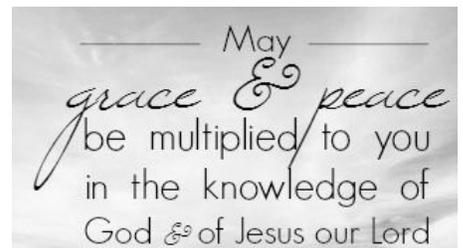


A Study of The Epistle of 2nd Peter
Theme: "Grow in Grace and Knowledge"

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Lesson: 1 Chapter 1:1,2 Date: 7-11-21



BIBLE TEXT:

(2 Peter 1:1-2) 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.

2 Peter was written toward the end of Peter's life (cf. 1:12-15), after he had written a prior letter (3:1) to the same readers (probably 1 Peter). Since Peter was martyred during the reign of Nero, his death must have occurred prior to A.D. 68; so it is very likely that he wrote 2 Peter between 65 and 68.

Some have argued that this date is too early for the writing of 2 Peter, but nothing in the book requires a later date. The error combated is comparable to the kind of heresy present in the first century. To insist that the second chapter was directed against second-century Gnosticism is to assume more than the contents of the chapter warrant. While the heretics referred to in 2 Peter may well have been among the forerunners of second-century Gnostics, nothing is said of them that would not fit into the later years of Peter's life.

Some have suggested a later date because they interpret the reference to the fathers in 3:4 to mean an earlier Christian generation. However, the word is most naturally interpreted as the OT patriarchs (cf. Jn 6:31, "forefathers"; Ac 3:13; Heb 1:1). Similarly, reference to Paul and his letters (3:15-16; see Author) does not require a date beyond Peter's lifetime.

STUDY NOTES:

(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:**

Simeon = Simon Peter
(Mt 16:18; Mk 6:30; Jn 1:42; Rom 1:1,12; 1 Cor 1:1; Heb 3:1)

God and Savior Jesus Christ
(Rom 9:5; Titus 1:4; 2:13)

A faith = the body of Christian doctrine
(2 Cor 4:13; 1 Tim 3:9; Jude 1:3)

Righteousness
(Rom 3:21-26)

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

Grace and peace
(Jn 14:27; 17:3; 20:19; Rom 1:7; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Php 3:8; Jude 2)

“1. *Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.*”

This is the signature and the superscription of this epistle, in order that we may know who is writing and to whom he is writing, namely, to those who have heard **the Word of God** and now have faith. But what kind of faith is it? “In the righteousness of **our God**,” says the apostle. Here he ascribes righteousness to faith alone, as St. Paul also does in Rom. 1:17: “For in the Gospel the **righteousness of God** is revealed through faith for faith, as it is written: ‘He who through faith is righteous shall live’ ” (Hab. 2:4). In this way St. Peter wants to exhort them to be armed and not to let the doctrine which they have taken hold of and know well to be carried away.

And by adding the words “**the righteousness of our God**” he excludes all human righteousness. For we are made righteous **before God** solely through faith. Therefore faith is also called a “**righteousness of God.**” For before the world it has no validity. Indeed, it is even condemned.

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

This is the greeting commonly used to preface the letters. It means: Instead of my service, I wish that you may increase in grace and peace, and become richer and richer. This grace comes **from the knowledge of God and of the Lord Christ**, which means that it is something only he who has **knowledge of God and Jesus Christ** can have.

The apostles and also the prophets constantly refer to **this knowledge of God** in Scripture. Thus we read in Is. 11:9: “They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” That is, **the knowledge of God** will burst forth as exuberantly as when a body of water gushes forth, rushes out, and inundates a whole country. From this such peace will result that no one will harm or injure his neighbor.

But the fact that you, like the Turks, the Jews, and the devil, believe that **God** created all things—this is not the **knowledge of God**. Nor is **this knowledge your belief that Christ** was born from a virgin, suffered, died, and rose again. No, you have **the true knowledge of God** when you believe and know that **God and Christ** are **your God and your Christ**. This the devil and the false Christians cannot believe. Thus this knowledge is nothing else than the true Christian faith; for when you know **God and Christ** in this way, you will rely on Him with all your heart and trust in Him in good fortune and misfortune, in life and death. Evil consciences cannot have such trust, for they know no more about **God** than that He is a **God** of St. Peter and all the saints in heaven. But they do not know Him as **their God**; they regard Him as a jailer and an angry judge.

To have God is to have all grace, all mercy, and everything one can call good. To **have Christ is to have the Savior and Mediator** who brought us to the point that **God** belongs to us, and who acquired for us all mercy from Him. You must weave this together in such a way that **Christ** becomes yours and you become **His**. Then you have a true knowledge. An unmarried woman can say, of course: “This is a man.” But she cannot say that he is her man. Thus we can all say, of course, that this is a god; but we cannot all say that **He is our God**. For we cannot all trust in Him and take comfort in Him. To this knowledge also belongs what Scripture calls the *facies et vultus Domini*, that is, the countenance of the Lord about which the prophets have much to say. He who does not behold **the face of God** does not know Him but sees only His back, that is, an angry and cruel **God**.

Here you see that St. Peter does not propose to write particularly about faith at this time, since he did this adequately in the first epistle. No, he wants to exhort believers to give evidence of their faith by means of good works. For he does not want faith without good works or works without faith. But he wants faith first and good works in addition to and flowing from faith.”

LIFE APPLICATION

Since we have the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, how is grace and peace multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord?