

2 Peter 1:1-11

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So, let's talk about Peter. Peter's second epistle, to be specific. When talking about Second Peter in circles outside of our own conservative WELS, some of the commonest line of discussion is that 2 Peter's place in the canon is doubtful. The Concordia Self-Study Commentary says this about Peter's two epistles: "While the first letter's place in the canon has always been an assured one, that of the second letter has been disputed, with the weakest historical attestation of any book in the New Testament."

Why is this? There are three main reasons. First, the book was practically unknown until early in the third century. The earliest clear reference to 2 Peter is in Origen (A.D. 185-254?) (*The Broadman Bible Commentary, Vol. 12*). However, it would be incorrect to say that 2 Peter does not have the support of the apostolic fathers for its canonicity. "Although 2 Peter was not as widely known and recognized in the early church as 1 Peter, some may have used and accepted it as authoritative as early as the second century and perhaps even in the latter part of the first century (1 Clement [A.D. 95] may allude to it). It was not ascribed to Peter until Origen's time, and he seems to reflect some doubt concerning it. Eusebius (265-340) placed it among the questioned books, though he admits that most accept it as from Peter. After Eusebius's time, it seems to have been quite generally accepted as canonical" (*The Concordia Self-Study Bible*).

Secondly, a difficulty arises in the differences between 1 Peter and 2 Peter. It seems as if the universal acknowledgment of 1 Peter as the product of the apostle caused the early church to be slow to accept 2 Peter into their list. (Broadman). Jerome (A.D. 346-420), the translator of the Vulgate version of the Bible, accepted 2 Peter along with the other 6 "catholic" or general epistles, at the same time recognized that some scholars even in his time have doubted its genuineness because of this variation in style between the two letters (*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*).

Although it might seem a bit cumbersome to quote at length from a grammarian, it might be worthwhile to listen to Robertson speak to this very point for several clarifying reasons.

As Peter was full of impulses and emotions and apparent inconsistencies, the same heritage falls to his Epistles. The most outstanding difference between 1 Peter and 2 Peter is in the vocabulary. 1 Peter has 361 not found in 2 Peter, while 2 Peter has 231 words not in 1 Peter...1 Peter has 63 words not in the rest of the NT, while 2 Peter has 57 (5 doubtful); but of these 120 words, only one (apothesis) occurs in both. This is surely a remarkable situation. But both of them have a number of words in common that occur elsewhere also in the NT, like anastrophe, psuchay, etc. Both use the plural of abstract nouns; both have the habit, like James, of repeating words, while Jude avoids repetitions; both make idiomatic use of the article; both make scant use of participles, and there are very few Hebraisms; both use words only known from the vernacular koinay; both use a number of classical words like anagkastoos (1 Peter, Plato), plastos (Her., Eur., Xen., 2 Peter); both use picture-words; both seem to know the Apocrypha; both refer to events in the life of Christ; both show acquaintance with Paul's Epistles, and use many technical Christian terms.

But, on the other hand, 1 Peter is deeply influenced by the LXX, while 2 Peter shows little use of it; 1 Peter is more stately and elevated without affectation, while 2 Peter has grandeur, though it is, perhaps, somewhat "grandiose" and uses a number of rare words like tartarooo; 1 Peter makes clear distinctions between the tenses, prepositions, and uses smooth Greek generally, while 2 Peter has a certain roughness of style and even apparent solecisms (mistakes) like blemma (2:8)...1 Peter shows little originality and rhetorical power, while 2 Peter, though not so original as Jude, yet has more individuality than 1 Peter....It is not for a grammarian to settle, if anybody can, the controversy about the two Epistles, but Simcox is not far from wrong when he says of 2 Peter that "a superficial student is likelier than a thorough student to be certain that it is

spurious.” Spitta, Bigg and Zahn among recent writers suggest that in 2 Peter we have Peter's own composition, while in 1 Peter we have the Greek of an amanuensis who either wrote out Peter's ideas, revised them or translated Peter's Aramaic into Greek. We know that Peter had interpreters (Mark, for instance), and Josephus used such literary help and Paul had amanuenses....It is worth mentioning that 2 Peter and the Apocalypse, which are the two books that furnish most of the linguistic anomalies in the NT, both have abundant parallels among the less well-educated papyri writers, and it is of Peter and John that the terms *agrammatoi* and *idiotai* are used (Acts 4:13). (*Robertson: A Grammar of the Greek New Testament*)

For a fuller comparison of the two Epistles of Peter, and for more argumentation in favor of Peter as the author of 2 Peter, read the full account in Robertson.

Thirdly, one of the difficulties that has raised questions about the authorship of 2 Peter as coming from Peter the Apostle and that have cast aspersions on 2 Peter's canonicity is its striking similarity in places to Jude. Compare Jude 5-16 with 2 Peter 2:1-19. Compare Jude 18: They said to you, “in the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires” (Jude 1:18 NIV) with 2 Peter 3:3: First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires (2 Peter 3:3 NIV). One major argument against Petrine authorship runs along this line: “If, perchance, Jude preceded 2 Peter, would the well-known apostle have borrowed from a little-known or unknown writer?” (*Broadman*) Edwin A. Blum, the editor of the 2 Peter part of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* echoes this opinion strongly: “There are so many similarities between 2 Peter (mainly chapter 2) and Jude that some kind of literary or oral dependence seems necessary....

The common material almost entirely relates to the description and denunciation of false teachers. The majority view is that 2 Peter is dependent on Jude....Some scholars use this apparent dependence on Jude to deny Petrine authorship. But the use of Jude by the author of 2 Peter would pose a problem for Petrine authorship of the letter only if (1) the dependence of 2 Peter on Jude were conclusively proved, (2) the composition of Jude were definitely dated later than A.D. 64, or (3) it could be shown that an apostle such as Peter would not have used so much material from another writer.

Some students of 1 Peter find a large amount of catechetical material within it. If Peter in the composition of his first letter used material common within the church, there is no reason why he should not have done the same thing in writing his second letter. However, the dependence of 2 Peter on Jude is not a certainty. Mayor holds that 2 Peter uses Jude while Bigg finds that Jude borrows from 2 Peter. It is also quite possible that both letters used a common source." (p. 263, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*). Because of these and other minor reasons, it was not until the 27 books of the NT were listed in the Epistle of Athanasius (A.D. 367) and approved subsequently by the Council of Carthage (397) that Second Peter had a fixed place in the canon. (*Broadman*)

Verse 1

NIV 1: Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:

KJV 1: Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

Latin 1: Simeon Petrus, et servus et apostolus Jesu Christi, iis qui aequae pretiosam nobiscum sortiti sunt fidem, per justitiam Dei nostri et Servatoris Jesu Christi,

Spanish 1: Simon Pedro, siervo y apostol de Jesucristo, a los que habeis alcanzado, por la justicia de nuestro Dios y Salvador Jesucristo, una fe igualmente preciosa qua la nuestra:

Luther's German 1: Simon Petrus, ein Knecht and Apostel Jesu Christi, denen, die mit uns eben denselbigen theuren Glauben überkommen haben in der Gerechtigkeit, die unser Gott gibt und der Heiland Jesus Christ.

Modern German 1: Simon Petrus, ein Knecht and Apostel Jesu Christi, denen, die mit uns denselben teuren Glauben überkommen haben durch die Gerechtigkeit, die unser Gott gibt und der Heiland Jesus Christus.

TEV 1: From Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ—to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have been given a faith as precious as ours:

AAT 1: Simon Peter, Servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the people who by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ were given a faith as precious as ours:

RSV 1: Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

LB 1: From: Simon Peter, a servant and missionary of Jesus Christ. To: All of you who have our kind of faith. The faith I speak of is the kind that Jesus Christ our God and Savior gives to us. How precious it is, and how just and good he is to give this same faith to each of us.

GWN 1: Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the people who by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ were given a faith as precious as ours:

KJH 1: Simon Peter, a slave and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith equally as precious as ours, through the (imputed) righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Greek: Συμεὼν Πέτρος δοῦλος καὶ ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῖς ἰσότιμον ἡμῖν λαχοῦσιν πίστιν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,

Exegetical Notes on verse 1

- ἰσότιμον*: “With the same honor.” Here the word has the meaning “equal privilege” or “equally privileged,” that is, a faith which carries equal privileges.
- ἡμῖν*: “With us.” The contrast could be (1) between Jews and Gentiles who have equal faith-privileges, but here the contrast is almost certainly (2) between the apostles who had been eyewitnesses of the original revelation (1:16) and the Christians that Peter was writing to, Christians of the second or even third generation.
- πίστιν*: Here it is not the faith which is a mere body of doctrine, but this is the God-given faith or trust which brings man salvation (*organon lepticon*) and the God-given ability to trust God's promises.

Robertson calls “*isotimon haymin pistin*” an instrumental dative under the classification of *With words of likeness and identity*.

Luther's Commentary: Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

This is the signature and superscription of this epistle, in order that we may know who is writing and to whom he is writing, namely, to those who have heard the Word of God and now have faith. But what kind of faith is it? "In the righteousness of our God," says the apostle. Here he ascribes righteousness to faith alone, as St. Paul also does in Romans 1:17: "For in the Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith, as it is written: 'He who through faith is righteous shall live'" (Hab. 2:4). In this way St. Peter wants to exhort them to be armed and not let the doctrine which they have taken hold of and know well to be carried away.

And by adding the words "the righteousness of our God" he excludes all human righteousness. For we are made righteous before God solely through faith. Therefore faith is also called a "righteousness of God." For before the world it has no validity. Indeed, it is even condemned.

Verse 2

NIV 2: Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

KJV 2: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

Latin 2: Gratia vobis et pax multiplicatur per cognitionem (vel, cum cognitione) Dei et Jesu Domini nostri;

Spanish 2: Gracia y paz os sean multiplicadas, en el conocimiento de Dios y de nuestro Señor Jesús.

Luther's German 2: Gott gebe euch viel Gnade and Friede durch die Erkenntnis Gottes und Jesu Christi, unsers Herrn;

Modern German 2: Gott gebe euch viel Gnade and Frieden durch die Erkenntnis Gottes und unsres Herrn Jesus!

TEV 2: May grace and peace be yours in full measure through your knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

AAT 2: As you know God and our Lord Jesus, may you enjoy more and more of His grace and peace.

RSV 2: May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

LB 2: Do you want more and more of God's kindness and peace? Then learn to know him better and better.

GWN 2: Along with your knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus, may you enjoy more and more of His grace and peace.

KJH 2: May grace and peace be yours in ever greater measure through an experiential knowledge of God and our Lord Jesus.

Greek: χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη ἐν ἐπιγνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

Exegetical Notes on Verse 2

πληθυνθείη: Aorist Passive Optative. From playthunoo: “to multiply, to increase;” pass.: “to be multiplied, to grow, to increase.” Here the connotation is: “May grace and peace be yours in ever greater measure” (BAG). The optative is used to express a wish or desire.

ἐν ἐπιγνώσει: “Knowledge, knowledge which is directed toward a particular object which can imply a more detailed or fuller knowledge.

Luther's Commentary on Verse 2: May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the greeting commonly used to preface the letters. It means: Instead of my service, I wish that you may increase in grace and peace, and become richer and richer. This grace comes from the knowledge of God and of the Lord Christ, which means that it is something only he who has knowledge of God and Jesus Christ can have.

The apostles and also the prophets constantly refer to this knowledge of God in Scripture. Thus we read in Isaiah 11:9: “They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” That is, the knowledge of God will burst forth exuberantly as when a body of water gushes forth, rushes out, and inundates a whole country. From this such peace will result that no one will harm or injure his neighbor.

But the fact that you, like the Turks, the Jews, and the devil, believe that God created all things—this is not the knowledge of God. Nor is this knowledge your belief that Christ was born from a virgin, suffered, died and rose again. No, you have the true knowledge of God when you believe and know that God and Christ are your God and your Christ. This the devil and the false Christians cannot believe. Thus this knowledge is nothing else than the true Christian faith; for when you know God and Christ in this way, you will rely on Him with all your heart and trust in Him in good fortune and misfortune, in life and death. Evil consciences cannot have such trust, for they know no more about God than that He is a God of St. Peter and all the saints in heaven. But they do not know Him as their God; they regard Him as a jailer and an angry judge.

To have God is to have all grace, all mercy, and everything one can call good. To have Christ is to have the Savior and Mediator who brought us to the point that God belongs to us, and who acquired for us all mercy from Him. You must weave this together in such a way that Christ becomes yours and you become His. Then you have a true knowledge. An unmarried woman can say, of course, “This is a man.” But she cannot say that he is her man. Thus we can all say; of course, that this is a god; but we cannot say that He is our God. For we cannot all trust in Him and take comfort in Him. To this knowledge also belongs what Scripture calls the *facies et vultus Domini*, that is, the countenance of the Lord about which the prophets have much to say. He who does not behold the face of God does not know Him but sees only His back, that is, an angry and cruel God.

Here you see that St. Peter does not propose to write particularly about faith at this time, since he did this adequately in the first epistle. No, he wants to exhort believers to give evidence of their faith by means of good works. For he does not want faith without good works or works without faith. But he wants faith first and good works in addition to and flowing from faith.

Verse 3

NIV 3: His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

KJV 3: According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Latin 3: Quemadmodum divina ejus potentia omnia nobis quae spectant ad vitam et pietatem dedit per cognitionem ejus qui vocavit nos propria gloria et virtute (vel, per gloriam et virtutem):

Spanish 3: Como todas las cosas que pertenecen a la vida y a la piedad nos han sido dadas por su divino poder, mediante el conocimiento de aquel que no llamo por su gloria y excelencia,

Luther's German 3: Nachdem allerei seiner göttlichen Kraft (was zum Leben and göttlichen Wandel dienet) uns geschenkt ist, durch die Erkenntnis dess, der uns berufen hat durch seine Herrlichkeit und Tugend;

Modern German 3: Alles, was zum Leben und göttlichen Wandel dient, hat uns seine göttliche Kraft geschenkt durch die Erkenntnis des, der uns berufen hat durch seine Herrlichkeit und Kraft.

TEV 3: God's divine power has given us everything we need to live a truly religious life through our knowledge of the one who called us to share in his own glory and goodness.

AAT 3: By His glory and might He once gave us very great and precious promises and now has called us. When we got to know Him, His divine power gave us everything for life and godliness.

RSV 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,

LB 3: For as you know him better, he will give you, through his great power, everything you need for living a truly good life: he even shares his own glory and his own goodness with us!

GWN 3: His divine power has given to us everything needed for life and godliness. This He did by leading us to a full knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence.

KJH 3: Just as he has given us everything else through his divine power, that is, everything that pertains to life and godliness—this he has done by leading us to a full knowledge of him who has called us to his own glory and virtue.

Greek: Ὡς πάντα ἡμῖν τῆς θείας δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ τὰ πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν δεδωρημένης διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ,

Exegetical Notes on Verse 3

θείας: “Godly, divine.” The term “divine power” in the gen. is the subject of the participle and was a phrase used for the term “God.” A parallel expression is found in the decree of Stratonicea, an inscription in honor of Zeus and Hekate.

εὐσέβειαν: “Godliness, true religion.” This is a characteristic which displays itself in reverence in the presence of that which is majestic and divine. The person’s worship and active life of obedience are “fruits” of the honor and reverence due to the divinity.

δεδωρημένης: Perfect Middle Part. Dooreoo is “to give as a gift, to grant, to bestow.” The participle is here used as a genitive absolute. The perfect tense emphasizes the continuing nature of that which is given.

καλέσαντος: Aor. Act. Part. “to call.”

ἀρετῇ: “Virtue, excellence.” Indicates the display of divine power and the performance of divine acts. The dat. case could be either instrumental “by” or dat. of advantage “to” or “for.”

Luther's Commentary on Verse 3: His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

This is the first part. Here Peter begins to write about the kind of blessings we have received from God through faith, namely, that—since we have learned to know God through faith—divine power has been granted to us. But what kind of power? It is the kind of power that pertains to life and godliness. That is, when we believe, we receive so much that God gives us His power of every kind, which dwells with us and in us in such a way that what we say and do is not said or done by us but is said and done by God Himself. God is strong, powerful and almighty in us even though we suffer, die and are weak before the world. Accordingly, we have no power or ability if we do not have this divine power.

But St. Peter does not want this power in us to be understood in such a way that we also have the ability to create heaven and earth and should work miracles, as God does. For how would this help us? No, we have divine power with us to the degree that it is useful and necessary for us. Therefore the apostle adds the words, “that pertain to life and godliness.” That is, we have the kind of divine power with which we are abundantly blessed to do good and to live eternally.

Through the knowledge of Him who called us.

Such divine power and great grace come from nothing else than this knowledge of God. For if you regard Him as a god, He will also deal with you as a god. Thus St. Paul also declares in 1 Cor. 1:5-7: “That in every way you were enriched in Him with all speech and all knowledge—even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift,” This is the greatest, noblest, and most necessary gift God can give us—a gift we should not exchange for everything heaven and earth contain. For what would it profit you to be able to go even through fire and water and to perform all kinds of miracles, if you did not have it? In fact, many people who perform such wonders are damned. But the greatest miracle of all is the fact that God gives us that kind of power through which all our sins are remitted and eradicated, and death, the devil and hell are vanquished and devoured, so that we have an undaunted conscience and a cheerful heart, and fear nothing.

To His own glory and excellence.

How did it happen that we were called by God? God let the holy Gospel go out into the world and be proclaimed. No man worked this beforehand. Nor did anyone implore and beg Him to do so. But before anyone thought of it, He offered us such grace, presented it, and poured it out richly and beyond measure, in order that He alone might have the glory and the honor resulting from it, and that we might ascribe to Him alone the ability and the power. For this is not our work; it is His alone. Therefore since we did not do the calling, we should not boast, as though we had done it; but we should extol and thank Him for giving us the Gospel and in this way bestowing strength and power against the devil, death, and all adversity.

Verse 4

NIV 4: Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

KJV 4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Latin 4: Quibus et maxime et pretiosae promissiones nobis donatae sunt, ut per haec fieretis divinae consortes naturae, ubi fugeritis corruptionem quae in mundo est in concupiscentia.

Spanish 4: por medio de las cuales no ha dado preciosas y grandisimas promesas, para que por ellas llegaseis a ser participantes de la naturaleza divina, habiendo huido de la corrupcion que hay en el mundo a causa de la concupiscencia;

Luther's German 4: Durch welche uns die theuren und allergrössesten Verheissungen geschenkt sind, nämlich, dass ihr durch dasselbige thriehaftig werdet der göttlichen Natur, so ihr fliehet die vergängliche Lust der Welt.

Modern German 4 Durch sie sind und die teuren und allergrössten Verheissungen geschenkt, auf dass ihr dadurch teilhaftig werdet der göttlichen Natur, die ihr entronnen seid der verderblicher Lust in der Welt.

TEV 4: In this way he has given us the very great and precious gifts he promised, so that by means of these gifts you may escape from the destructive lust that is in the world, and may come to share the divine nature.

AAT 3-4: By His glory and might He once gave us very great and precious promises and now has called us. When we got to know Him, His divine power gave us everything for life and godliness to help you escape the corruption that lust brought into the world and to share in the divine nature.

RSV 4: by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature.

LB 4: And by that same mighty power he has given us all the other rich and wonderful blessings he promised; for instance, the promise to save us from the lust and rottenness around us, and to give us his own character.

GWN 4: Thus He has given us His precious and very great promises, so that after you have escaped the corruption that lust brought into the world, you might by these promises share in the divine power.

KJH 4: Through these things God has given us precious and very great promises, in order that through these promises we might become sharers in the divine nature, and escape from the corruption that is in this world caused by evil desires.

Greek: δι' ὧν τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως ἀποφυγόντες τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς.

Exegetical Notes on Verse 4

- δι' ὧν: "Through which things." The antecedent of the rel. pron. would be the words "glory and virtue" in verse 3.
- τὰ τίμια: "honorable, precious, valuable."
- μέγιστα: "magnificent." Elative superlative: "Very great." See Robertson pp 669-670 for "The Elative Superlative." This is the only NT occurrence of megistos.
- ἐπαγγέλματα: "That which was promised." The -ma ending emphasizes the thing resulting from an action, whereas the -sis -σις ending emphasizes the process or action itself.
- δεδώρηται: Perf. Mid. Ind. (see part. form in verse 3) "to give as a gift, grant, bestow."
- γένησθε: Aor. Mid. Subj. "To be, become." The subjunctive is used to express purpose.
- κοινωνοὶ: "Partner, sharer, partaker."
- φύσεως: "Nature." Peter does not mean that the man is absorbed into deity but rather that those who are partakers of Christ will be partakers of the glory that shall be revealed.
- ἀποφυγόντες: Aor. Act. Part. apopheugoo. "To escape, to escape completely."
- ἐπιθυμία: "Strong desire, lust, passion."
- φθορᾶς: "Corruption." The basic meaning of the word denotes primarily not a sudden destruction owing to external violence, but a dissolution brought on by means of an internal decay, i.e. "rottenness."

Luther's Commentary on Verse 4: By which He has granted us His precious and verb great promises.

St. Peter adds these words in order to explain the nature and character of faith. If we know Him as God, then, through faith, we have eternal life and the divine power with which we overcome death and the devil. But we do not see and feel this. Nevertheless, it has been promised to us. To be sure, all this is ours; but it is not yet manifest. On the Last Day, however, we shall see it revealed. Here it has its beginning in faith, but we do not have it in perfection. Yet we have the promise that we shall live here in divine power and later in eternal bliss. Now he who believes this has it; he who does not believe this does not have it and must be lost eternally. Peter now explains further how great and precious this is. He says: "That through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature."

Through the power of faith, he says, we partake of and have association or communion with the divine nature. This is a verse without a parallel in the New and Old Testament, even though unbelievers regard it as a trivial matter that we partake of the divine nature itself. But what is the divine nature? It is eternal truth, righteousness, wisdom, everlasting life, peace, joy, happiness, and whatever can be called good. Now he who becomes a partaker of the divine nature receives all this, so that he lives eternally and has everlasting peace, joy, and happiness, and is pure, clean, righteous, and almighty against the devil, sin and death. Therefore this is what Peter wants to say: Just as God cannot be deprived of being eternal life and eternal truth, so you cannot be deprived of this. If anything is done to you, it must be done to God; for he who wants to oppress a Christian must oppress God.

All this is included in the term "divine nature," and St. Peter has used it for the very purpose of including all this. It is surely something very great when one believes it. But, as I have stated above, with all these instructions he does not lay a foundation for faith but emphasizes what great and rich blessings we receive through faith. For this reason he says: You will have all this if you live in such a way that you give evidence of your faith by shunning worldly lust.

One note on "sharing in the divine nature" that is worth our while to consider comes from Peiper's *Christian Dogmatics*:

In a special manner God is united with His church, the believers. John 14:23: Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23 NIV). God Himself dwells in the believers, not merely, as some have said, His divine powers and gifts. The Formula of Concord has Scripture on its side when it rejects as false doctrine "that not God dwells in believers, but only the gifts of God" (Trig. 937, Sol. Decl., III, 65). Because of this indwelling the believers are "the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. 6:16); "the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 6:19); "the body of Christ" (Eph 1:23). This *unio mystica* between God and the believers is so intimate that believers are called "partakers of the divine nature." (2 Peter 1:4)

Verse 5

NIV 5: For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;

KJV 5: And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

Latin 5: Atque in hoc ipsum omne studium applicantes, subministrate in fide vestra virtutem, in virtute autem scientiam;

Spanish 5: vosotros tambien, poniendo toda diligencia por esto mismo, anadid a vuestra fe virtud; a la virtud, conocimiento;

Luther's German 5: So wendet allen euren Fleiss daran, und reichet dar in eurem Glauben Tugend, und in der Tugend Bescheidenheit,

Modern German 5: So wendet allen euren Fleiss daran und beweist in eurem Glauben Tugend und in der Tugend Erkenntnis

TEV 5: For this very reason do your best to add goodness to your faith; to your goodness add knowledge;

AAT 5: In view of that, try very hard to add to your faith moral power, to moral power knowledge,

RSV 5: For this very reason make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge,

LB 5: But to obtain these gifts, you need more than faith; you must also work hard to be good, and even that is not enough. For then you must learn to know God better and discover what he wants you to do.

GWN 5: In view of that, by using every bit of your energy, to your faith add excellence, to excellence knowledge,

KJH 5: And for this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith sterling moral integrity,

Greek: καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δὲ σπουδῆν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες ἐπιχορηγήσατε ἐν τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀρετῇ τὴν γνῶσιν,

Exegetical Notes on Verse 5

αὐτὸ τοῦτο: Robertson lists this verse under the heading: THE PARENTHETIC NOMINATIVE, but in the body of the paragraph adds this notation for 2 Pet. 1:5: "But auto touto is probably accusative." (Peter's grammar is often hard to decipher). This could be, I assume, an accusative of respect. See Robertson, page 460. Several pages later, Robertson again lists 1 Peter 1:5 auto touto under the heading THE ADVERBIAL ACCUSATIVE. He says, "It is not very common in the N.T. except in the case of pure adverbs. The adverbial accusative is really nothing more than a loose use of the accusative with intransitive verbs, with substantives, or with adjectives.... This accusative is sometimes called the accusative of general reference." (Robertson page 486-87, 686) In 2 Cor. 2:3 Paul has touto auto in the adverbial sense, while Peter here turns the phrase around. See Robertson p. 705.

σπουδῆν: "Haste, effort." Note how the German uses the word Fleiss: "Diligence."

παρεισενέγκαντες: Aor. Act. Part. pareispheroo "To bring alongside of. Used idiomatically with the word "effort" to express the idea of bringing in every effort. We are to bring "into" this relationship "alongside" what God has done, every ounce of determination that we can muster.

ἐπιχορηγήσατε: Aor. Act. Impv. epixoraygeoo. "to supply in addition to, to outfit the chorus with additional (complete) supplies"—See Robertson Word Pictures. The Prep. in compound seems to have an accumulative force, "to add further supplies," "to provide more than was expected or could be demanded." Can also have the connotation of "to give lavishly" "to give with generosity." For other NT uses of this word, see 2 Cor. 9:10, Gal 3:5, Col. 2:19, 1 Peter 4:11.

ἐν: "in." There is a certain unusual use of en here, in that it here has a causal connotation with the verb epixopavaavsate. "Since you have faith, let it not be lacking in virtue, etc." TLKGNT.

τῇ πίστει: "Faith." Here it is to be understood as subjective faith—the loyal adherence to Christ and his teaching rather than that of the doctrine itself.

- ἀρετῆ: “Virtue, moral energy.” In classical times the word meant the god-given power or ability to perform heroic deeds, whether military or athletic or artistic, or even in conducting your own life. Socrates’ or Plato’s life would be characterized by this word aretay. The basic meaning of the word indicated the quality by which one stands out as being excellent. In respect to ethics Aristotle held that it was the right behavior choice, or the mean between two extremes. The Stoics had a different slant on the word, and connected it with nature and taught that the essence of virtue was “living harmoniously with nature.”
- τὴν γνῶσιν: “The process of knowing something by experience; knowing, knowledge.” See the Living Bible translation.

The best commentary on verses 5-7 of this chapter uses this explanation: “Supplement your faith.” This means supplement, as the fruit of a tree “supplements” the tree. But the translation is somewhat misleading. The word means to “furnish” or “provide,” and there is a preposition (“in”) with faith; it would be preferable to render: “In your faith provide virtue” (i.e., let your faith provide, or produce, virtue) and continue the whole series (5-7) in the same way. The whole series describes, in chain-reaction form, the flowering and fruitage of faith (*Concordia Self-Study Commentary*).

Luther’s Commentary on Verse 5: For this very reason make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue.

Here St. Peter admonishes them to give evidence of their faith with good works. Since such a great blessing has been given to you through faith that you truly have everything that is God, he wants to say, add to this, be diligent, do not be lazy, supplement your faith with virtue; that is, let your faith break forth before the people, in order that it may be helpful, busy, powerful, and active, and may do many good works and not remain sluggish and sterile. You have a good inheritance and a good field. But see to it that you do not let thistles or weeds grow in it.

And virtue with knowledge.

In the first place, understanding, or knowledge, means to lead one’s outward life and practice the virtue of faith in a sensible manner. For one should restrain and curb the body, in order that it may remain sober, alert, and fit for what is good. One should not hurt it too much and slay it, as some mad saints do. For even though God loathes the sins that remain in the flesh, yet He does not want you to slay your body on this account. You should check its wickedness and wantonness, but this does not mean that you should destroy or injure it. You must give it food and necessities, in order that it may remain healthy and alive.

In the second place, understanding also means to lead a fine, sensible life and to act judiciously in external matters, in matters of diet and the like. One should not do anything imprudently, and one should not give offense to one’s neighbor.

Verse 6

NIV 6: and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;

KJV 6: And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

Latin 6: In scientia vero temperantiam, in temperantia autem patientiam, in patientia vero pietatem,

Spanish 6: al conocimiento, dominio propio, al dominio propio, paciencia; a la paciencia, piedad;

Luther's German 6: Und in der Bescheidenheit Mässigkeit, und in der Mässigkeit Geduld, und in der Geduld Gottseligkeit,

Modern German 6: und in der Erkenntnis Mässigkeit, and in der Mässigkeit Geduld, und in der Geduld Gottesfurcht

TEV 6: to your knowledge add self-control; to your self-control add endurance; to your endurance add godliness;

AAT 6: to knowledge self-control, to self-control endurance, to endurance godliness,

RSV 6: and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,

LB 6: Next, learn to put aside your own desires so that you will become patient and godly, gladly letting God have his way with you.

GWN 6: to knowledge self-control, to self-control patient endurance, to patient endurance godliness,

KJH 6: and to your knowledge self-control, and to your self-control endurance, and to your endurance a constant reverence and awe of God's presence

Greek: ἐν δὲ τῇ γνώσει τὴν ἐγκράτειαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐγκρατεία τὴν ὑπομονήν, ἐν δὲ τῇ ὑπομονῇ τὴν εὐσέβειαν,

Exegetical Notes on Verse 6

ἐγκράτειαν: Literally, "Holding himself in." "Self-control."

ὑπομονήν: Literally, "Stay under; Hold up under." "Endurance, perseverance." The ability to "take a licking and keep on ticking (Timex)." The quality of the "Eveready Rabbit" to keep on going and going and going. In pastoral life, it must mean the ability to face opposition of all kinds and still carry out your duties.

εὐσέβειαν: See verse 3 above. Eusebeia in this list accentuates especially one's continual awareness of God with you, for you, near you, in you. Then it follows subjectively that if God's presence is an overwhelming, overriding issue in your life, how will this cause me to act in my daily affairs? With reverence, a worshipful attitude, "godliness" or "living your faith." Some would call this eusebeia "true religion." This is what the "deeds, not creeds" people want to see more of in Christians. To some extent, Peter says we owe it to them.

Luther's Commentary on Verse 6: And knowledge with self-control.

Self-control applies not only to eating and drinking; it is moderation in all circumstances in life, in words, in deeds, and bearing. One should not live extravagantly. Excess in adornment and dress should be avoided, and no one should make himself conspicuous by being haughty and arrogant. But St. Peter refrains from fixing a rule, a standard or aim, pertaining to this, as the (monastic) orders have made bold to do. They undertake to formulate rules for all this and have added commandments that apply to everything. In Christendom it will not do to issue laws, so that there is a general rule pertaining to self-control. For people are not alike. One is strong, another is weak by nature, and no one is always as fit in every respect as the other person is. Therefore everyone should learn to know himself, what he can do and what he can stand.

And self-control with steadfastness.

This is what St. Peter wants to say: If you lead a temperate and sensible life, you should not suppose that you will live without trials and persecution. For if you believe and lead a good, Christian life, the world will not let you alone. It must persecute you and be your enemy. You must bear this with patience, which is a fruit of faith.

And steadfastness with godliness.

This means that in our whole outward life, in what we do or suffer, we should conduct ourselves in such a way that we serve God and do not seek our own glory and advantage. It means that God alone must be praised by what we do and that we must act in such a way that one can see that we do everything for God's sake.

Verse 7

NIV 7: and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

KJV 7: And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

Latin 7: In pietate autem fraternum amorem, in fraterno vero amore charitatem.

Spanish 7: a la piedad, afecto fraternal; y al afecto fraternal, amor.

Luther's German 7: Und in der Gottseligkeit brüderliche Liebe, und in der brüderlichen Liebe gemeine Liebe.

Modern German 7: und in der Gottesfurcht brüderliche Liebe, und in der brüderliche Lieben Liebe die Liebe zu allen Menschen.

TEV 7: to your godliness add brotherly affection; and to your brotherly affection add love.

AAT 7: to godliness brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness, love.

RSV 7: and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

LB 7: This will make possible the next step, which is for you to enjoy other people and to like them, and finally you will grow to love them deeply.

GWN 7: to godliness brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness, love.

KJH 7: and to your constant reverence and awe of God's presence add brotherly kindness, and to your brotherly kindness add love.

Greek: ἐν δὲ τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ τὴν φιλαδελφίαν, ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ τὴν ἀγάπην.

Exegetical Notes on Verse 7

φιλαδελφίαν: “Brotherly love.” Note how the German translations contrast “brotherly love” with “love for all men.” The German seems to recognize a distinction between “Christian love among the brotherhood” and “Christian love for those OUTSIDE the brotherhood” in this verse by the translation. I don't see it in the Greek, however.

ἀγάπην: If this is the pinnacle of Christian faith, and according to 1 Corinthians 13:13 it is, then this is not to be CONTRASTED with the preceding word, philadelphia. I think a better translation would be to shade this love with the attribute (essence) of God as we know it from 1 John 4:8&16, where we find that God IS love. The final “step of progression” in our faith is to have God’s love become so much a part of us that we actually IMITATE this characteristic of God himself. Paul hints at this thought in verses like 1 Cor. 4:16. See also Hebrews 6:12 and 13:7, 3 John 11.

It would be worth our while to add a concluding statement of my own to verses 5 to 7. Two years ago I taught a Bible class on these very verses. One Sunday I said something to the effect that it didn't matter in which order we possess these characteristics, because Peter apparently put them in no particular order. Now, I strongly disagree with that line of thought. I realize that heretics often “pick and choose” which Christian virtues they wish to elevate.

For example, faith must be the starting-point, or “Square One,” of the Christian life. Then the virtuous life, aretay, the life of strong moral fiber, is important. This is why we teach our confirmands not only doctrine, but the commandments, creed, etc. applied to life situations. This is the characteristic which Paul extolled in the Bereans (Acts 17:11). This is the virtue which causes us to realize that we are “different” in a good sense, so that we desire to “escape the corruption which is in the world caused by evil desires.” Proper aretay is the seed-bed of repentance, for aretay urges us to weed out the sin in our lives, to prize righteousness and value holiness, to long for the perfection of heaven, to want to be more like God himself.

What if aretay does not come second? Then you get heresies like Paul describes in Romans 6, and sinners like the man in 1 Corinthians 5. You get egomaniac-evangelists like Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggart who will accept no brotherly Christian admonition.

To aretay knowledge is to be added. This is one good thing that Martin Luther learned in his monastery and professor of theology at Wittenberg years, that is, his deep knowledge of God through Scripture. Peter is not speaking about the knowledge that the Gnostics elevated—Peter is talking about knowledge of God that comes from knowing Jesus as Savior and friend, the knowledge of God’s mercy and justice as taught in Scripture, the knowledge of how to live a Christian life as led by your elder Christian brothers in the faith. If knowledge does not come next, you end up with men who “naval-gaze” or “pole-sitter saints” who shut out not only the world, but effectively shut out God’s Word and other Christian influence from their lives as well. This is the kind of knowledge that comes from the proper keeping of the Third Commandment, “gladly hear and learn it.”

Self-control is next. This is not Epicurean self-control. This is not Stoic self-control. This is not monastic self-control. Where are these groups today? This is the self-control best summed up in the words of the Apostle Paul in these three verses: “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15-16 NIV). “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body” (1 Cor. 6:15-16). “Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible...I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22 NIV).

Perseverance is next. Many a Pastor will immediately recall this verse on perseverance from their mental concordance: “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers” (1 Timothy 4:16 NIV). Needless to say, many a heretic developed perseverance “too soon” among the virtues of their Christian faith. Moses knew too well that Korah, Dathan and Abiram were tenacious and perseverant. But they had “leaped over” some of the preceding Christian virtues in their bid for power. Today, although guilty of many other sins and legal aberrations, no one would dare accuse David Koresh of Waco, Texas fame for not being “perseverant.” I think the picture is clear why Peter did not list “perseverance” immediately following “faith.”

Godliness is next. Our Mormon “friends” are the prime example of taking this one out of context and placing it in the wrong order. These “God-Making” Latter Day Saints firmly believe that they will be, some

day, just like God himself, ruling over their own little universes. I think it is safe to say that many Mormons would benefit much from some “knowledge” of Scripture’s clear passages. No, faith is not to be followed by “godliness,” unless it is preceded by virtue, knowledge, self-control, and perseverance.

Brotherly kindness is next. For many years this trait was the hallmark of the Quakers. What has happened to most of them by today? Faith and “brotherly love” are not alone enough. For years, one of the mainline church bodies most known for their warmth and friendliness or “brotherly love” were the Methodists. Look at what has happened to the doctrinal underpinnings of this church body today. Arguing over whether to call God “Our Father” in hymns is hardly a sign of a solidly-based faith.

Love is the last and greatest characteristic to add. Note well what happens when the intermediary steps are skipped. The end result is the cry “All you need is love” of the hippie generation of the 60’s, and the moral relativism and promiscuity that have given us more venereal disease than any other generation. Then love and faith are both cheapened beyond recognition.

Peter had Holy Spirit inspired wisdom in placing these Christian virtues in the order that he did.

Luther's Commentary on Verse 7: And godliness with brotherly affection.

With these words St. Peter obligates us all to help one another like brothers (See Galatians 6). One person must look after that other person. Nor should he despise or harm him. This is also an evidence of faith. In this way we show that we have the godliness of which the apostle has spoken.

And brotherly affection with love.

This love extends to both friends and enemies, also to those who do not act in a friendly and brotherly way toward us. Thus here St. Peter has expressed in a few words what belongs to a Christian life and what the works and the fruits of faith are, namely, knowledge, self-control, patience, a God-fearing life, brotherly affection, and kindness to everybody.

Verse 8

NIV 8: For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

KJV 8: For if these things be in you, and abound, they make [you that ye shall] neither [be] barren nor un-fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Latin 8: Haec enim si vobis adsint, et abunde suppetant, non otiosos neque infructuosos constituent vos in cognitione Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Spanish 8: Porque si estas cosas están en vosotros, y abundan, no os dejarán estar ociosos ni sin fruto en cuanto al conocimiento de nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

Luther’s German 8: Denn wo solches reichlich bei euch ist, wirds euch nicht faul noch unfruchtbar sein lassen in der Erkenntnis unsers Herrn Jesu Christi.

Modern German 8: Denn wenn solches reichlich bei euch ist, werdet ihr nicht faul noch unfruchtbar sein in der Erkenntnis unsres Herrn Jesus Christus.

TEV 8: These are the qualities you need, and if you have them in abundance, they will make you active and effective in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

AAT 8: If you have these and they grow more and more, they keep you from being useless and unproductive in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

RSV 8: For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

LB 8: The more you go on in this way, the more you will grow strong spiritually and become fruitful and useful to our Lord Jesus Christ.

GWN 8: For if you have these and they are increasing, they will demonstrate that knowing our Lord Jesus Christ has not made you useless and unproductive.

KJH 8: For if you have these characteristics in you and are increasing in them, you will not be barren or unfruitful in your (faith in) our Lord Jesus Christ.

Greek: ταῦτα γὰρ ὑμῖν ὑπάρχοντα καὶ πλεονάζοντα οὐκ ἀργοὺς οὐδὲ ἀκάρπους καθίστησιν εἰς τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπίγνωσιν

Exegetical Notes on Verse 8

πλεονάζοντα: Pres. Act. Part. pleonazo “to abound, to increase” In the classical writers this word is a disparaging term, implying excess, to be or to have more than enough, to exaggerate. But to fervent Christianity there can be no excess of good characteristics. Note the present tense, which implies continual growth.

ἀργοὺς: “Not active, inactive, idle, dormant.”

ἀκάρπους: “Not fruitful, unfruitful.”

καθίστησιν: Pres. Act. Ind. “to bring a person to a place, to make (someone be something), appoint, put in charge.”

My German Bible lists Titus 3:14 under this verse. It is certainly pertinent and applies here. Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order that they may provide for daily necessities and not live unproductive lives (Titus 3:14 NIV).

Luther’s Commentary on Verse 8: For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That is, if you do works of this kind, you are on the right path and have a true faith, and the knowledge of Christ is active and fruitful in you. Therefore see to it that you do not make light of this. Hold your body in subjection, and do for your neighbor as you know that Christ has done for you.

Verse 9

NIV 9: But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

KJV 9: But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Latin 9: Cui enim haec non adsunt, caecus est, manu palpans, purgationis oblitus veterum delictorum.

Spanish 9: Pero el que no tienen estas cosas tiene la vista muy corta; es ciego, habiendo olvidado la purificación de sus antiguos pecados.

Luther's German 9: Welcher aber solches nicht hat, der ist blind, und tappet mit der Hand, und vergisst der Reinigung seiner vorigen Sünden.

Modern German 9: Wer aber solches nicht hat, der ist blind und tappt in Dunkeln und hat vergessen, dass er rein geworden ist von seinen vorigen Sünden.

TEV 9: But whoever does not have them is so shortsighted that he cannot see and has forgotten that he has been purified from his past sins.

AAT 9: But if anyone doesn't have these, he's blind, shortsighted, and has forgotten that his old sins were washed away.

RSV 9: For whoever lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

LB 9: But anyone who fails to go after these additions to faith is blind indeed, or at least very shortsighted, and has forgotten that God delivered him from the old life of sin so that now he can live a strong, good life for the Lord.

GWN 9: If anyone does not have these, he is blind, shortsighted, and has forgotten that his old sins were washed away.

KJH 9: The one who does not have these characteristics is blind, shortsighted, and forgetful of the fact that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

Greek: ὃ γὰρ μὴ πάρεστιν ταῦτα, τυφλός ἐστιν μυωπάζων, λήθην λαβὼν τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ τῶν πάλαι αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτιῶν.

Exegetical Notes on Verse 9

πάρεστιν: Pres. Act. Ind. "To be by, to be present, to be."

τυφλός: "Blind."

μυωπάζων: Pres. Act. Part. muoopazoo Cf. the present-day optometry term "Myopic," that is, "The inability to see what is close."

λήθην: "Forgetfulness." Remember the River Lethe from mythology?

λαβὼν: Aor. Act. Part. "to take, to receive." Used in the expression "having received forgetfulness," i.e. "to forget." This part. could be causal "because he has forgotten."

τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ: "cleansing, purifying."

πάλαι: Adverbial accusative. "Long ago, formerly." Can also mean "old."

My German Bible lists 1 John 2:9&11 after this verse. The verses read: "Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness....But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks

around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him” (1 John 2:9,11 NIV).

Luther’s Commentary on Verse 9: For whoever lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and he has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

He who does not have such a supply of the fruits of faith gropes about like a blind person and lives in such a way that he does not know what his plight is. He does not have the true faith, and his knowledge of Christ does not exceed his ability to say how he heard it. Therefore he goes along and fumbles in uncertainty, like a blind man on the road. He forgets that he has been baptized and that his sins have been forgiven. He becomes ungrateful and a lazy and careless person who takes nothing to heart and neither takes hold of nor tastes such great grace and blessings.

With this exhortation St. Peter wants to incite and urge us who believe to do the works with which we should prove that we really have faith. He always insists that faith alone justifies. For where there is this faith, the works must follow. What now follows will pertain to the strengthening of faith.

Verse 10

NIV 10: Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall,

KJV 10: Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

Latin 10: Quamobrem magis, fratres, studete firmam vestram vocationem et electionem facere: haec enim si feceritis, non cadetis unquam:

Spanish 10: Por to cual, hermanos, tanto más procurad hacer firme vuestra vocación y elección; porque haciendo estas cosas, no caereis jamas.

Luther’s German 10: Darum, lieben Brüder, thut desto mehr Fleiss, euren Beruf und Erwählung fest zu machen. Denn wo ihr solches thut, werdet ihr nicht straucheln. (Hebrews 3:14)

Modern German 10: Darum, liebe Brüder, tut desto mehr Fleiss, eure Berufung und Erwählung festzumachen. Denn wenn ihr solches tut, werdet ihr nicht straucheln,

TEV 10: So then, my brothers, try even harder to make God's call and his choice of you a permanent experience; if you do so, you will never abandon your faith.

AAT 10: Be all the more eager, then, fellow-Christians, to make sure you’re God’s called and chosen ones. If you do this, you will never fail.

RSV 10: Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall;

LB 10: So, dear brothers, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen, and then you will never stumble or fall away.

GWN 10: Be all the more eager then, fellow-Christians, to make sure that your calling and choosing are secure. If you do this, you will never fall away.

KJH 10: Rather, therefore, brothers, strive to make your calling and election certain; for by doing these things you will never fall, ever.

Greek: διὸ μᾶλλον, ἀδελφοί, σποθδάσατε βεβαίαν ὑμῶν τὴν κλήσιν καὶ ἐκλογὴν ποιεῖσθαι· ταῦτα γὰρ ποιοῦντες οὐ μὴ πταίσητέ ποτε.

Exegetical Notes on Verse 10:

- διὸ μᾶλλον: “Wherefore the more.”
- σποθδάσατε: Aor. Act. Inv. spoudazoo “To be in a hurry, to give diligence, to exert effort.” The word stresses the urgency of Peter’s plea that they should determine to live their lives for God.
- βεβαίαν: “firm, secure.” Used with the infinitive in the sense of “to MAKE firm, to certify, to confirm, to attest to.” In the papyri it was used as a technical term for a legal guarantee.
- κλήσιν: “Calling.”
- ἐκλογὴν: “Selection, election, choosing.”
- ποιεῖσθαι: Pres. Mid. Inf. “To do, to make.” Here it is used with the adjective in the sense of “to make certain,” or “to give a guarantee.” The Christian life is an evidence of the guarantee God has made to us in his Word. The infinitive is expegetical or complementary in explaining the verb “to give diligence.”
- ποιοῦντες: Pres. Act. Part. “to do.” Note how the present imperative signifies that this side of heaven, the job will never be completed.
- οὐ μὴ: “Never in any way.” This is a “Strong Future Negation” See page 49 of NWC’s (C. Spaude’s) *Basic Greek Syntax*.
- πταίσητέ: Aor. Act. Subjunctive ptaioo “To stumble, fall.” The verb of the “Strong Future Negation.”

This is probably one of the deepest theological statements made not only by Peter in his letters, but also in all of the NT. Election is normally (See Romans 8) used as a doctrine of comfort and assurance. However, here we have the doctrine of election used as leverage in the hands of believers. It is so seemingly contradictory to the language of the rest of Scripture that at first glance it seems to be wrong. It is so..., so un-Lutheran.

Perhaps it would be worthwhile to turn to the dogmatists in a wicket as sticky as this.

The Holy Spirit is not only “the Spirit of faith” (2 Cor. 4:13), but also the Spirit of sanctification and of good works. He incessantly admonishes and urges believers to avoid the evil and perform the good. And if the Holy Ghost is persistently thwarted in this part of His work, He will cease to perform the other part, the preservation of faith. The Christian Church has always taught that evil works destroy faith.

On the other hand, we dare not say that good works preserve faith. True, good works, being effected through faith by the power of the Holy Spirit, assure Christians of their faith, of their state of grace (*testimonium externum Spiritus Sancti de fide et statu gratiae*), and for this reason Christians should show all diligence in good works. But to say that good works preserve faith and thereby assure Christians of final salvation, turns everything that Scripture says of the relation of faith to good works upside down. Good works do not sustain faith, but, conversely, faith sustains good works. It cannot be otherwise, since good works, according to Scripture, are

in every case only the effect, fruit, and consequence of faith. *Christian Dogmatics*. (See also Trigl. 947, F.C., Sol. Decl., IV, 33).

However, this is not all dogmatics has to say on election:

Scripture explicitly and definitely states the purpose of this doctrine [of election]. Its purpose is not to deny the *gratia universalis*, as many before and after Calvin have thought, but to confirm and impress on us the *sola gratia*.

Another purpose of the doctrine of election is to supply an admonition and warning much needed by all Christians according to their flesh. Since Christians were not elected irrespective of the means of grace (*nude*), but “through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,” this doctrine powerfully exhorts all Christians by all means to hold to the course in which their election in eternity took place. Thus Christ uses the election for admonition when, after describing the way of salvation, He adds: “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matt. 20:16; 22:14). Peter, too, uses this doctrine for the same purpose when he urges all Christians to make their calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10). *Christian Dogmatics*.

In another light, as regards the forgiveness of sins and even justification, works are not strictly relegated to the "back alley" by the garbage cans. No, for in the terminology of Luther himself there are “two kinds” of forgiveness of sins, or of justification, the “internal” and the “external.” The internal justification takes place through the gracious promise of the Gospel and through faith which lays hold of this promise. External justification takes place through the good works of Christians, which, as the consequence and fruit of the internal justification, prove to men that internal justification is there. The forgiveness of sins, as I have often said, occurs in two ways: (1) through the Gospel and the Word of God, which is accepted inwardly in the heart, before God, by faith, and (2) externally through the works, of which St. Peter speaks (2 Peter 1:10): “Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.” He means that we should prove that we have faith and forgiveness of sins, that is, that we give evidence of the works, so that one can tell the tree by the fruit, the fruits proving that it is a good, not a bad, tree. *Christian Dogmatics*.

Christ often connects the promise of the remission of sins to good works, not because He means that good works are a propitiation, for they follow reconciliation, but for two reasons: One is, because good fruits must necessarily follow. Therefore He reminds us that, if good fruits do not follow, the repentance is hypocritical and feigned. The other reason is (here 2 Peter 1:10 applies), because we have need of external signs of so great a promise, because a conscience full of fear has need of manifold consolation. (See Luke 19:1-10, esp. v. 8). As, therefore, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs that continually admonish, cheer, and encourage desponding minds to believe the more firmly that sins are forgiven, so the same promise is written and portrayed in good works, in order that these works may admonish us to believe the more firmly. (Trigl. 199, Apol., Art III, 154).

Finally, it needs to be underscored that the most important thing is not the good works which a Christian may do, no matter how useful they may be, but “the very great and precious promises” of our Lord to us sinners in the Gospel. A concluding quote from Pieper will suffice to deal with this issue:

Does not Scripture itself teach us to follow the method of self-certainty theologians when it tells us that we should gain the assurance of our faith and of our continuance in the truth by reflecting on our good works, i.e., our own Ego? Now, it is true that our good works do assure us that we have passed from death unto life. That is the teaching of Scripture (John 8:47; 1 John 3:14; 1

John 2:3-4; Matt. 6:14; 2 Peter 1:10) and of the Lutheran Symbols (Trigl. 199, 154 f.). But we must always bear in mind that when “stormy weather sets in,” and that happens very often, the Christian is driven, lest he perish in uncertainty, to rely solely and exclusively on the objective word of Scripture as the immovable basis of his assurance. Nevertheless, it is God's will that the Christians should be always in a position to bring in their works as a *testimonium* of their standing in grace and in the truth. *Christian Dogmatics*.

Again, my German Bible cites after this verse the Scripture reference Hebrews 3:14. It is listed here: We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. (Hebrews 3:14 NIV)

Luther's Commentary on Verse 10: Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election.

Indeed, the election and God's eternal foreordination is firm enough in itself and requires no confirmation. The call is also strong and firm. For he who hears the Gospel, believes in it, and is baptized is called and will be saved. Now since we, too, are called, we must be zealous, says Peter, to confirm this call and election for ourselves, not only for God.

Now this is a way of speaking employed in Scripture, just as St. Paul says in Ephesians 2:12: “You were strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” Although there is no man, whether good or evil, over whom God is not Lord, since all creatures are His, yet Paul declares that he who does not know God, does not love Him, and does not trust in Him has no God, even though God remains God so far as He Himself is concerned. Thus here, too, although the call and election is firm enough in itself, yet it is not strong and firm enough for you, since you are not yet certain that it pertains to you. Therefore Peter wants us to confirm this call and election for ourselves with good works.

Thus you see what this apostle attributes to the fruits of faith. Although they apply to our neighbor, in order that he may be served with them, yet the fruit does not fail to strengthen faith and to cause it constantly to do more and more good works. Thus this strength is far different from physical strength, which decreases and is consumed if one uses and does something too much. But this spiritual strength increases the more one makes use of it and applies it. It decreases when one does not apply it. Therefore with the battle of faith God first led, drove, and disciplined Christendom this way in shame, death, and bloodshed, in order that it might become truly strong and powerful. The more it was oppressed, the more it flourished. Now St. Peter means that one should not let faith rest and lie still, for it is so constituted that through application and practice it becomes stronger and stronger until it is sure of the call and election and cannot be wanting.

Here bounds are fixed with regard to how one should deal with election. There are many frivolous spirits who have not felt faith deeply. They rush in, attack the matter at the top, and concern themselves with it for the first time. They want to ascertain with their reason whether they are elected, in order that they may be sure of where they stand. But desist from this quickly. It is not the proper method. But if you want to be sure, you must adopt the method St. Peter suggests here. If you choose another way, you have already failed. Your own experience must teach you this. (Luther here is, of course, giving an account of his own struggles over the problem of divine election.) If your faith is well-exercised and applied, you will finally gain assurance, and this will keep you from failing, as is clear from what follows:

For if you do this, you will never fall.

That is, you will stand firm and not stumble or sin; but you will proceed properly and confidently, and everything will turn out well. Otherwise, if you undertake to accomplish this with your own notions, the devil will soon cast you into despair and into hatred of God.

Verse 11

NIV 11: and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

KJV 11: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Latin 11: Sic enim abunde subministrabitur vobis ingressus in regnum aeternum Domini nostri et Servatoris Jesu Christi.

Spanish 11: Porque de esta manera os sera otorgada amplia y generosa entrada en el reino eterno de nuestro Senor y Salvador Jesucristo.

Luther's German 11: Und also wird euch reichlich dargereicht werden der Eingang zu dem ewigen Reich unsers Herrn und Heilandes Jesu Christi.

Modern German 11: und so wird euch reichlich dargereicht werden der Eingang zu dem ewigen Reich unsres Herrn und Heilandes Jesus Christus.

TEV 11: In this way you will be given the full right to enter the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

AAT 11: Then with rich gifts you will be welcomed into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

RSV 11: so there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

LB 11: And God will open wide the gates of heaven for you to enter into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

GWN 11: For then you will be welcomed richly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

KJH 11: For in this way there will be richly supplied for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Greek: οὕτως γὰρ πλουσίως ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται ὑμῖν ἡ εἴσοδος εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον βασιλείαν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Exegetical Notes on Verse 11:

πλουσίως: Adverb. "Richly."

ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται: Fut. Pass, Ind. (See also verse 5) From epixoraygeo: "to supply in addition to, to outfit the chorus with additional (complete) supplies."

εἴσοδος: "The way in, entrance."

Luther's Commentary on Verse 11: So there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This is the road by which one enters the kingdom of heaven. Therefore no one should get the thought that he will enter by means of the kind of dream and ideas of faith he has devised in his own heart. It must be a faith that is alive—a faith well-exercised and applied. So help me God, how our seducers have written and taught contrary to this text! They have said that he who has even the slightest degree and only a little spark of faith in the hour of, death will be saved. (On the basis of Isaiah 42:3: A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; it was argued that even the spark of a “weak and feeble faith and hope...in cross and conflict” [cf. *Luther’s Works*, Am. ed., volume 27, page 27] was enough.) If you want to postpone matters until that time and expect to acquire such faith suddenly and quickly, you will have waited too long. Yet mark well that even those who are strong have enough to take care of, even though one should not despair of those who are weak. For it can well happen that they will enter the kingdom of heaven. But this will be difficult and arduous, and it will cost much toil. He, however, whose manner of living shows that his faith is accompanied by good works and thus becomes strong will have an entrance richly provided for him, and he will enter yonder life cheerfully and confidently. Thus he dies courageously, despises life, departs with pride, as it were, and leaps into the eternal kingdom. But if the others enter at all, they will not go so joyfully. The door will not be open so wide for them. They will not have such a richly provided entrance; but it will be narrow and difficult for them, so that they struggle and prefer a lifetime of weakness to the thought that eventually they will have to die.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this first half of the first chapter of 2 Peter, although it appears in neither the ILCW series nor the historic pericope readings, is full of meat and worth feeding your congregations in sermon or Bible class format. It was good for me to “gnaw” on this half chapter for a period of some two months. My faith grew. My appreciation for the Lutheran Confessions, Franz Pieper, and Peter the Apostle grew appreciably as well. And I have learned to love this section of Scripture.