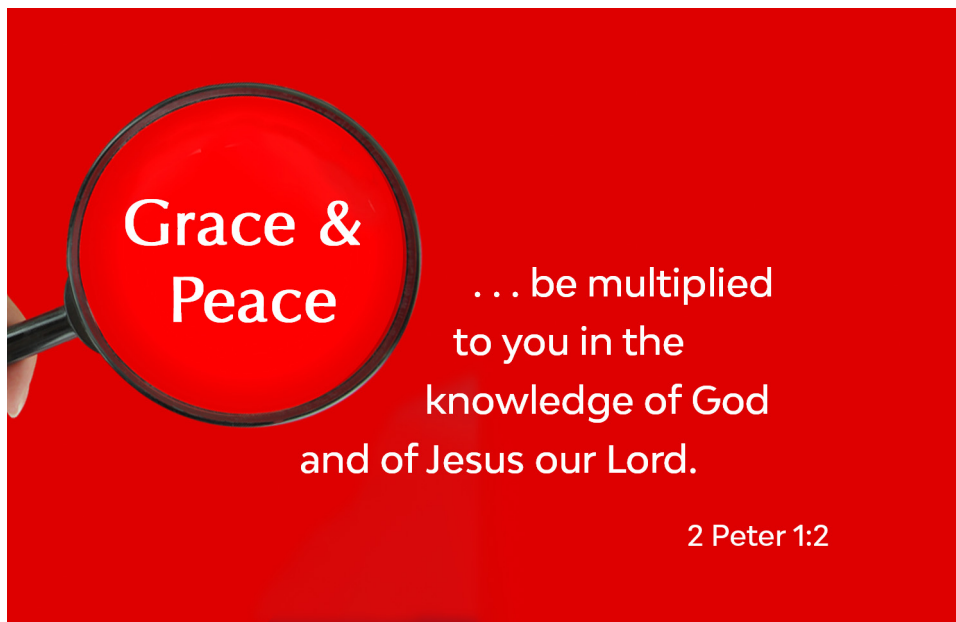


Grace and Peace Through Knowledge of God

Our first two studies in the book of 2 Peter have been in verse one. We found some incredible, precious truths in that verse, so I wanted to make sure that we understood what Peter was saying. When the apostle Peter wrote, he knew all of the doctrine instinctively. He stated truths in just a few simple words and sometimes we do not understand what those simple words are really conveying. So, I tried to help you understand what Peter was saying to us under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Tonight our study is verse 2. We are going to find some more surprises in this verse. The verse is about how to receive grace and peace and how to get more of them. We do not often think about how to get grace and peace. But Peter is telling us that it is possible to have more grace and peace. Here is the verse.



[Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord . . . 2 Peter 1:2 \(NASB\)](#)

Past, Present and Future Grace. So we want to speak now about grace and peace. I believe it is really important to understand what he is talking about. It is not something we talk about very much. Once in a while we hear that there is grace or we sing the song "Amazing Grace." Sometimes

people say that grace is everything God can give us because of Jesus. Someone defined grace as charity. That has a nice ring to it. I like that in many ways but grace is a lot more than just unmerited favor. Grace actually is everything that God gives us because of Jesus our Lord. The grace that God grants us has a purpose. It transforms us from a sinner into a righteous person. It transforms us from a non-Christian to being a Christian. God's grace does a transforming work in our lives. There is a purpose in God's grace. Again, God's grace is everything that God can give to us and everything God can

do to us because of Jesus.

So while it is true that Scripture teaches that we are saved by grace, Ephesians 2:8-9 and Romans 5:2 teach that we are also living in "this grace." 1 Peter 1:13 tells us that there is a future grace. In other words,

you are going to die and someday you are going to go to the eternal grace. So when we go to heaven, there is going to be a transformation that occurs. We are going to be living in this incredible grace called the eternal heavens. The grace is going to be more than just the eternal heavens because we are told that God will be dwelling with us and there will be no sin. There will be no crying. There will be no tears. It is going to be a wonderful place. This is a future grace.

So, we are saved by grace and are living in grace. There is

a future grace. We do not often think about grace. We think that grace *just* saves us. No, we are also living in grace. Everything that God is doing in our lives is God's grace poured out on us to transform us, to enable us to live the Christian life as He wants, and it is all good for us. Scripture teaches that grace has been freely given to us in Christ. Does that sound familiar (Ephesians 1:6)? We are told in John 1:16 that when Christ came, we received grace upon grace. I just love the phrase: we received grace upon grace. That means that God just gives us grace and grace and grace upon grace!

Grace Upon Grace. While all that is true, Peter reveals that we can experience and grow in grace. There is not a static amount of grace given to each believer. So Peter writes, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God, and Jesus our Lord." Think with me about this. What he is telling us is that there are different degrees of grace. You can have grace and then you can have grace. There is grace upon grace. In James 4:6 we read,

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." James 4:6 (NASB)

"A greater grace" means there is yet grace to be given. For example, when we are in a difficult situation, there is grace that we can receive. I like the phrase "greater grace." The ESV actually has a different translation. It says "more grace." He gives "more grace." So God tells us that we have grace and we can have more grace. Do you see what Scripture is telling us? This truth reminds me of a gospel song written by Annie Johnson Flint titled "He Giveth More Grace." The lyrics are,

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials His multiplied peace.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His pow'r has no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus,
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.

Grace upon grace. That is exactly what Annie Flint's lyrics say. "He giveth, and giveth and giveth again." But remember that grace is not given so that we can just get whatever we want. There is a transforming purpose to His grace. Just as He transforms us from being spiritually dead into being spiritually alive, God has a purpose.

Grace to Help In Time of Need. One of my favorite verses is Hebrews 4:16. It says,

Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16 (NASB)

Scripture also refers to God as the God of all grace (1 Peter 5:10). He is the God of all grace. Now what does this verse tell us?

I want you to look at Hebrews 4:16 closely for a minute. It says, "Therefore let us draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive . . ." What? Mercy and find what? ". . . grace to help in time of need." Here you are going through a trial. You are experiencing great difficulty and if you pray, God is going to provide you with grace upon grace! He is going to give you more grace. Why do you need grace? You need more grace to help you through your trial.

Scripture is telling us that you can have more grace than you already have experienced. There is a transforming grace that is ongoing in the process. When you are in a difficult moment, God will give you more grace to help you and He has a purpose in doing that. I like the fact that we are told we can pray and can receive mercy. We can find grace. Before I leave the verse, let me just make a point that the word for help is the same word that is used for a rope in Acts 27:17. In Acts 27:17 we are told that some sailors took a rope and lashed the boat about with it. It held the boat together to help them through a storm. I think the reason that word was used in Hebrews 4:16 is to help us realize that when we are in the middle of a trial, God is not necessarily trying to take us out of the trial. He wants to lash us about with the "rope of grace" to help us go through the trial. The sailors would

lash the boat with a rope to help prevent it from breaking up in the midst of a storm. Then the boat could go through the storm successfully.

When it says in time of need, the word is used in Mark 6:21. There the word refers to the opportune time or the best time. So, the idea is that God helps you go through your trial at the right time, at the opportune time. He is going to actually leave you in your trial for a while so it accomplishes what it is supposed to. He is going to leave you in the trial so it will achieve its purpose. Then at the right time God will take you out of the trial. So, He gives you grace to help you at the right time go through your trial. The message of the verse is that you will receive grace, something you needed. Grace that you did not have.

2 Peter 3:18 is the last verse in 2 Peter. Peter wrote these words,

... but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ . . . 2 Peter 3:18 (NASB)

Why would Peter tell us to grow in grace if there was not something we are supposed to grow in? Why would he tell us to grow in grace, if we have all the grace we need? Do you understand? He is telling us that there is room to grow in grace and that we can.

Grace be Multiplied to You. The word “multiplied” in 1 Peter 1:2 is an interesting word. The Greek word can mean “increase.” The Greek word can mean “to possess more.” That is the literal meaning of the word. It has the idea of increasing more and more. What is very interesting about this word is that it is in the optative mood in the Greek. The optative mood has the sense of a wish or of hope. Some Bibles translate this verse correctly as, “May you increase in grace and peace in the knowledge of God in Jesus our Lord.” That is a better translation of the verse. It has the sense of a wish. Peter is wishing that we will grow in the grace and peace found in the knowledge of God and of Jesus. This is an interesting passage of Scripture. He is saying, I hope you will, and then he tells us how we can do that.

Now, how can we do that? Most of us are aware that in order for somebody to become a Christian, they have to hear

the Gospel, the good news. Let me put it this way: they have to hear the facts about Jesus. There is an old statement that says facts lead to faith, which in turn results in feelings. First facts, then faith, and finally the feelings.

That is consistent with the message of John 20:30-31 which says,

Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the pre-sence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. John 20:30-31 (NASB)

Notice the apostle John said that his gospel was written so that we will know Jesus is the Christ and that we will believe in Jesus, resulting in eternal life.

So, the first thing we need to realize when 2 Peter 1:2 says that we can grow in grace and *in the knowledge of God* is that the facts are already in place. Then God by His grace draws us. In the moment of saving faith, we become a Christian. If you will remember, Peter has already addressed the book of 1 Peter to Christians. When you get to 1 Peter 1:2, he is not talking to unbelievers. The point that I want to make is that knowledge is necessary to become a Christian. You have to know who Jesus is. You have to know that He died on a cross to pay the penalty for our sins. You have to know that He came back to life. You have to know that He did everything that was necessary for us to be saved so we do not need to work for our salvation. We do not need to get baptized in order to be saved. We do not need to do anything else. Jesus did it all for us on the cross; but the message that I want you to understand is that 2 Peter is written to Christians so verse 2 is to Christians. Christians are to grow in grace and peace through the knowledge of God.

Grace Multiplied by the Knowledge of God.

Some may wonder, “How do we grow in grace through the knowledge of God?” Look at John 17:17. I want you to notice a couple of interesting statements. John 17:17 says that Jesus is talking about his disciples. He is praying to the Father and says, “Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth.”

The word for sanctify means “to make holy.” So, how does a person become holy? It happens through truth. Jesus is making the point that we become holy through the word of God. Through truth! That is how believers become holy.

So is it really a surprise that in Ephesians 1:18 Paul said,

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places . . . Ephesians 1:18-20 (NASB)

Paul said that I wish that “your heart would be enlightened.” What is that? Knowledge. Paul was praying that they would gain knowledge. In Colossians 1:9, Paul wrote,

For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him . . . Colossians 1:9-10 (NASB)

Now Paul told the believers in the city of Colossae that he prayed they will have how much knowledge? He does not just say a little bit. He prayed they would be *filled* with the knowledge of Him in all spiritual wisdom and understanding so that they would walk in a manner that was pleasing to God,

. . . bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God . . . Colossians 1:10 (NASB)

It is interesting that he said if we are growing in the knowledge of God’s will and it is affecting our conduct, that you will be growing in the knowledge of God. That sounds like circular reasoning to some of us. But the message of Scripture is that the more knowledge you have about God, it enables

you to learn more about God. It is like a spinning wheel. The knowledge of God leads to the more knowledge about God.

Another important verse that I stumbled across years ago and I do not hear people talk about very often is John 14:21. It says,

He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him. John 14:21(NASB)

Jesus was speaking about believers. He said that if you are keeping His commandments, He will disclose Himself to you. That means you need to know what He wants us to do. Then if you obey Him, Jesus will let you know more about Himself. He said He will disclose Himself to you.

Do you know of any Christians who have difficulty understanding the Bible? Do you know of people who do not know the Bible? They may try to explain a passage of Scripture, but it becomes obvious they do not know about what they are speaking. Why? They are uninformed Christians. Jesus says, if you are being obedient, I am going to reveal more of Myself to you. That is bad news if you are a disobedient Christian and desperately want to know more about God. There are people who claim to be Christians who want to know about God, but they are not motivated to study the Bible. They are not motivated to read it on their own. They are not trying to know God. Their disobedience prevents them from knowing more of Jesus. Jesus said, if you are being obedient, you will be able to know more about me. So, obedience is connected to learning and knowing the Word of God.

Word of God is Essential to Spiritual Growth.

In the middle of 1 John 2:13, the apostle John said,

I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father. 1 John 2:13 (NASB)

I really like this passage. One of the reasons I like it is that it transformed my life. The first time I read this, I realized this was talking about spiritual growth. I realized I was a little

child and I did not want to remain a little child. I wanted to be a father of the faith, because we are told here that the little child just knows the Father. The first part of verse 12 says that their sins are forgiven. That describes a baby Christian. The young man is somewhere along the path of spiritual growth. You might be able to identify whether or not you are a young man in the faith because the verse says the young man is overcoming the evil one, that is you are overcoming sin.

In verse 14 the apostle John states,

I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. 1 John 2:14b (NASB)

The word “strong” means you are strong in the faith. A helpful passage about being strong in the faith is Romans 4:20.

There another description of the young man is that he abides in the Word of God. So that is the young man. He has strong faith. He is overcoming sin and knows the word of God. He is living it. The word “abide” means he does not just have head knowledge. He is living it too!

Now notice the fathers, beginning in verse 14. We are told,

I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. John 2:14a (NASB)

What is the father of the faith? Notice what is not mentioned. It does not say that he has overcome the evil one. It does not talk about the fact that he is strong in the faith. It does not mention that his sins are forgiven. The only thing that is said of the father is that, “He knows him who is from the beginning.” It is also mentioned in verse 13. What is that? The Word of God helps the father of the faith to know God.

Word of God Helps Us Grow in Grace. That is what Peter is telling us in 2 Peter 1:2. “Grace and peace be increased to you in the knowledge of God in Jesus our Lord.” The message is that the Word of God is what helps us grow in grace! 1 Thessalonians 2:13 is another really incredible verse. It says,

For this reason we also constantly thank God that

when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is . . . 1 Thessalonians 2:13a (NASB)

Now, we can get excited because the Thessalonians accepted what they heard as the Word of God. But notice the next part of the verse. The apostle Paul wrote,

. . .which also performs its work in you who believe. 1 Thessalonians 2:13b (NASB)

In other words, if you are a believer and the Word of God is taught and you understand the Word of God, it is doing a work in your life. The Holy Spirit is performing a transforming work in your life as you read the Word of God. As you are taught the word of God, it is doing this work in you. It is transforming you. That is what Paul is telling us. It is an incredible statement.

In Philippians 3:8, Paul is talking about his heart’s desire. He is talking about what he really wants. The apostle Paul is a Christian and he writes these words,

More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord . . . Philippians 3:8a (NASB)

Now Paul is not hoping to become a Christian. He is already an apostle of Jesus Christ! He says, “I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.” In other words, the apostle says, I want to know Jesus more. I want to know Him more ...

. . . for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, Philippians 3:8b (NASB)

Now notice the words, “gain Christ.” What did Paul mean? He is not talking about becoming a Christian. He is talking about gaining more knowledge and understanding of who Jesus is. That is what he is talking about. Now the apostle Paul has been writing a lot of Scripture and what does he

want? He wants to know Jesus more!

Next turn to Exodus 33:12. In this verse Moses is speaking. Moses has led the Israelites out of Egypt. He has performed many miracles with God's help. Now if I were Moses, I might have been thinking, "Hey, I am a special guy. This has been really exciting. I am God's special man. I am God's leader." I have referred to Moses as God's minister in the desert or God's pastor in the desert. But notice what verse 12 says.

Then Moses said to the LORD, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people!'" Exodus 33:12a (NASB)

Moses is referring to the task that God gave him to do. It was to bring His people out of Egypt.

. . . But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.' Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people. Exodus 33:12a-13 (NASB)

There is much we could talk about. But let me focus you in the middle of the verse that says, "Let me know Your ways that I may know You." What does Moses want? He wants to know God. Do you remember what Peter told us? Peter said that grace and peace would be multiplied to us through the knowledge of God. What did Paul want? Paul wanted to know God. We are told that knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord transforms us. We are told that the mark of the spiritually mature person is that he or she knows God the Father. What does Moses want? He wants to know God. He does not want to be a baby Christian. He doesn't want to be a young man. He wants to be a father of the faith. He wants to know God. What did Moses ask God? "Let me know your ways so that I may know you."

Psalm 103:7 explains the meaning of Moses' prayer. It says,

He made known His ways to Moses . . . Psalm 103:7a

(NASB)

That is what Moses asked for. Moses asked, "Let me know your ways so that I can know you." Then we are told God showed,

. . . His acts to the sons of Israel. Psalm 103:7b (NASB)

There is a contrast here. We are told God showed His ways to Moses, but He only showed His acts to the sons of Israel. What is the difference? Why is it that Moses was shown God's ways, but all that the sons of Israel knew were the acts of God? The answer is the acts of God were the things God did: the parting of the Red Sea and all of the miracles. The Israelites saw all of those "acts of God." In the Gospels we read that Jesus walked on water. We read that He turned water into wine. We know that He raised the dead. He cast out demons. He did miracle upon miracle. The Israelites only saw the acts of God. Those are the sensational things people tend to get excited about.

But Moses learned something different. He knew and understood God's ways. What does that mean? We are told in the gospel of Mark that after Jesus walked on the water, He rebuked the disciples because their hearts were hardened. They were not understanding the message of the feeding of the five thousand. Is not that interesting? Because the hearts of the disciples were hardened, they did not understand the message of the miracle of Jesus walking on the water. They did not understand the ways of God. The "fact" was Jesus walked on the water, but the deeper message or meaning was that Jesus was God.

Jeremiah 9:23-24 is another important passage. It says,

Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD. Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NASB)

What does God say that He wants from us? He wants us to know Him, or to understand He has loving kindness, that He is just, and that He is righteous. He wants us to get to know and understand who He is. That is what God wants.

Conclusion. The message of all of these passages is that as we seek to know God, grace is multiplied in a believer's life. 2 Corinthians 12 is our final stop. It will give us an illustration of grace being multiplied. In this passage, the apostle Paul reveals that he had a thorn in the flesh. We are told in 2 Corinthians 12:7,

Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations,
for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there
was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan
to torment me — to keep me from exalting myself!
Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that
it might leave me. And He has said to me, “My grace is
sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”
2 Corinthians 12:7-9a (NASB)

What did God tell Paul that He was going to give him? Grace! What did Peter write in 2 Peter 1:2? “Grace and peace be multiplied to us through the knowledge of God.” Paul may have assumed God was going to heal him because he asked. But Paul learned that God would give him grace and not healing. God told Paul, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Then Paul said,

I will rather boast about my weaknesses so that the
power of God may dwell in me. 2 Corinthians 12:7-9b
(NASB)

Paul learned something about God. He learned about the ways of God. God was going to give him grace to help him through his affliction. Grace was multiplied for Paul. He was given more grace! In the process of Paul receiving more grace, he learned more about God as well. They go together.

What have we learned? God wants us to know Him. The great saints such as Moses, David, and others wanted to know God. Then God will lavish us with peace and grace as we will

know Him more and more. In the process of more grace and peace being lavished on us, we will learn more about Him. May God bless you as you seek to know Him and grow in peace and grace.