

MULTIPLIED GRACE

Peter writes his second letter as an apostle of God in the flesh, Jesus, sent by Him to teach His word of truth. Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ receives the same gift of faith as the apostles. There are not different classes of Christians, but all are bought-with-blood, ransomed by the same righteous Lord at the same cross. Yet some claim to be Christians who think spiritual experiences somehow give them special esoteric knowledge, somehow setting them apart in a higher plane of spirituality than believers without such experiences. Peter counters this deception. In chapter 1, he talks about 1) equal faith. 2) received righteousness, and 3) not dividing the body of believers. This mathematical theme continues...

4- GOD'S MULTIPLIED GRACE. 2 Peter 1:2 says, "*may grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*" Verse 1 ascribed deity to "*our God and Savior Jesus Christ.*" Beware the deception of those who want to talk about God but never Jesus. Saving knowledge of God comes only through the Lord Jesus Christ, and this is where all believers must begin. Peter uses the word knowledge (*gnosis*) 11 times in this letter. It is through knowledge of Jesus that grace and peace come. Jesus is the foundation of salvation, the only way to God, truth and life (John 14:6). Peter confessed of Jesus in Matthew 16:16, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" Jesus replied, "*Blessed are you, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.*" This is not gnostic esoteric knowledge, this is saving faith knowledge that comes when one is reborn by the Holy Spirit, and is true of all Christians. But it's only the beginning of peace with God. Grace and peace will be multiplied, as you grow in grace and knowledge. To multiply something you start with that thing. So it is with faith. It doesn't stop there, it starts there. It's the glorious spiritual beginning of a transformed life, here and now.

5- GOD GRANTS ALL YOU NEED. Verse 3, "*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence.*" False teachers claim special knowledge. God says all Christians, by God's divine power, have already received "all things" needed for life and godliness, everything relevant to the Christian life. This begins by knowing God through the Lord Jesus Christ in saving faith. And believers are called to something far beyond so-called gnostic knowledge - to Christ's own glory and excellence. This refers to His divinity, as God in the flesh, as Jesus the lord of glory reveals the character of God (1 Corinthians 2:8, James 2:1). Jesus is the outward expression of the inward realities of God's attributes. John 1:14, "*the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*" Believers in Christ are in union with Him, as Colossians 1:27, "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" His divine power has already granted believers the sum total of all they need to grow in Him.

6- GOD ADDS AND SUBTRACTS. Verse 4, "*by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desires.*" New life in Christ subtracts your former slavery to sin, and adds God's blessings of sanctification. Precious, as 1 Peter 1:19 "*you were ransomed not with perishable things such as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.*" Promised, as Philippians 1:6 "*God who began a good work in you will bring it to completion*" and Romans 8:30, as those whom He predestined He also called and justified and glorified. Believers will be sanctified, being made holy, more like Christ, as you trust and obey. It's all according to God's principle of transformation, "the Spirit of God works the Word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God." That's the process and purpose of union with Christ, as Romans 8:29, "*to be conformed to the image of Christ.*"

The "*all things*" of verse 3 are in verse 4 the "*promises*" that believers will be "*partakers of the divine nature.*" BH Edwards notes "this is through the Word and the Spirit. With those two we have all that we need to become a Christian, and all that we need to continue as a Christian. This is neglected today because we have been given the impression that we are somehow smart to respond to the call of God, and that the first inclination of our heart and mind toward the Creator was more our work than His." Rather, regeneration and justification are God's work of monergism, the past tense of salvation. He grants you these gifts, and then sanctification is the present tense of His work of synergism. As you trust and obey by the power of the Holy Spirit, bearing the fruit of the Spirit, to become more like Christ. The future tense of salvation is glorification, when God ultimately will resurrect your body to live with Him forever.