

Growing by Knowing

2 Peter 3:17-18 Berean Study Bible

*Therefore, **beloved**, since you already know these things, be on your guard so that you will not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure standing.*

*¹⁸But **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ**. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

THESE ARE THE LAST WORDS OF PETER – now an old man who knows his death is imminent

2 Peter 1:14 GNT

I know that I shall soon put off this mortal body, as our Lord Jesus Christ plainly told me.

For this reason He appears to be in a hurry to get this Epistle completed bringing it to an abrupt conclusion after only 3 chapters (unlike his first epistle).

He knows He's writing to fellow believers who he is not likely to ever see or address again. *You can hear the concern of this caring father in these parting words.*

He calls them, 'Beloved'! They are people he dearly loves & cares for, whom he has been teaching & guiding as his beloved children. His parting thoughts are toward them, to leave them with instruction that will keep them safe & save them from error seeing he won't be around to watch them or guide them. (See Paul also in Acts 20:20)

*He knows that there is evil lurking in the shadows, seeking to draw his beloved brothers & sisters into cunningly devised fables (2 Peter 1:16) ... destructive heresies ... **denying the Lord Jesus** (2 Peter 2:1-3). He speaks about false prophets ... false teachers who by covetousness will exploit them with deceptive words.*

*His final words are to exhort them to '**Grow in Grace & Knowledge of Jesus Christ**'*

This in itself will save them from going astray into the error of the wicked.

SLIDE This thought comes out clearer by putting verse 18 before verse 17 in our text ...

¹⁸ Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ...

*¹⁷ so that you will not be **carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure standing.***

Peter is saying the way to prevent 'being carried away by the error of the lawless and falling from our secure standing' is to '**Grow in Grace & Knowledge of Jesus Christ**'.

WHAT HAPPENS?

After the initial excitement of being saved, the experience can start to wear thin. Here many new Christians start devising ways to stay spiritual. It's at this point that many Christian's become vulnerable to **the error of the lawless and fall from their secure standing.** **SLIDE**

I call it: **A VULNERABLE PLACE OF ZEALOUS DISCONTENT.**

Many start thinking ... 'WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?'

Some start reading Christian books which propagate NEW IDEAS! Some become influenced by religious older people ... stale, serious types who preach 'HOLINESS', saying you must give up all pleasure in this life. Some separate themselves ... get caught up in cults - **Waco ... Jim**

Jones. Some in Philosophy: After Bible College, I wanted to keep learning so I read 'Das Kapital' by Karl Marx (the man behind communism & the Communist Manifesto). As a result ... I started to develop a revolutionary 'gospel', I added philosophy-faith & began to grow in 'UN-GRACE'.

But Peter says, 'Don't get caught up into any other other aspect of growth ... Grow in [the] Grace you received when you were first saved.'

*This is the same grace you were saved by that **you now live in** ... As Paul declares ... **We are no longer under Law ... but under Grace** (Romans 6:14)*

**We are also told that 'This Grace' is our solid foundation
Romans 5:2**

*Through [Jesus] also we have access by faith into **This Grace in which we stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

In This Grace you have been cemented & securely planted

John, living in a time when Gnosticism was infiltrating the church, says the same thing ...
1 John 2:24 SLIDE

*As for you, **let what you have heard from the beginning abide in you**. If what you have heard from the beginning should abide in you, you also will abide in the Son & the Father.*

PETER'S HEART IS BURNING WITH THIS PROCLAMATION ...

DON'T DEPART FROM THIS GRACE YOU'VE ALREADY RECEIVED ... GROW IN IT.

1 John 2:7

*Beloved, **I am not writing you a new commandment, but an old one**, which you have had from the beginning. This commandment is the message you have heard.*

WHAT IS THIS GRACE THAT WILL SAVE US FROM ERROR?

PETER IDENTIFIES WHAT THIS GRACE IS IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS!

IT'S 'THE GRACE OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST'

The 'Children of God' (the False Prophet Moses David) used to confront Christians.

One day, many years ago, they stopped me. I said, 'How does a person get saved?'

The guy said, 'We introduce them "to Christ".'

I said, 'Jesus Christ?'

He repeated what he'd said, 'We introduce them "to Christ".'

I repeated, 'Jesus Christ?' He couldn't answer!

At that point I knew beyond the shadow of a doubt... these people were preaching another Christ.

*They'd added to their initial experience & were **NO LONGER GROWING IN THE GRACE OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST'***

The other day I read a long 'prophetic word' from The Australian Council of Prophets. The writer was claiming 'God' had spoken to them, telling them how everyone in church was going wrong. However, as I read, it bred anxiety & uneasiness in my spirit & I realised ... **there was not one mention of 'Jesus'...** despite the fact the scripture tells us the testimony of Jesus is the essence of all prophesy

Revelation 19:10 (Berean Literal Bible) ...*'The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophesy'*.

Look at what the Apostle John says,

1 John 4:1-2 (Berean Study)

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for **many false prophets have gone out into the world.***

2 By this you will know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

One guy who ran a whole movement of '**banner waving**' wrote, '*Experience the power of banners in prophetic worship, intercession and spiritual warfare ...*' **NO MENTION OF JESUS**

By departing from '**this Grace**' many people start to grow prodigiously in other ways... religiously ... philosophically ... demonically ... **denying Jesus Christ as Lord & Saviour.**

PEOPLE DEVELOP A TYPE OF HYBRID CHRISTIANITY **SLIDE**

A MIXTURE OF ORGANIC GRACE & MAN-MADE MINISTRIES. They become *people who are saved by grace but now become perfected by works and **DEPART FROM THE GRACE OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST** – the grace in which they were initially planted.*

Galatians 3:3

You began in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by The Flesh?

Jesus is no longer their joy or focus ... their success is.

THERE IS NOT ANOTHER 'GRACE OF GOD' OTHER THAN THE GRACE THAT PROCLAIMS JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOUR.

- Saul was anointed with a vial.
- A vial is a man-made vessel representing a man-made ministry.
- David was anointed with a 'Horn'.
- A Horn is a natural vessel ... representing an organic, God-breathed ministry.

Problem: Many of us think we can do it ourselves.

We always want to keep adding to God's grace. It's My Ministry ... I will build My Church ...

We start off in Grace but suddenly we start growing in the flesh.

Peter says, 'Stay in the Grace of Jesus Christ & Grow in the Grace of Jesus Christ'.

THE SECOND EXHORTATION PETER GIVES IS TO GROW IN KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

2 Peter 3:18 **SLIDE**

*But grow in the grace and **[grow in] knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.** To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

WHAT IS THIS KNOWLEDGE?

Knowledge γνῶσει (gnōsei) = doctrine, wisdom. From ginosko; knowing, i.e. knowledge.

1. THIS KNOWLEDGE IS GRACE-KNOWLEDGE

This knowledge we receive comes by Grace.

By revelation ... by enlightenment ... by divine understanding ...

SLIDE GRACE IS THE PLACE WHERE THE REVELATION OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST SHINES BEAUTIFULLY & SOVEREIGNLY.

GRACE & TRUTH go hand in glove & GRACE ALWAYS PRECEDES TRUTH.

John writes about Jesus, saying ...

John 1:14 **SLIDE**

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of (1) grace and (2) truth.

John 1:17 **SLIDE**

For the Law was given through Moses; (1) grace and (2) truth came through Jesus Christ.

In this GARDEN OF GOD'S GRACE ... the knowledge of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ grows naturally, peacefully & prolifically.

HERE IN THIS BEAUTIFUL GARDEN OF HIS GRACE WE NATURALLY PARTAKE OF THE FRUIT OF GRACE-KNOWLEDGE AS IT ORGANICALLY GROWS.

If you approach Truth without 'Grace', from any other basis ... you'll miss its mysteries ... its nuances ... its absolutes ... its joy ... its flow ... its freedom.

WHAT IS THIS KNOWLEDGE?

2. THIS KNOWLEDGE IS GOD BREATHED KNOWLEDGE.

Proverbs 2:6 **SLIDE**

For the LORD gives wisdom: out of his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.

This is not hard study ... It's beautiful, satisfying revelation of Him & tastes wonderful.

Proverbs 2:10 ... *Knowledge is pleasant to your soul.*

*Everything begins to make sense as we discover the 'Thread of Grace & Truth'
Everything begins to Line Up.*

I've got to say, since coming into His Grace Revelation & beginning to understand 'The Gospel of The Grace of God' I have never had one Sunday where I was at a loss as to what

to preach & teach. In Fact ... the opposite is true. I have had a problem with trying to preach & teach toooooo much!

I HAVE DISCOVERED AN ETERNAL RESERVOIR – AN EVERLASTING SOURCE! A Fountain that never will run dry! A well where we will never thirst again ... IT'S HIS GLORIOUS GRACE!

SLIDE WHAT IS THIS KNOWLEDGE?

3. THIS IS THE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST
It's not the knowledge Jesus has but the knowledge about our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ. It is Knowing Christ Himself in a plethora of ways; for instance ...

IT'S KNOWLEDGE **ABOUT** EVERYTHING JESUS HAS DONE FOR US BY HIS DEATH & RESURRECTION.

IT'S KNOWLEDGE **ABOUT** WHO HE WAS AS A MAN.

IT'S KNOWLEDGE **ABOUT** WHO HE IS AS THE RISEN LORD.

IT'S KNOWLEDGE **ABOUT** HIS LOVE & PROVISION FOR YOU etc.

THE EMMAUS ROAD (Luke 24: 13-35)

When Jesus met the disciples on the Emmaus road, they were upset & discouraged. But notice what Jesus didn't do. He didn't bring them temporary relief by encouraging words. JESUS WENT STRAIGHT TO THE WORD OF GOD & TAUGHT ABOUT HIMSELF.

THIS KNOWLEDGE IS ABOUT HIM.

Luke 24:27 **SLIDE**

*Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things **concerning Himself.***

Jesus didn't give them a prophetic word ... Jesus disclosed The Knowledge about Himself from The Written word ... The Logos.

NB: The result.

- Their hearts burned in assurance & joy (Verse 32).
- Their eyes were opened & they **KNEW** Him (Verse 31).
- They proclaimed the risen saviour with enthusiasm (Verse 34).

I believe in prophetic words ... ie words of edification, exhortation & comfort.

BUT I DON'T BELIEVE WE SHOULD BE CO-DEPENDENT ON THESE WORDS OR MINISTERS.

THE 'PROPHETIC' WORD SOME CHRISTIAN'S CRAVE AND BUILD THEIR LIVES ON IS NOT ABOUT JESUS ... IT'S ABOUT THEM. It brings temporary encouragement for a situation.

Christian's who crave & live for these words for themselves remain babes ...

THEY NEVER GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42)

Luke 10:39 **SLIDE ... Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and *heard His word.***

Mary didn't hear A WORD (a prophetic word) about herself.

She heard The 'Logos' of Jesus & Jesus is 'The Logos' ...
MARY WAS HEARING ABOUT 'HER LORD & SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST'

This knowledge is NOT some NEW TRUTH.

It's this 'GOOD NEWS OF GOD ... CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST' (Romans 1:1-3)

People start adding NEW TRUTH because they get bored with The Gospel.

But we haven't yet exhausted the FULL GOSPEL. WE'VE ONLY HAD A TASTE OF IT.

- WE GROW IN THE GRACE WE ALREADY HAVE.
- WE GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE WE ALREADY KNOW.

NB: 2 Peter 3:17 (Berean Study Bible) ... *since you already know ...*

We begin with the end! The highest truth is the first truth that we learn. MacLaren
BUT IT IS IN SEMINAL FORM.

Peter insists that this organic knowledge of Jesus Christ flowing from 'salvation by grace' will indubitably, intrinsically & effortlessly cause us to grow in Christ.

He states it at the beginning of this epistle & at the end.

2 Peter 1:2

Grace and peace be multiplied to you through *the knowledge* of God and of Jesus our Lord.

2 Peter 1:3

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through *the knowledge* of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

Here in this beautiful garden you receive the perfect conditions for growth

- *Pure refreshing Water from The Presence of The Holy Spirit.*
- *Nutrient rich soil from The Word of His Grace.*
- *Energising Sunshine from the revelation of His finished work.*

THE GARDEN OF GOD'S GRACE & KNOWLEDGE

In this place of grace ... God is the divine gardener who planted you by His hand ... and just as you didn't plant yourself in this Garden of Grace but you were planted by the Divine Gardener ... so He will cause you to grow by revealing Himself by His Word, more & more.

THE SAME WAY YOU WERE SOVEREIGNLY PLANTED IS

THE SAME WAY YOU WILL ORGANICALLY GROW.

Not by any effort or striving on your part.

I am surrounded by trees & plants on my property where I live. Now I don't go out every morning to see what is making all the noise outside – all that groaning & puffing &

panting ... the 'Ah's'! the 'Oh's'! because the plant life is trying to grow!

No, people come to my place and say ... 'It's so quiet! It's so peaceful.' They can't hear the plants trying to grow ... because they're not trying.

ORGANIC LIFE GROWS SILENTLY WITHOUT EFFORT ... IN GOD'S TIME.

So we do also. We Grow in Grace & knowledge of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.

SUPPLEMENTARY

2 Peter 1:8 (Berean Study Bible)

*For if you possess these qualities and continue to grow in them, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in **your knowledge** of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

HOW DO WE RESPOND TO THIS GRACE & KNOWLEDGE ABOUT OUR LORD & SAVIOUR

1. WE PERCEIVE THERE'S MORE TO KNOW ABOUT HIM & HIS WORK.

We know that we don't know all.

2. WE FOLLOW THE INHERENT HUNGER IN OUR HEARTS TO KNOW HIM MORE ...
TO HAVE A GOOD APPETITE IS TO HAVE A HEALTHY LIFE.

Hunger & thirst for righteousness. As Newborn babes ... we sincerely desire ...

3. WE MEDITATE UPON HIS WORD TO US & ALLOW OUR MIND TO UNDERSTAND
THAT WHICH WE KNOW OF HIM IN OUR HEART.

To let our mind be taught by our spirit ... The eyes of our understanding are in our spirit.