

- Today we resume our journey through 2 Peter, and as we discovered in the introduction, Peter wrote 2 Peter – which I know may seem obvious – but, some scholars have said they thought someone else may have written the letter. Based on my study – I think it's clear Peter wrote it.
  - So, Peter wrote the letter
  - And it's only 3 chapters
  - And it was the last letter ever penned in the New Testament
    - Also, Peter wrote this letter at the end of his life
- What is the letter's "Main Theme"?
  - It is Spiritual Maturity – another way you could say it is "Progressive Fruit"
  - An increase in the fruit in the life of the believer!
    - And I am not sure if there has ever been a time in the History of the Church, where a specific topic was more needed than today!
- Spiritual growth in the life of the believer is such an overlooked topic. And why?
  - Because it's tough – it's a grind of study, prayer and then putting it into action.
  - That is why it's such an overlooked topic, because it requires daily discipline
    - Anyways – I'll digress on the subject and let Peter do the talking:

**2 Peter 1:1 Simon 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:**

**2 Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;**

**2 Peter 1:3 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.**

**2 Peter 1:4 For 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.**

**2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,**

**2 Peter 1:6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,**

**2 Peter 1:7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.**

**2 Peter 1:8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**2 Peter 1:9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.**

**2 Peter 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His**

**calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;**

**2 Peter 1:11** for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

- Peter starts the letter by acknowledging who he is – which was a Bond Servant
  - Then he says -

**2 Peter 1:2** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in “the knowledge” of God and of Jesus our Lord;

- In verse 3-5 he identifies God's Promises – He actually calls them His Precious and Magnificent Promises
  - And he says we are partakers of this divine nature.
  - And then he says something interesting at the end of verse 4 when He says – We have become partakers of God’s magnificent promises having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust
- Peter is saying, if you are saved – you are now a partaker of the divine nature.
  - And you have escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.
  - Meaning, once you are saved:
    - You have immediately overcome sin.
    - You are victorious over every sin that so beseeches you.
  - Which tells us something:
    - It tells us that when someone says that a believer was delivered from some sin that is not a true biblical statement.
    - Because, when someone is saved – they are automatically delivered!
    - That’s it - the end!
  - In 2 Corinthians 5:17 – Paul said it this way:

**2 Cor. 5:17** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

- The words we are looking for here, are “wiped clean” – declared righteous!
  - So – this means when someone sins or becomes entangled in a life of repeated sin of some sort.
    - They don’t need deliverance!
    - They need repentance!

- Which is between that individual and God alone.
- It doesn't require the participation of other people.
- Now, I know this may seem like I'm splitting hairs. And it would be – if deliverance was defined as a believer asking God to forgive them (which is repentance) – and at that point God would and will cleanse them of all unrighteousness.
  - In that scenario – God would be (delivering them in a sense). Which would be like splitting hairs! But generally speaking – that's not the way churches mean it.
- Most of the time, they believe deliverance is some type of ritual of some sorts. With some sort of ceremonial act – one designed to deliver that person from whatever sin they are mixed up in!
  - These two definitions are obviously on two opposite ends of the spectrum. So, they are not the same.
  - One meets the Biblical definition of deliverance, and the other does not!
- Now, let me clarify one thing before moving on. I am not talking about someone who is not a believer being delivered in some sort of way,
  - 12 step programs
  - Celebrate Recovery
  - Or even in very rare cases, someone being delivered by the laying on of hands or through exorcism!
    - And yes, those are real! but that's another message for another day!
  - Anyways, so, Peter says:
    - “You have” been delivered.
    - You are partakers of the “Divine Nature”,
    - Which means you are a believer and therefore act like it!
  - In other words, claim what is yours – which is righteousness and forgiveness of your sin. Then move on!
    - And let me say – this applies to every believer.
    - If you are dealing with regret or guilt or something you have done or should have done and you can't seem to let it go, I just want you to know that God has forgiven you – if you have asked Him.
    - Therefore – it's time to quit allowing the enemy – to live rent free in your head.
    - God forgave you – and for this reason it is time to do what Peter is telling these believers to do.
- Which is what? – Verse 5 – 8:

**2 Peter 1:5** Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, **2 Peter 1:6** and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness,

**2 Peter 1:7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.**

**2 Peter 1:8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

- As previously stated, Peter gives us this list of cascading qualities or virtues that every believer should display.
  - And He starts out with moral excellence.
  - We talked about this in our last teaching, how “moral excellence” – isn’t just something immoral (as we think of immoral – such as adultery)
    - The word moral in the Greek is the word “virtue”.
    - Which simply means – behavior showing high moral standards
  - Moral excellence – would apply to anything God honoring.
  - When we honor God – we are achieving moral excellence.
- Next up, is knowledge – Peter said:

**2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge,**

- I touched on this last time we were together – but it’s worth mentioning one more time,
  - Once we learn something (knowledge), it’s at that point - we are to apply whatever it is that we’ve learned.
  - But in Peter’s list – here we see – moral excellence as being listed first and then knowledge.
    - I gave you a theory – on why this was possibly the case, and if you want to hear more on this theory, just go back – to our last teaching.
    - But for now – it’s an interesting proposition – the way it is laid out and listed,
- Anyways, so moral excellence gives way to knowledge.
  - The word knowledge in the Greek is gnosis (“nose-is”) – and it refers to information – and not just any ole information.
  - The word empathizes the Christian’s need to know all that God has revealed in His Word, not just the gospel!
    - Which, by the way, the correlation between His Word and the Gospel have almost become synonyms
    - Meaning – when people talk about God’s Word – they almost always equate it to the Gospel of Jesus Christ
  - The Gospel of Jesus Christ is in His Word
    - But so are a lot of other things,

- And it's those other things – that you must become knowledgeable about.
- And why – because Knowledge is truly power and that power – can only be unlocked when His Word sets up residency in your Heart and Mind.
- So, Knowledge is key if we are to fulfill all these other Moral Excellencies / Virtues
  - And let me show you what I mean – As Peter moves from Knowledge to Self Control to Perseverance to Godliness
- Beginning with Self-Control: What is the Biblical definition of this word, we have our understanding of self-control, but what is the Bible's definition of this word?
  - Self-Control in the Greek is egkrates (eng-krat-i-ah) – means “mastery of self”, disciplined moderation – controlling one's desires and passions.
    - I love this concept of “Mastery of self”, but this is not mastery of self in the way we think of mastery of self.
  - Mastery of self – by the world's definition – is you as an individual, by your self, putting yourself under submission to whatever it is.
  - Meaning – if you are not healthy – you grab ahold of your eating habits – you clean up your diet – and you force yourself to become disciplined with your eating.
    - Same holds true for exercise,
    - Or work life balance
    - Spending time with God etc..
- Nothing necessarily wrong with this – but what Peter is talking about is Mastery of Self – with the help of the Holy Spirit – which is great news, because you are not alone in this fight!
  - In other words – you are partnered with the Holy Spirit
  - Problem is – most of us – do not know how to tap into the Holy Spirit's help!
    - And the best way I can tell you how to do it is through Prayer – requesting God give you the help
    - By way of the comforter – ie... the Holy Spirit
    - And then by reaching into God's Word – and accessing the knowledge – found in the pages of His Holy Manuscript
- Once again – we are right back to learning, and once we learn and apply –
  - It's at that point – we can begin to tap into the virtues Peter is speaking about
  - Having said all of this, make no mistake about it – this process will not happen through sheer intestinal fortitude!
    - It begins through the power of God,
  - And guys – let me testify for just a moment, throughout my life – I have found myself lost in decisions.
    - Not knowing what to do.
    - And so – I prayed for wisdom – and God gave it to me.

- I quit praying for a specific thing.
- Meaning – I quit praying - Lord help this or that specific thing or issue.
- Instead – I said – Lord, please give me eyes to see and ears to hear and when I began praying that prayer that’s when everything changed, and that’s when I was able to access the answers.
- The same holds true for “Self-control” or “Mastery of Self”.
- If you want to bring yourself into submission with God, you must “Master Yourself” – and by biblical definition
  - This cannot take place without the help of the Holy Spirit!
  - Which means – if you have a drinking problem, God will help you through the knowledge of Him.
- A Knowledge by the way that leads to revelation.
  - It produces a change – through what I call those “awe ha” moments.
  - And so if you are struggling in your marriage, knowledge – as it relates to God – is the key.
  - Are you eating poorly – desperately desiring to clean up your diet – but you just can’t seem to grab control of it – same thing applies
  - Just fill in the blank - it applies to everything: Poor overall health, finances etc. – anything you struggle with.
- Next on this list is – Perseverance.
  - Perseverance is an interesting one – and is yet another recurring theme of Paul’s ministry (along with some of the other Apostles as well) – all throughout God’s Holy Manuscript.
  - Perseverance is emphasized – perseverance is the need to keep on keeping on – in the face of adversity.
    - By definition – it is patient endurance in holiness when we encounter temptation to give in or to give up (cf. Rom. 5:3-4; 15:4-5; 2 Cor. 1:6; 6:4; Col. 1:11; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4; James 1:3).
    - The Greek word (*hypomonen*) literally means to remain under something, such as a heavy load.
  - The key to tapping into perseverance (once again) – lies in your understanding of God – and His ability to keep you.
  - And this reality can only be realized in your life when you understand what the scriptures have to say on this topic.
- Let me give you an example of what I mean.

**John 10:26** “But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.

**John 10:27** “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

**John 10:28** and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

**John 10:29** “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.

**John 10:30** “I and the Father are one.”

- Notice who’s in control here – God is!

**Phil. 1:6** For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus

**Rom. 11:29** for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

**1 John 3:9** No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

- My point is your perseverance is a work of God
  - But God requires you participate
  - He isn’t just going to do it for you
    - Kind of like the time when I had come across a lady whose car was stuck in the mud. I stopped to help her – I got behind the car and began pushing, and from what I could see she just needed a little nudge – but the car wouldn’t budge. After about 5 minutes of trying, I said – “Ma’am - do you have the break on?”
    - She said – “oops – sorry my bad.”
  - We have a responsibility to participate – to work on it.
  - We can’t ask God to help and then put our foot on the break.
- Next on the list – is Godliness.
  - What does it mean to obtain or increase in Godliness
    - Godliness (Gr. *eusebeia*) refers to behavior that reflects the character of God (cf. v. 3; 3:11; et al.).
    - It presupposes a desire to please God in all the relationships of life.
- Here’s a question for you this morning, do you – in everything you do – have a desire to please God?
- Or – Do you have a desire to become more like God?
  - I would hope the answer would be yes!
    - If it’s not – then you and I need to talk – catch me after the service.
  - If you are a believer – you must pursue Godliness.
    - You must desire to become more like him and less like – you!
    - And that desire cannot be manufactured through the power of “Positive

thinking” – this is a spiritual transformation.

- It can only be achieved when you understand who God is – how He operates and what he expects.
  - In essence – it can only be achieved when you understand what Godliness looks like.
- Now believe it or not, this may seem like a simple thing to understand but I will tell you – based on the world we live in, where evil is called good – and good is called evil.
  - Which by the way is (in my opinion) – one of the greatest markers of the End of Times.
  - In my opinion, people have drifted so far from the Truth of God that they do not know what Godliness even looks like.
    - So, what’s a Christian to do – if they don’t know?
    - Study and learn – go back to the basics!
- Next up, brotherly kindness.
  - Brotherly kindness (Gr. *philadelphia*) is thoughtful consideration of fellow believers (cf. 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:8; Rom. 12:10; 1 Cor. 12:25-26; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1).
    - It includes overt acts of kindness which manifest this characteristic (Gal. 6:10).
    - Basically – it's thinking of your Christian brothers and sisters and doing something for them.
    - And I would ask, once again – how are we doing in this area of our Christian life?
      - This is a question we all must contemplate, because it’s not just saying hi to someone on Sunday morning.
      - It’s literally doing something to show you care.
- And then finally, we have Love.
  - And – as you might imagine – this isn’t just any old Love
  - In the Bible there are several meanings for the word Love
- There is: *Eros, Storge, Phillia, and Agape*
  - Eros (Pronounced: AIR-ohs) is the Greek word for sensual or romantic love.
    - The term originated from the mythological Greek god of love, sexual desire, physical attraction, and physical love, Eros, Roman counterpart was Cupid.
    - Then we have – Storge (stor-kay) & Philia (Fill-ee-uh),
  - Storge (Pronounced: STOR-kay) is a term for love in the Bible that you may not be familiar with.
    - This Greek word describes family love, the affectionate bond that develops naturally between parents and children, and brothers and sisters.
  - Philia (Pronounced: FILL-ee-uh) is the type of intimate love in the Bible that most Christians practice toward each other.
    - This Greek term describes the powerful emotional bond seen in deep



friendships.

- And finally, we have Love (Gr. agape).
  - Which is the highest form of love, God's kind, that seeks the welfare of the person loved above its own welfare (John 3:16; 13:35; Gal. 5:22; 1 Pet. 4:8; et al.).
  - Agape reaches out to all people, not just fellow believers.
- Now which type of love do you think Peter is talking about here when he says brotherly kindness?
  - You might tend to think it would be Phillia (Fill-ee-uh) – since Phillia means brotherly love, but that's not it.
  - It's Agape – it's a self-sacrificial love – one that transcends one's own interest and desires.
    - And this type of love is impossible to obtain without help from God.
- James echoes Peter's same words when he says this.

**James 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

**James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.**

**James 4:9 Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.**

**James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.**

- See the corollary here?
  - The process is:
    - You do and God does
    - You Submit yourself to God and He will help you flee the enemy!
    - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you
    - Cleanse your hands, you sinners and purify your hearts
- And then finally – Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.
  - Another way to say it is, you take one step toward God and He will take one or more steps toward you!
  - So, once again Peter's words clearly model for us how we are responsible for our own individual spiritual growth and maturity.
    - Which means you can't outsource your Spiritual Growth!
    - You must participate!
- Moving on, and let us end our teaching with verses 9-1:

**2 Peter 1:9 For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.**

**2 Peter 1:10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

**2 Peter 1:11** for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

- So, Peter says:
  - Because you have been freed from sin.
  - Because you have been delivered.
  - You should work on those lists of virtues.
    - And anyone – verse 9

**“Who lacks these qualities is blind, or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins”.**

- So, the question is: Do you lack these qualities? How are you doing with:
  - Moral Excellence – Yes / No?
  - Knowledge -??
  - Self – Control -??
  - Perseverance –??
  - Godliness -??
  - Brotherly Kindness -??
- If you aren’t doing so well, Peter tell us we are blind and short sighted and you have forgotten – paraphrasing here – you have forgotten what God did for you!
  - And then in verse 10 He says – and “Oh by the way”:

**2 Peter 1:10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

- I don’t want to read right through this verse, because there is something – that everyone sitting here today needs to hear.
  - And here it is – God chose you. You didn’t choose Him.
  - Now, you might be sitting here thinking, – Well – I know that.
  - You might be thinking, No I choose Him. I asked Him into my heart.
    - And yes - you may have prayed an asked God to forgive you and to save you!
  - But the step preceding your acceptance of Him had zero to do with you!

- But what do I mean – I mean?
- There is no man – who seeks God.
- Romans 3 – tells us this exact thing. Listen to what Paul wrote.

**Romans 3:9** What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;

**Romans 3:10** as it is written,

**“THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;**

**Romans 3:11** THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,

**THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;**

- God is the one who pricks the heart first and then – we answer His call.
  - That is why it’s called “a Call”.
  - God initiates “the call”.
  - And man answers.
    - That’s the sequence of events - and that’s how it works!
  - That’s why Peter says you were chosen.
    - The word in Greek isn’t actually chosen – it's elected
- If you are a believer – you are the elect, which means you have been given a gift.
  - Which also means, when we don’t work on our spiritual growth and maturity, we are essentially thumbing our nose at God.
  - And that’s why Peter says, if you don’t improve in these virtues you are blind & short sighted, and you have forgotten the call with which you have been called!
    - You have forgotten He elected or chose you!
  - But Peter says something else, something that I would like to end with, and that shows up in the first part of verse 10.
    - Let me read it – one more time:

**2 Peter 1:10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

- “To make certain about His calling and choosing you”.
  - The sentiment here – is that of checking yourself – to see how you are doing in the mentioned list of virtues.
- In other words, It is not saying – check yourself – to see if you are saved, but rather, check yourself back against this list as a measuring tool of sorts, to see how you measure up with Gods expectation.

- In other words, are you living up to your calling and His choosing of you?
- Let me say this as we close, your walk with the Lord is not a feeling.
  - Just like love is not a feeling
  - It's a verb – an action.
- So, what Peter is telling us is, we must examine ourselves – and look at this list (among others), and from that list – determine how we are doing!
  - We should never do this – by what someone might say about us, or even how we feel about ourselves.
  - But rather how are we doing – measuring ourselves back against Gods measurement tool!
    - And so – that is the question we all must ponder this morning.
    - And my hope and prayer is that we leave here doing just that!
    - Amen – Amen!