

Brandon Phillips / General

The Church: Growing in Faith and Love / Faith; Love / 1 Peter 1:3-15

As we approach 2024 and beyond with all the possibilities, the Apostle Peter gives three litmus tests for whether your faith is true and growing.

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### Pre-sermon Comments

[Ephesians 6:10](#) (LSB) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

[Philippians 3:13-14](#) (LSB) <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do not consider myself as having laid hold of *it* yet, but one thing I do: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

### Sermon Text

#### **2 Peter 1:2-7 LSB**

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. <sup>5</sup> Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, <sup>7</sup> and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love.

## Proposition and Outline

As we approach 2024 and beyond with all the possibilities, the Apostle Peter gives three litmus tests for whether your faith is true and growing. You must have:

1. A Faith that Advances in Knowledge ([2 Pet 1:2-4](#))
2. A Faith that Abounds in Love ([2 Pet 1:5-11](#))
3. A Faith that Affirms God's Grace ([2 Pet 3:17-18](#))

## Review

### The Author of 2 Peter

[John 1:40-42](#) (LSB) <sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John *speak* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ). <sup>42</sup> He brought him to Jesus. When Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

[Matthew 16:16](#) (LSB) <sup>16</sup> And Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

[Matthew 16:21](#) (LSB) <sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

[Matthew 16:23](#) (LSB) <sup>23</sup> But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

[Luke 22:61-62](#) (LSB) <sup>61</sup> And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." <sup>62</sup> And he went out and cried bitterly.

[John 21:17](#) (LSB) <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, “Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Tend My sheep.

[Acts 2:14](#) (LSB) <sup>14</sup> But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words.

[Acts 10:34–35](#) (LSB) <sup>34</sup> And opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most truly comprehend *now* that God is not one to show partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation the one who fears Him and does righteousness is welcome to Him.

## The Context of 2 Peter

### Peter’s Audience

[2 Peter 1:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> Simeon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, **To those who have received the same kind of faith as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:**

[2 Peter 3:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

[1 Peter 1:1–2](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, **To those who reside as exiles, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,**

who are chosen <sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to the obedience of Jesus Christ and the sprinkling of His blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

[1 Peter 1:4](#) (LSB) <sup>4</sup> to *obtain* an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, having been kept in heaven for you,

[1 Peter 1:6–7](#) (LSB) <sup>6</sup> In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

## Peter's Main Point

[1 Peter 5:8](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> Be of sober *spirit*, be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

## **The Church's One Foundation - Verse 3**

Though with a scornful wonder,  
men see her sore oppressed,  
by schisms rent asunder,  
by heresies distressed,  
yet saints their watch are keeping,  
their cry goes up, "How long?"  
and soon the night of weeping  
shall be the morn of song!

## You must have a Faith that Advances in Knowledge ([2 Peter 1:2-4](#))

[2 Peter 1:2](#) (LSB) <sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not of works, so that no one may boast.

## Peter's confidence - multiplied grace and peace! ([2 Peter 1:2](#))

[2 Peter 1:2](#) (LSB) <sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

## What is true knowledge?

[1 Timothy 2:4](#) (LSB) <sup>4</sup> who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

[2 Timothy 2:25](#) (LSB) <sup>25</sup> with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may give them repentance leading to the full knowledge of the truth,

[2 Timothy 3:7](#) (LSB) <sup>7</sup> always learning and never able to come to the full knowledge of the truth.

[Titus 1:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of God's elect and the full knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,

[Hebrews 10:26](#) (LSB) <sup>26</sup> For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

[Ephesians 1:13](#) (LSB) <sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

What is false knowledge?

O, Church Arise by Keith and Kristyn Getty

With shield of faith and belt of truth, We'll stand against the devil's lies

The source of your salvation is God, and the substance of your salvation is knowledge – knowledge. ~ John MacArthur

[1 Thessalonians 5:8](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> But since we are of *the* day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

Peter's confirmation - we have been granted everything we need ([2 Peter 1:3](#))

[2 Peter 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

[1 Peter 1:2](#) (LSB) <sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to the obedience of Jesus Christ and the sprinkling of His blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

[2 Corinthians 9:8](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> And God is able to make every grace abound to you, so that in everything at every time having every sufficiency, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

[1 Timothy 1:12-14](#) (LSB) <sup>12</sup> I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He regarded me faithful, putting me into service, <sup>13</sup> even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; <sup>14</sup> and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

[1 Timothy 1:15](#) (LSB) <sup>15</sup> It is a trustworthy saying and deserving full acceptance: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost.

[2 Peter 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

**His divine power confirms it!**

[Psalm 24:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> The earth is Yahweh's, as well as its fullness, The world, and those who dwell in it.

[Genesis 1:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[Psalm 19:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And the expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

[Ephesians 1:18-21](#) (LSB) <sup>18</sup> so that you—the eyes of your heart having been enlightened—will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of the might of His strength, <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ, by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

[2 Peter 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

What's the catch?

[Ephesians 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

[Luke 16:11](#) (LSB) <sup>11</sup> “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true *riches* to you?”

[Matthew 6:19-21](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; <sup>21</sup> for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Connecting to Peter's Main Point

[2 Peter 2:1-3](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. <sup>2</sup> And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned. <sup>3</sup> And in *their greed* they will exploit you with false words, their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

What have we been given?

[2 Peter 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

As a Christian, by grace, God has given you -

- **Faith** ([Eph 2:8-9](#))

[Ephesians 2:8-9](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not of works, so that no one may boast.

- **Forgiveness ([Eph 1:7](#))**

[Ephesians 1:7](#) (LSB) <sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our transgressions, according to the riches of His grace

- **The Holy Spirit ([Eph 1:13-14](#))**
- **An Inheritance**

[Ephesians 1:13-14](#) (LSB) <sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, unto the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

- **The Fruit of the Spirit ([Gal 5:22-23](#))**

[Galatians 5:22-23](#) (LSB) <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

- **Gifts of the Spirit ([Eph 4:7-8](#))**

[Ephesians 4:7-8](#) (LSB) <sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. <sup>8</sup> Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, *And HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN.*"

- **Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places ([Eph 1:3](#))**

[Ephesians 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ,

- **Christ's righteousness ([2 Cor 5:21](#))**

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#) (LSB) <sup>21</sup> He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.



- **The Church for your protection and fellowship ([Eph 5:25](#); [Acts 20:28](#))**

[Acts 20:28](#) (LSB) <sup>28</sup> “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

[Ephesians 5:25](#) (LSB) <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

[Ephesians 1:4](#) (LSB) <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him in love,

How do we unlock these gifts?

[2 Peter 1:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

[Matthew 16:24](#) (LSB) <sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

Peter reiterates the magnificent promises!

[2 Peter 1:4](#) (LSB) <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

[Ephesians 1:5–6](#) (LSB) <sup>5</sup> by predestining us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He graciously bestowed on us in the Beloved.

[2 Peter 1:4](#) (LSB) <sup>4</sup> For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Having a faith that advances?

[Matthew 7:13](#) (LSB) <sup>13</sup> “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

## Applying these truths as a church

[Hebrews 12:1-3](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, laying aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary, fainting in heart.

## Additional Quotes

### Quotes about Faith

Faith is both God's gift and man's act. The Lord is the author of our faith, but we ourselves believe. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Obedience is the hallmark of faith. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Get the queen bee of faith and all the other virtues will attend her. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

\*Faith is the silver thread upon which the pearls of the graces are strung. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Faith is the accepting of what God gives. Faith is the believing what God says. Faith is the trusting to what Jesus has done. Only do this and you are saved, as surely as you are alive! ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

It is not the strength of your faith that saves you, but the strength of Him upon whom you rely! Christ is able to save you if you come to Him—be your faith weak or be it strong. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Walking by sight is just this: "I believe in myself." Whereas walking by faith is: "I believe in God." ~ Charles Spurgeon

\*Faith cannot stand unless it be founded on the promises of God. ~ **John Calvin**

Faith is nothing but believing what God promises or says. Whatever remarkable thing we read of happening in the Old or New Testament, we read that it was done by faith—not by works, not by a general faith, but by faith directed to the matter in hand. ~ **Martin Luther**

The property of faith is not to be proud of what the eye sees, but to rely on what the Word reveals. ~ **Martin Luther**

It is never on account of its formal nature as a psychic act that faith is conceived in Scripture to be saving. It is not, strictly speaking, even faith in Christ that saves, but Christ that saves through faith. The saving power resides exclusively, not in the act of faith or the attitude of faith or nature of faith, but in the object of faith. ~ **Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield**

Faith in God is a terrific venture in the dark. ~ **Oswald Chambers**

Faith that is sure of itself is not faith; faith that is sure of God is the only faith there is. ~ **Oswald Chambers**

Faith does not struggle; faith lets God do it all. ~ **Corrie ten Boom**

Faith is to believe what you do not yet see; the reward for this faith is to see what you believe. ~ **Augustine of Hippo**

Faith is not in itself a meritorious act; the merit is in the One toward Whom it is directed. Faith is a redirecting of our sight, a getting out of the focus of our own vision and getting God into focus. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

In natural matters faith follows evidence and is impossible without it, but in the reality of the spirit, faith precedes understanding; it does not follow it. The natural man must know in order to believe; the spiritual man must believe in order to know. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Every man lives by faith, the non-believer as well as the saint; the one by faith in natural laws and the other by faith in God. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

The man that believes will obey; failure to obey is convincing proof that there is not true faith present. To attempt the impossible God must give faith or there will be none, and He gives faith to the obedient heart only. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Faith says, “I cannot believe that he who has brought me so far is going to let me down at this point. It is impossible; it would be inconsistent with the character of God.” ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Faith always shows itself in the whole personality. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not our righteousness; our faith does not constitute our righteousness. Faith is simply the instrument by which we receive the righteousness. Or, again, take it like this: our faith does not justify us. If you begin to speak like that, you see, you turn faith at once into works. You say, Ah, I am justified because of my faith; it was my faith that did it; and immediately you have got something to boast of. The other man had not got faith, and I had faith, my faith has saved me. At once you are contradicting [Romans 1:17](#). Our faith does not justify us. It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ that justifies—and nothing else! ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

The trials burn away any impurities in the believer’s faith. What is left when the trials have ended is purified, genuine faith, analogous to the pure gold or silver that emerges from the refiner’s fire. ~ **Wayne Grudem**

Faith is the sight of the inward eye. ~ **Alexander Maclaren**

## Quotes about Knowledge

Observe, then, that all other knowledge may be useful enough in itself, but if it does not concern Christ, it cannot be called saving knowledge. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

You know something of Him. Oh, may God give the Grace to add to your knowledge, trust, and then shall you have true saving faith! ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The usual rule is that the more we really know the more conscious we are of the littleness of our knowledge. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The knowledge of God is the great hope of sinners. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

\* Jesus taught that true knowledge begins with spiritual knowledge, knowledge of God, and that this is to be found in God's revelation of himself in the Bible and in Jesus' own life and work, the work of the Savior. ~ **James Montgomery Boice**

Ignorance is your disease; knowledge must be your cure. ~ **Richard Baxter**

Knowledge without humility is vanity. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

To know God is at once the easiest and the most difficult thing in the world. It is easy because the knowledge is not won by hard mental toil, but is something freely given. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

\* Seek not to grow in knowledge chiefly for the sake of applause, and to enable you to dispute with others; but seek it for the benefit of your souls. ~ **Jonathan Edwards**

All true knowledge of God is born out of obedience. ~ **John Calvin**

*We must observe that the knowledge of God which we are invited to cultivate is not that which, resting satisfied with empty speculation, only flutters in the brain, but a knowledge which will prove substantial and fruitful whenever it is duly perceived and rooted in the heart.* ~ **John Calvin**

Having the knowledge of God's Word control our minds is the key to righteous living. What controls your thoughts will control your behavior. Self-control is a result of mind-control, which is dependent on knowledge. ~ **John F.**

**MacArthur**

Some Corinthian believers assumed that knowledge was the true sign of spirituality. They did not understand that knowledge without love indicates a lack of knowledge. ~ **John D. Barry; Douglas Mangum; Derek R. Brown; Michael S. Heiser; Miles Custis; Elliot Ritzema; Matthew M. Whitehead; Michael Grigoni; David Bomar**

Knowledge is happiness, because to have knowledge—broad, deep knowledge—is to know true ends from false, and lofty things from low. ~ **Helen Keller**

Nothing but the pure knowledge of God can teach us humility. ~ **John Calvin**

When we obey His Word, we grow in spiritual knowledge; and as we grow in spiritual knowledge, we grow in freedom from sin. Life leads to learning, and learning leads to liberty. ~ **Warren W. Wiersbe**

The true knowledge of God will result, not in our being puffed up with conceit at how knowledgeable we are, but in our falling on our faces before God in sheer wonder and crying, “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how unscrutable his ways!” Whenever our knowledge becomes dry or leaves us cold, something has gone wrong. ~ **John Stott**

## Next time:

You must have a Faith that [Abounds in Love \(2 Peter 1:5-7\)](#)

[2 Peter 1:5-7](#) (LSB) <sup>5</sup> Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, <sup>7</sup> and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love.

You must have a Faith that [Affirms God’s Grace \(2 Peter 3:17-18\)](#)

[2 Peter 3:17-18](#) (LSB) <sup>17</sup> You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest you, having been carried away by the error of unprincipled men, fall from your own steadfastness, <sup>18</sup> but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.