

2Peter 11-08-26b

Let's pick up our study now in 2 Peter chapter 1. We have seen the significance of the apostle chosen to write this letter. If you think about it, any one of the apostles could have written this, but Peter was chosen to be the bearer of this particular set of truths, and there's a reason for it. He embodies and represents a lot of these truths.

People knew his story, knew about his time with the Lord, as we're going to see as we move forward. So he talks about grace and peace being multiplied in the knowledge of God. And if you watch, I mentioned at the end of the first lesson tonight that the great thing about this letter is that it gives us practical ways to get her done, to get the Christian life underway, to get the fire lit under our boilers and get up a good head of steam and get going.

Pie in the sky, by and by, be ye holy and pray and learn verses and so on is all well and good, but we go away with kind of a holy glow after we hear an inspirational sermon or see something great out of the word of God, but it's kind of like the face of Moses coming down from Sinai, it wears off, it's like the phosphorescence on your old time clock. I never could get that to work. They say, get this alarm clock, it's got phosphorescent hands.

So at night, you set your alarm and you turn off the lamp and you can see it glowing green and it's all bright. Well, you know, if you wake up a couple of hours later and you go over there, well, it's all dark. And what good is that? Turn on the light and charge it up and then turn it off and see what time it is.

It doesn't last, it fades. Maybe you all are different, but this has been my experience in trying to be a healthy active Christian is that I get all fired up, I look into the perfect law of liberty, I get all gangbusters, I'm going to be godly, I'm going to abandon my sins, I'm going to pray, I'm going to be on fire for God, I'm going to be a streaking spiritual comet across the sky. Well, you know, in a matter of hours, if not minutes, it wore off, I'm just back to my same old self.

And I think, well, how is this thing supposed to work? And, of course, a big part of the problem is if we haven't figured out how to be plugged into the power of God, we end up trying to do it ourselves and we've got no power to do this. And this is your basic battery-powered clock. It's got no light, you know, battery-powered clocks, if it does have a light, you hit the light thing and it comes on.

It's just like this watch. I got this watch because it's an illuminator watch, well, among other things. It's also plastic and cheap.

And I got it for that reason because I can wear it running, I can, you know, it's pretty indestructible. And if it does get destructible-ized, it's, you know, it's a \$20 watch. What I like about this watch is anytime that I can't see it, I can hit this little button and now I can see it.

It's got internal power to make it glow, but it only lasts a few seconds because if it stayed on, the battery would run down. Well, this is your spiritual life under your own power. It lasts about two seconds and it winks out.

And what you need is a plug-in clock, a plug-in timepiece that has perpetual access to power. A clock radio, you know, you get those glowing numbers, the red numbers. I got the one that shines up on your ceiling.

And so at night, I can't get that thing back on. At night, it's all night long. All I got to do is open my eyes, there's the time, there's the inside temperature, there's the outside temperature, cycling back and forth.

I know everything I need to know and it lasts all night long because it's not on a battery, it's plugged in. Well, this book tells us how to be plugged in so that there is always power available and you don't have this little momentary blip of activity followed by darkness. So the secret here is in the prepositions.

And so if you go through the text here, you find this wonderful preposition, DIA. So Peter is writing along here and he says, grace to you and peace be multiplied in the epinosis of God and Jesus our Lord. Just as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through DIA, the epinosis.

Up above in verse two, it said, grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of our God and Savior. That's the Greek preposition N. N is also a great signal for how to get stuff done because N, whether it's the actual preposition or if you find it assumed, and this is one of the sneaky things about Greek, is you can leave out N if you use the dative, locative or instrumental case. Those of you fixing to take Greek, pay attention now.

You're about to learn something that's going to help you, I hope. N means in, by, or with. In, by, or with.

Always. It's one of those things. So, grace and peace be multiplied to you in the epinosis, by means of the epinosis, or along with the epinosis.

But see here, how many people in their lives are looking for peace? I want tranquility. I want my soul to be at rest. I don't want to be troubled.

I don't want to be worried. I don't want to be upset. I don't want to be uncertain.

I don't want to be tossed about. I don't want to be awake at night, wondering. I don't want to be tortured in soul.

I want peace. People are looking for peace. They want world peace.

They visualize world peace. They want personal peace. I want to feel good.

I want to be rested. And people want grace. They want the benefits of grace.

Provision. Protection. Presence.

The three great Ps of grace. It's God's provision, God's protection, and God's presence. It comes to us because we possess the righteousness of Christ.

Free, no charge. When you accepted Christ as your Savior, righteousness was assigned. It was imputed.

It was deposited automatically in our spiritual bank account. Righteousness of Christ. It's there permanently.

It cannot be taken away. And it is now the anchor point for the grace of God. The grace of God flows from heaven down onto the righteousness that is ours through Christ.

Now, we can refuse the deposit. We can cut off the pipe. We can kick it away by different things.

But that's the perfect design. That's the way the system is supposed to work. Grace from heaven comes down onto the righteousness of God.

That's why the righteousness of Christ is so important. It's not just an abstract. It's not just a theological concept.

The accomplishment of this feat, this miracle on the cross by the Lord Jesus Christ is one of the greatest things in all of human history. That fallen, sinful, corrupt, temporary, mundane human beings can partake of eternal things and divine things happens because we get this little radioactive imputation of the righteousness of Christ. That's why Paul says, He has been made unto us righteousness and peace and sanctification.

Righteousness first. Because of that righteousness, we have peace. And because of the righteousness and peace, we can enter into sanctification, which is getting rid of the old sins and the bad habits and the corrupt way of life.

Well, how? It's great to be called to holiness. It's great to be heading on the upward way, going to heaven, waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus and all that. But how can I really live an effective Christian life? N. By means of epinosis.

You are here partaking of epinosis right now. It is an experiential knowledge of God. It takes scriptural truth combined with application, processing it.

You can't just hear it. Remember what James says? Be doers of the word and not hearers only. If you're just a hearer only, you're like a guy that looks in the mirror, sees his face, walks away and

forgets what he looks like.

Well, this is the light winking out on the watch two seconds after you hit the button. You're just as dark as you were beforehand. We want to catch hold of that truth.

It's got to flame. It has to live. It has to breathe in us after we hear it.

That's what faith does. You can hear the word. You can assent and agree to everything that you hear in Bible class.

You can say, that makes good sense to me. Jesus died and Peter says be holy. You've got a calling.

God's got this great plan for you and it's unique. I get all of that. But if you walk out of here and it doesn't cross your mind again, you have not made it the object of faith.

We have to think about it again after we hear it. So, here's your challenge. This is Friday, Friday night.

Tomorrow is Saturday. My challenge and your challenge is just once tomorrow, any time of the day, take your pick, set an alarm. Alarm's going to go off, say at 11.30 a.m., just in time for lunch.

And you say, what's this alarm for? Oh, yeah. Let me see if I can think back on what I heard in Bible class last night. What was that thing? Oh, yeah.

I can have peace. I can have grace through knowledge of our God and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Why is that true? What's the deal on that? Well, because I know Him, I've got a different kind of life.

What am I doing? Am I mowing the lawn? Am I cleaning the garage? Am I waxing the car? Am I sitting inside surfing the Internet? What am I doing? I'm engaging in a hobby. I'm taking care of a task. I'm performing errands or chores or whatever it is I'm doing.

Stop. Am I doing this in the light of heaven? Am I doing it as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? I do it as unto the Lord. It is as though the Lord said, Please wax this car.

Please wax this floor. Please mow this lawn. Please run this set of errands for me.

Could you do this for me? And we say, Lord, I would be glad to do this for you. And because I'm doing it for you, I'm going to do it well. I'm going to do it cheerfully.

I'm going to do it without complaint. I'm going to do it helpfully. I'm going to do it in a way that reflects your glory and makes others glad that I'm around instead of wishing I was elsewhere.

That's what I'm going to do. I've got to remember that. It isn't what it is we're doing.

It is how we do it. Why we do it. In the knowledge of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Because we know Him, we do things. We do the same things, but we do them differently. We do them better.

We do them on AC power instead of battery power. Because when we grab hold of righteousness by faith, when we say, I want to do this as unto the Lord, God sends power back down the pipe. And we are enabled to do things that we can't normally do.

We can be patient when we are normally impatient. We can be worry-free when we are normally worriful. We can be gracious when we are normally ingracious.

We can be cheerful when we are normally not so cheerful. We can be helpful when we don't feel like being helpful. We can be loving when we don't really have any basis for love.

The person we're dealing with isn't lovely and we're not particularly lovely. And so there's no love happening. There's no source and there's no target.

You're not lovely, I'm not lovely. There is no love. And yet, not by trying to generate some human substitute for gooey, sticky, shallow human love, we stop and we think, what is my knowledge of Jesus Christ? Greater love hath no man than this, that he lays down his life for his friend.

The Lord Jesus Christ died to give me this life, to give me this opportunity, to let me reach through that conduit of grace and lay hold of the divine nature. The divine nature that says there's something bigger than myself. The plan of God is more important than my personal agenda.

And it balances me. It makes me objective. So, by means of epinosis.

Hear me now. This is the way. This is how this wonderfully idealized Christian life is actually lived.

But to do it, we've got to grab the knowledge. We've got to grab that epinosis. We've got to stop and think about it.

Have you ever had knowledge and not use it? When I first looked at Ryan tonight, I thought, oh, Christian brought somebody from the college. Because I didn't really access my knowledge. I know who Ryan is.

I've known his parents forever. But it's just very superficial. Strange face.

Christian's at the college. Must be somebody from the college. Didn't recognize him right off the bat.

I thought, well, okay. And I didn't think. I've got the knowledge.

Now that I have thought about it, I know exactly who Ryan is. I know a lot about him. But it was

knowledge I didn't draw upon.

And I could have embarrassed myself even worse than I already have if I had said, so how are things down there at the college? Because he's not at the college. Not this college. So we can have knowledge, but we have to access it.

We have to use it. Doesn't do any good if it's sitting there and we forget to grab it. And the older you get, the more important this becomes.

I struggle with something and then suddenly remember, oh, yeah. Last week I did this same thing, and I should know how to solve this problem by now. And we just forget.

We don't remember. This is the problem for us that we face. If we want to live the Christian life, it's not a matter of, oh, I just can't be holy enough.

I can't be charged up enough. We have everything we need. We have to turn our attention to where the power is and plug the power in, which is reaching through that conduit of grace that God has established between heaven and us.

Be partakers of the divine. What does it mean to be a partaker of the divine nature? The divine nature is omnipotent. The divine nature is, you remember the list? Sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, immutability, and veracity.

Many of you know that list. And if you don't, you should. That's the essence box.

Remember Bob's essence box? Sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal. That's the divine nature. I am a puny, mortal, failing, aging, graying, wrinkling, pruning up, ever more forgetful human, and yet I can partake of the divine nature.

How? In epinosis, by means of knowledge. The knowledge comes from Bible class. The knowledge is not Bible class.

That made my screen come on. The knowledge is not Bible class. The knowledge comes from Bible class.

You are not in epinosis because you attend. We are in epinosis when we remember what we heard when we attended. I don't know about you, but I somehow missed this great essential truth in some of my younger days.

I thought, hey, I've heard a Bible class. I'm golden. It isn't what we hear.

It is what we make experiential. That's why epi is on the front of gnosis. It's not just the hearing.

It's not just Shimeon. I don't want to just be Simon. I want to be Simon Peter.

I want that Petra. I want to grab a hold of the rock, the great confession, the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, partaker of the divine nature, fullness of deity and bodily form. Why does he say this letter is from Simon Peter? Why doesn't he just say Shimeon? A lot of these people are Jews from Jerusalem out in the Diaspora.

Because I started out as Simon, but I heard and I got it. I heard it and I repeated it back when it counted. Jesus Christ said, who do you say that I am? And Peter didn't just sit there like a bump on a log.

He had it. He brought it up. He spoke it.

He applied it at the moment. And you can imagine the joy of the Lord Jesus when one of the disciples managed to bring up something that he knew at the right time. This is why Peter is the only guy besides the Lord Jesus to ever walk on water.

Because he could. Early on it was in flashes. It's like when your child can ride the bicycle for a few feet before it falls over.

You know, you got to crawl before you can walk. Peter had flashes before the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection and ascension. But afterward, he is absolutely hitting on all eight cylinders.

And that's what he's doing here. So, grace and peace be multiplied to you by means of, if we want grace, if we want peace, we have got to grab this knowledge that we get in Bible class and use it at all of the times we're not in Bible class, which is, you know, what's the percentage? Subtract four hours out of a week of hours, and that's the percentage. That's when we need to be applying.

Doesn't mean you can sin freely while you're sitting here, but you know what I mean. Just as his divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. Did you catch that? God's omnipotence, God's divine power, God's divine nature has given us everything that we need for life.

And everything we need for godliness. This was my big question growing up and going to Sunday school. You keep telling me all of this stuff, and I just don't have it in me to do it.

I don't really even feel like doing it. It seems boring sitting around. I mean, I'm like a 10, 12-year-old kid.

I'm supposed to be praying and thinking about missionaries and agonizing over the bread and the cup. Am I really saved? What about the lost off and far off lands? I should be thinking holy thoughts. I just thought, I'm a kid.

I want to play football. I want to do stuff. I want to be with my friends.

This holiness stuff seems like a real drag. And it was just very difficult. I kept thinking, abstractly, I want to be pleasing to God.

I know that's the important thing. I understand that academically. But how does it really happen? Well, I didn't get that answer for a while.

But if you keep banging on the gates of heaven and ask and it shall be given, seek and you will find. And I kept praying to God and saying, you know, we're going to church. And I keep being told all the things I'm supposed to be.

I just don't see it. If you are up there, please tell me how this is done. And next thing you know, here's somebody telling me how it is done.

And it was passages just like this that tell us how it is done. Look at this. He has given to us his divine power.

God's godly power gives us everything for life. Everything to be godly. Everything to be like him.

How? Dia. Through. Epinosis.

It's the same thing he gave us in the last verse. Grace and peace are multiplied to us through knowledge. Everything for life and godliness come to us through knowledge.

But it's not just gnosis. It's epinosis. It is our knowledge brought forth and expressed and applied and lived out in experience.

It's living knowledge. It is knowledge in practice. That's where the power comes from.

You say, well, I thought I needed that power to live it out. Well, it is bringing that knowledge to bear. It is calling it up and saying, oh, I remember.

This is not something I pray for. This is something where I apply. This is something where I claim a promise.

This is something where I live in the light of a principle. I know the difference between a promise, a principle, and a doctrine. Do you remember the difference between a promise, a principle, and a doctrine? If you think about it, you can.

It's kind of like the difference between goals and values and priorities. They are different things. They point in different directions.

They have different applications. Through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue. By which have been given to us.

You know what the first word in verse 4 is in Greek? Take a guess. Dia. Through.

Through which. Through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue. Through which.

That same knowledge have been given to us exceedingly great and precious doctrines. Exceedingly great and precious principles. No.

Exceedingly great and precious promises. What is the difference in a promise, a principle, and a doctrine? A promise has a condition. Promises have condition.

This is where I get in trouble with some parts of the theological world. They say there are conditional promises and there are unconditional promises. I'm sorry, but I don't believe it.

There is no such thing in the mind of Sam as an unconditional promise. All promises are conditional. If my people who are called by my name will pray and heed my voice, I will hear and answer.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If you persevere, if you endure, if you survive and profit from this momentary light affliction, you will inherit. You have need of patience so that after you have suffered a while, you inherit the promises.

If you are patient. If, if, if, these are conditions. Promises have conditions.

So, in this knowledge of God, in this word of God, in this revelation of Jesus Christ, stuff has been told to us that has a condition. What do we know at this point? If tomorrow, Saturday, sometime during the day, I stop and think, what was it we talked about in Bible class last night? Did I learn anything? Do I remember anything from that class? Well, I remember that God's grace and peace are obtained through experiential knowledge of Him. So, some kind of way, I've got to lay hold of my knowledge of Jesus Christ when I'm not sitting listening to it.

If I can call it to mind, it gives me perspective. If I stop in the middle of my day and I think, I'm a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, God is in heaven, I've got the righteousness of Christ, God's grace flows through that conduit that Sam kept harping about, down to the righteousness of Christ, and that's how I can partake of the divine nature. I can reach up through that same pipeline, that same avenue, and lay hold of the divine nature.

That will give me power. That will give me righteousness. That will give me peace.

That will give me insight. That will give me perspective. It will give me patience.

It will ultimately give me love for the unlovely. I am not a loving person in this situation, and the object that needs love isn't very lovely at this point, but I will have supernatural love because I will partake of the divine nature because I am remembering who I am. I am remembering why I'm here.

And it's really that simple. Remembering what we learn in Bible class and thinking of it when we are in the midst of our daily circumstances, just thinking about it. The word of God is living and powerful.

It's better than dynamite. It's really more like uranium. It's got radioactive power.

It glows. It heats. It lights.

It energizes. It's got a big electrical charge on it. Just thinking about it energizes our soul.

You can think about any part of it. You can think about the days of creation. You can think about King Saul.

You can think about Daniel. You can think about the wise men. You can think about Cornelius.

You can think about Timothy. You can think about anything in the 66 books of the Bible. And if you call it to mind and start thinking about, I am a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am in the dispensation of the church. The Lord Jesus Christ is going to be returning. I am here to reflect His glory.

I possess the righteousness of Jesus Christ that He bought for me and purchased with His blood on the cross. And I am here to represent Him. Just that much starts our soul glowing with divine energy, divine power, and we will have things that are seemingly unrelated.

It gives us objectivity, which gives us patience, which gives us love, which gives us power to be peaceful, power to receive God's grace. That's what this is talking about. It is the epinosis.

It's not any specific epinosis. You don't even have to have the exact applicable principle or promise or doctrine. But we've got those great promises.

What are the promises? You only need one promise. Ask and it shall be given. Seek and ye shall find.

Knock and it shall be opened unto you. God is your heavenly Father. He loves you.

If you ask for bread, He will not give you a rock. If that's all you can think of, that is an exceedingly great and precious promise. The God of the galactic expanses of the universe, the God of the electron microscopic particles and sub-particles.

I was telling the girls on the way over that atoms are made of protons, croutons, and electrons. That's why they reflect light, because the croutons are bigger than the photons and they bounce off. You don't have to know very much.

But if you know anything at all and call it to mind, God's power gets active in us. Because all we

have to do is turn our face. Dr. Criswell's sermon on Sunday night this week is going to be, Look and Live.

There's life for a look. All we have to do is look. Just look at the gnosis that is in our soul and it becomes epi-gnosis.

It becomes a part of our practical life. It's the most counterintuitive thing. You don't have to say, Where's my notebook? What is the doctrine of how to sweep the grass that my weed-eating husband didn't sweep up and I'm out here having to sweep up after him? Or I'm having to pick up this thing that fell on the floor and somebody else should have picked it up.

Or why is this sticky spot in the kitchen? Whatever it is. I'm projecting now. But whatever it is, you can think about anything.

You can think about Elijah on Mount Carmel and the prophets and whether or not he should have slaughtered all those prophets of El. Did he do a good thing or did he do a bad thing? But when we go back to our knowledge, that starts our soul aglow because the word of God is alive and powerful. Grab anything.

It doesn't have to apply. It will still straighten us out. It will point us.

It's like a compass needle. It will point us back to God. It will orient us to grace.

It will give us peace. It will give us confidence. It will give us objectivity.

And that enables us to lay hold of righteousness by faith. It enables us to reflect the glory of God and to fulfill our calling. The allotment of faith that we have received.

We just have to do it. We have to think of it. We have to be aware, at times other than Bible class, of who we are and why we're here.

That's all it takes. Simeon Petras. We hear and we claim.

You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. I heard it. I know it.

I can say it. Peter's example, just in his name, gives us really the key of the mechanics of the Christian life. We just have to remember it.

We just have to do it. And that is really the message of the whole first half of the first chapter of 2 Peter. And it is a great relief to me to know that God will provide the power.

God will energize my soul and make it do what it's supposed to do. It'll start restoring itself to God's image in which it was originally supposed to be created just by the presence of God's Word. God's Word never comes back to him void.

And the power is in the Word. In the hands of the Holy Spirit, it will transform us. In the hands of the Holy Spirit, it will guide us.

It will speak to us. It will point us in the direction that we need to go. It will whisper in our ear and tell us, here is the right path.

Here is the right way. This is Peter's message. And he's going to tell us before this chapter is over that, look at verse 12, I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, even though you know them.

I've got to remind you. Much of what I've said tonight, most of you know. But we need to be reminded.

We need to remind ourselves. And Peter says, I could tell you stories about the Lord Jesus, but this is the most important thing. I've got a short letter to write.

I'm going to remind you of how to live this life. I think it is right as long as I am still in this tent, this temporary body here, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I'm going to be gone. Look at verse 15.

I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things, even after I'm gone. That's why he wrote it down. And 2,000 years later, this reminder is still working.

It's still doing its job. Peter said, the last thing I want to do before I leave is make sure you don't forget this truth that we've talked about tonight. Of all of the things Peter could have talked about, this is what he left as his last words to these people.

There is no third Peter. There is no Gospel of Peter. This is it.

And he says, I'm about to fold up my tent and go to glory. This is what you need to know. This is what I want you to remember.

So, I challenge myself as I challenge you. Sometime tomorrow, stop in the middle of whatever you're busy doing and see how much of what we've looked at in this first chapter we can remember. And see what it does to us in the midst.

See what it does to our soul. See what happens when epinosis starts circulating in the hands of the Holy Spirit in the middle of our day, in the middle of our challenges and our circumstances and our just mundane daily chores. We can convert the earthly and the seemingly foolish things of this world into an eternal weight of glory.

This is like alchemy. It's like turning lead to gold. You can turn mowing the lawn into eternal inheritance if you do it right.

And that's our challenge. That's our calling. So, we get a chance to try it in the days that remain to us in this life.

But we'll close here tonight in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the resources that you have placed at our disposal.

The almost unimaginably great opportunity that has been given to us through the Lord Jesus. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit will impress these things on our hearts, remind us of them, convict us of them, encourage us in them so that we can more fully and completely exploit the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross and vindicate his work on our behalf and indulge in the spoils of that victory as we reflect his glory and prepare ourselves for service and for opportunity both in this life and in the ages to come. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.