

24.1a Second Peter Discussion

Introduction

Key phrases: grace and knowledge, 1.2-3, 4, 8; 3.18

2 Peter 1:2-3, May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 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

These phrases indicate Peter's purpose in writing: to encourage [*spiritual growth & maturity*] in a healthy balance of [*knowledge*] and [*godliness*.]

What does it mean to say that the key to progress is personal based on 1.2-3 and 3.18 (But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ)? Note: it is this personal dimension that is threatened by things Peter discusses in the letter. That is what makes the things developed in the letter so important. *The key is getting to know Him better...that you know Him better, 1.2. Perhaps, we need to speak here about our interpersonal relationship with Christ.*

1) What then is at the center of the book?

There are three chapters and chapter two (the longest section that overflows into 3.1-7) covers *the single topic of false teachers* (false prophets, 2.1; ungodly, 2.6; bold and willful, 2.10; waterless springs, 2.17; dogs and sows, 2.22; scoffers, 3.3). Therefore, avoiding unsound doctrine and pursuing sound doctrine are back to back duties central in the book.

2) What is the source of sound doctrine? 1.16-21 (v 19, **And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, 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**) *What we have and proclaim is not myth, but eyewitness accounts of the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, 1.16; the words of prophets (apostle-prophets too) are God's very words by the Holy Spirit's governing of their testimony, 1.21.*

3) What specific duty emerges in 1.5-7? (For this very reason, 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). *He refers to the specific duty we have in our sanctification. Beginning with virtue (moral goodness), we are to make every effort to add knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, and love; we are to pile these things up one on top of the other in growth.*

4) What promise does Peter attach to this specific duty? 1.8 (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) *He clearly promises effectiveness and fruitfulness, but in a particular way...in knowledge and this knowledge is vitally personal...of our Lord Jesus Christ in all His majesty (cf. the compounding titles in His name).*

5) How does Peter reinforce this duty by redefining it in terms of calling and election (1.10-11, Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, 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)? *Every effort (v. 5) becomes diligence (v. 10, be all the more diligent) to make your calling and election sure. This does not mean that somehow we improve on God's calling and election to in some way complete it such that it could fail of strength and surety if we did not confirm it or complete it. That goes against the grain of salvation by the work of God alone: He does not depend on us; we utterly depend on Him. Instead, the idea is a) you find assurance on this path of effort to know Christ better, and b) your growth proves your calling.*

6) Based on 1.12-15, how does Peter's pastoral example "exhort" both pastors and members of the church?

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.

Pastors should do this kind of reminding to encourage the work God's people must do in the process of their sanctification; at the core is the meaning of calling and election and proving it by how we strive to know the Lord Jesus better. Pastor's need to keep pressing the Lord's people to look to Christ; they are to point the way repeatedly, to the work they must do to grow in personal knowledge of Him through the Holy Spirit given word.

Members should pray for their pastor to this end and they should submit to this kind of teaching that a) points to Christ b) in the strong bond of doctrine and life. They are to submit to the pastor as a duty to Christ, and a humble duty it is since He tells them to submit as sinners to another sinner.