

2Peter 1:1-3

Wow! What is Included When You Receive Christ

In a time of crisis, it is important to take an inventory of what resources you have available to work with, or to fight with, so that you know what your capabilities are and so you can plan accordingly how you should respond.

We are in an ever-worsening crisis. Satan is at war to destroy Christianity, and to destroy the Judeo-Christian framework and values of our society. He is at war to destroy our freedoms and to bring us into bondage.

And the Lord is sending us on a rescue mission into this environment, as sheep among wolves. But He is not sending us alone. He is not sending us vulnerable. He is not sending us without all the resources we need for success.

Today we are going to begin taking inventory to see what God has given us for dealing with the challenges and threats of living in this world.

In First Peter, the Lord was preparing the church for coming persecution and reminding the church that this world is not our home.

We are to live here as foreigners who are here on short-term visas—just passing through with a task to do.

Now we are going to take a look at Second Peter, in which the Lord is warning and preparing the church to not be deceived by false teachers and by destructive doctrines that come disguised as the truth.

This letter is designed to cultivate and strengthen the ability of the church to discern truth from lies, (I think that this may be very helpful for us living in a time when lies seem to be more common than truth).

And this letter encourages us to not lose faith when God's promises don't come as quickly as we would like them to.

This teaching will be very important for us to have firmly under our belts if the rapture doesn't come before full-blown persecution breaks out in our land.

2Peter 1:1a, "Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ..."

A bondservant was also known as a love slave.

In Hebrew culture, masters were required to release their slaves after seven years of service and set them free.

But if a slave had a good master, and deeply loved that master, he or she might prefer to continue serving as the master's slave and living under the master's care, rather than to be released.

Such a slave could devote themselves voluntarily to permanently serve their master for the rest of their lives, and as a mark of that loyalty, a large hole would be pierced in their ear as a permanent mark of that loyalty.

This is what Peter's relationship with Jesus Christ was like. Out of love for his Master, Peter was devoted to being Christ's servant for the rest of his life.

No longer would Peter seek his own desires, or pursue his own dreams, or live his own life, but he would for the rest of his life, be devoted to following and obeying Jesus, whom he loved intensely.

Peter took great delight and joy in being a bondservant of Jesus Christ.

Have you ever done this? Have you surrendered your independence, and out of love for Jesus, offered yourself, to be for the rest of your life, His bondservant, His love-slave?

I can remember doing this when I was around 19 or 20 years of age. And I have never regretted it. Jesus has been so good to me. It was one of the best decisions I ever made.

2Peter 1:1b, "To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:"

Peter was the apostle, the church leader. And he is writing this letter to churches that were under his care and authority.

He addresses the believers he is writing to as, those who have obtained like precious faith with us, meaning, "those who have obtained a faith of equal standing [or equal value] with ours (ESV); who have received a faith just as precious as ours (NIV)."

What the average Christian receives when they come to faith in Christ, is the same caliber and quality of faith as Peter, Paul, James and John received.

So, all that he has to say here about what was received, applies to every child of God just as equally as it applied to the Apostle Peter.

The spiritual package you received from God when you believed is of equal quality to what Peter received.

Our faith was something that we obtained, or received. It is a gift that is given to us, we didn't work for it.

Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”

Where does your faith in God come from? Why are you a believer and others are not? How did you get the faith that you have?

Verse one tells us that we received it by the righteousness of our God. That means our faith comes from God. And it was God’s righteous action that put faith into our hearts.

The fact that you have faith and are a believer and therefore a child of God, is not because of any righteousness of your own. It is 100% God’s righteousness that gave you this amazingly costly, valuable, precious faith.

And look carefully at how Peter identifies our God there in verse one, “*...our God and Savior Jesus Christ.*”

Who is Jesus? This is a declaration that Jesus Christ is God—He is both our God and our Savior.

What is God? The biblical qualification is that in order to be God you must be the one who created everything that exists.

So doesn’t it make sense that the one who created us has the right of ownership over us—we belong to Him.

God planned and created every person on this planet; therefore, all people rightfully belong to God—He owns us all.

But most people prefer to identify some other being as their god, or they prefer to deny the existence of any God, so that they can avoid any loyalty to their one true Creator. We were born rebels by nature.

We were all by nature the opposite of a love-slave, we were rebel enemies of God.

And Jesus is not only our God who created us, but He is also our Savior who rescued us from our rebellion when we were enemies of God.

Jesus paid the penalty for our sin so that we could become children of God.

We often hear someone say to a hero who rescues them from drowning, or from a burning building, “I owe you my life, because you saved me.”

So, Jesus Christ doubly owns us—He created us, so we belong to Him. And He rescued us from our deserved death penalty, so we owe Him our life.

This is why each of us should surrender our life to Jesus Christ, that we might be His love-slaves. We rightfully belong to Him.

2Peter 1:2, “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”

Look at the blessing that the Holy Spirit, speaking through Peter, pronounces upon the children of God: “*Grace and peace be multiplied to you...*”

Grace means God’s power, goodness and love expressed toward the undeserving in generously giving powerless people [that’s us] everything needed for salvation, everything needed for abundant life and everything needed for godliness; all at Christ’s expense.

God does it all, we contribute nothing of our own. That is grace!

And God’s desire, as expressed through His word in verse two, is to multiply this toward you so that you experience more and more of His grace.

“*Grace and peace be multiplied to you...*” **What is peace?**

Peace is that Hebrew concept of Shalom.

In this context it means living at peace with God, enjoying His favor, and friendship, and living at peace and security with those around you, resulting in safety, fellowship and happiness.

Shalom means experiencing all the blessings of God in your life, including physical health, spiritual vitality, and the abundant provision of all your needs.

And God, speaking through Peter, says that He desires this kind of peace to be multiplied to you who have been given this amazing gift of faith by God.

When you received Christ, you became eligible to receive unlimited deliveries of grace and peace from God, over and over for the rest of your life.

How do we activate, or begin experiencing the multiplication of these gifts from God?

2Peter 1:2, “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”

Maybe you have heard it said before that Christianity is not religion, it is a relationship with God.

John 17:3, Jesus said, “*And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*”

And grace and peace are multiplied in our lives as we get to know God—not just get to know information about God, but really grow to know Him and to interact with Him on a personal level.

As you read the Bible with an attitude that says, “This is what God has written to me, I want to read it so that I can know Him better,” you will get to know Him.

And as prayer becomes conversation with a friend, you will get to know Him through talking with Him.

And as your daily life becomes a conscious act of walking with Jesus, and following His lead, and talking to Him about the things you encounter, and letting Him speak to others about Himself through you, you will get to know Him better.

And as you meet with other believers and talk about Jesus, and experience the life of Jesus being expressed through them, you will grow in your knowledge of Him.

And as you suffer rejection and persecution, and hardships because of your walk with Jesus, you will grow immensely in your knowledge of Him.

He will become your friend, and then your best friend. He will eventually become closer to you than even your closest and most intimate human relationship.

And the more you know Him, the more deeply you will want to go in your knowledge of Him, and the more you will be willing to suffer in order to follow Him, because of the depth of your relationship.

Philippians 3:8, 10, “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ... ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection [this is multiplied grace and peace], and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...”

In what way is the enemy robbing you of growing in your relationship with Jesus Christ?

Often the enemy will keep you too busy and distracted with other things to be able to invest yourself in knowing Christ.

When other things crowd out the Lord, He will sometimes take those other things away that have been consuming all of our time and attention.

He will take them away, so that He can have relationship with us.

Notice how God is identified in the last part of verse two.

2Peter 1:2, “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”

Two beings are identified as our Lord (singular), meaning our Master—one is called God, and the other is called Jesus.

Verse one ended identifying Jesus as our God.

Now verse two ends saying that both God and Jesus are our Lord. Jesus Christ is God, but there is more to God than Jesus, and yet Jesus is not less than God.

This is the mystery of the godhead. Our God is three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and yet He is one God.

2Peter 1:3, “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue...”

Jesus’ power is divine, meaning His power is the power of God, which means that it is infinite power—there is no limit or end to His power.

His power is not just energy, but His power is also resources—wealth is power, knowledge in power, influence is power, and authority is power.

There is no limit to the energy of God, or to the resources and riches of God. He has all knowledge and all authority.

And His power knows no rival.

God’s infinite power has given to us all things that we need for life, and all things that we need for godliness.

If someone else had equal or greater power than God, they could cancel, or override, or take away what God has given us.

But there is no rival to God’s power—He is all powerful, and what He has given us can never be taken away.

2Peter 1:3, “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to [meaning, everything needed for] life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us...”

God’s infinite power has already given to us (past tense) all things that pertain to life—meaning all that we need for living the life that God has called us to live, has already been given to us.

Obviously, God has not given us millions of dollars in our bank account, nor has he given us semi-truck loads of all the stuff we will ever need in life.

So how has God already, past tense, given to us all things that we need for life and godliness?

This means that when He saved us, God gave us Jesus Christ, who, by His Holy Spirit, lives inside of us, and He (God in us) supplies for us **everything** (notice that the Bible uses the word *everything*) we will ever need, when we need it.

Again, look at how verse three ends, all that we need for living life, and all that we need for being godly, has been given to us through our knowledge of Christ—through our relationship with Christ.

And as we prioritize and cultivate our relationship with the Lord, as we get to know Him better, we will trust Him more, and we will look to other sources less, and we will find that He meets all of our needs.

This is the same thing that Jesus promised us in **Matthew 6:31-33**, “*Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’*”³² *For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, [meaning seek to know and walk with Jesus] and all these things [everything needed for successful life and godliness] shall be added to you.”*

Many are fearful about how we will survive if we lose our job, or if there are massive food shortages. Let’s pause and take stock of what we have with us for survival gear in our boat that feels like it is about to capsize and sink in this stormy sea.

Oh, look, we have Jesus Christ with us in our boat. And who is He? Our God and our Savior.

All that is needed for life doesn’t come through a good-paying job, or through a loaded bank account, or through lots of food stock-piled.

Through nurturing our relationship with Christ—getting to know Him, we will find that He will supply everything that we need.

Romans 8:31-35, “*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, [and He is] *who can be against us?*”³² *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, [He sent His own Son to die in our place so that we could be set free] how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?* [All things that are needed for life and for godliness]³³ *Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect?* [We are God’s elect.] *It is God who justifies.*³⁴ *Who is he who condemns?* [As Peter said, God’s power—His infinite power has given us these blessings, so no one can take them away.] *It is Christ who died* [He knows all about our sins and died for even the worst of our sins—everything is covered and paid in full by the infinite power of His blood], *and furthermore [Christ] is also risen* [He triumphed over all enemies—even death], *who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.* [Jesus is for us—He’s talking to the Father on our behalf.]³⁵ *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”**

Romans 8:38-39, “*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels [this includes demons, who are fallen angels] nor principalities [these are high-ranking demons with authority over regions] nor powers [of any kind, human or supernatural], nor things present nor things to*

come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

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