

“WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW”

(2Peter 1:1-21)

June 26, 2011

Peter's second letter to the church focuses on a **DIFFERENT** sort of persecution - in the form of **FALSE** teachings.

“Learn the Bible. Read it and study it as much as you are able, and you will know when someone else is misrepresenting what God has said.” -Matthew Slick

Five Things We Need to Know to Refute False Teaching

I. The RIGHTEOUSNESS of God...

It is first and foremost the righteousness of God that has saved us through Christ. Only a righteous God could SAVE us from our sins

*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness **through our knowledge of him ... (3)***

One of the earliest heresies in the church was Gnosticism. Gnosis = “to know.”

One of their teachings was that the material and spiritual worlds were completely SEPARATE. Therefore, whatever you did with your body did not effect your soul. People believed bodily sins were therefore ok. Paul:

Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!

Romans 6:12, 15

Peter counters this false teaching by emphasizing our need to know God, beginning with his righteousness and the amazing promise that WE can participate in his divine nature – through Christ!

II. The VIRTUES of God.

Peter focuses here on some godly virtues that WE should acquire and develop with the help of his Spirit.

Peter says that IF we possess these qualities in *increasing measure* , these virtues will keep us from being ineffective and unproductive.

Peter also issues a warning: The failure to acquire and develop these virtues from God will leave us spiritually BLIND.

Ask yourself this question: “Am I GROWING in Christ today?”

Peter is calling on all believers to be prepared for the onslaught of false teachings by becoming personally anchored in the truth of God and our personal relationship with Jesus. That is OUR responsibility!

The great promise is that IF we do these things (receive & develop these virtues) we will NEVER fall and will one day receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of God. That is worth the investment!

III. The REVELATION of God.

Peter knows what we need to know and he promises to make every effort, even after his death, to prompt all believers to REMEMBER the revelation given by God through Christ to every apostle and then to all believers.

That revelation is the Gospel - the Good News that God entered human history in the person of Christ, that he lived and ministered and taught and ultimately died – ALL for our sake and our salvation.

IV. The GLORY of God's Son.

Peter is saying, “I'm not making this stuff up! I have been an eyewitness to the glory and majesty of Jesus.”

Peter was an eyewitness to that glorious sight. He was also an “earwitness” to the glorious sound of God's voice saying, *“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

V. The INSPIRATION of God's Word.

One of the greatest blessings we have as followers of Christ is his Word, the BIBLE. God allows it, CAUSES it, to shine as a light in our hearts.

The written word of God was INSPIRED in men by his Holy Spirit and they obediently recorded it for our benefit.

Why not follow Peter's advice? Pay attention to it!

It is a light shining into the darkness of your heart, your soul. Read it, regularly, carefully, joyfully. It CAN save your eternal life!

KNOWLEDGE is the key to avoiding the trap of false teaching.

Peter is absolutely right – we HAVE what we need for life and godliness through our available knowledge of Him.

It is time for US to use it, be accountable to it and boldly share it with a darkened and dangerous world.