

*1Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,
To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the
righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: 2Grace and peace
be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;
3seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to
life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by
His own glory and excellence. 4For by these He has granted to us His
precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become
partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in
the world by lust.*

Last week we introduced 2 Peter and we just sort of bathed in the richness of the words in vs. 1 and the first two words in vs. 2. Foundational truths that this book will be built on.

How Peter is a slave, like us. We are under a common yoke. Jesus is our Lord. It is a sweet slavery. Our old master was cruelty and death, Jesus is life. Our old master was solitary confinement in an ink black room, Jesus is freedom to come out into glorious light!

But we learned that unlike us, Peter is an apostle and has authority to bring to us the Word of God. It only takes him 3 words in vs. 1 to state that truth, because that is foundational and it is under attack.

The whole purpose of this letter is that false teachers are undermining Peter's teaching. And Peter begins with this credential. Jesus has appointed him and given him the authority to bring the very words of God to us. False teachers do not have that office or authority.

And so, 2000 years later, we are dependent on these words, brought to us by apostles and prophets who were ordained by God to bring us the truth by His inspiration.

How do we know what is true and what is false? The world is confused and getting more confused by the day. Is there a source for truth that is the authoritative standard by which all the lies that are coming at us are measured and rejected?

Yes, there is. And it is the words in this book. Listen to the final words of this book from Revelation 22. Just before John identifies himself for the final time and signs off, and the Bible is finished for all time, there is one final message given to John, by an angel, under the inspiration of God.

6 And he said to me, “***These words are faithful and true***”; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His slaves (doulos) the things which must soon take place.

7 “And behold, I am coming quickly. ***Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.***”

Words are the basis, the foundation for knowing what is true and what is false. But, words are cheap. Especially these days. We are drowning in words.

This manuscript will find it's way onto the world wide web shortly and a few thousand more words will be added to the trillions and trillions of words stored in electronic memory that humans have written.

I asked google how many words are there on the www. Google didn't know. There must be googles and googles of words. Too many to count and get a realistic number. Words that form ideas. Statements.

Which words are true? And which words are false? How do we know if an idea is true, or false. Look around you. The debate never ends. And it's getting really heated. Wars are being fought over ideas. The confusion of it all is almost overwhelming.

This book that we hold has 783,137 words. Compared to unknown quantities of trillions, that's a manageable number. In fact we can break it down even more than that.

If I open up my Strong's concordance, I find that there are 5,624 greek words to form ideas, and 8,674 hebrew words to form ideas. And of course there's a huge overlap there. Because the greek words all have a hebrew word that means the same thing.

And God, who created the universes with words, He spoke them into existence, there weren't, and when He spoke, they were, that God says that the words in this book are true.

So, googles of words, trillions of ideas, and all of them, **all of them** must be compared to what this book says to learn if they are true ideas of false ideas. It's very manageable. This book is the truth source. The plumb line by which every human imagining must be compared.

And the world summarily rejects that. And very soon, push is going to come to shove. Because the world is at war with the God who wrote these truths. They hate Him, and they hate His book, and they are just about at the threshold of punishing anyone who will have the backbone to say to the world, you are wrong, and this book is right.

That is coming to a governing authority near you. And you won't be ready to confront it if you don't know what this book teaches. A few thousand words. A few hundred ideas. Baseling truths that God has spoken and given to us in this book.

Peter says, I'm a slave, but I'm also an apostle. The words that Peter brings us are truth that we can stand in. A firm foundation for the coming storm.

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord

What is the best you can hope for in this life? What's the top tier if all your dreams could come true? Wealth? Fame? Power? Influence? Respect? Renoun? Those are all things this world gives the highest value to.

But let's assume this world is a fallen place at war with God, and as a result, it's values are faulty. Broken.

The noetic affects of the fall have affected it's reasoning powers to such an extent that in the long term, none of those things has any lasting

satisfaction.

I mean you can be Hugh Hefner and have all the money and the looks and the power and the mansion and the concubines and a day comes when you're just a pathetic old man and the mansion gets sold out from under you, and all the beautiful girls of your youth have grown old and died;

Even the best case anyone can wildly imagine - it doesn't satisfy. It doesn't last. I mean we don't have to go there. Solomon already proved it for us. All the money, all the wisdom, all the power, all the wives and concubines, he had it all. And he wrote down his findings for us. We don't have to do it over like Hugh Hefner.

Here's what he said. *Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.* All is vanity and striving after wind.

Real satisfaction, you might as well try to catch the wind. So that answers the first part of our question. All the stuff this world holds in high esteem, ultimately doesn't satisfy. It's empty. There's nothing there to hold on to.

What then? Is it hopeless? Who's happier; Donald Trump or Kim Jong Un? They both define the pinnacle of what this world can offer. Which one is the happiest? The most satisfied? My money's on - neither.

The other day I watched a 2+ hour debate - a TED talk - of 3 distinguished philosophers on the topic; Is there meaning to life. Let me tell you; Smart people does not equate to good answers.

The smartest people, the prettiest people, the richest people, the most powerful people - none of them have the answer to that question. But you're in luck, because I know the answer - and not only that - it's obtainable.

An old white guy in Tonopah Nevada, that missed virtually all of the

worlds boats - knows the answer to lifes question?? Yes. And I'm going to share it with you this morning by words that a fisherman wrote almost 2000 years ago.

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord

In this world, the nasty now and now (as opposed to the sweet by and by), the pinnacle that we can attain and know are in three words in Peter's greeting. Two of them we defined last week.

Grace. There is no better thing that we can experience in the midst of a world that is at war with it's Creator that what is defined by that word. God's favor. The world is at war with God, and God is at war with this world, and we can come out of that war and be in His favor.

That idea takes my breath away. The God who created this world with the breath of His mouth is coming to wage war against the rebellion of this world, again with the breath of His mouth, but there's a little group of people, Peter defines them as *those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ* -

and those people are standing in God's favor, as opposed to rebellion and wrath.

That's a breathtaking idea. The very word; gospel, good news, is based in this single idea. There is a pathway - in modern corporate catchword terminology, a path forward, that leads us out of rebellion to a place of safety and favor and blessing. All of that is defined by this first word in Peter's greeting; Grace

And the next word is a simple extension of that idea. If we have grace, if we have come out of the rebellion and into His favor, if God is smiling down on us and has adopted us as His children, the logical progression is in the next word. Peace.

And that word isn't about this world, this world may well be, and is

increasingly at, war with us, but; we are at peace with God. The war is over between me and God. I am a son. I am standing in His favor, and in that, no matter what this world does, I have a peace that transcends this world.

There's a third word here, and one we did not get to last week. And it's all tied together with the other two words that form this idea that answers the big question about the meaning of life.

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord

Knowledge. The grace and the peace aren't given to me in stingy quantity. I'm not like Oliver in Dickens novel begging for a tiny morsel more because I'm still hungry. That isn't how our Father works. He multiplies grace and peace to you. I was hoping for a cup full, and He backs up with a dump truck. That's what multiplied means.

But that's not the important third word to define here. *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord*

We must unpack this word knowledge. Because the dumptruck full of the grace and the peace is tethered together with and dependent on this word. We want the grace. We want the peace. We want the blessings. We want the dumptruck full of these; what does it mean when it says these come by way of, or; *in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord*

What does that mean? In what sense, what capacity are we talking about here. Let me help if I can. In Genesis 4, it says; *And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain*

I'm not the brightest plate in the cupboard, but I do know - that baby didn't come because Adam knew about Eve. When Peter says; *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord* he isn't talking about knowing about God and Jesus, he's talking about a relationship that is deeply intimate.

On the night that God quickened me from the dead, and made me alive together with Christ, when I prayed and asked for forgiveness of sins and invited Christ to live in my heart, an intimate friendship began that has lasted 47 years and counting. Counting on to eternity.

Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. Colossians 1:27 *To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory.*

The verse that saved me on that night that God chose to make me alive says; Romans 8:9 *However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.*

That's pretty clear. Paul get's downright blatant about it to the Corinthians who were wracked with problems. He says; *Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? 2 Cor 13:5*

Those of us who have the grace, the favor of God, and the peace that comes because the war with God is over, have that because we have a personal relationship with the indwelling Holy Spirit. Sin is gone. Rebellion is gone. Peace and favor have come.

And that relationship is directly affected by sin and rebellion, because in this life, in this world, we still fall into those pits, don't we. And the love relationship, the friendship is in conflict with our spirits when we do that.

And if we're real christians, we can't live in that tension very long. We have to ask for cleansing and forgiveness and get back under that umbrella of favor and peace.

That's why John in his letters frankly tells them, people who live in a continuous lifestyle that this book defines as sinful, who claim to be christians, are not.

Real indwelt believers can't live in that tension. The good is too good to live in the bad. God has a way of making those who belong to Him miserable when they wander away. Don't ask me how I know that.

Now that we've spent some time unpacking the words, let's read those words of Peter again, and I hope they are as full of thrilling meaning to you as they are to me.

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord

How does that stack up against all the best stuff the world is chasing after? Would you trade that for Olympic Gold? Is what God has given us not infinitely better than standing on that platform in the middle and having the gold medal put around your neck. Or standing at the top of the ladder having just come out of Air Force One and with a smirk on your face, waving to the rest of the world. Most powerful man in the world?

How do the values compare? Is there meaning to life? I told you I knew the answer. What God has given us is not only infinitely more valuable than anything this world has, it transcends this world and continues to the next one.

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, 46 and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Well, we need to get busy, or we'll do it again, and I don't want to be a teacher who you get discouraged with because we get bogged down. Bogged down in a dumptruck load of treasure beyond anything this world can offer.

Peter continues; *3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*

Once we've got that important groundwork in place in vs. 2, the rest becomes, not easy, but very understandable, because Peter is expanding on those ideas in vss. 3 and 4. Same things, but expanded.

3seeing that His divine power has granted to us There's the dump truck. God isn't stingy with His blessing. We're the stingy ones. He's got a feast for us, and we fiddle around looking at the feast and finally, we take an olive and a wheat thin.

He's got a feast that will fill a dump truck and you take a wheat thin?? One wheat thin?? What about the roast pig? And the mashed potatoes and the gravy. Ever tasted gravy that God made?

This verse says God is not stingy with the feast. It took divine power to provide the feast for us. He had to send His only Son to die on a cross in my place in order to take care of my sin problem, my rebellion.

And then He had to impute His son's righteousness to my account, so that I could come to the feast in proper attire. And then He had to raise His son from the dead. That's the divine power that has brought us the feast.

seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness,

Not only do I have favor and peace, here's that idea expanded further. Before I had Jesus, all my righteousness I tried to gin up myself, was filthy rags. My righteousness was sewage to God.

Now, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, God working in me and through me, life and godliness are available to me. I can become a pipeline for the Holy Spirit to bring truth to others.

Real life, and real godliness are available because I have His divine power living in me.

We play this game where we make an excuse for ourselves something

like this. There's the super Christians and there's me. And I'm just too weak to get serious about doing God's will. I wish I could be like them, but obviously I can't.

That's a direct denial of what Peter just said. *3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*

If that verse is not true of you, then you have to deny that God's divine power and His glory and His excellence aren't excellent enough and glorious enough and powerful enough to apply to you.

It also means you'd have to cut 1 Corinthians 10:13 out of your Bible. *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

There's our word knowledge again. Everything goes back to that source. Knowing God. A personal relationship with God is the source where this expansion into life and godliness, beyond the favor and peace comes from.

Grace and peace, life and godliness come from Christ in you, the hope of glory.

We talked a couple of weeks back about the weapons of our warfare. Remember, in Ephesians 6. And remember, the weapon that protects our head, our helmet, is the helmet of salvation.

Salvation is the source for the feast. So we can review what Peter has said so far, quickly by saying; Grace, God's favor directed at us, and peace, inner peace, and life, and godliness are all linked directly back to knowledge, knowing God, and that link is directly tied to what? Why do we know God? How did that happen?

3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to

life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

I told you. Peter's such a calvinist. The banquet feast comes from salvation, and salvation comes because God chose us and called us out of this world to be His children.

4For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust

For by these . . by what? What we just said. Grace, peace, life, godliness, because we know and belong to Jesus, because He chose us and called us by His divine power and excellence, . . by these

He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature,

Does Peter have a particular set of promises in mind? I think he does. I mean the entire book we hold is full of promises and they are precious to us, but I think Peter has some particularly special precious and magnificent promises in mind.

He gives a clue, a direction *so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature*

I think Peter's thinking of the upper room discourse the night before Jesus death. We find that discourse in John 13 - 16.

14:16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

The favor, the grace, the inner peace, the quickening of my spirit to life, the godliness all are tied back into the knowledge of God. The intimate personal relationship with God, having sins removed out of the way.

And that intimacy, that knowing God is all bound up in the indwelling Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit makes His dwelling place inside my heart, I become a partaker of the divine nature.

More precious promises from John 14:

18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 “After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. 20 “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 “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.”

Those are precious and magnificent promises by which I am promised that I will be a partaker of the divine nature. And those promises keep coming and coming. John 15, the vine; He is the vine, we are the branches. We are fruitbearers when we have that connection through the Holy Spirit who indwells us and helps us.

John 16 23 “In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. 24 “Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.

We should go to those chapters often and just soak up all of those promises that Jesus promised to give us in the indwelling spirit.

And finally, the indwelling Holy Spririt brings us victory over sin and the corruption of this world.

4For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust

When someone is truly born again and the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling place inside that person, there is a very real seperation from this world and all of it's lusts.

We still struggle and occasionally slip and fall, but the reality is, if salvation is real, your lifestyle can't continue in sin. This verse has within it a tension of two incompatible systems.

The world and all of its lusts, vss. a coming out of that and a life of ever increasing godliness. Those two realities cannot co-exist.

As we speak the so-called evangelical church is struggling to find common ground with all of the world's bizarre sexual confusion. Come on in. Cake and eat it too. That's all great, but you'll need a pair of scissors so you can cut this verse out of your bibles.

The evangelicals and mainstream protestants and even the Catholics may put up with the world's lusts, but the Holy Spirit will not. This verse we're studying sees no marriage between real Christianity and the world's lusts.

The groups who sell out to that will end up in 2 Tim. 3:...*4 traitorous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. Turn away from such as these! 6 They are the kind who worm their way into households and captivate vulnerable women who are weighed down with sins and led astray by various passions,...*

And that's exactly why Peter is laying this foundation. Because the folks Paul just described in those verses are the very folks Peter is writing to warn his little group of believers about. False teachers. Cake and eat it too teachers. You can be a Christian and keep your sin teachers.

Peter says, sin, the corruption of this world, is mutually exclusive with grace, and peace and life and godliness. Pick one or the other. You can't keep both. Even if some teacher comes along and says you can.

*4For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become **partakers** of the divine nature, having **escaped the corruption** that is in the world by lust*

False teachers are going to come along, and they're going to say, there's no need to escape the corruption that is in the world in order to be a partaker of the divine nature.

That's what this book is about. We'll leave it right there until next week.