

Round Top Church Christian Fellowship

Sermon Series in 2 Peter

2 Peter 1

Divine Nature's Seven Points

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(All Scripture is from the New American Standard Bible, unless otherwise noted.)

Simon Peter writes a second letter to Believers who live somewhere in the Mediterranean world. The saving Gospel had been established in them, that the truth is in them and is present with them. 2 Peter 1:12.

Obviously, by its very name, this letter is written after 1 Peter, and there is a clue/reference in 2 Peter 3:1. "This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder". This assumes that 1 Peter was the first letter that is being noted here. By mathematical probabilities, Peter could have written several letters and this reference is to an unknown document. We have at least 13 letters Paul wrote. It stands to reason that Peter wrote more than two letters. Yes, Peter was a fisherman by trade and did not receive the education Paul achieved being a Pharisee of Pharisees. However, since we know that both men (Paul/Tertius and Peter/Silvanus) used a secretary to dictate letters. Peter's lesser education should not have impaired his letter writing. We might expect that there are many more letters Peter wrote that have been lost to the destruction of time.

Peter must have cared deeply about his audience. Peter's life was before him and with every breath he was going to deliver the eye-witness account (2:16) of his relationship with the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ.

Here are some key points:

Peter presents himself as a bond-servant (slave) of Jesus Christ.

This means he has no choice but to speak and write for the Lord, for he has no will of his own.

Peter speaks of "faith" as the "same kind as ours." By saying this, Peter is pointing to other kinds of "faith" (false-faith) that were being presented and taught. This is the same as today. Many teachers of false-faiths seek to entrap people into a legalism via demanding works to rid the soul of guilt. The Cross has already paid the price. This is why knowing God's Word is so important. Again, Jesus came to set the captives free. Are you free? Are you free from childhood false teachings that have placed guilt into your psyche as a resident evil? Or perhaps, as an adult, someone has drilled into your head a guilt that you cannot rid yourself. Jesus came to set us free (Luke 4:18).

Remember a few Sundays ago . . .

"God's Gospel does not intend to replace one group of oppressive spiritual masters (Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes) for another list of titles (Elders, Deacons, Popes, Cardinals, Bishops and Priests). Nowhere in the Gospel of Christ do we see this hierarchical rule with rules and regulations governing salvation."

Peter presents God, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit as one Lord/body (v. 1 and 20,21)

Peter presents the letter he writes as the voice of God via His Holy Spirit and that all the prophets are just instruments through which God

speaks. Is this not what happens to all the writers of the Bible? They are the writers, but God is the author.

Peter states that faith is by the righteousness of God. We do not receive faith because of our righteousness. Meaning, faith is a free gift from God.

Peter identifies “knowledge in the Lord” (epignosis = full knowledge) as a way to increase God’s grace and peace as compared to the false knowledge taught by false teachers. We can count eleven uses/forms of the word “gnosis” (knowledge) in 2 Peter. Paul also warns in Titus 1:16 of false teachers who claim to know or have an idea of God. We have the same today, many claiming and teaching a false knowledge that leads to death and destruction in life. Our country is full of cults and false teachers. This list is too numerous to note here. In addition, the Word of God is adulterated by many groups who do not like the Bible, so they print their own versions and change the words to support their views. If they do not change the text itself, they add copious sidebar comments and foot notes in an attempt to sway the reader to their deranged camp. Some groups simply write their own book and call it sacred as if it came from God. All of these group’s teachings lead to a life of bondage and destruction that plagues the soul.

What more do we need than the Gospel of Jesus Christ? What more do we need than one Gospel account? Is not the revelation from John’s Gospel enough to make the case for Christ?

John 3:1

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;

² this man came to Him by night, and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God *as* a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" (Jn. 3:1-4 NAS)

⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

⁶ "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Continuing in John . . .

^{3:16} "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

What if these were all the words we had? Are they enough?

If these words were found inscribed on a wall today and the world read them, would there not be the divine power coming through them that says . . .

²² "Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other. (Isa. 45:22)

It is God's divine power at work in us that grants/provides the life He has called us. Remember, it is God at work in us for His good pleasure, that we walk in the works He has planned for us (Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 2:13).

Other Points in 2 Peter . . .

Peter sees his life coming to an end.

Peter calls for a moral life-style based on Believers being empowered by God's divine power. This divine power gives us the ability to overcome the world. This does not mean that we become sinless. We do work in that

direction, but we see God standing faithful in this fallen world to forgive us when we fail (1 John 1:1-5). Obviously, three of our best examples of this are David, Moses and Peter who all failed but confessed and were restored. They did suffer the temporal consequences of their sin.

Peter challenges false teaching concerning the **return of Jesus Christ**.

Peter teaches that overcoming life's immoral choices presents Believers **as genuine**.

Let us read the first few lines of the text and comment as we go along.

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 Grace and peace be multiplied to you

in the **knowledge of God** and of Jesus our Lord;

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**.

⁴ For by **these [glory and excellence]**

He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises,
in order that by **them**
you might become partakers of *the **divine nature***,
having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

These recipients have received the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit; they have been reborn of Spirit. They had already escaped; they had been set free from a 24/7 life of corruption. They were now challenged not to step into life's potholes. Peter challenges them to become partakers of God's divine nature. He then provides a list of seven attributes of God's divine nature.

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

[Faith/righteousness is what powers them. For inside the Gospels is carried the righteousness of God that is revealed from faith to faith (Romans 1:17)]

and in *your* moral excellence, **knowledge**;

[Spiritual Bible knowledge]

⁶ and in *your* knowledge, **self-control**,

[fruit of H.S. controls you, no law/Gal 5]

and in *your* self-control, **perseverance**,

[From the Cross perseverance]

and in *your* perseverance, **godliness**; [We are in the image of God]

⁷ and in *your* godliness, **brotherly kindness**, [fruit of the Spirit]

and in *your* brotherly kindness, **love**. [fruit of the Spirit]

Note: There are seven (7) attributes/elements listed. Seven is the number of *spiritual completeness*. There are many lists of seven in the Bible. Isaiah 11:2 “And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear (reverence) of the LORD.” This is the list in reference to the coming Messiah whom Isaiah prophesied. Jesus was the perfect person, because He was God in the flesh. Matthew 5:48, “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” How can this be? Through Christ we are made perfect. Christ absorbs the sins of the surrendered Believer. God implants into every Believer His Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9). This is why we belong to God. Paul proclaims that it is no longer him that lives, but Christ lives in him. He states he lives by faith (Galatians 2:20).

Here are two other lists (Matthew 5 and Galatians 5). Jesus preaches the Sermon on the Mount and opens with seven attributes/characteristics a person should have to enter in the kingdom of Heaven. We continue to go to Jesus’ sermon, because it is foundational in turning away from the perception that keeping the Law can save a person. Jesus points to the inner man of which only God can see and judge.

Matthew 5:1 And when He saw the multitudes, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

[First 7 are a prelude to conquering the last three (persecution).]

² And opening His mouth He *began* to teach them, saying,

³ “Blessed are the **poor in spirit, (humble)** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the **gentle**, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for **righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ "Blessed are the **merciful**, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ "Blessed are the **pure in heart**, for they shall see God.

⁹ "Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.

Paul projects what Jesus taught in Galatians five. The list is longer with nine attributes. It is noted in history that the number nine is the last of the single digits and thus the end or the completeness of things. It is $3 \times 3 = 9$ with three being the number of divine perfection. *For a good study of what numbers mean, you can read E.W. Bullinger's Number in Scripture; Kregel publications.*

Galatians 5:18-26

¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. ¹⁹ Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** ²³ **gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**

²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

2 Peter continued . . .

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

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

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;

¹¹ **for in this way . . .**

[What way? It is God's calling and choosing THAT HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED THESE BELIEVERS IN THE TRUTH which is PRESENT IN THEM AS PETER WRITES TO THEM 2:12] [THERE THE ENTRANCE TO HEAVEN IS SUPPLIED BY GOD'S CALLING AND CHOOSING.

REMEMBER, GOD CALLS all people through the creation via His Holy Spirit AND qualifies ALL PEOPLE AT THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT.

REMEMBER IT IS THOSE THAT HOLD ON TO THE OVERCOMING LIFE TO THE END WHO ARE THE REAL BELIEVERS. REAL BELIEVERS OVERCOME.]

Verse 11 continued . . .

11 the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

Here is Scripture support. **Overcomers** are eternally saved. Believers may slip, but, in the end, they are preserved due to their possessing the same kind of faith as Peter did and the people for whom he wrote.

1 John. 5:4 For whatever is born of God **overcomes** the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.

Revelation. 17:14 "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will **overcome** them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him *are the* **called and chosen and faithful.**"

1 Cor. 1:4-8 ⁴ I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵ that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, ⁶ **even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,** ⁷ so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸ **who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

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.

1Thess 3:13 so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1Thess. 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:7 having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

1 Cor. 5:5 I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Years ago, as I transported people that I had arrested to the jailhouse, I often thought that God created them for another purpose than to go to jail. Many were arrested under circumstances that were less than flattering and downright embarrassing. However, they went in all their absence of glory. When I read this passage in 1 Thessalonians, I think of all those who were delivered over to the authorities for correction and, yes, punishment. Paul speaks of a gross sinner to be delivered over to Satan for the destruction of their soul? NO. But their flesh. I look back over my role as a police officer and see that after a person had been in the process of having their flesh destroyed, we as arms of the state were there to pick up the pieces and give the person another chance. Jail can be the best place for a person to think about the destruction of their flesh.

2 Peter ¹² Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things,
even though you *already know them*,
and **have been established** in the truth which is **present with you**.

¹³ And I consider it right,
as long as I am in this *earthly* dwelling,
to **stir you up** by way of **reminder**,

¹⁴ knowing that the laying aside of my *earthly* dwelling is imminent,
as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

¹⁵ And I will also be diligent
that at any time after my departure

you may be able to call these things to mind.

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised tales

when we made known to you

the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,

but we were **eyewitnesses** of His majesty.

¹⁷ For when He received honor and glory from God the Father,

such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory,

"This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased "--

¹⁸ and we ourselves heard this utterance

made from heaven

when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

¹⁹ And so we have the prophetic word *made* more sure,

to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place,

until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

²⁰ But know this first of all,

that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation,

²¹ for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will,

but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.