

2 Peter Part 2 – The Pursuit of True Knowledge and Maturity – July 3rd, 2026

Summary

The provided text outlines a theological study of **2 Peter 1:3-15**, focusing on the necessity of **true knowledge** and **human transformation** in the life of a believer. The speaker states that while God's **divine power** grants the means for godliness, the believer carries a **conditional obligation** to actively develop virtues like **moral excellence** and **self-control**. This process of **renewing the mind** is presented as a rigorous, lifelong effort required to avoid spiritual stagnation and ensure entrance into the **eternal earthly kingdom**. Central to the discussion is the warning that **Satan seeks to dilute scripture**, making it vital for teachers to repeatedly **remind** the faithful of these truths. Ultimately, the teaching emphasizes that **knowledge without action** is useless, and the pinnacle of spiritual maturity is the selfless **love of the brethren**.

Study Guide

Definitions of Key Words

- **Antecedent:** The word or idea that comes before something else and that another word refers back to. Understanding antecedents is crucial for identifying what specific qualities or promises the text is referencing in its immediate context.
- **Diligence (Greek: *spoudē*):** Bringing in **all zeal or effort**. It implies making growth a distinct and definitive object to be accomplished, rather than a casual desire.
- **Excellence (Virtue):** Refers to Christ's **moral perfection, virtue, and heroic goodness**. Believers are called to develop this same moral excellence as a response to God's calling.
- **Glory:** Refers to Christ's **divine majesty, splendour, and manifest authority**.
- **Granted:** A term in the perfect tense describing divine power; it carries the past tense action of **having already been magnificently gifted**.
- **Love (Agape):** The crowning virtue and pinnacle of the list; it is **unselfish love** focused on serving the brethren rather than oneself.
- **Self-control:** The **mastery over all evil intentions and appetites**.
- **True Knowledge (*Epignōsis*):** A precise, correct knowledge of God that is not erroneous or false. It is the vehicle through which life and godliness are granted and must result in **active change**.

Expansion of Key Points

I. The Foundation of Divine Provision (2 Peter 1:3-4)

- **Everything Provided:** God's divine power has already granted believers **everything pertaining to life and godliness**. This is a gift of grace, not something earned by human effort.

- **The Significance of "These":** In verse 4, "these" refers to the nearest plural antecedents: **glory and excellence**. It is by means of Christ's own intrinsic splendour and moral power that believers are called and enabled to take on the divine nature.
- **The Divine Nature:** Through "precious and magnificent promises," believers become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption of the world caused by lust.

II. The Conditionality of the Kingdom (Romans 8:17, Matthew 18:3)

- **Conditional Clauses:** The scriptures contain hundreds of "if" clauses (1,637 occurrences of "if" in the Bible) that show God's promises often require human participation.
- **Suffering and Glorification:** According to **Romans 8:17**, being glorified with Christ is conditional: "**if indeed we suffer with Him**".
- **The Necessity of Change:** Jesus taught in **Matthew 18:3** that entrance into the kingdom is conditional: "**unless you change** and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven".

III. The Virtue Chain and Human Transformation (2 Peter 1:5-7)

- **Continuous Process:** Transformation is not a one-time event (such as "giving your heart to Jesus") but a **continual process** of the renewed mind.
- **The Ladder of Growth:** Believers are told to apply diligence to supply:
 1. **Faith**
 2. **Moral Excellence** (Virtue)
 3. **Knowledge**
 4. **Self-control**
 5. **Perseverance**
 6. **Godliness**
 7. **Brotherly Kindness**
 8. **Love** (*Agape*)
- **Action as the Goal:** The purpose of knowledge is **action**. Knowledge that does not instigate change is useless and can lead to pride.

IV. The Urgency of Practice and Remembrance (2 Peter 1:8-15)

- **Fruitfulness vs. Blindness:** Possessing and increasing in these virtues renders a believer fruitful in the true knowledge of Christ. Lacking them leads to **spiritual blindness and shortsightedness**, causing one to **forget** their purification from sin.
 - **Making Calling Sure:** Believers must be diligent to "make certain" of their calling by **practising** these things **continually**.
 - **The Role of the Teacher:** Peter emphasizes the need to **remind** believers of these truths **repeatedly**, even if they already know them, because life's distractions and Satan's influence can cause people to forget and stop practising.
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Study Questions

1. According to the strict rules of grammar discussed in the teaching what are the specific plural antecedents for the word "these" in 2 Peter 1:4?
 2. How does the speaker distinguish between "true knowledge" and "false knowledge" in terms of their results?
 3. Why does the teacher argue that "giving your heart to Jesus" is an insufficient description of the Christian life based on these texts?
 4. What is the "subjunctive mood" used for in Romans 8:17, and what does it imply about glorification?
 5. What is the "pinnacle" virtue in Peter's list, and what is its primary target?
 6. According to the teaching, why is Satan's main target the "integrity of God's words"?
 7. What does the term "shortsighted" (verse 9) imply about a believer's focus?
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Answer Key

1. **Glory and excellence**, found at the end of verse 3.
 2. **True knowledge** produces providential fruit and leads to moral excellence; **false knowledge** renders a person useless and unfruitful, often appearing "rotten on the inside" despite outward appearances.
 3. The term is not found in scripture; rather, the Bible describes a **continual process** of enduring suffering, renewing the mind, and practising virtues until the end.
 4. The subjunctive mood indicates **possibility**; it implies that glorification is dependent on having gone through suffering with Christ.
 5. **Love (Agape)** is the pinnacle, and its target is the **brethren** (serving and loving others).
 6. By diluting and corrupting the truth, Satan ensures people do not have a **true knowledge of God**, which is necessary to enter the eternal earthly kingdom.
 7. It means the person is living for the **present discomfort or self-interest** rather than the future reality of the kingdom and the spiritual needs of others.
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Biblical References within the Sources

- 2 Peter 1:1-15 (Primary Text)
- 2 Peter 1:3
- 2 Peter 1:4
- 2 Peter 1:5
- 2 Peter 1:5-7
- 2 Peter 1:6
- 2 Peter 1:7
- 2 Peter 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:9

- **2 Peter 1:10**
 - **2 Peter 1:11**
 - **2 Peter 1:12**
 - **2 Peter 1:13**
 - **2 Peter 1:14**
 - **2 Peter 1:15**
 - **Romans 8:17**
 - **Matthew 18:3**
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Exhortations

- **Pursue Moral Excellence Aggressively:** Do not read these virtues passively; treat them as **urgent goals** and "absolute imperative qualities of life".
- **Beware of "Knowledge Only":** Don't chase knowledge at the cost of your character. If your study of scripture isn't changing your behaviour, it is of no use.
- **Live for the Future:** Don't let the discomfort of the present or the fear of suffering stop you from declaring the gospel. Look ahead to the **future earthly kingdom** and the eternal state of those around you.
- **Never Be Satisfied:** Like the Apostle Paul, never think you have "arrived." Be diligent to ensure your virtues are **increasing**, as there is an onus on us to never be satisfied with where we are in our walk.
- **Embrace Remembrance:** Value the repetition of truth. Review what you have learned, practice it daily, and use the written Word to keep these things constantly in mind.

THE BLUEPRINT FOR DIVINE MATURITY

(2 Peter 1)

START WITH GOD'S DIVINE PROVISION.

God's power grants everything for
life and godliness through His
glory and moral excellence.

BUILD THE SEVEN-STEP VIRTUE CHAIN



UNDERSTAND THE "IF" CLAUSES.

Entrance into the Kingdom is conditional; "if" these
qualities are yours and increasing, you will not stumble.

COMMIT TO CONSTANT REMEMBRANCE.

Maturity requires diligent "practicing"
of these truths over and over to
prevent spiritual nearsightedness.

KNOWLEDGE REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ACTION.

True knowledge is useless unless
it instigates change and the
"renewing of the mind."