

08-30-2015

Message: God's Grace and Peace Come through Knowing Christ, Part 2

Text: 2 Peter 1:1-9

Introduction

- A. A good shepherd watches over and cares for his sheep, feeds his sheep, stands between His sheep and those who would destroy them, protecting them and even laying down his life for his sheep.
- B. This describes the Lord Jesus, our Good Shepherd (Jn 10:11). He laid down His life for His church, was raised from the dead, exalted to reign at His Father's right hand to continue to shepherd us with all authority in heaven and earth, destined to return for us in glory that we might share in His glory in the new heavens and earth forever.

John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

- C. As a Good Shepherd, Christ protects His church in every subsequent generation through His apostle Peter's second letter to His largely Gentile churches in what is today modern Turkey, cautioning us against false teachings and false teachers that arise within the churches.

2 Peter 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you**, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

- D. In the past 2 weeks in the opening verses of this letter we began to see how the Lord protects us, His people from deceivers by enabling us to discern and desire the truth of Christ, for ...
 - 1. We have received from Jesus Christ the same faith He gave to His believing Jewish apostles and disciples .

2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, **to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours**

Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."¹⁷ And Jesus said to him, "**Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.**

- 2. We have received from the Lord this same faith in Christ as the result of His righteousness in keeping His word to bless all nations/peoples from Abraham's posterity.

2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a bond-servant 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:

Romans 1:16 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.**¹⁷ **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."

3. The Lord's grace and peace come to us and multiply in us through a true informational, convictional, and experiential knowledge of Him.

2 Peter 1:2 **Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;**

- a. Informational knowledge of God and Christ. We must be exposed to sufficient content of God's self-revelation in the Scriptures in order to believe in Him and in His Son, Jesus.

Romans 10:13 for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."¹⁴ How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? **How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ...**¹⁷ **So faith comes from hearing,** and hearing by the word of Christ.

But mere exposure to biblical information alone will not result in grace and peace coming to us, for the Devil and certain unbelievers have a great knowledge of the content of the Scriptures.

Jeremiah 2:8 "The priests did not say, 'Where is the LORD?' and **those who handle the law did not know Me;**

- b. Convictional knowledge of God and Christ. We must not only know what the Bible says about the Lord but be convinced that what is said is true, so as to entrust all that we are to all that He reveals Himself to be. Such convictional knowledge leads to experiential knowledge of God and Christ.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 **for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction;**

2 Timothy 1:12 For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for **I know whom I have believed and I am convinced** that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

- c. Experiential knowledge of God and Christ. To know God and Christ experientially includes experiencing with delight what it is like in measure to be like Him, to experience His godly virtues - to know by experience what it is like to be holy as God is holy, to be merciful as God is merciful, to be patient as God is patient, to

love as God loves.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and **everyone who loves** is born of God and **knows God**.⁸ **The one who does not love does not know God**, for God is love.

- E. It is beyond our natural capacity to know God in this way - informationally, perhaps, but convictionally and experientially, no. We don't have the internal resources, the moral, spiritual strength and capacity of heart to love living life in the image of Christ, to have His grace and peace to us multiplied in the knowledge of Him. But God provides all we need.

IV. The Lord promised to create in His elect by His Spirit's divine power a faith-born intellectual, convictional, experiential knowledge of Him that we might escape the corruption of the world through lust.

2 Peter 1:3 seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him** who called us by His own glory and excellence.⁴ For by these **He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.**

- A. 1:3 God, by His Spirit's power, gives us what we lack, everything we need for life and godliness. By His glory and excellence He transforms our natures, our minds and hearts into conformity to His own (1:4).

1 Thessalonians 1:5 for our gospel did not come to you in word only, **but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction**; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

1 Corinthians 2:1 And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God.² For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.³ I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling,⁴ and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,⁵ **so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.**

2 Corinthians 10:10 For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his personal presence is unimpressive and his speech contemptible."

- B. 1:4 God, because of His own glorious, excellent character, is fulfilling in us His precious promises to turn our hearts to Him and give us hearts to know Him. These are precious promises, because they are extremely rare - no other promises by any other being can do what God has promised!

Jeremiah 24:7 **I will give them a heart to know Me**, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for **they will return to Me with their whole heart**.

Jeremiah 31:33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "**I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it**; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for **they will all know Me**, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Ezekiel 36:26 "Moreover, **I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you**; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "**I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes**, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

- C. 1:4 By His glory and excellence, He has granted us His precious and magnificent promises to share in His divine nature so that we, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust, will inherit a place in His glory at His promised coming. Without His transforming power, we would remain slaves of sin and destined for destruction.

2 Peter 1:4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, **having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust**.

1. corruption (phthora) = deterioration leading to destruction cf 2:12,19; Romans 8:21; Galatians 6:8

2 Peter 2:12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, ,, 19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of **corruption**; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.

Galatians 6:8 For **the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption**, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- a. fleshly lusts, left unchecked, will destroy us.

1 Peter 2:11 **Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.**

- b. sinning without repentance leads to death (no matter what is our informational knowledge of Christ)

Romans 8:13 for **if you are living according to the flesh, you must die**; but if

by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Galatians 5:19 **Now the deeds of the flesh are evident**, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which **I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

2. Christ grants His precious promise of future grace at His coming to all who by His present grace of a Spirit-regenerated soul live by faith in Him, and in this way escape the corruption of the world through lust.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.**"

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again** to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ **to obtain an inheritance** *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,⁵ **who are protected by the power of God through faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, **having been justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and **we exult in hope of the glory of God.**

2 Peter 3:13 But **according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.**

- E. This leads to Peter's calling us to diligently increase in the knowledge of God, producing godly virtues through His promised divine power. And when we do grow, we give Him the glory forever.

2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence**, and in *your* moral excellence, **knowledge**,⁶ and in *your* knowledge, **self-control**, and in *your* self-control, **perseverance**, and in *your* perseverance, **godliness**,⁷ and in *your* godliness, **brotherly kindness**, and in *your* brotherly kindness, **love**.

2 Peter 3:18 but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

- F. Having been told by God and convinced by God that He gives us grace to do everything He commands, that nothing we desire compares to Him or compares to being like Him, we can gladly pursue with diligence the experiential knowledge of all of His wonderful, communicable attributes.

V. Grow diligently in the knowledge of God's own moral excellence.

2 Peter 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by **His own** glory and **excellence** (arete).

2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence** (spoude), **in your faith supply moral excellence** (arete), and in your moral excellence, knowledge,⁶ and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,⁷ and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.

A. 1:5 For this very reason (on account of the glory and moral excellence [areta] of God) ...

1. by which we are partakers of the divine nature (1:4)
2. by which we escape the corruption (destruction) that is in the world through lust (1:4)

B. 1:5 apply all "diligence," - spoude (spoudazo = to work hard, do one's best, spare no effort; make haste Cf. 1:10,15; 3:14) in your faith to supply godly virtues, even as Christ spared no effort to bring us to God.

C. 1:5 in your faith "supply" (epichoregeo) - used of benefactors who supply generously. God supplies us generously with all we need for life, godliness, and entrance into His kingdom (1:11). A sincere, diligent faith will supply an experiential knowledge of the virtues of Christ.

2 Peter 1:11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

1. 1:5 moral excellence, goodness (arete), whereby a person engages in praiseworthy deeds. I.e., be zealous to be excellent in our praying, patience, parenting, husbanding/wifing, one anothering, loving.
 - a. Again, all these qualities emanate from God's own character. Therefore, each command calls us to be conformed by faith to the image of God, to the image of Christ.

2 Peter 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and **excellence** (arete).

1 Peter 2:9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the **excellencies** (arete) of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

- b. Christ spared no effort, but gave His life to prepare for Himself a people zealous for good deeds.

Titus 2:13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, **zealous for good deeds**.

- c. In Peter's day it was assumed that only people of wealth and power could be expected to be generous and excellent in their virtues, even as today our culture excuses bad behavior due to poverty. But rich or poor, God gives us by His excellence everything we need for life and godliness, everything we need for our faith to supply moral excellence. And so He says to all whose minds His Spirit has transformed ...

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any **excellence** (arete) and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

2. 1:5 knowledge

2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, **knowledge**,

- a. The knowledge in view here appears to be the knowledge of God's will that directs our zeal in paths of righteousness.

Ephesians 5:17 So then do not be foolish, but **understand what the will of the Lord is**.

Philippians 1:9 And this I pray, that **your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment**,

- b. Zeal without knowledge proved eternally disastrous for many of the apostle Paul's fellow Jews (Rom. 10:3,4). Love without knowledge can result in parents being too permissive or too rigid. A lack of knowledge can result in professing Christians affirming couples living together outside of marriage, same sex marriage, abortion on demand, or reacting against such practices with ungodly hostility. On 10/23/1998 in a suburb of Buffalo, NY, Dr. Barnett Slepian, an abortion provider, had returned with his wife and four children from synagogue where they attended a memorial service for his father. Around 10 PM Slepian was in his kitchen preparing soup, when pro-life activist James Kopp aimed his high powered rifle from a wooded area and fire a single fatal shot through the kitchen window that shattered Slepian's spine, tore his aorta, and barely missed his son's head as it exited. In his zeal without knowledge, Kopp devalued the sanctity of

human life he supposed himself to be protecting.

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for *their* salvation.² For I testify about them that **they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.**³ For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Conclusion

- A. So brothers and sisters, as Christ was diligent, spared no effort to bring us to God, let us be diligent, spare no effort to be conformed to His moral excellence according to knowledge. Let us pursue excellence in what matters most (Mt. 23:23), conforming to the character traits of Christ.
- B. It is by granting us a faith that produces virtues after His own image that Christ, our Good Shepherd, protects us from being drawn away from Him by seductive temptations and false teachers.

2 Peter 1:8 **For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**