2 Peter 1:1-11

Key Verse 1:3

*His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness*

Introduction to 2 Peter

In the book of 1 Peter, the apostle Peter encouraged believers to participate in the sufferings of Christ and to continue to do what is right and good. His focus was on the relationships of believers outside and inside of the church and how God was using their current trials to discipline their faith and make them strong. Now, in 2 Peter, the apostle Peter focuses more on the problem of false teachers and the promise of Jesus’ second coming. He wanted to help the believers to hold onto the truth of God and keep their faith in God to the end. For this, they needed to work on and grow their faith and confirm their calling and election. They needed to overcome the deception of false teachers and to be patient and watchful in waiting for the day of the Lord.

Introducion: In 1 Peter 1:1-11

In today’s passage, the apostle Peter encouraged the believers to work on and grow their faith through adding various qualities to their faith. They should make progress in developing a godly lifestyle in order to confirm their calling and election from God. In this way, they could be prepared for Jesus’ second coming and receive a rich welcoming into his kingdom.

1. Read verses 1-2. How did Peter introduce himself? (1) How did he address the believers? (2) How had the believers received faith? In what respect was their faith precious? (1 Pet. 1:9) How did Peter bless them? (2) What is the source of grace and peace?

*Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:* ***2*** *Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

1. Peter introduced himself as a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.
   1. First, Peter introduced himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. He was called to serve others in the name of Jesus Christ. Here, the word servant is translated from the Greek word doulos, which can also be translated as slave. In Peter’s day a servant was not much different than a slave. Servants had few, if any, rights, and could not demand anything from their master or from anyone else. Peter considered himself a servant of Jesus Christ, meaning that he lived as a slave of Jesus Christ. He did not use his freedom in Christ for himself, but to serve God and to serve others in Christ (1Pet 2:16). Living as a servant or slave of Jesus Christ speaks on one’s attitude before God. A servant should have a humble and obedient attitude; or servant’s attitude. A servant has no right to demand anything from their master or from those they are called to serve. They have no say in whom they are called to serve, nor where, how, nor what that calling involves. They have no room to even ask why. Instead, they must trust in God and obediently submit to His sovereign authority and do as God commands, serving others in the name of Jesus Christ.
   2. Second, Peter introduced himself as an apostle of Jesus Chirst. The word apostle comes from the Greek word apostolos, which means one who is sent. Peter was sent by Jesus Christ for a specific purpose; to be a shepherd for God’s flock, especially among the Jews (1Pet 5:2; Gal 2:8). The first apostles were a select group. Jesus designated them from among his disciples (Lk 6:13). Jesus also commissioned Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles (1Cor 15:7-9’ Rom 1:1, 5, 11:13; Gal 2:8). The apostles were those sent by Jesus Christ. In John’s gospel, Jesus revealed that he was sent by the Father, which was something that he said repeatedly (John 5:36-37, 6:44,57, 8:16, 18, 42, 10:36, 12:49, 14:24, and 17:21, 25). Then after Jesus rose from the dead, he sent his disciples, saying, *“Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you”* (John 20:21). To be sent as an apostle means to be sent just as Jesus was sent--to be sent from God, just as Jesus was sent from God and to do the same things that Jesus had done. Just as Jesus taught the word of God, those sent by Jesus are called to teach God’s word. Just as Jesus preached a message of repentance and sin forgiveness, those sent by him are called to preach repentance and sin forgiveness. And, just as Jesus came to suffer for doing what is right, so also those sent by him are called to suffer for doing what is right. An apostle of Jesus Christ represents Jesus in the body; setting an example through their lifestyle and words.
2. Peter addressed the believers as *“those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours*. Here, Peter used the word “our*”* or “ours”; saying “*our* God and Savior” and “*our* faith”. The believers shared the same faith together with the apostle Peter. They might have had many differences, but they were all united by one faith. Through their one faith, they were all part of one family. Regardless of what differences they might have, they could be united in faith as the body of Christ--the church.
3. The believers had received faith through the righteousness of their God and Savior Jesus Christ. Before meeting Jesus, the believers had no faith in God. But, they received faith through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, when Jesus Christ appeared a righteousness from God was revealed. Without this righteousness from God, they were helpless to believe in God. But, through this righteousness, they believed in God. They received faith and began a life of faith. It’s as the apostle Paul also said in Romans 1:17, *“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”* Without the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, there is not righteousness to speak of at all. So believers owe even their faith to Him and Him alone.
4. Their faith was precious because it was saving faith. 1Pet 1:9 says, *“For you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”* This faith was more precious and valuable than anything they could gain in this world. It was through this faith that they were saved from eternal condemnation and judgement and received eternal life and heavenly reward.
5. Peter blessed them with grace and peace in abundance. Grace and peace from God are what the believers need the most. They needed them in abundance. Here, the word abundance comes from the Greek word plēthyntheiē, meaning to multiply. Peter prayed that their grace and peace would not decrease, but increase and multiply. Sometimes believers have the problem of not remembering God’s grace, and may not experience the same measure of peace they once had. This may be especially so when they have had to endure trials or even fiery ordeals. However, Peter blessed the believers that they would have even more grace and peace from God in the time of trials.
6. The source of grace and peace is the knowledge of God and Jesus their Lord. Abundant grace and peace come through knowing Jesus better. When the believers went through trials and even fiery ordeals, they could have doubted God’s love, forgotten God’s grace and lost their peace of mind. However, God’s purpose in trials was to help them to know Jesus better. Through the trials their faith could be tested and purified, they could be made holy and grow up in their salvation through God’s word to know Jesus better (1Pet 1:7, 1:15, 2:2) Then, through knowing Jesus better their grace and peace would be multiplied all the more, and they could be prepared to share in His glory. This is why Peter previously stressed for them to rejoice in sufferings for Christ and to continue to do what is right or good (1Pet 2:15, 2:20, 3:14, 3:17, 4:12-13). He even said their sufferings for Christ were the way to glory and true grace of God (1 Pet 5:10-12). They should not avoid or be shaken by these sufferings, but stand fast in them. Through participating in the suffering of Christ they could know Christ better and experience grace and peace in abundance (1Pet 4:13, Phi 3:10)

1. Read verses 3-4. In what respect did the believers have everything they needed for a godly life? (3a) How had God called them and given them his promises? (3b-4a) What did God’s promises do for them? (4b)

***3*** *His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.* ***4*** *Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

1. His divine power had given the believers everything they needed for a godly life. Here *“His”* refers back to verse 2 where it says, *“... through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.* God and the Lord Jesus Christ who were the source of power to live a godly life. God the Father had made Jesus Lord, had given Him all authority in heaven and earth and had placed all of His enemies under his feet (Mat 28:18, Mark 13:36, 1Cor 15:25). The believers might have been overcome with the fear because of the fiery ordeal that had come on them. The power of sin and death and the devil was far too great for them. However, the Lord Jesus was more powerful, and His divine power had given them everything they needed for, because they were powerless to the power of sin and death and the devil. Instead, they needed to know the Lord Jesus better and rely on his power. It was through the power of Jesus alone that they could overcome the world and live a godly life. Again, they just needed to know Jesus better. By knowing Jesus better, they could also know themselves better. They could know their own weakness and limitations and rely on God’s unlimited power. The believers might have thought that they needed Jesus plus something else for salvation. However, according to Peter, they already had everything they needed. Instead of doubting based on what they could see, their visible reality, they needed to simply just believe. Otherwise they are unstable due to divided hearts. (James 1:8)
2. God had called them by his own glory and goodness, and by his own glory and goodness, he had given them his very great and precious promises. Not only should the believers know God’s grace and power, but also God's glory and goodness. God is good. So His calling is also good. God is glorious. So his calling is also glorious. God is good. So his promises are very great. God is glorious. So his promises are precious. Here, all these teams have to do with value. God’s calling and promises are so valuable, because knowing God is so valuable. He is good, and the sum total of all that is good, so that apart from him nothing is good. The believers should value God’s calling and God’s promises the most because they came from God who is good and always good.
3. Through God’s promises the believers could escape the corruption of the world caused by evil desires and participate for His divine nature. God’s very great and precious promises were given for God’s glorious purpose of salvation--to escape the world and participate in the things of God. Through His promises, God was working to recover his glorious image within them and to restore them to His glorious heavenly kingdom. In order to participate in the divine nature, the believers should escape the corruption of the world caused by evil desires. However, in order to escape the world and participate in the divine nature, what they really needed most was to believe and hold the promises of God. God’s promises are different from human promises. God is always faithful to keep his promises, so that his promises are guaranteed to be fulfilled, and as good as done. However, they are still promises. They may not be fulfilled according to our own expectations. Rather, they are fulfilled in God’s time, according to His own infinite wisdom. The believers needed to be patient to wait on God’s time--the time when God’s salvation work would be complete. Some of the believers might have still struggled with the corruption of the world. They may have remained spiritually immature; not knowing Jesus as well as they would like. Others might have overcome fully, but Jesus still didn’t come. Whatever the case, they all needed to continue to hold onto the promises of God and be patient for God to complete his salvation world according to his own wisdom and plan.
4. Read verses 5-11. What qualities should the believers add to their faith? (5-7) What progressions can be found between these qualities? What would having these qualities do for them? (8) What was the condition of whoever didn’t have them? Why should the believers make every effort to have these qualities? (5a, 10-11) How were these qualities related to confirming their calling and election?

***5*** *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;* ***6*** *and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;* ***7*** *and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.* ***8*** *For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* ***9*** *But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.* ***10*** *Therefore, my brothers and sisters,[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+1%3A1-11&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30490a)*] make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble,* ***11*** *and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

1. The believers should add to their faith goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness. and mutual affection. Each of these qualities add something to their faith in terms of their action and lifestyle.
2. First, a macro progression between these qualities is that they begin with faith and end with mutual affection—love—or love for one another. Here faith represents the starting point, while mutual love represents the final goal. So having faith, or true faith should end with loving others, especially within the church fellowship. Here Faith without love is kind of an empty faith. As the apostle Paul also said if I have faith without love I am nothing (1Cor 13:2b). So definitely, true faith should produce love, and love should be demonstrated through love for one another. Second in micro progression between these qualities is that each new quality is added to the one that preceded it. In order to add to your faith goodness, you need to have faith, and in order to add to your goodness knowledge, you need to have goodness, and so on and so forth. So each quality is dependent on and built on the foundation of the one that comes before it. Again faith is very important as the starting point here. However, goodness is also very important, because it was the first quality added to faith, and without first adding goodness to their faith, they cannot progress to adding any of the other qualities. Here, knowledge is also very significant, because the apostle Paul already mentioned knowledge twice previously in the passage. In verse two he said, *“Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord”*, and in verse three, *“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”* Having faith and adding to faith goodness are essential for knowing Jesus. Also, knowing Jesus is so essential for adding self-control, perseverance, godliness, and mutual affection or love. In order for the believers to truly know Jesus, they needed to add something practical to their faith; such as doing what is right or doing good. In this way, they would be adding to their faith goodness. Also, in order for the believers to say that they know Jesus, they would need to add something practical to their knowledge; such as self-control, and then perseverance, godliness and mutual affection or love. Overall, the believers’ faith should be practical, in that it makes an actual difference in their actions as well as their lifestyle.
3. Possessing these qualities in increasing measure would keep them from being ineffective and unproductive in their knowledge Jesus Christ. Here again, the apostle Peter emphasizes knowledge or knowing Jesus as a central issue. Without faith or putting their faith to work through doing what is right or good, they could not know Jesus. Without knowing Jesus, they could not practice self-control, perseverance, godliness or love for one another. In this way, having these qualities in increasing measure would make them very effective and productive in their knowledge of Jesus Christ. This was the way for them to become victorious and fruitful Christians. To have these qualities in increasing measure implies spiritual growth. A healthy Christian is a growing Christian, and a growing Christian is a healthy Christian.
4. Whoever did not have these qualities was nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed of past sins. When believers did not add to the faith goodness and so on, they could easily forget God’s grace. When they were not active and growing in their faith, they were actually losing the spiritual battle and backsliding. As Jesus also said in Mark 4:25 “*Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”*
5. The believers should make every effort to have these qualities because if they did these things they would never stumble and would receive a rich welcome into Jesus’ eternal kingdom. Although the believers needed to rely on the divine power of God for living a godly life, their effort was still essencial. They needed to make every effort to work with God; to pray and study the word of God and so struggle against their sinful desire and participate in the work of God. Once Jesus said, *“The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent”* (John 6:29). Believing in Jesus does not come naturally. It requires a lot of work and effort to believe in Jesus and to maintain and grow one’s faith. The believers needed to work on their faith and make progress through applying the principles Peter laid out here.
6. These qualities were related to confirming their calling and election in that doing these things was the way for them to confirm their calling and election. In other words, the way for them to confirm their calling and election was to develop their faith in the method Peter prescribed. To confirm their calling and election was a matter of assurance of salvation. They had experienced that God had chosen and called them, but that wasn’t the end of the matter. They needed to be ready for Jesus’ second coming. They should just try to squeak into heaven, but aspire to receive a rich welcome into Jesus’ eternal kingdom. For this reason, they needed to confirm their calling and election by working on their faith. They needed to make their actions and lifestyles the evidence of their faith. They needed to keep from stumbling in their faith. Would they be able to live by faith from first to last? Would they be able to keep their faith and stand firm through trials; from persecutions to the attacks of false teachers, or from other’s betrayals of their own temptations? Not only was their faith being tested, but they needed to grow their faith in a positive way as well. The believers really needed to make every effort to work on their faith and confirm their calling and election.

One word: everything we need for a godly life