

## 2<sup>nd</sup> PETER • ABSTRACT (A summary of the contents of a book)

### PART 1



2nd Peter represents the Apostle Peter's 2<sup>nd</sup> epistle. Written shortly after the first, the distinguishing mark of this letter is not only its focus on the saving gospel, but its efficient and effective presentation. In this respect, Peter does two things. First, he reminds us of what the saving gospel teaches (1:1-5), then he provides us with those reasons we should not only remember what this gospel teaches, but also why it is important that we are growing strong in our commitment to its truths (1:16-3:18).

#### 1. What Peter reminds us about the saving gospel message (1:1-15):

1.1. Through faith in the righteousness of Christ we GAIN a justified state (or "standing") with God (i.e. forgiveness from the eternal penalty of sin).

#### (1-2)

1.2. Through faith in Christ we also GAIN a glorified/exalted state (or "standing") before God (i.e. empowerment for godly living, the promise of eternal life and freedom from the bondage to sin).

(3-4) "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him...by which he [also] granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you might become partakers of the divine nature" = faith-gained empowerment for godly living and the promise of eternal life; "having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire" = freedom from bondage to sin (see Rom 8:29-30 w/1-3 = justified, 4-11 = glorified; see 2Co 3:17-18; also consider Rom 6:4).

1.3. Though we have GAINED a justified and glorified state through faith in Christ, we MUST MAINTAIN this state/standing through faithfulness (i.e. Christianity = Marriage = Gain + Maintain *NOT simply* Gain).

(5a - "make every effort to supplement [giving all diligence add to - KJV] your faith" = Be faithful to maintain what you gained. IOW: more than faith is demanded by God (i.e. is necessary) to be saved. Notice, the responsibility (of supplementing/adding) is placed squarely upon us (versus it being something that is produced by God). Consider also, that the Scriptures never call Christians to give such attention or diligence to their faith (i.e. make every effort to really, really, really believe!). After we have gained our marriage to Christ thru faith (Eph 5:22-32), our concentration becomes the same as any earthly marriage – MAINTAINING thru faithfulness: CONTRA E.G. = "To focus on how I'm doing more than what Christ has done is Christian narcissism. Because Jesus was someone, you're free to be no one." - Tullian Tchividjian (*Jesus + Nothing = Everything*)

1.4. Faithful maintaining looks like growing in those areas/attributes of obedience God commands in His Word.

(5b-8: "virtue" [ἀρετή = moral excellence - NAS]) = Bible-based behavior, excellency as revealed in the character, work and wisdom of God - see v3; Rom 2:18; Phi 4:8; Isa 30:21; \*all the other areas/attributes of obedience function as the means by which we achieve this first area/attribute – Phi 1:9-10 // "knowledge" = Special Rev/General Rev for determining what is excellent – again Phi 1:9-10; Isa 5:13 w/8:20-22, 27:11 w/28:23-29 // "self-control" = Able to put knowledge into practice and say 'no' to ungodliness – Act 24:25; Tit 2:11-12 // "steadfastness" = Perseverance; consistency, commitment or self-control that is not subject to circumstance – 2Ti 4:2; Mat 10:21-22; e.g. Mat 13:18-23; often a function of aptitude – Deu 8:11-20; Psa 78:5-23 // "godliness" = Sound theology, doctrine or gospel that sees persevering obedience to God's Law as necessary to salvation - 1Ti 4:6-8 w/1:8-11; consider how God acts "godly" – by acting according to His Law; the Law is simply an expression of God's character // "brotherly affection" = Loving loyalty to our covenant family in accordance w/the 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest commandment or expression of godliness/God's character – Mat 22:39 // "love" = Loyalty to God as the greatest commandment or expression of brotherly kindness – Mat 22:37-38; 1Jo 5:2; \*in agreement w/ these last two is where our Christian life begins). CONTRA E.G. = "Real spiritual growth happens as we look up to Christ and what he did, not in to ourselves and how we're doing." - Tullian Tchividjian (*Jesus + Nothing = Everything*).

### 1.5. Failing to maintain means losing what we gained.

(9) = Nearsighted blindness and forgotten cleansing are both metaphors meant to refer to loss of a person's justified state/right standing with God; Isa 59:10-11; Eze 18:24). IOW: Our continued freedom from sin's enslaving power and eternal penalty is dependent on us (i.e. we can go back under both sin's power and penalty - 2:20).

### 1.6. Faithfulness in maintaining what we have gained will mean salvation (i.e. Faith + Faithfulness = Salvation NOT Faith + Nothing = Salvation).

(10-11 = Notice he affirms salvation to be conditioned upon our faithfulness: **"if you practice these qualities"** – i.e. if you maintain...then **"you will never fail"**; Notice also he affirms this to be the true way to heaven—i.e. final salvation, **"For in this way there was richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom..."**; Consider the antithesis: "If you do not practice these qualities you WILL FAIL and the entrance into the eternal kingdom will not be richly supplied." The Apostle James preached the same message (Jam 2:14-26). How controversial Peter and James' words are to the Evangelical Christian view. CONTRA E.G.: 1) "Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." – *Article V. Southern Baptist Church Faith and Message*. 2) "What I'm most deeply grateful for is that God's love for us, approval of us, and commitment to us does not ride on our resolve but on Jesus's resolve for us. The gospel is the good news announcing Jesus's infallible devotion to us despite our inconsistent devotion to Him. The gospel is not a command to hang on to Jesus; it's a promise that no matter how weak and unsuccessful our faith and efforts may be, God is always holding on to us." - Tullian Tchividjian (*It Is Finished: 365 Days of Good News*)

### 1.7. Peter thought it was incredibly important to remind believers of these specific "qualities" (G&M) of the saving gospel message.

(12-15) **"I intend always to remind you of these qualities...I think it right as long as I am in this body"** = Though Peter did write about other things (e.g. his 1<sup>st</sup> epistle), the G&M gospel took center stage when it came to priority of teaching. **"I will make every effort so after my departure you may be able to recall these things"** = This particular gospel message could not die with him. Peter would **"therefore"** do whatever it took to see that Christians (both in his day and the future) grew strong in their recollection and commitment to the G&M gospel. The message presented in the previous verses was just that important.

## 2. Why Peter thought it was so important to not only remind believers of this gospel (of G&M) but see that they were growing strong in their commitment to its truths (1:16-3:18):

### 2.1. B/C this gospel is not the false teaching of men, but the message of both Christ (whom God Himself affirmed) and the OT Scriptures.

(16-21) **"For we did not follow cleverly devised myths"** = A gospel message which sounds right or seems to make sense but lacks Divine and Scriptural support/authority. **"when we ("rather/instead" - ἄλλα) made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty...He received glory (or affirmation) from God the Father...we ourselves heard this"** = This is where Peter got his gospel message. It was the message of God's powerful Son at His coming. **"And we have something more sure, the prophetic word... (the "prophecy of Scripture" not "produced by the will of man, but...from God...the Holy Spirit")** = This (also) is where Peter's message came from; it is the same gospel found in the OT Scriptures - especially those portions which prophesied of the NC to come (see Jer 31:33 ["law written on their hearts" = inward justification gained by faith], 34 ["know Me" = relationship w/God maintained thru outward obedience/faithfulness] w/Rom 2:6-29 w/3:28-30; 1Jo 2:1-7). **"to which you do well to pay attention...until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts"** = The day of Christ's return. As such, this represents not only another affirmation of maintaining of what we have gained (i.e. maintain until the end/Christ's return), but also a serious warning in light of the authority by which the message comes (Christ and the Scriptures). We dare not neglect or forget it!