

Growth for Godliness: Part 1
5 “P’s” Pertaining to Life and Godliness
2 Peter 1:3-4

Read 2 Peter 1:3-11

INTRODUCTION

2 Peter is written to believers (1:1- to those who obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and SJC) at the end of Peter’s life. Same people as 1 Peter who are in Asia Minor- modern day Turkey who needed encouragement in the times of persecution. He warns of false teachers. His defense of the church and plea to remain pure to the end. The Bible commentator, Lenski says: “Second Peter is written for those who are to meet false, libertinistic teachers, and whose faith, diligence in godliness, and knowledge are to be fortified.”

We see an example of this plea from Peter to be faithful to the end in 1:12-15

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.

* Therefore- this always important word transitions the reader from the amazing truths found in vs3-11 which will be our text for today and next Sunday. Before we get into that text though I want to start with Peter’s therefore...

* Therefore...Peter because he was nearing the end of his life he wanted to make sure he REMINDED the believers he loved and ministered with and to of a few very important things.

* V 3-11 really sum up Peter's last words...and explain the purpose statement of 1:14-15

* Most of 2 Peter deals with the return of Christ and the judgment that will come with it

* One of the young men in the church was telling us a few weeks ago about a "near death" experience that happened to him. He was stung by a bee and didn't know he was allergic. He started having a serious reaction to it with shortage of breath. He and his family were not close to a hospital and he said as his ability to take a breath became harder and harder he started thinking about what he wanted to share with his family before he couldn't breathe any more (He got to the ER and is back to normal!)

The structure of v3-11 confirms to a miniature sermon in the early Christian church style —> historical-theological section recounting divine acts (3-4), ethical exhortation (5-10), ends with eschatological conclusion (11)

This beginning is a bit different than some of the other intros to NT letters. A typical Pauline letter gives a blessing and thanksgiving.

Illustration: Life is full of projects. I probably should not start with this story because it may sidetrack you for the rest of the sermon as you think of all the projects you have to do! I had a project I had wanted to get done for awhile. The house we have been in for a year now has a pool and it has a slot for a basketball hoop....

My garage vs my neighbors garage...my lack of tools vs his garage full of tools.

-**Goal**- cutting down a full-size basketball hoop to fit as a pool-side basketball hoop

-**Tool**- screwdriver and hammer vs electric saw

-**Person** - Knowledge, experience, effort - my lack of knowledge

*even in the effort- we were trying really hard but getting no where because we didn't have the right tool (power) or knowledge.

I started with this story today, because I think we can relate easily to physical projects with goal and tools and skills needed to accomplish things. Transfer some of these ideas to our spiritual life. How are you doing in your life in connection to God? How are you as the created doing in living out the purpose of your Creator. How are you as the rescued doing in relationship to the Rescuer? How are you as a son/daughter of God living in light of your Heavenly Father's desires for you.

-Distinction between Justification and Sanctification

2 Dangerous Perspectives on Godliness:

- * Dreamy danger of godliness-idolize heroes,
- * Disbelieving danger - cynical, underestimate HS

"Though the process is hard, long, and often ordinary, and usually slow, we must grow in godliness... and grow more than we think" - Kevin Young

Here are a few questions I believe our text in Scripture will help answer and apply this morning...

- * Am I fully equipped to be the spouse, parent, coworker, church member, and neighbor who pleases Christ in the way I relate to others?
- * Can I rise to the occasion and help in situations where spiritual "repairs" are needed—because of the spiritual tools I have available and know how to use?

Sermon Title: Growth for godliness- the simple title I have given these two messages implies that we are not as godly as we need to be and that we need to grow...be continually changed into His image.

In the book "How People Change" by Lane and Tripp they make this statement several times at the beginning of their book...“Nothing is more obvious than the need for change. Nothing is less obvious than what needs to change and how that change happens.” At the end of the book they add to this statement by saying, "Change can and does happen when we live in relationship with our Redeemer and embrace all the benefits he brings."

Proposition: Jesus provides everything needed for godliness.

The call to godliness is rooted in and secured by God's grace; his gracious power supplies what he demands. (Thomas R. Schreiner in NAC)

God never calls the believer to something He does not provide the power to accomplish.

1. The Provider of Godliness (His, divine) v3a

- We are talking about the **Source** of a Sanctified Life (Godliness)
- One important point to make here is that the source is not just some impersonal force, but a person!
- The Greek word here for Divine only used 3x in NT (2x here and Acts 17:29). The word is used in hellenistic pagan language and writings a lot.
- Granted (2x) v1, 2 -translated giver or provided everything
- The Giver- Is this God or Christ? - seems Christ would be the immediate antecedent from v 2 and power is also attributed to Christ in v 16 -“the power and coming off our Lord Jesus Christ” - It ultimately does not matter much as Peter shows in v 1 God and Christ as equal.
- “Who called” - This “knowledge” of Jesus did not come through their personal investigation, but because Jesus himself “called us.” He took the initiative. And this call came “by his own glory and goodness.” (Pillar Com)
- “To his own glory and excellence—>an example of a hendiadys -2 terms for same thing) (Pillar Com)-

- When combined with “glory,” “goodness” refers to the divine moral excellence of Christ, focusing especially on the beauty of his goodness. (Schreiner-NAC)
- Through or by means of these virtues he has given us promises, so very likely the thought in v. 3 is already that they are the basis of our calling. That is, the achievement in our calling was all Jesus’ doing. We were called into our knowledge of him; it was not really our discovery. And this calling came on the basis of his achievement and excellence, his honorable nature, not ours. **Yet because of his honor we have been called into an honorable status. (Pillar Com)**

Application: This beauty and loveliness of the moral character of Christ is foundational because it is this same moral excellence that we are in v 5 and following called to pursue as we seek to be like Christ. Peter is calling the believer to live morally transformed lives but the source of that transformation is not will power or mere effort, but divine power which comes because of grace. **The power to live godly lives is gifted to us in God's call to us as believers.**

2. The Power for Godliness v3

- Jesus was the ultimate example of living a perfect life - potential, completely fulfilled in Him (Acts 10:38- *how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him-*

“If you wish to know God, you must know his Word. If you wish to perceive His Power, you must see how he works by His Word. If you wish to know His purpose before it comes to pass, you can only discover it by His word” -Charles Spurgeon

- Eph 3:30- *the Power that works in us* - Col 2:9-10 *all of God is in Christ and all of Christ is in you* -Phil 4:13- *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*

Illustration: Maybe think of it like this...We have a 2 year old and I remember when she first started to pull herself up and try to walk. You could see in her eyes the thought, do I have what it takes, do I have the potential to roam free!? Based on her confidence in her potential power she would let go of the couch and try to move her feet one in front of the other. We as adults do the same thing with being given a new project at work, or a project around the home, or a certain exercise at the gym...The difference for adults is if we do not think we have the potential to accomplish it so we do not try!

- In other words, there is no excuse for not living a godly life, for believers have already received everything that is necessary to do so.

Illustration: If you have been following the news, you have heard about the devastation in Puerto Rico cause by the latest hurricanes. We had dinner this week with a missionary couple from Puerto Rico and they were explaining to us their perspective and the frustrations of life for their family who live there. The major frustration and source of much of the obstacle to getting back on their feet is the lack of power, the lack of electricity. The lack of fuel to power generators. *When Hurricane Maria crashed into Puerto Rico on September 20th, it found a **vulnerable target**.*

We have CHRIST as Our PROVIDER AND POWER

3. The Position of the Godly v3

- The called - God's call is effective, awakening and creating faith. Paul referred to calling in this way regularly (Rom 4:17-gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist; Gal 1:6, 15-set me apart before I was born and who called me by his grace More significantly, the word "called" also has this meaning in 1 Peter (1:15; 2:9, 21; 3:9; 5:10). First Peter 2:9 indicates that conversion is in view, for God called believers out of darkness into his marvelous light (Schreiner -NAC)
- Us- all believers

- The Possession of the Godly- Romans 8:32- *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us **all things**?*
- Eph 1:3- *-Have you forgotten your position? You know, in Ephesians 1 it says in verse 3, "He's blessed us with **all spiritual blessings** in the heavenlies." It's a magnanimous statement, blessed us with all spiritual blessings. And the word there is pneumatikos and that word "spiritual" is not a word in contrast to physical. He's not saying blessings of the spiritual part of our nature. The word pneumatikos used in the New Testament always refers to the Holy Spirit. So it is not talking about spiritual as opposed to physical, but supernatural as opposed to natural, you see. In other words, God has given to us all the necessary and all the available — and I'll add another one — all the possible spiritual capacities. Incredible. –J. MacArthur*

4. The Pathway for Godliness -The How?

- Christ's divine power has **given** these **presents** to us (to Peter and to his readers) "by **means** of the knowledge from him who called us with his own glory and praise." (Lenski)
- released to believers "through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. The knowledge of Jesus (i.e., coming to understand and acknowledge his significance), which was the basis of the reception of the equally honorable faith, is the means by which he, by his divine power, gives one all that is needed for a godly life. (Pillar Com)
- *Epignosis*- encounter with Jesus that begins and continues - Grk perfect past action with continuing results
- Know Jesus to Know God -*Peter again and again had heard him stress this fact (John 7:16, 17- Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me.If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.; 8:28-So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just*

as the Father taught me.; 12:49-; 14:10, 24; 17:8, 14).
(Lenski)

Application: If knowledge is the means by which you appropriate the power given by the divine, how much of an emphasis should you as a follower of Christ put on knowing God more? We say this all the time, but this is not simply reading a quick devotional. Are you a student of the Word. Reading, studying, mediating, memorizing, TEACHING others....

5. The Promise - v 4

- "The Power of God flows through his promises" - De Young
- What is so valuable and great about the promise? Precious (valuable, honorable) and very great -WHY? Because you get to participate in the very character of God and escape your damning lusts
- This Grk word for promise is a little different than the normal Grk word used for promise in the NT. It is only found here and 3:13 - *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*
- This Promise brings rest and eternal life and participation in the divine nature and the escape from the corruption in this world -1 John 3:2 - *Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we **shall be like him**, because we shall see him as he is.³ And everyone who thus hopes in him **purifies himself as he is pure.***
- Positive: + participate in the divine nature
 - What does this mean? Indwelling HS, Christ in us?
 - **Believers will "participate" (*koinōnoi*) in the divine nature, but they will not become gods.**
 - **Ethical** vs ontological - The immortal permanence of the divine (as opposed to the earth, which will change) is connected to holiness, purity, and goodness. And these are the virtues that make sense in the context of 2 Peter. And so it is likely that

what 2 Peter has in mind when he claims participation in the divine nature is the reception of an ethical nature like God's, which then leads to immortality (Pillar com).

- Negative -escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires
 - some scholars argue that believers will escape the corruption of the world at death or when the Lord returns. It is more likely, however, that Peter operated with an **already-but-not-yet** schema. Believers have already escaped the world's corruption in that they belong to God, but the full realization of such a liberation will be theirs on the day of resurrection. The parallel expression in 2 Pet 2:20 supports this interpretation. Peter, speaking of the lapse of the false teachers, said, "If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (Schreiner-NAC)
 - Calvin says, "he sets the corruption of the world in opposition to the divine nature; but he shews that this corruption is not in the elements which surround us, but in our heart, because there vicious and depraved affections prevail, the fountain and root of which he points out by the word *lust*. Corruption, then, is thus placed in the world, that we may know that the world is in us."

Summary- Peter tells us there is a great giver ...Who has great unlimited resources and that He gives great gifts to those he calls to enable them to do what he has called them to do in his likeness calling them out of the darkness into His light.

Conclusion: Today we looked at the question of "Who am I in Christ" and we answered it from many different angles. We looked at our Provider, Power, Position, Pathway and Promise. Next week we will look in more detail about the product of who we are in Christ. As we understand our identity in Christ (This is who I am), then we can take a closer honest look at a

new way of living (This is what I can be) out that identity.
Growth in Godliness. Changed into His Image.

"I think that many of us when Christ has enabled us to overcome one or two sins that were an obvious nuisance, we think that we are good enough. We have done all that He has inclined us to do and we would be obliged if God would now leave us alone. I never expected to be a saint, I only wanted to be a decent ordinary chap. We imagine when we say this that we are being humble. We are content to be what we call ordinary people, but God is determined to carry out quite a different plan. To shrink back is not humility, but it is laziness and cowardness. To submit to it is not conceit, but obedience. Do you believe that progress is possible. And do you actually want progress in godliness?" - CS Lewis

Do you believe you have everything you need for godliness?