

# A Practical Study of 2 PETER:

## A Winner's Game Plan

### “What It Takes to Break the Tape”

Key Verse: 1 Peter 5:10

*“But the God of all Grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, shall himself make you complete, shall establish you, shall make you strong, shall ground you as on a foundation.”*

### Study Number One – “Here’s What You Have” – 2 Peter 1:1-4

A man died and went to heaven. As he stood in front of Saint Peter at the pearly gates, he saw a huge wall of clocks. The man asked, “What are these clocks?” Saint Peter answered, “Those are lie clocks. Everyone on earth has a lie clock. Each time you tell a lie, the hands on your clock will move.”

“Oh” said the man. “Whose clock is that?” Saint Peter responded, “That’s Mother Teresa’s clock. The hands have never moved indicating that she never told a lie.”

“That’s incredible!” said the man. “And whose clock is that?” Saint Peter responded, “That’s Abraham Lincoln’s clock. His

hands have moved twice telling us that Abe told only two lies in his life.”

“Well, I want to know where’s Obama’s clock?”

“Obama’s clock is in Jesus’ office. He’s using it as a ceiling fan.”

This book is very emotional because it’s the last book that Peter writes. It’s like you study 2 Timothy and you can just see Paul in the spring of the year walking down to be beheaded. It’s his last will and testament.

Peter is the same way. But I think people identify more deeply with Peter than they do even with the apostle Paul. Partly because Peter was so real and he was so much like us, that when we see his story and we hear what he has to say we’re saying “Hey, that’s me. That’s the struggle I have.”

What I have found in 2 Peter is an all-out effort, on the part of our hero Peter, to tell it like it is and to leave a legacy by giving you the rules for how you win the game of life. And he, as certainly of all men, should deal with that issue.

We learned in 1 Peter that Peter is so concerned about salvation and understanding what it is to have a relationship with Christ. He also wanted us to understand what it is to be submissive to authority and to be willing to swallow our pride and do the right thing rather than what we want to do. And then to be a man who also faced failure so seriously. And the

suffering that he was involved in his life because of that experience with the denial. And that that experience when he was trying to tell the whole world that Christ was the Son of the living God and then to turn around and say “Nobody’s going to sack our quarterback! You’re not going to go to the cross!” And he had to hear from the Lord “Get behind me Satan! You don’t mind the things of the Spirit of God!”

We relate to things like that. I have found in this second journey through 2 Peter in preparation for this conference, that so many little notes along the side have been notes that have been put there because of what God has been teaching me personally.

One of the books that I read back when I was working on 2 Peter the first time was by Colonel Jack Broughton. It’s called *Thud Ridge*. This is the place in the Vietnam war where many of our aircraft were lost. It’s a book of bitterness because the United States of America was fighting a tentative war. And the reason it was lost is because there wasn’t an all-out effort to take three weeks and to destroy the enemy. There were all kinds of things that were put as restraints.

And I want you to hear this fighter pilot this morning because I don’t want you to be a person who, when you get to glory, the Lord has to say “You know, I wanted an all-out effort on you to the finish line and you turned on me. And you had all kinds of reservations and you got tentative and you failed to really give the effort.”

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## John 9:4

“I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night is coming when no man can work.”

This is what Colonel Jack Broughton says. It's of frustration as a fighter pilot with the Vietnam War:

*(Thud Ridge by Col. Jack Broughton)*

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 dribbles over three years.

(source unknown)

He talks about the restrictions on not being able to shoot at MIG aircraft until they were airborne and other things as to why they lost so many aircraft.

Another new book that just came out that is a New York best seller—I've got to warn you that if you're going to read this book, there's going to be military language. This is a story of—*The Lone Survivor*—four of our Navy Seals. And just to see the training they go through to get to do it.

[They] were dropped into Afghanistan. They ran into some shepherds the first morning and they sat there and argued with each other over whether they should kill them or let them go on back to their village. And they knew that they would be accused by the liberal press if they got home over the fact that they murdered innocent women and children.

The next day they were over 400 Taliban gunning them down. Three out of the four died. [Marcus] Lutrell got home safely and it was a miracle.

But you read those stories and you realize, when you're dealing with war and when you're dealing with life and death, you don't get tentative. And you don't want to do that. You don't want to just figure out selfishly what you're going to do when you retire. You don't want to sit around selfishly and think about "Well, I'm going to be tentative in this Christian thing. I'm going to show up on Sunday morning and give my money and do those things. But asking me to really spend myself, that's another deal."

And it's the sacrifices that we make for the cause of Christ that lets us be productive in the lives of others. And I hope that out of this study there will be some really deep things that'll go on inside of you.

I've called this study "How to Win the Game of Life—Written by One Who Did."

And I know you're going to take issue with that because you

know the life of Peter as well as I do. You're going to ask me the question "Well how can you say that when he did this and he did this and you did that?"

Thank God for the grace of God that took this guy who was a failure and turned him into a powerful preacher at Pentecost that touched thousands of lives and who had the courage, even after he denied the Lord, to be crucified upside down as a martyr.

You're going to feel in this study because he in one of these studies is going to talk about the fact that the Lord has made it clear to him he's going to die. And yet he just keeps on keeping on.

And I hope the inspiration of that will be a blessing to you.

I want you to turn to the apostle Paul to start the study.

### Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I'm pressing on, in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ. 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.

The apostle is talking about that **TODAY SHOULD BE FIRST DAY OF THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!**

Today should be a **SIGNATURE DAY!** When you're leaving the past behind and realizing it's been dealt with at the cross. And for you to be tentative right now because of something you've done in the past is something you've got to be liberated from. And be **ALL OUT**—realize His grace is adequate. The forgiveness is there. The guilt and the failure is a mentality that Satan sows within our hearts over the past so it render us ineffective in the present.

Just pretend that this is the first day of the rest of your life. And listen to Peter instruct us on how we can be the kind of people that He wants us to be.

I believe that Peter became a Christian the first time that he ever heard the Lord Jesus speak.

You remember Peter had been out fishing all night and they were cleaning the nets and getting ready to go home and sack out. And the Lord says “Can I borrow your boat? I need a pulpit.” And sitting in the box seat behind the Savior—he was a trapped fisherman—to hear the gospel story as Christ began to speak.

Do you remember what happened after he dismissed the crowd? He turned to Peter and said “Let's go fishing.” Now that was the last thing on his agenda. He wanted sleep. But

being a good folks with southern hospitality he said “OK. We’re not going to get anything but we’ll go.”

Launched out and what happened? He had the courage to let down the nets and there was such a catch of fish the boats nearly sank and he had to call his friends to get the boats in.

Remember what Peter did?

Dropped on his knees in that dirty old boat, [he] said “Depart from me for I’m a sinful man, oh Lord.”

The Lord saw in that repentant, broken spirit of this hardened fisherman the potential to be the ROCK—the *Petros*. So it’s no longer going to be Simon. It’s going to be Peter.

And I want the same Lord to do what He did in his life, to do in mine. And yes, I can go back 70 years now to that little Baptist church in Burns, Oregon when I was so impressed by the minister’s message and the little book we were going to get afterwards about how to receive Christ, that I still remember it as the day of my new birth. It was a wonderful day.

But the thing that thrills me about Peter is he certainly didn’t write a success story. So what you’re getting on the page is a lot of blood that’s been shed.

You’re going to get a lot of failure on his part. And some of this I never saw the first time I went through the book. And I think it’s because I’ve had my open Greek text beside me as

I've prepared each of these lectures, to know the significance of the word the guy is using. And the history and why it would be hard for him to use those words in the way that he has.

And so as we look at these few verses this morning, realize you've got a fisherman who came to know Christ in a boat up on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee. And out of that he became a disciple. He became an apostle. He became a preacher. He became a writer. And most of all, he was totally committed to Jesus Christ with a passion.

In highlighting his career, we will hit numbers of places along the way, about how what happens to him relates to what he is writing in the book.

You'll remember so many of those experiences I'm sure as we begin to dig into the text.

You just say when a guy lays down his life, "What a man." And you also (you know) the older I get, there are people that I look at and I say "I want to be just like them." But most of all it thrills the heart of God when He hears me say "I want to be just like Jesus. I want to be just like Him."

I want to go victoriously and triumphantly, continuing to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. You have your heroes too. The people you want to be like. The people you know have something that's real and you want to be a part of it.

I've chosen to bring Peter. It's like Peter is dropping the mantel today. He is now leaving the scene. His work is over. His main job is to communicate his final legacy—his message—and then to go on to be with the Lord.

So as he's making his checklist, he's giving his battle strategy. He's giving you some very important Proverbs. And just like Paul in 2 Timothy, I believe Peter and Paul died very close together. Probably 67 A.D. There is an argument about 67 and 68 A.D. for the apostle.

He wrote 2 Timothy, you'll remember, to get Timothy to get to him before he died and to bring his coat and all the stuff he needed in the prison—the Mamertine prison. We don't know if he ever got there with that stuff. But we do know in the spring that he was beheaded. He walked with Dr. Luke and hopefully Timothy was with him, as they went to his final demise.

Peter was in the city of Rome. So he faced all of the horrible, horrible persecution of Nero (of the believers). And he wouldn't be crucified right-side up. In humility and brokenness, he wanted to be crucified upside down. That's our man. He's going to tell his story in the letter that we're looking at together.

And it's so significant to me that both of these guys, greatly used of the Lord, die so close (as far as their timeframe is concerned).

“How to Win the Game of Life—Written

## By One Who Did”

This morning we’re only going to look at **FOUR VERSES**:

1. “Here’s What You Have”—in other words, “Here is your offensive weapons.” What’s the most important?

Tomorrow morning we’ll look at:

2. “Here’s What You Do”—verses 5-11,

And then our third study tomorrow night:

3. “Here’s How I’m Going to Help,”

Then we will look at:

4. “Here’s What You Are Going to Face,”
5. “Here’s How They’re Going to Look,”
6. “Here’s What You need to Remember,”
7. “Here’s What’s Going to Happen,” and
8. “Here’s the Keys to Winning.”

I think it would be good for us to focus for just a minute on this whole business of winning—letting somebody like Vince Lombardi talk to us:

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 life 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.

(source unknown)

That statement reminds me of Winston Churchill, doesn't it?

“Never, never, never, never, never, never quit!”

And that's the key to winning.

“Here's What You Have”—and you say:

I want that.

I want to be all out.

I want to be like the Savior—cranking it up a notch, getting closer to the cross.

I want to be like Paul.

I want to be like Peter.

I want to be like these people who spend every ounce of energy, before it's over, for the glory of God.

Now you know in my studies, if you've ever done one with me before, there's a KEY VERSE. And if you want to just star verse 3—that'll be our key verse to this particular study.

We're talking about resources. What is it Peter that you can give us as resource for the assurance that we will do it in the right way and we indeed will win?

I'm reminded of Robert E. Lee's farewell address to the troops after the Civil War:

After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to the overwhelming numbers and resources. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed. [Sic'em Lee! Sorry, that was my own insertion.] 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.

(source unknown)

What a powerful statement at the end of a great disappointment as far as he was concerned and how he spoke

to these men.

John Calvin said:

The majesty of the spirit of Christ exhibits itself in every part of this epistle.

(source unknown)

So what is your greatest resources? Your greatest resource to finish well and to finish strong is to agree with Paul:

### 2 Timothy 4:7-8

I fought a good fight, I finished the course, I kept the faith. Henceforth there's laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.

Peter too is going to find out that the Lord is totally adequate for everything that he is going to need with regard to winning at the game of life.

“Here's What You Have”—let's just take a look.

**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:**

“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:”

Isn't it interesting? In this letter he uses both of His names? I think he does that because he wants you to know it hasn't always been this way. It's been a struggle to become an old man—to become a new person in Jesus Christ. It's something we all go through so he uses both names. His old name, that speaks of his old life. And Peter, *Petros*—the Rock—that he trusts, he is becoming.

So what we're having here is a picture of a man introducing himself differently here than he did before.

In John 1:40 we have the first encounter:

### John 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 as 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 is translated means Peter [or *Petros* or Rock]).”

You know, you get from this a picture of every one of our biographies. We're born into this old world heading in the wrong direction. And then we're born again by the Spirit in Jesus Christ and we're set on a new track and a new direction.

Our pathway was death before we met the Christ. Now it's life and our journey is heaven and home.

And so in the very words that he gives us at the beginning, he's got to tell you that Jesus made all the difference in the world. You'll notice that he calls himself first of all, "a bonds slave." Do you understand that?

This is the whole business. And the reason we've gone so bonkers in our country and in the world. We can't buy or find servant leadership. People who are willing to surrender their agendas and their rights and give up all of those for what it is that Christ wants them to do.

I stood in the circle downstairs and the staff asked me to pray with them. And to hear them pray about servant leadership blessed me once again today. To see that the next generation, there's a bunch of them—are learning it isn't what you get it's what you give. And it's how you live for others that's going to leave your legacy and make it most significant.

Back a number of years ago we were wanting to leave part of our legacy a place like this because this is my favorite place to minister frankly. The reason I love this is my congregation can't run away from me. You're going to have to eat with me and live with me. I get to see the real you by the time the week is over. And you get to see the real me before the week is over. That's why I love camping.

In fact, as part of the process, we were going to buy TrailWest

because YoungLife didn't want to be in adult ministry. The national committee put the kibosh on all that. Then we lost the ranch in Colorado too. But when I got home realizing there would not be a camp in our legacy, the Lord really spoke to me. It was like:

“Anderson, your legacy is not in your Bible studies. Your legacy is not in a facility. Your legacy is only in people whose lives have been changed by My Spirit and by My Word.”

You know, I am so fulfilled. And Pearl and I feel so joyful in all that God has done when we start playing by His agenda. And that's just serving others until you have a chance and an opportunity to bring them to Christ.

One writer said this:

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

(source unknown)

That's Peter. Oh how he has grown to say these very words. “Bondslave” had to bring something to his mind, didn't it?

You're talking about servanthood. What would you think about some experience in your life when you didn't serve? When you blew it? That's immediately the way you think.

Peter is thinking the same thing. Remember when he blew it? He was sitting in the Upper Room and he should have appointed somebody out of the 12 to be washing feet. And the Lord takes a towel and kneels before each of them and begins to wash their feet. All the other guys said it's ok. They didn't say anything. But when we get to our hero, the star of the story, old Pete says "You ain't washing my feet!" Remember that?

Why? It's his proud heart. Nobody's going to help him. But now that broken heart, I think through the denial and the cross and all that he's gone through he says "I'm just a bonds slave. I'm just showing up for work. I just want to let Him make it happen in and through me."

It takes us so long to learn that!

How would this show up in your life if you really were a bonds slave this morning?

Well, it will show up in your relationship with God because you would never start a day without checking in with the Boss.

And it would show up in your marriage too because you would be serving your mate rather than in a Mexican standoff, deciding who's right and who's wrong.

And it would show up in your work because your employees are not serving you specifically, they're in a project together

with you and you're serving together.

It would show up in your family too. You'd begin to serve them and to love them as Christ would love the church.

Servant Leadership!

Peter, do you know what you're talking about?

I made a little ACROSTIC , okay, for SERVANT—so it would be on your mind.

S = Sacrifice

E = Endurance

R = Respond to the Opportunity

V = Valuable

A = Available

N = Near

T = Thoughtful

You've got to start thinking this way before you do it.

Sacrifices—Endurance—Responding to the Opportunity—Valuable—Available—Near—Thoughtful.

You could put Mark 10:45 down here if you want to:

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.

So, what am I supposed to do? I'm supposed to be characterized as a person who is:

1. [I am] serving JESUS
2. I'm serving my MATE,
3. I'm serving my FAMILY,
4. I'm serving my CHURCH,
5. I'm serving my COUNTRY,
6. I'm serving my PROFESSION,
7. I'm serving my FRIENDS and ASSOCIATES, and
8. I'm serving THOSE WITHOUT CHRIST.

That encompasses servanthood and what Peter is all about now, as you read his story in the book of Acts.

Oh, there's so many passages! Let me just give you a few.

### Job 1:8

So the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? ...

Job 2:3

Then the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? ....

Psalm 31:16

Smile on your servant! ...

Psalm 86:4

Make your servant glad...

Psalm 116:16

Yes, Lord! I am indeed your servant ...

Psalm 119:17

Be kind to your servant! ...

Psalm 119:125

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

Oh! Verse after verse!

Daniel 9:17

So now, our God, accept the prayer and requests of your servant ...

### 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.

### Mathew 23:11

The greatest among you will be your servant.

And remember those great parables? How they ended?

### Matthew 25:21

... 'Well done, good and faithful servant! ...

That's the legacy you want to leave and to take with you. Those are the first words you want to hear from the Savior when you enter His presence. That is maximum living to the full.

### 2 Corinthians 4:5

We are your servants because of what Jesus has done for us.

That says it well.

Ephesians 5:25—Men, this is going to put you under conviction:

### Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for her.

And then the book of Philippians is filled—in chapter 2—the whole chapter is on servanthood.

And 2 Timothy 2:24—Paul in his last letter says:

### 2 Timothy 2:24

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

Oh, there are many things we could say about being a “bondslave.”

And then he goes on to say:

“to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours”

He is speaking the gospel with the word “faith.” And I put John 1:12 there:

## 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.

The question is:

Have you, by faith, received Jesus Christ as your Savior?

Do you really know Him?

Maybe you're part of an extended family today and you've not heard the gospel for so long. And you realize right now that God is speaking to you and that's the reason you're here and the reason we're here.

There are so many people who have made this place so sacred. We've had guys come up here with us who wanted to bring their family to have a good time but they were not going to show up in one of these Bible studies if it killed them. One old crusty guy stayed in his room, afraid to come out since we might see that he was missing the meetings. I knew it all week long.

He came to Friday night and he came because of what he saw in the staff and all the people that were serving. He invited Christ into his life. He still tells the same life-changing story of what God did in his life at TrailWest.

There are many voices that would bear witness to the fact that many of them came thinking they were believers but they just didn't understand the gospel. And they came to know Him here.

The thing you need to understand here is there's no labels here. It's by faith. He's not asking you if you're a Presbyterian or a Baptist or a Pentecostal or any other kind of stripe that you could put down there.

### 2 Corinthians 5:21

He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we could be declared righteous by faith.

And that's the picture that Peter wants to describe in these opening words to you, as he describes first of all that it's the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

“May grace and peace be yours in ever greater measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;”

You never have “grace and peace” reversed. You've always got to experience GRACE before you'll know PEACE.

## Isaiah 32:17

The work of righteousness will be peace and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

You will always see that. Both Peter and Paul will never reverse the order and talk to you about peace before they'll talk to you about grace. You must experience the one before you have the other.

But the phrase I want you to get out of that, and this is where it really started to unlock for me this week:

“in ever greater measure in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

There are so many people in our churches that are sitting around thinking that because they have received Christ by faith they've done everything they need to do and they're just going to go on to glory as a dead log! They've done what they need and when they show up, they're going to give their record of 60 years ago when they received Christ as Savior. And to them it's a terminal experience! And it's not!

There would be NO HOPE for Peter if that were true! If in fact you went back to the boat when Christ is speaking and He says “Depart from me for I'm a sinful man, oh Lord.”

If that had been all that God had intended, then we wouldn't know the rest of the story! The church of Jesus Christ would

not have been given birth at the day of Pentecost! But this man, through the struggles of living the daily life, is telling you “grace and peace [becomes] yours in ever greater measure” as you face every new failure, after you face every new challenge, you experience greater grace.

He’s so forgiving and so patient. Even in the arena of our failure, He’s there to heal and to say: It’s ok. Just come now and let’s reason together! Though your sins be as scarlet, they’ll be as white as snow! We’ll get it behind us! You don’t have to think about it anymore.” That’s grace!

And when you get a greater hold of grace then you have a greater peace.

### Isaiah 26:3

Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.

And so, the place just lit up! As I looked at it, Lord God I want to know more grace! I started singing:

*Marvelous grace of our loving Lord!  
Grace greater than all our sins!*

Anything that had GRACE in it, I was singing it out of the hymn book here! Because I wanted to know it and experience it.

How could I know it and experience it? There it is in that next phrase:

“in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

God meant for you and I to get to know God better every day and to experience the grace of Jesus Christ every day. And “in ever greater measure” let that be the place!

Remember what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12 at that point when the thorn in the flesh was bothering him and he was asking God to get rid of it so he could have a greater ministry? What does the Lord say to him? “No! No! No! But”:

### 2 Corinthians 12:9

... But my strength is made perfect in your weakness. Most rather would I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

*Grace greater than our sins!*  
*Grace, grace, God's grace.*

“Ever greater measure” is the way you can translate that. You could also translate it:

“every intense effort,”

“all the more diligent,”

“be paying attention,”

“keep on stirring it up,”

“looking for and hastening it.”

You see what that does is you have a person who is not content with the status quo. You know what the status quo is. That’s a casket with both ends kicked out. That’s a person who’s just going to stay where they are.

The thing this does for me is this reveals Peter’s passion. He ain’t sitting around talking about a salvation experience in a boat. Oh, that’s where it started! He’s talking about NOW! And he’s experiencing something more now than he did back there when he received Christ as Savior.

You show me your passion today by telling me your story, that Christ is more to you today than He was yesterday! That you love Him because you visited with Him and He spoke to you through His Word! He’s revealing Himself to you in newer and deeper ways! And then I will know in my heart your passion.

It’s an on-going process until the very day we die.

And that’s:

1 John 3:2

Soon we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is.

And that's:

### Philippians 1:6

I'm confident of this very thing, that he who has began a good work in me is going to continue to perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

You're not going to arrive but thank God we can make progress on the way. And he's telling you there is available for you a greater knowledge of the Savior. And the more you walk with Him, the more you know Him. And the more you know Him, the more you love Him.

Well, if you'll keep Jesus at the center and spend your energies getting to know Him better and better then you're on track.

I wrote that under my notes because of all these years of experience with the Lord.

Keep Jesus at the center and spend all of your energies getting to know Him better and better.

Lewis Smedes is with the Lord. He had an accident while they were putting up Christmas tree lights. He quickly went home to be with the Lord.

He wrote a book that I treasured called *How Can It Be Alright When Everything is All Wrong?*

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 sometimes all wrong, and still know that somehow, in the center of your life, it's all right. This is the reason why we call it amazing grace.  
(source unknown)

The more you know Him, the greater you're going to grow in your grace and your peace. That's all he said in verse 2.

Now our KEY VERSE—verse 3.

Oh this is rich! You ready for this? I hope the Spirit of God will speak to you through these words.

**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.**

“seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything”—and that word you capitalize, circle. That’s the summary of the whole study this morning.

“[He has] given us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by means of His own glory and virtue.”

What do you have to be a winner? What do you have to finish strong? It’s a person. You’ve got everything—“His divine power” and His generously giving us everything that pertains to “life and godliness.”

You’ve been loaded up with everything you are ever going to need in Jesus. You don’t have to look more. You don’t have to look elsewhere. You don’t have to try to get yourself in some kind of an emotional way in order to receive something that somebody else doesn’t have. You’ve got it all! **EVERYTHING.**

I held up a bottle of Ragu sauce a couple of Sundays ago at Hide-a-way and I said “Remember that commentary? It’s in there.”

No matter what you ask, it’s in there—in the spaghetti sauce. You want this? It’s in there. Well that’s what I’m saying to you this morning. When you talk to me about Jesus, it’s in there.

You’ve got everything for life and godliness that you are going to need.

That's John 10:10 in other words:

### John 10:10

I have come that they might have life, and they might have it more abundantly.

And isn't it interesting that he would say that He has given us the "divine power?" Even in the midst of our failure. And He's given us "everything [that pertains] to life and godliness."

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

He called us and He provided for us.

### Romans 8:30

Those whom he called, he justified. And those whom he justified, he also glorified.

Thank God that all the tools are there and He wants us to meet with Him every day! Show up for work and by "His divine power" He is going to provide everything that is necessary to be successful in negotiating life.

That's our key verse.

Ok, verse 4.

**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] He has generously given to us His precious and exceedingly great promises,”—now the PURPOSE is the next phrase—“in order that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire.”

What he says there is that:

He has given “everything”—verse 3.

But He’s:

“generously given to us.”

Can you picture a rugged fisherman using the word “precious?” You just don’t think that way. But this man has such a passion for Jesus that the promises of God have become “precious” to him.

And you can tell by the change in his life. There are some very, very special tender memories of his encounters with Christ that he now calls—as he looks back on them—as “precious...promises.”

And for the purpose that:

“through these”—precious...promises—“you might be partakers of the divine nature.”

Do you understand the new nature, the “divine nature” that comes in the moment you receive Christ as Savior?

And in the process you have “escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire.”

Oh! Shall we talk about “desire” for just a minute? It’s gone crazy!

I have watched my sweetheart grow a ministry to prisoners. We went through this economic crunch and we thought we were going to have to quit doing it because we couldn’t afford it. And then the Lord opened up a woman from Amarillo who’s working with women prisoners. And we were working with both. And so, we’re working with men prisoners. But the let-up isn’t there!

Desire! Desire! Desire! When it’s the wrong desire, when it becomes drugs, sex and alcohol—it’s going to put you in a prison cell and you’re going to sit there and seethe and watch and suffer as your family is literally destroyed. And every one of those come. How many? I think there were 20-something. We had 3 boxes of them there the day before we left. We wanted to get everything cleaned up. Just going to prisoners

with addictive behaviors whose desires have gone bonkers. Because everybody does it!

And the other thing that we're getting in marriage counseling which is so sad, is the availability on the computer to pornography! These websites, you can be punching in for scores—which I do all the time on Fox Sports—and you've got a woman up in the corner begging you to click onto her! And you've been there and done that and you've said "No!" and thank God you have. But a lot of people haven't. And when a wife finds that a guy has visited a pornographic website for a thousand visits over the last three months, that's grounds for suing for divorce.

And no wonder they're so mad and so betrayed and so angry. That's what desire does when it's not controlled by the Spirit of God.

It literally destroys the life! So you're playing with fire when you deal with desire. And Peter wants that understood. Because, one day he let desire dominate and he said he never knew the Lord. He had to go through the painful experience of taking the responsibility for the cross upon his own shoulders.

God help us as we realize, as ordinary people, the only possibility for victory for you and for me is to be those who are completely committed to the Spirit of God.

And it's like, the word is "having escaped from the destruction in the world caused by desire." That's Sodom and Gomorrah!

They had to literally be drug out of the city but they were leaving the fruitage of desire, what was going on in the homosexual capital of the world! Knowing that they were going to die because they were living “by desire” rather than by the word of God.

Well, when it comes to desire I always remember. Two of the happiest days in a man's life is:

1. when he gets a boat and
2. when he sells it.

That's kind of like what goes on.

I started singing:

*Jesus is tenderly calling me home,  
Calling today, calling today.  
Why from the sunshine of love wilt you roam  
Farther and farther away?*

Remember what the Lord said?

Genesis 3:9

Adam, where are you?

The Lord moved right to the point, didn't He? Adam didn't.

John 11:43

“Lazarus, come forth!”

Thank God He said Lazarus because He would have emptied the whole cotton-pickin’ graveyard if He’d have said “Come forth.”

Remember what He said when He was coming the last time to Jerusalem?

Luke 13:34

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often have I desired you as a hen would gather her chickens under her wings, and you would not.

Paul would say:

2 Corinthians 6:2

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

You have everything you’re ever going to need to win at the game of life IN JESUS CHRIST.

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.

# **STUDY NUMBER ONE – “HERE’S WHAT YOU HAVE”**

## **– 2 PETER 1:1-4**

### **NOTES**

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 Him 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.

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Read 2 Peter 1:1-4 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. How does Peter refer to himself in verse 1?

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3. What is his wish for them in verse 2?

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4. What has “His divine power” given to us, according to verse 3?

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5. Explain the phrase “through the true knowledge of Him” in verse 3.

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6. What two things stand out in the latter part of verse 3 as the means of His calling us?

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7. What has He given us in verse 4?

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8. What have we “escaped” by receiving Jesus Christ, according to verse 4?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons 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.