

Living With Truth  
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Do you remember the TV show “MacGyver?” MacGyver (played by Richard Dean Anderson) was a secret agent who didn’t carry a gun and had a UNIQUE method of getting out of any “jam.” How did he do it? He was able to solve complex problems with everyday materials he finds at hand, along with his ever-present duct tape and Swiss Army Knife.

Opening question: We’ve all heard those survey questions: “If you were stranded on a desert island what five things would you want with you?” **If YOU were planning your SURVIVAL KIT of things you would need what would it include?**

In this first chapter of Peter’s second letter to believers he instructs us: When we become a believer in Christ, we are equipped with “divine power” that gives us EVERYTHING we need to live a life of “godliness.” We also have the TRUTH of God’s Word to instruct us in everything that “pertains” to living that life.

Intro to 2 Peter:

Warren Wiersbe writes:

*The key word in 2 Peter is “knowledge,” and the danger Peter writes about is false teaching. In 1 Peter, Satan is described as a roaring lion, for Peter’s theme is the fiery persecution that was about to come to the saints. But in 2 Peter, Satan is a serpent seeking to deceive (see John 8:44–45). False teaching from within the church is far more dangerous than persecution from without (see Acts 20:28–32). Persecution has always cleansed and strengthened the church; false teaching weakens the church and ruins its testimony. The only weapon to fight false teaching and the devil’s lies is the Word of God, which is why Peter emphasizes spiritual knowledge.*

If we want to avoid being DECEIVED by false teaching we must KNOW the Word of God and GROW in our relationship with Christ.

2 Peter 1:1-2 (ESV)

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

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

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

- Verse 1: Notice that Peter uses BOTH his “old” name (before Christ changed it) and his “new” name. No doubt, he’s testifying to how Jesus changed him: “This old sinner Simon/Simeon is now Peter: a “servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.”
- Also in Verse 1: Peter says he’s writing to “those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours.” **What is Peter saying about OUR Faith in Christ?**

- The same wonderful, marvelous faith in Christ can be “obtained” by YOU and ME as it was by Peter, the other Apostles, and prophets! OUR faith is as valid as THEIR faith.
- Verse 2: “grace and peace [are] multiplied” in our lives by the “knowledge of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. **What does it mean to KNOW Christ as Savior and Lord?**
- “Knowledge” (*epignōsei*, “full [*epi*, additional] knowledge”) implies an intimate and personal relationship. It is the means by which God’s grace and peace may be received and experienced. (*Bible Knowledge Commentary*)
- Knowing ABOUT Jesus is RELIGION; KNOWING Jesus is RELATIONSHIP!
- What does that RELATIONSHIP with Jesus as Lord give us? Verses 3 and 4...

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

- Verse 3: **What does verse 3 say we get when Jesus saves us? DIVINE POWER**
- Also, Verse 3: **What does that DIVINE POWER grant or give to us?** “...all things that pertain to life and godliness.” The MESSAGE paraphrase puts it plainly:

*Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. (MESSAGE)*

You and I have been SUPERNATURALLY ENDOWED with EVERYTHING we need to live a life PLEASING to God. BUT, we have to USE and DEVELOP what God has put into us. Beginning in verse 5 there are SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS that should be evident in a Christian’s life:

5 For this very reason, [*because Jesus saved us and gave us DIVINE POWER*] make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Verse 5 says “make every effort”, we are to DO OUR BEST to “supplement your faith.” **What does it mean to “supplement” something?** You ADD to what you already have. Some folks say: “I’m saved so I guess I’m all set.” We must DO our part!
- These are BUILDING BLOCKS to living the Christian life. Wiersbe says: “*They are like the sections of a telescope: one leads into the other.*” It ALWAYS starts with “faith” that is, SAVING FAITH...that is the foundation.
- Then Peter says to add VIRTUE...**What does it mean to have VIRTUE?** Goodness.
- John MacArthur says this is “*Moral excellence,*” --- not an attitude but an action. Our model for that kind of active excellence is Jesus Christ, who “went about doing good” (*Acts 10:38*).

- **Question: Jesus went about “doing good”, what are some examples of how we can be VIRTUOUS? (as opposed to living a self-centered life)**
- To VIRTUE Peter said add KNOWLEDGE...**what did we say earlier about this kind of KNOWLEDGE?**
- It's not knowing ABOUT Jesus, but KNOWING Him in relationship.
- **How do we do that? How do we GROW in the KNOWLEDGE of God?**
- We are to have SELF CONTROL - Keeping our PASSIONS in check.
- **What benefits come to those who have high self-control?**

In the book [The Willpower Instinct: How Self-Control Works, Why It Matters, and What You Can Do To Get More of It](#) by Kelly McGonigal Ph.D. says:

*People who have better control of their attention, emotions, and actions are better off almost any way you look at it. They are happier and healthier. Their relationships are more satisfying and last longer. They make more money and go further in their careers. They are better able to manage stress, deal with conflict, and overcome adversity. They even live longer.*

- STEADFASTNESS - Persevere. **What does it mean for a Christian to persevere?**
- GODLINESS - **What is being a “godly” person?** Living to please and glorify God.
- The first five characteristics are INTERNAL but the last two have an EXTERNAL focus:
- BROTHERLY AFFECTION and LOVE. Similar but different.
- **What is BROTHERLY AFFECTION?** Loving “the brethren”...other believers.
- When Peter says LOVE he uses the Greek word AGAPE. **What is AGAPE love?**
- AGAPE love is the kind of love Christ shows toward sinners.

Warren Wiersbe again:

*When we have brotherly love, we love because of our likenesses to others; but with agape love, we love in spite of the differences we have.*

- What if we DON'T practice these SEVEN characteristics? Verse 9:

9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

- WOW! Spiritual NEARSIGHTEDNESS. **What does it mean to be NEARSIGHTED?**
- So, **how would you describe SPIRITUAL NEARSIGHTEDNESS?**
- Peter says, it would be like you totally FORGOT Jesus saved you.

10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. 11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

12 Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. 13 I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, 14 since I know that the putting off of my body

will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.  
Christ's Glory and the Prophetic Word

- You see, Peter was not “long for this world” and he was FOCUSED on REMINDING these believers about how to live the Christian life.
- Next Peter TESTIFIES. He tells of his own EYEWITNESS account of the POWER and the DIETY of Jesus:

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. 19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- Peter said: “I was THERE on the mountain of TRANSFIGURATION! I heard the very voice of God confirming that Jesus IS who he said he was. But, you don't just have to take my word for it. You have HIS WORD.”
- Verse 19, Peter says: “we have the prophetic word”...**what is he referring to there?**
- Peter said: Pay attention to scripture like you would use a lamp in a dark place.
- If you walked into your dark house would you stumble around in the darkness banging into the furniture and bruising yourself black and blue or would you turn on the LAMP?
- “I don't have the time to mess with that lamp! I'm busy, busy, busy, I'll just stumble around in the dark until I find my way out of this situation.” Ridiculous, right?
- How can we expect to GROW in the knowledge of God if we don't spend time in His LOVE LETTER to us...the Bible?

So, What's the TAKEAWAY?

- As his life on earth was slipping away, Peter wrote to these believers to help them REMEMBER and PUT INTO PRACTICE things that, “pertain to life and godliness.”
- He said if we have been SAVED we have been SUPERNATURALLY GRANTED everything we need to live this way.
- He gave us these SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS...it would be a great idea to RE-READ these verses every day this week and ask ourselves the question: “Am I growing in each of these seven things?” Am I MAKING EVERY EFFORT in these areas?
- Am I daily reaching for the “light switch” of God's Word, or just stumbling around in the dark?