

**New Series: “Last Days” – 2 Peter
Precious Faith – 2 Peter 1:1 – 4**

Big Idea – The object of true biblical faith is Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:1 From Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ. To you who have received a faith as valuable as ours, because our God and Savior Jesus Christ does what is right.

2 Grace and peace be given to you more and more, because you truly know God and Jesus our Lord.

3 Jesus has the power of God, by which he has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know him. Jesus called us by his glory and goodness.

4 Through these he gave us very great and precious promises. With these gifts you can share in the nature of God, and the world will not ruin you with its evil desires.”

Intro – the first letter that bears Peter’s name, 1 Peter, is all about suffering and glory. Peter grew from the brash, impulsive, disciple/apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ into a mature, humble follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Note how he speaks of himself in vs. 1 - He calls himself

A Servant – literally means slave

An Apostle – Greek word *apostolos* meaning a messenger, one sent forth with orders. Used about the Lord in Hebrews 3:1, Beyond that it was someone chosen by the Lord Himself - the Twelve, called to that by the Lord during his earthly ministry (Matthew 10:2), also of Paul who was called to that apostleship by the risen and ascended Lord, and of Barnabas (Acts 14:14), specially designated by the Holy Spirit. Although it was never said about Matthias, who was chosen by lot to take the place of Judas, is says about him “he was numbered with the Twelve.”

Peter’s second epistle, or letter, was written as a warning against false teachers and heresy in the church in doctrine and living.

Peter says that this letter was written to believers, those who had the same “precious” faith. Here’s a convicting question: Do you consider your faith precious?

The word “know” or “knowledge” is used 13 times in this letter. The word “know” does not simply mean to know a fact, like intellectual knowledge, but to know, meaning to personally know someone.

Jesus used same word in John 17:2 “This is life eternal, that they would know You the only true God, and Jesus Christ, who You sent.”

Notice how Peter starts

1. This Faith is in a Person – vs. 1, 2

“Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ. To you who have received a faith as valuable as ours, because our God and Savior Jesus Christ does what is right.

2 Grace and peace be given to you more and more, because you truly know God and Jesus our Lord.”

That Person is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior.

Peter believed Jesus is God and affirmed that; repeated this title in 2 Peter 1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18.

What’s a Savior? - A savior is "one who brings salvation," and the word salvation was familiar to the people of that day. In their vocabulary, it meant "deliverance from trouble," particularly "deliverance from the enemy."

Jesus is the Great Physician who heals the heart from the sickness of sin. He is the victorious Conqueror who has defeated our enemies—sin, death, Satan, and hell—and is leading us in triumph (2 Cor. 2:14ff).

To become our Savior, He laid down His life on the cross and died for the sins of the world.

As our Savior only Jesus can give us three things we need:

Righteousness – 2 Corinthians 5:21; Titus 3:5 “not by works of righteousness that we have done

Grace - Grace is God's favor to the undeserving. In His mercy God does not give us what we do deserve; God in His grace gives us what we don't deserve.

Peace – “peace with God” (Rom. 5:1) and “the peace of God” (Phil. 4:6-7). In fact, God's grace and peace are "multiplied" toward us as we walk with Him and trust His promises.

The Christian life begins with saving faith, faith in the person of Jesus Christ.

2. This Faith involves God’s Power – vs. 3

“Jesus has the power of God, by which he has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know him. Jesus called us by his glory and goodness.”

But when you know Jesus Christ personally, you also experience God's power, and this power produces "life and godliness."

The unsaved sinner is dead (Eph. 2:1-3) and only Christ can raise him from the dead (John 5:24). When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, He said, "Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44). Get rid of the graveclothes!

When you are born into the family of God by faith in Christ, you are born complete. God gives you everything you will ever need "for life and godliness." Nothing has to be added! "And ye are complete in Him" (Col. 2:10).

The false teachers claimed that they had a "special doctrine" that would add something to the lives of Peter's readers, but Peter knew that nothing could be added. A normal baby is born with all the "equipment" he needs for life and only needs to grow, so the Christian has all that is needed and only needs to grow. God never has to call back any of His "models" because something is lacking or faulty.

Just as a baby has a definite genetic structure that determines how he will grow, the believer is "genetically structured" to experience "glory and virtue." One day he will be like the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2). We have been "called... to His eternal glory" (1 Peter 5:10), and we will share that glory when Jesus Christ returns and takes His people to heaven.

But we are also "called... to virtue." We have been saved so that we might "show forth the praises [virtues] of Him who hath called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

We should not wait until we get to heaven to become like Jesus Christ! In our character and conduct, we should reveal His beauty and grace today.

3. This Faith includes God's Promises – vs. 4

“Through these he gave us very great and precious promises. With these gifts you can share in the nature of God, and the world will not ruin you with its evil desires.”

God has not only given us all that we need for life and godliness, but He has also given us His Word to enable us to develop this life and godliness. These promises are great because they come from a great God and they lead to a great life. They are precious because their value is beyond calculation. If we lost the Word of God, there would be no way to replace it.

Peter must have liked the word precious, for he wrote about the "precious faith" (2 Peter 1:1; cf. 1 Peter 1:7), the "precious promises" (2 Peter 1:4), the "precious blood" (1 Peter 1:19), the precious stone (1 Peter 2:4, 6), and the precious Saviour (1 Peter 2:7).

When the sinner believes on Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to impart the life and nature of God within. A baby shares the nature of its parents, and a person born of God shares the divine nature of God.

The lost sinner is dead, but the Christ-follower is alive because he shares the divine nature. The lost sinner is decaying because of his corrupt nature, but the “Christ-one” can experience a dynamic life of godliness because he has God's divine nature within. Mankind is under the bondage of corruption

(Rom. 8:21), but the believer shares the freedom and growth that is a part of possessing the divine nature.

Nature determines appetite. The pig wants slop and the dog will even eat its own vomit (2 Peter 2:22), but the sheep desires green pastures.

Nature also determines behavior. An eagle flies because it has an eagle's nature and a dolphin swims because that is the nature of the dolphin.

Nature determines environment: squirrels climb trees, moles burrow underground, and trout swim in the water.

Nature also determines association: lions travel in prides, sheep in flocks, and fish in schools.

If nature determines appetite, and we have God's nature within, then we ought to have an appetite for that which is pure and holy.

Our behavior should be like that of the Father, and we should live in the kind of "spiritual environment" that is suited to our nature. We should associate with that which is true to our nature (see 2 Cor. 6:14ff). The only normal, fruit-bearing life for the child of God is a godly life.

Because we possess this divine nature, we have "completely escaped" the defilement and decay in this present evil world.

If we feed the new nature the nourishment of the Word, then we will have little interest in the garbage of the world.

If we "make provision for the flesh" (Rom. 13:14), our sinful nature will lust after the "old sins" (2 Peter 1:9) and we will disobey God. Godly living is the result of cultivating the new nature within.