



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V21 N49 December 15, 2019

ALL IS WELL

“It’s Not What You Know”

2 Peter 1:1-4

THIS WEEK’S CORE COMPETENCY

Peace

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, others, and myself.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:6-7



What have believers received from their God and Savior Jesus Christ?

Christians have peace with God because they are justified; in other words, because they are declared righteous by faith like Abraham. Paul tells believers in Rome, “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand” (Ro 5:1; cf., 4:3; Ge 15:6). The peace Paul is talking about here is not inner tranquility, but rather the cessation of hostilities entailed by reconciliation. God and those who were once his enemies have been reconciled through the death of his Son (Ro 5:10a). But more than that, the peace Paul is taking about, which results from justification, involves more than just the cessation of hostilities. One commentator writes: “Paul probably also has in mind the Jewish concept of *shalom*, which comprehensively represents the blessings of salvation, which brings *wholeness* as well as *holiness* (see Isa. 48:18; cf. 2 Thess. 3.16)” (Ben Witherington III, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 134, italics added), and another adds, “The word ‘peace’ moves beyond the largely negative signification of the word in secular Greek – ‘peace’ as the cessation or absence of hostilities – to a more positive nuance – the *well-being*, prosperity, or salvation of the godly person” (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT, 299, italics added). Theologically speaking, the two aspects of peace reflect two aspects of salvation: *justification*, namely, the cessation of hostilities, and *sanctification*, namely, the wholeness of godliness.

God’s intention for every believer is “conformity to the image of his Son” (Ro 8:29), which is the outcome of a process.

Call it what you will: “transformation” if viewed in terms of development, “discipleship” if viewed in terms of training, or “sanctification” if viewed in terms of holiness. These three terms all refer to one and the same process that all believers go through to become like Jesus. And according to the Apostle Peter, “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life [i.e., sanctification] through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness” (2Pe 1:3). In other words, believers, “those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours” (v. 1), have everything they need to live godly lives. You see, as we grow in our “knowledge of him,” Jesus Christ, we will inevitably be transformed in every aspect of our lives.

Dallas Willard (*The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 1-10) might add that while we can’t know Christ by trying hard to know him, what we can’t do by trying hard, we can do by training wisely. Experiencing life with Christ as his obedient disciples, engaged in the spiritual disciplines the Holy Spirit uses to transform us, will result in godly lives marked by *shalom*, that is, well-being and wholeness. These disciplines include but aren’t limited to the following ten Core Practices: Bible Study, Biblical Community, Compassion, Disciple-Making, Evangelism, Generosity, Prayer, Single-mindedness, Spiritual Gifts, and Worship. To these add solitude and silence, contemplation, journaling, scripture meditation and memorization, and the list is still incomplete. There are more.

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

2 Peter 1:1-4

1 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.

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.

READ in another translation

1 From Simeon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, have been granted a faith just as precious as ours. 2 May grace and peace be lavished on you as you grow in the rich knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord!

3 I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. 4 Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire. (NET)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "Simon Peter" in v. 1.
- Underline "servant" and "apostle" in v. 1.
- Box "through" indicating *means* in vv. 1, 2.
- Bracket "our God and Savior Jesus Christ" in v. 1.
- Circle "received" in v. 1.
- Circle "faith" in v. 1.
- Circle "precious" in v. 1.
- Underline "grace and peace" in v. 2.
- Circle "divine power" in v. 3.
- Circle "these" in v. 4.
- Box "so that" indicating *purpose* in v. 4.
- Circle "divine nature" in v. 4.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. The apostle uses two names, “Simon” (Simeon, NET) and “Peter,” in his second epistle (cf., 1Pe 1:1). Any thoughts on why he used both?
2. The apostle uses two titles, “servant” and “apostle.” Any thoughts on why he used both?
3. *Contrast* the meanings of “servant” (NIV) and “slave” (NET). Then explain why *neither* captures the sense of the Greek term *doulos*. (See note v. 1 *servant and apostle*.)
4. *What* have Peter’s readers received, and by what *means* have they received it?
5. What do you *infer* about Jesus Christ from verse 1?
6. By what *means* is a lavish amount of “grace and peace” obtained? Explain.
7. *What* have believers received and by *whose* divine power?
8. To whom does “he” refer in verse 4?
9. Does “has given us . . . promises” connote *making* promises or *fulfilling* promises? What do you think?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about the sense in which believers participate in the divine nature.

Commentary On The Text

Letter writing was common in the ancient world. Everyday letters were written messages sent because the corresponding parties were separated geographically. They were the only way to keep a conversation going while the parties were apart. Friends and relatives wrote to stay in touch; others had more specific reasons for writing – either to seek or share information, or to request or command something of the recipients. Like these letters, New Testament letters have three parts: an opening, a body, and a closing. The opening and closing serve to maintain the personal contact while the body facilitates the exchange of information, making requests, and giving instructions. As you might expect, the body of New Testament letters is generally longer than the body of typical ancient letters.

The opening of New Testament letters, like their secular counterparts, contains the salutation and greeting. Peter's second letter contains an expanded salutation. Instead of the common "sender to recipient," it has: "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" (v. 1). And instead of the common "greetings," it has: "Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (v. 2). As usual, the opening prepares the way for what the writer has to say in the body. In the opening of 2 Peter, the apostle writes that "grace and peace" – two marks of a godly life – are abundantly available "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (v. 2). In the body, he goes on to say that everything needed for a godly life comes "through our *knowledge* of him." "Him" is most likely a reference to Christ, given the mention of his "glory and goodness," which are more appropriately ascribed to him than the Father. What's more, he is the last one mentioned (see Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude*, TNTC, 71).

In verses 1 and 2, the apostle first introduces himself in the salutation using the Hebraic spelling of his name, "Simeon," together with his Greek name, "Peter." Why both? On the use of two names, one commentator suggests: "The double name, if significant at all, is meant to draw the reader's attention from the Jewish fisherman to the Christian apostle, from the old life to the new, from Simon, the name given him at his entry into the Old Covenant, to Peter, his distinctively Christian name" (Green, 67).

Peter also identifies himself as a "servant" and "apostle." The first is a translation of the Greek term *doulos*, which can be translated either "servant" (NIV) or "slave" (NET). But the first misses the mark because it connotes a free person, and the second because of its association with slavery in North America. "Bondservant" (NKJV) might be better since it denotes indentured servitude without any racial connotations. However, the term is considered archaic, so most English translations avoid using it. Peter pairs "servant" with "apostle" to affirm his and his letter's authority over his readers' belief and practice. He addresses them as recipients of saving faith that comes with the same privileges as his own – either as a Jew or as an apostle. This has happened because Jesus Christ, who is himself God, does what is right and fair. Then in his greeting, Peter expresses a prayer/wish that his readers would experience "grace and peace" in abundance through a growing knowledge of their Savior – one that moves beyond knowing about him intellectually to knowing him personally.

In verses 3 and 4, tell his readers what Christ has done for them and why, suggesting how they should in turn respond. What has Christ done for them? He has given them everything they need to live godly lives, which comes through a growing knowledge of him. Christ has fulfilled "very great and precious promises" regarding salvation made in the past. Why has Christ done this? He has done this with a view to believers participating in the divine nature through their union with him and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Perhaps the following clarification will help. We do not *have* a divine nature; we *participate* in the divine nature. One commentator explains, "Through our union with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we share in something of God's own holy nature, separated from the corrupt world around us. And it is precisely 'for that reason' (v. 5) that we [are] called on to progress in holiness and godliness" (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter, Jude*, 55). And another writes, "To enter into a totally new relationship with God, in which he becomes our Father and we members of his family. It is in this sense that Peter rightly claims that believers are *already* participants in the divine nature" (Green, 74).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *Simon Peter* Cf., “Simeon Peter” (NET); cf., Ac 15:14. “The reading *sumeōn* enjoys ample and widespread support among the MSS, strongly suggesting its authenticity. Further, this Hebraic spelling is a subtle argument for the authenticity of this letter, since a forger would almost surely follow the normal spelling of the name (1 Peter begins only with ‘Peter’ giving no help either way” (*The NET Bible*, 1tc on 2Pe 1:1; see also Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter, Jude*, 33).

v. 1 *servant and apostle* The writer’s credentials are twofold. “Peter regarded himself, first, as a ‘bond-slave (or bondservant) (Gr. *doulos*) of Jesus Christ,’ and secondarily, as His ‘apostle’ (cf. Rom. 1:1; Tit. 1:1). ‘Bond-servant of Jesus Christ’ is the New Testament equivalent of ‘servant of the Lord’ in the Old Testament. Peter mentioned his apostolic authority in his salutation, because in this epistle he dealt with false teachers. His readers needed to remember that what they were reading came from an apostle and was *authoritative*” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 2 Peter,” 2019 ed., 10, planobiblechapter.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf).

v. 1, *through . . .* Cf., “You received that faith because our God and Savior Jesus Christ is fair and does what is right” (ICB). “Some take ‘righteousness’ here to refer to the redemptive work of Christ to which Christians owe their faith (Spicq, Stöger), but elsewhere in 2 Peter ‘righteous-ness’ is an ethical quality (1:13; 2:5, 7, 8, 21; 3:13) and most commentators therefore rightly connect it with *isotimon*, taking it to refer to the fairness and lack of favoritism which gives equal privilege to all Christians” (Richard J. Bauckham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 50, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 168; contra Moo, 35).

v. 1 *God and Savior* “From the grammatical aspect, the two nouns are bound together in Greek by a single article, which strongly suggests that a single Person is meant” (Green, 69; see *The Net Bible*, 5tn on 2Pe 1:1, regarding the Granville Sharp rule, and lengthy discussion in Bauckham, 168-69). Note the similar expression “Lord and Savior” (1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18), which clearly refers to Jesus, and the *different* construction where Peter distinguishes Jesus and the Father (1:2). “Here we have one of the few verses in the New Testament where Jesus is explicitly called ‘God.’ This does not, of course, mean that for Peter Jesus Christ has taken the place of the Old Testament God he has worshiped since childhood. It

It means, rather, that he has now come to understand that Jesus, along with the Father, is God. Nor is it likely that in saying this Peter is giving up monotheism and conceiving of Jesus as another God alongside the Father” (Moo, 35).

v. 1 *received* The word connotes the “reception of a gift, or in the least reception of something that one does not deserve. H. Hanse’s statement (*TDNT* 4:1) that ‘Even where there is no casting of lots, the attainment is not by one’s own effort or as a result of one’s own exertions, but is like ripe fruit falling into one’s lap’ is apt for this passage” (*The NET Bible*, 6tn, note on 2 Pe 1:1).

v. 1 *faith* “The *faith* in question appears to be, not the faith as a body of doctrine, which would scarcely make sense in the context, but the faith or trust which brings a man salvation as he grasps the proffered hand of God. Faith is the God-given capacity to trust him, available alike to Jew and Gentile, to apostle and twentieth-century Christian” (Green, 68).

v. 1 *precious* “*Isotimos* can mean ‘of equal value’. Here it probably means ‘of equal standing’ (Abbott-Smith ‘equally privileged’). There is a political nuance to the word: there are no second class citizens in God’s kingdom” (Green, 68). “Other non-biblical Greek writers used the unique Greek word translated ‘same kind’ (*isotimos*) to describe immigrants who received citizenship privileges equal to those of native inhabitants” (Constable, 11).

v. 2 *grace and peace* Peter indicates that an abundance of both grace (God’s help) and peace are available through our knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, where knowledge of = deepening relationship to.

v. 3 *glory and goodness* “Glory” refers to the total impact of the Person of Jesus (cf. Jn. 1:14), his *gravitas*, and “goodness” refers to his moral excellence, his virtue. These are what attracted us to him.

Other Texts to Consider

1 Peter 1:1-2

“1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,
To God’s elect, exiles scattered throughout the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, 2 who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood:

2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance.”

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Christ has given believers everything they need to live godly lives, so as believers we ought to pursue godliness through a growing knowledge of him, who has given us great and precious promises

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Have you ever noticed that sometimes when you make suggestions to your kids they take them as an oath of truth, a right-hand-on-the-Bible kind of promise? Yesterday I *suggested* to my kids we *might* be able to get ice cream after dinner. I know, not too smart on my part. It got late; I got tired and suggested we would go later in the week. You would think I canceled Christmas. An hour later my kids were still going on about how I “promised” ice cream. This morning they reminded me of my “promise” and I’ve received ice cream emojis all day from my teenagers. How grateful I am God’s promises aren’t “suggestions” of what He might do but are trustworthy and true assurances. Jesus promises we can deal with the trouble that comes our way because He has overcome the world (John 16:33). He promises to never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). He promises comfort and compassion (Isaiah 49:13), safety (Nahum 1:7), strength (Isaiah 40:2) and rest (Matthew 11:28). He promises big and comes through every single time. He promised a Savior (Gen 3:15) and was faithful to deliver through the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ. What a joy to celebrate the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6) this season! Which of God’s promises do you cling to? We are praying you rest on the promise of a risen Savior this week. “For the word of the Lord is right and true; He is faithful in all He does,” Psalm 33:4.

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 2 Peter 1-4

1. Who is Peter writing to and how does he greet them?
2. What has God’s divine power given us?
3. What does knowing God’s promises help us to escape? (v. 20)

What Do You Think?

Read Luke 2:1-20. What do you think Mary treasured and pondered in her heart (v 19)? Why?

What Do You Do?

What are some of God’s promises to you? Draw a picture and hang it up in your room to remember that God is faithful to fulfill His promises.

CORE COMPETENCY: Peace

I live without worry because things are good between God, myself and others.

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 2:14

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week’s verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME _____

GRADE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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