

Subject: *Believers Are Blessed Beyond Measure – Part 2*

Scripture: *2 Peter 1:1-4*

In the first letter of Peter his main theme is staying faithful to Christ in a time of trial and persecution. In this second letter he writes about growing in our knowledge of Christ in the midst of false teaching. In First Peter he writes to believers facing threats from outside the church, but in Second Peter he writes about dangers that come from inside the church.

This second letter of Peter is a warning to the church and also a reminder of spiritual truth that would protect and strengthen them. This letter shows that the best way to defend against false teachers and their doctrine is to know the truth. Peter begins chapter 1 by reminding believers about the rich blessings of their salvation.

1. The source of salvation

Those who are saved have “obtained like precious faith with us” (Peter and other believers). Faith (the same precious, valuable faith that was given to the apostles) was given to them by God. It was a gift of God’s grace, not something they had done.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

Both the grace and the faith are the gift of God. God’s grace is His hand that reaches down to save us, and faith is our hand that receives salvation.

Salvation is a gift that comes from God through Christ’s obedience and death on the cross. All believers share in the righteousness of Christ which is imputed (credited) to them. All believers come to share in the righteousness of Christ by faith, and that faith itself is a divine gift.

2. The substance of salvation

The substance of salvation is grace and peace which are multiplied to believers when they come to know God and Jesus as Lord. This is a personal saving knowledge of God and His Son Jesus. Christ gave us a definition of eternal life when He prayed in *John 17:3* *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*

Knowledge is a key word found 13 times in 2 Peter (first reference, 1:2; last reference, 3:18). The word for “knowledge” is not only knowing facts or information about Christ, but it is personal, intimate knowledge. Being a Christian begins by knowing the truth about Christ, and then moves beyond that to knowing Christ in a personal way. In 1 Peter 2:7, Peter writes, “Unto you therefore who believe he (Christ) is precious.” Someone is precious to you only if you know them personally. As our knowledge grows deeper and wider, the more His grace and peace are multiplied in us. All believers have more grace for their sins and more peace for their trials.

3. The sufficiency of salvation

Peter writes about the components of our salvation which include:

- A. Divine power** – Salvation is a great demonstration of God’s power. Believers have no sufficiency of their own, but only through Christ.
- B. Divine provision** – Christ has granted to believers all things pertaining to life and godliness. To be godly is to live in reverence, submission, and obedience to Christ. He has supplied everything we need to become godly. False teachers want us to think that we lack something more than Christ (an experience, a special blessing, an extra ability, a second level of spiritual blessing). “Life and godliness” refer to what God supplies for our sanctification. It takes a lot to take a rebellious, lost sinner and make him think and talk and worship, and serve like a saint, but God has provided everything we need. One of the greatest resources is Scripture. **2 Timothy 3:16** *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect (mature), thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*
- C. Divine purpose** – (“through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue”) This knowledge comes through the revealed majesty of Christ. We can see His majesty and beauty, and He becomes precious to us. When we are saved we understand that Christ is the Son of God (glory) and the perfect man (virtue), and because of that we repent of our sins and trust in Him as our Lord and Savior.

The Bible speaks of those who are saved as the “called.”

2 Timothy 1:9 *God has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.*

1 Peter 2:9 *God called us out of spiritual darkness into God’s marvelous light*

1 Corinthians 1:9 *God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

1 Timothy 6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called...*

Biblically speaking, there are two aspects to God’s call. There is **the general call** which comes through the preaching and sharing of the gospel, and there is **the effectual call** that always results in salvation. The general call of the Gospel goes out to all people, but some don’t hear it or obey it. The effectual call is different. All true Christians hear God’s call to salvation in Christ and they are saved.

Three things can be said about **the effectual call**: 1) it is powerful because it comes in the power of God; 2) it is productive because it produces repentance and faith in Christ. It produces salvation; 3) it is personal because each believer hears and answers this call from God. So when a preacher preaches or a teacher teaches or a person evangelizes, he can proclaim the Gospel to anyone and everyone, and he can rest assured that some will hear God’s call, respond to it, and be saved.

John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Romans 8:29-30 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

In all the NT letters “call” refers to the effectual call by which sinners are drawn to Christ by His glory (as God) and virtue (as man). It is not a verbal or audible call; it’s an internal and personal call. God opens our spiritual eyes to see Christ as the pearl of great price.

D. Divine promises – God promises to give us spiritual life, eternal life, resurrection life, forgiveness, and so much more. By these promises we believe in Christ and become partakers of the divine nature. We don’t become little gods, but we become like God. That is what we partake in, but there’s something we don’t partake in—the corruption that is in the world through lust (selfish desire). When we’re saved it means we love what God loves and we hate what God hates; we love what we once hated, and we hate what we once loved. Salvation changes our desires and affections. Believers have escaped the world’s corruption. This is process that begins at conversion and continues until we go to our eternal home. This is what Paul had in mind in **Romans 12:2** *And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*

The word “precious” is one that Peter uses several times in 1 and 2 Peter. He speaks of “precious faith” like the apostles had, the “precious blood of Christ” that redeems us from sin, and “the precious corner stone” who is Christ. Peter says back in 1 Peter 1:7, “Unto you who believe Christ is precious.” Is Christ precious to you?

It’s no wonder that Peter refers to “like precious faith” (vs. 1) because this faith is our connection with our precious Lord and Savior.