

9.05.21 ~ 2Peter 1:1-4, Partakers of the Divine Nature...

Peter's first letter (cf **1Peter 1:1**) was sent out to bring comfort and instruction to the believers who were suffering persecution on behalf of Christ, those who were scattered throughout "Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia."

Peter's second letter is sent to these same believers, but now he is exhorting them to be on guard against false teachers who have arisen from within the church and are now teaching heresies, leading people away from the true gospel of Christ.

Read 2Peter 1:1a... Peter identifies himself as a bondservant [*doulos, lit. slave*] and an apostle [*apostolos, lit. one sent, i.e., one divinely commissioned as a witness of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ*].

This second letter is written to "those" same believers who received the first letter; the recipients are mostly Gentile converts to Christianity, but also Jewish converts who are living in A.D. 67-68, about a year after Peter's first letter.

See 2Peter 1:1b... Notice that Peter says they "have received a faith of the same kind as ours," this has everything to do with their response to the Gospel.

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

This grace is granted to both Jews and Gentiles, even though the centuries of conflict between Jews and Gentiles had driven a wedge and put up a wall of separation that made it very difficult for them to trust each other, let alone to accept one another as equals in Christ, which is the way God sees us.

Galatians 3:26-29, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."

God made it clear to Peter that the gospel was sovereignly effectual to both Jew and Gentile, to anyone who would hear and believe the message of Christ.

Acts 10-11 recap the story of when Peter was in Joppa, in a trance; 3 times he a large table cloth lowered from heaven with all kinds of unclean animals on it. And God said, "Get up, kill and eat." After this, 3 men from Caesarea came to Peter's door, on behalf of a Gentile Centurion named Cornelius, asking Peter to come and tell them what God wants them to know. He told them about Jesus and they believed and were saved, the whole household.

Peter would later (see **Acts 15**) reiterate this story at the Jerusalem Council, to the Apostles and the Elders of the Church of God. Peter's clear message is that God shows no favoritism concerning the Message of Christ, the same Gospel brings salvation to both Jew and Gentile alike.

2Peter 1:1c... True salvation is made possible "by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ," it is to be shared with all people.

Acts 13:47, "For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, that You may bring salvation to the end of the earth.'"

It was always God's plan to bring salvation to the whole world, beginning with the Jews, as Paul writes (**Romans 1:16**), "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."

Read 2Corinthians 5:17-21... The righteousness of God the Father is able to reach every believer through God the Son (cf. **John 14:6**), "Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

It was Jesus [God the Son] who asked God the Father to send God the Holy Spirit to take up residence in us, so that the Father and the Son would come and live in us through the Spirit (**John 14:23**), "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

Read 2Peter 1:2... Peter encourages the believers concerning the "Grace and peace" we have in Christ, as Paul reiterated in the prayer we looked at last week (**Ephesians 3:17-19**), "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

That expresses how God's grace is "multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." As believers and followers of Christ we receive God's grace that forgives all our sins (past-present-future), and gives us the eternal peace of God to get through every trial and struggle we will experience on this earth.

All of this is made effectual through our personal knowledge of God, and the fact that God knows us as His very own children.

Read 2Peter 1:3a... God's divine power has granted us everything we need for *life* [*bio = physical, mortal*], as we serve Him on earth; while also providing everything we need for *godliness* [*zoe = spiritual, eternal life*], in order to live with Him in heaven for eternity.

John 6:37-40, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."

In **John 10:11**, Jesus says He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep (**John 10:27-29**), "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

Romans 8:28-35, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these

whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

Romans 8:37-39, "In all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Ephesians 1:13-14, " In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are equally glorified in and through God's plan, purpose and provision of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin and the granting of eternal life

2Peter 1:4a... Jesus Christ accomplished everything concerning our salvation, and He has provided all we need, now and forever.

God's promises to us fill the Old and New Testaments, declaring what we have received: a personal relationship with God, His forgiveness for all our sins (past, present, future), eternal life (the indwelling of God's Spirit), the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, patience, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control), the wisdom of God, the mind of Christ, the power of God, the eternal reward of living with God in the new heavens and new earth.

Read 2Peter 1:4b... Through Him we "become partners of the divine nature," we are able to enjoy deep fellowship with God like God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have had since eternity past.

What we won't share in is the corruption [decay and death] that is in this world because of the curse of sin, caused by evil desires. We have escaped all judgement and condemnation through Jesus Christ (**Romans 8:1-2**), "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."

John 17:22-26, "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have

known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Revelation 21:1-4, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

Revelation 22:3, “There will no longer be any curse...” **5**, “And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.”

Genesis 1:1, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” **26** Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ **27** God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. **28** God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’

29 Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; **30** and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food’; and it was so. **31** God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.”

We are going to live forever in a perfected world (like the Garden of Eden was before sin entered creation), with perpetual joy, because of the gracious, merciful, lovingkindness of God, just as He sovereignly determined, before anything was created, that we should live in His presence, according to His purpose, as “Partakers of [His] Divine (and Eternal) Nature.”

Revelation 4:11, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

Revelation 5:13, “And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.” Amen!

Pastor Mike
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