our sins, He replaces them with a robe of righteousness. Joy comes not in spite of but because of sorrow. When discipline becomes a glad surrender, every day we experience something of the death of Jesus, so that we may also know the power of the life of Jesus in these bodies of ours."

Smedes points out, "The fact is that the grace of God that brings salvation to all has appeared. And no matter how you got to be where you are, no matter how wretched your condition, how bad your hurt, and how drained of hope you may feel, it can be all right at the core of your life. You and I were created for JOY, and if we miss it, we miss the reason for our existence. More, the reason Jesus Christ lived and died on earth was to restore us to the joy we have lost. Jesus himself taught us all that He said to us on earth came down to one primary goal: that we should share His joy. The church officially echoed Jesus when it taught us that the chief end of men and women was to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. C. S. Lewis sensed it when he remarked that 'joy is the chief business of heaven' and I would add, of earth as well. So we can safely believe that when we think about joy we are at the edge of life's deepest secret. We are not talking about emotional frills and psychic indulgences. We are talking about the discovery of all-rightness in the essence of life. If joy is our human destiny, it is also our human desire. We all want a little enjoyment. Let's not be hypocritical,

as if we were too serious to want joy in our lives. Let us admit that what keeps us going is a hope that one night the bells will ring, and the hallelujah chorus will sound for us too."

Smedes in another book called Union with Christ says, "The whole of life, from its fundamental being to its discreet actions, is surrounded by the reality of Christ. The pilgrim journey is not a burdensome trudge up a lonely road. It is a way that cuts through Jesus Christ himself. Life begins, proceeds and ends in Christ."

v. 4 Through which (things) He has generously given to us His precious and exceedingly great promises, in order that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire.

"Through which things" refers back to verse 3 and tells us that it is through His own glory and virtue "He has generously given to us" that is, believers "His precious and exceedingly great promises."

We learned in verse 3 that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness. And now we see here He has generously given to us His precious and exceedingly great promises.

The promises are characterized in two ways:

1. They are precious and
2. Exceedingly great

Hasn't Failed
to keep them!!

They are this way because of the glory and virtue of the One who has made them.

The fact that Peter is using the word 'precious' seems strange. But the word occurs a number of times in the first epistle. Peter's heart has been softened by the invasion of the Spirit into his life, and the

Precious
X- 3 Times
blood
Trial of our Faith

So was John's!! Gentleness! Tenderness!
Kind, Sincere, Thoughtful, Loving
David: "By Gentleness has made me Great."

ongoing production of agape love that has made him tender and sensitive, so that he is able to discern those things which are precious.

Because of his glory and virtue, His promises are precious and exceedingly great. He will keep them.

Never Made A Promise He hasn't Kept or will Keep!!

When we get a little further on in the epistle, we are going to see some of these promises that are a part of the sure word of prophecy that the Lord is going to be faithful to fulfill.

The purpose behind these precious and exceeding great promises is seen in the next phrase, "in order that through these (that is, the promises) you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire."

Thomas J. Oyler points out, "The believer can participate in God's nature when, by the resources God has given him, he develops the moral qualities of God. It is the thesis of this paper that God's nature is reflected in the seven virtues that follow. When the believer seeks to add to his faith the qualities of life mentioned in verses 5-7, he is partaking of the divine nature. This will be clearly demonstrated as each virtue is considered. As the potential of the believer is to partake of the divine nature, so also he is able to escape the corruption that is in the world. If the divine nature is reflected in the virtues that follow, so also the antithesis of the virtues reflect the corruption of the world."

Horatius Bonar puts it this way, "Believers are not hired servants, supporting themselves by their own work but children maintained at their heavenly Father's expense."

Colonel Jack Broughton in his book Thud Ridge says, "Although I never bothered to inquire into the religious habits of my pilots, I was impressed by the numbers who made it to the chapel for one service or another. And I can tell you for sure there are very few atheists



in the arming area. When you watch comrades fall from the sky day after day, you realize that it is going to take some help and guidance from a level above your own to hack the course."

In the book They Call Me Super-Mex by Lee Trevino and Sam Blair we read, "When I was inducted into the world Golf Hall of Fame in September of 1981, I passed another milestone. Now I know that someday I can officially become a 'has-been,' and I'd much rather be a 'has-been' than a 'never-was.'"

uses his
one iron
thunder
because
couldn't hit
lost his ball
found his ball
lost his ball

British Open

Smedes points out, "Don Quixote, that ridiculous knight who came riding on his silly donkey to conquer his crazy world, has a splendid secular parable of amazing grace. Quixote ended up tilting at windmills, but he had one powerful ability. He was able to make life better for someone by persuading her it was all right when things were really all wrong. He met this tawdry woman in a tawdry tavern in a tawdry little town. She was not a fine woman. In fact, everyone in town knew she was a bad woman. Since they all knew she was bad, they all treated her like a hopelessly dirty sinner. And since everyone treated her like a bad woman, she felt she must be a bad woman, so she acted the part. Then the amazing Don Quixote rode into town. He looked at her through the spectacles of his grace. What he saw was a splendid woman. He broke through the icy judgment of the moral majority and declared her to be a fine and noble person. He said to her, 'It's all right, even though everyone says you're all wrong.' And when she was sure that Don Quixote really met it, when she embraced the grace with which he embraced her, she began to feel the power of grace. She became what Don Quixote saw."

† Ordinary people feel too tired a lot. They come to church and listen to words about a grace that has made life all right at the core. But they are often so muzzled by self-pity, so shackled by anger, and so paralyzed by their own real hurts, that they cannot find the extra reserve of power to open their hearts to the reality of Jesus Christ and the fact of His grace. God needs to open the door. He keeps coming after me, and when I most want to leave Him, He

subdues me by His love. He will not let me stop believing. When I find myself believing Him, I know it must be all right with us, even when things are sadly, shabbily, stupidly wrong. He comes with a pungent taste of pardon when I go wrong. He comes with a quiet nudge of power when I feel helpless; comes with a subtle hint of hope when I lose courage. When He comes, He gives me each time ~~now the~~ ^{Another} real reason why I believe and cannot stop believing. He supplied the reason when He opened heaven, put a ladder down to earth and came with grace to me. I cannot stop believing, even when my head tells me that too many things are wrong in my world for God to be true. But when I feel the triumph of grace in my beleaguered soul, I know that at bottom it is all right, and will be all right everywhere before God is through with me. †

As a result of believing these promises, through them God works in our lives and we become partakers of the divine nature.

When a person comes to know Jesus Christ, He Christ comes to live within us and provides a new nature, which is the divine nature, which when energized by the Holy Spirit, will, in fact, produce the fruitage that we are going to see in the following verses.

We have divine power in verse 3
and a divine nature in verse 4.

Ephesians 4:23,24 "And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth."

"Having escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire"

The real culprit behind the destruction in the world is human desire. Paul tells us in Galatians chap. 5 that "the flesh or our old nature sets its desire against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please."

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:27 "But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified."

1 John 2:15-18 "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away and also its desires, but the one who does the will of God is abiding forever."

It is the divine power of verse 3 that energizes the divine nature of verse 4, that provides the victory over the world, the flesh and the devil.

In verses 3 and 4 we have the four P's:

1. The POWER
2. The PERSON
3. The PROMISES
4. The PARTAKERS

Talk About Momentum
From Kick Off to the Final Goal
brother You Got it All !!

In verse 4 the positive is the divine nature and the negative is "we escape destruction."

The divine power energizes the new nature, desire energizes the old nature.

2 Happiest days in life ① Got A boat ② Sold A Boat

* Desire is kind of like the little girl receiving a pin cushion from her aunt for Christmas. When she was writing a thank-you note to her aunt, she said, "I want to thank you for the pin cushion you gave me at Christmas. I have always wanted a pin cushion but not very much."

Desire is like that. It seems like it's something we cannot do without. It's something we have always wanted, but then once the desire is gratified, we have to confess "not very much."

Peter is going to have a lot more to say about the destruction in the world as he speaks of historical examples with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the flood in Noah's time, as well as the future manifestation of this destruction of the present heavens and earth.

There is an interesting phenomenon with the coming of the new year in Israel. Written in an article called "Israel Seeks to Change the 'Doom' Year":

"An Israeli Cabinet minister wants to change the Hebrew designation for the next Jewish new year to remove any predictions of doom implied in the Hebrew letters.

In Hebrew each letter of the alphabet has a numerical value, as do the Roman letters that often date buildings in Europe and the United States.

In Hebrew those letters sometimes form words. Next year, 5,744 will come out as the word tashmad, whose root means 'destruction,' and Education Minister Zevulun Hammer wants it changed.

He suggests the word shdemot, which would mean with some free translation, 'pleasant fields,' to cover the new year running from September 1983 to September 1984.

Hammer's proposal has gone to the Ministerial Committee on Symbols and Ceremonies."

One is reminded of 1 Thessalonians 5:2,3

"For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come, just like a thief in the night. While they are saying peace and safety, then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape."

Matthew 7:13,14

"Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction. And many are those who enter by it, for the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life; and few are those who find it."

CONCLUSION:

What are the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Faith is the single condition of God's work in declaring us righteous before Him.

LESSON #2: The more we get to know Him, the greater will be our experience of grace and peace.

LESSON #3: He has provided everything we need for life and godliness.

LESSON #4: We find the answer to our every need in Jesus Christ.

LESSON #5: When we exercise faith in His power, His person, His promises, He makes us partakers of the divine nature.

LESSON #6: Desire energizes the old nature to produce sin, which leads to destruction.

Peter says, "It is Jesus who called us, by means of His own glory and virtue."

The hymnwriter expresses it:

"Jesus is tenderly calling thee home,
calling today, calling today.
Why from the sunshine of love wilt thou roam
farther and farther away?

Calling today, calling today,
Jesus is calling, is tenderly calling today."

"Adam, where are you?"

"Lazarus, come forth."

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you as a hen would gather her chickens under her wings, and you would not."

"Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

How to win the game of life? It all begins with what you have. And what we have in Jesus Christ is everything pertaining to life and godliness. He, in fact, has already won the victory through His death on Calvary, and through His triumph over the grave. And He stands to share that victory with you if you will by faith but respond to His call.