

Like Paul, Peter didn't want them to be spiritually hijacked by false teachers and their heresies. He did not want them to buy into lies and into a lifestyle that dishonors God and destroys people. See Acts 20:28-32.

So, how can genuine believers in the Lord Jesus Christ stay in the place of grace and avoid getting snookered by religious frauds? How can we stay on the right path and be faithful to God when false teachers and their deviant lifestyles can find their way into our very midst? As sinners who are still attracted to sin—as people who still have sinful desires living inside of us—what can we do?

2 Peter gives us God's answer to that question. It points us in two main directions. First, it tells us to keep growing. Second, it tells us to keep recalling. Always do both. Never stop either one.



First, we can't stop growing in our relationship with God. By God's grace, each one of us must go after spiritual growth. This means more than accumulating more Bible data about God. It certainly includes that, but it's much more than just learning more. This growth is not just an intellectual thing. It's a relational and transformational thing. It involves our personal relationship with Jesus Christ and our personally becoming like Him.

Second, we need to not only know what God has done so far but also actively remember what He has done. We can't afford to be unclear about the past. We must know how God has worked and never stop recalling how He has worked.

As Peter begins this final dispatch, he makes every word count:

1 Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

He identifies himself first as a slave (δοῦλος) and then as an apostle (ἀπόστολος) of Jesus Christ (the Master who had bought Peter with His own blood at the cross—2:1). Peter addresses his audience with both humility and dignity. He comes at them humbly but authoritatively. He takes his place with them as someone who is fully owned by and who seeks to faithfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ. But he talks to them with a voice that commands because he has been authorized by Jesus Christ to speak on His behalf.

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours

His humble tone carries on as he identifies his readers and identifies with his readers. Their faith had been "allotted" (the more literal meaning of the word translated "obtained") to them. God had graciously chosen to give all of them real faith in Jesus (notice "ours" in 1:1 and then also "your faith" in 1:5). That faith was a gift from God. God had granted it, and they had received it.

And whether Jewish or not, eyewitness of Jesus or not, and/or apostle or not, their true faith in Jesus was a faith of equal standing. No one's faith was inferior to someone else's. The genuine faith of the people who received this letter was not of a second class or of a lower rank, and neither is ours. That faith is precious. Billions of USD aren't worth as much as true faith in Jesus and the salvation it brings to the sinner who has it (1 Peter 1:3-9).

by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

Our standing before God is not based upon our own righteousness. We have zero chance of meeting God's perfect standard for us. We all fall terribly short in thought, word, and deed. Our right standing with God is only possible because of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

There is no doubt that Peter is referring to Jesus Christ as God when he says, “our God and Savior Jesus Christ.” In the way the sentence is constructed in the Greek language, both “God” and “Savior” refer to the same person—Jesus Christ. This description of Jesus, along with many others in both the OT and NT make it clear that Jesus is God. Peter’s statement here is very similar to Paul’s in Titus 2:13:

waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

Peter, of course, is not denying the full deity of God the Father (see 1:17) or of the Holy Spirit (see 1:21) when he affirms the full deity of the Son. There is only one true, eternal God, but in some mysterious way, both the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are eternally, fully God. “God is one in essence and three in person.” Because Jesus is no less than God, Peter has no problem ending this letter in the way he does in 3:18.

2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Peter’s wish is much the same in 2 Peter 1:2 as it was in 1 Peter 1:2: lots of grace and peace for these endangered people. But in 2 Peter 1:2 he specifies that this abundant grace and peace is experienced in connection with “the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” If we find ourselves spiritually weak (lacking God’s strengthening grace) and unsettled (lacking God’s peace), is it because we are running short in our personal knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord? Truth is, we all need to grow. 2 Peter can help us with that. This letter is another of God’s gifts to us.

Never stop growing. Never stop recalling. 2 Peter. Let’s go.

All Scripture quotations taken from the ESV.

No Small Greeting

2 Peter 1:1-2

Peter’s death as a martyr by crucifixion was on the horizon. It wasn’t far away. Soon Peter would be taken off the earthly scene.

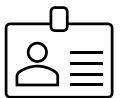
He knew it, and he wanted to send out another letter while there was still time. He wanted to leave behind something that would still speak once he had died. He wanted to give God’s blood-bought people a written-down reminder that could serve their souls even after he was gone (1:12-15 and 3:1-3).

The book of 2 Peter was a gift which Peter gave to the Christians of his day before he departed. It’s also a gift of God to us today.

When he wrote 1 Peter (probably a few years earlier), he prepared God’s people for the external threat of persecution. God used Peter to pour spiritual steel into their suffering souls. He exhorted them, declared the true grace of God to them, and called them to stand firm in that grace (1 Peter 5:12).

As he wrote 2 Peter, he sensed a need to warn and prepare God’s people for a different kind of danger that they faced (or soon would). This time that danger would be an “inside job.” It would be the less obvious and more insidious threat of religious liars and their lies. These counterfeit Christians worked for the enemy and served their own sinful desires to their own self-destruction.

“But none of them wore ‘FALSE TEACHER’ name tags.” It wasn’t that easy. Their true nature wasn’t obvious.



Peter loved these real believers to whom he wrote this letter. He cared about their souls and was concerned about their churches.