

Is Your Faith Real?

2 Peter 1:1-4

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I'm going to read 2 Peter 1:1-4, and then we're going to go back and unpack it phrase by phrase. It starts with, "Simon Peter,"—which is rare for Peter to actually use his old name, Simon, which was the name he had before Jesus changed his name to Peter; and he calls himself—"a servant"—the Greek word is *doûlos* or bondsman—"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: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 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: 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"—or literally, because of—"lust."

One of the surefire ways to detect a counterfeit bill is to familiarize yourself with real money. If you want to know a counterfeit, the best way is to know the real, genuine, authentic thing. Amen? What Peter wanted the believers...and he's writing to the same believers that he wrote 1 Peter to, which is clear in 2 Peter 3:1. Peter wrote his second epistle because of his deep concern that the readers knew the difference between the true and false faith, of the false apostles, or the true faith and the false faith, and they could tell the difference.

Let me give you just some light introductory thoughts. Turn to 2 Peter 3:17-18 where we find perhaps the key summary, the last two verses of the whole epistle, a short little three chapters, and he summarizes why he wrote. He wrote right after he wrote 1 Peter, so he's writing around 64-66 A.D. We're not sure where from, but he wrote it to the same people shortly after he wrote 1 Peter.

Notice 2 Peter 3:17. He says, "Ye, therefore, beloved,"—that was one of Peter's favorite terms for the believers, to call them "beloved," reminding them that they're loved by God and loved by him,—“seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” So, this is why he wrote 2 Peter, he wanted them to be warned and, “ . . . beware lest . . . being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” In order for them to get steadfast and not be led astray, verse 18, “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.”

One of the key words in 2 Peter is the word “knowledge,” and we'll talk about what it means. It's the word most often from the Greek, *epígn* ×6—0, which means an experiential overflowing knowledge that is an experiential, personal, subjective experience with God. Through the Word of God and through the Spirit of God they were to be growing in the grace and knowledge of God and of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The best anecdote for error is truth, to get grounded and growing in the Word of God.

Just a quick outline of the three chapters. In chapter 1, we're going to be standing in holiness, how we live the Christian life. Inevitably, bad doctrine leads to bad living. Bad doctrine leads to bad living. Sound doctrine leads to sound living. What you believe often determines how you behave, and nine times out of ten, false teachers are involved in some kind of moral sin because of their lack of knowledge of the Word of God which should lead us to a life of holiness, chapter 1. In chapter 2, we're going to be looking at steadfast against or standing against heresy. The theme in chapter 1 is standing in holiness; the theme in chapter 2 is standing against heresy, how we believe. Chapter 3 will be standing in hope. One of the things that the false teachers were propagating were the fact the Jesus Christ is not going to return. They were denying the imminent return and Second Coming of Jesus Christ. That's not a lot different than what people are doing today, so he's going to warn us about those who would say that the Lord's delayed His coming and the dangers of that in chapter 3.

Someone said, "In 1 Peter we had pain with a purpose, and we read about suffering. In 2 Peter we have poison in the pew." First Peter dealt with suffering from the outside; 2 Peter deals with deception on the inside. Someone pointed out how Satan attacks the church from these two epistles. In 1 Peter he comes with persecution as a lion from the outside. In 2 Peter he comes as a serpent with poison on the inside and in the pulpit and in the pew. That's one of the most dangerous things that we face today. It's not persecution or opposition from the outside, but poison and false teaching and heresy in the inside of the church.

When Paul met with the elders from Ephesus on the beach at Miletus when he was on his way to Jerusalem, he met with those elders and said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise," so, two categories: They will come in from the outside and arise up from the inside. So, we have to be careful. We have to be vigilant against false teachers who come against the name of the Lord. Second Peter focuses on growing in grace and the knowledge as a proper response to the errors from within the church.

Peter lays out five important affirmations about real faith. There's a lot of stuff in this text that we can't go in to, but if you're taking notes, I want you to write down these five affirmations that are qualities and characteristics of authentic and genuine faith. The first characteristic of genuine faith is that it is called a "like precious faith." Look at it with me in verse 1. Again, "Simon Peter," and by the way, I don't know why but critics attack 2 Peter perhaps more than any other book of the New Testament claiming that Peter didn't write it. They really have no reason for that other than they don't like the fact that it's against false teachers and that that's what they are. A lot of attack against this epistle, but interestingly it opens up with "Simon Peter," so it's pretty clear who the author of the second epistle is. Some say because of the different way he wrote and the different theme he wrote on, but that has nothing to do with indicating Peter did not write it.

Then, Peter calls himself, " . . . a servant," which is pretty typical—not the Pope—but calls himself "a servant." By the way, he is actually called here a *doûlos*, which is a bondsman. The lowest of the slaves were *doûloses*; they were bondsmen. They were slaves willingly and out

of choice, but they were bondslaves. The word “servant” should actually be translated slave, and he was “. . . an apostle,”—one who was commissioned and sent out by our Lord—“Jesus Christ.” He’s writing “to them that have obtained”—here’s our point—“like precious faith with us”—that is, us apostles—“through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

What does Peter mean when he talks about “like precious faith”? The word “precious” means of equal value. It was used for foreigners who had been granted the privilege of citizenship which were equal and of the same value as those who were native-born citizens. We hear a lot today in America about illegal aliens and citizenship and immigration and those kind of things, but if you are born in America and you are an American, you’re there by birth, you’re a citizen. If you immigrate into America and you become a citizen, you’re a citizen. You’re no less a citizen than those who were born in America. It’s like the “like precious faith,” you’re of equal value, you’re a citizen of the United States of America.

Peter is saying that the faith given to them by God is equal in honor and value with that of the apostles. Now, think about that. The same faith Peter, James, John, and Thomas and Bartholomew and Matthew, the same faith that the apostles had, I have the same faith. It’s a “like precious faith.” It’s of the same value. I’m not anymore loved by God or not loved by God as these apostles.

It also indicates, too, that those who were Gentiles had a “like precious faith” with those that are Jews, that there’s not in the body of Christ,” . . . Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Whether we have the same faith as the apostles or the same faith as the Jews that believed in Jesus Christ, the New American Standard Bible translates it like this, “To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours.” What kind of faith should we have? The same kind of faith that Peter, James, and John had. How ‘bout that old song, “Give Me That Old Time Religion,” It was good for Paul and Silas, It’s good enough for me. Amen? So we have the same faith, the same body of belief, same relationship to God that the apostles had, and that’s a marvelous truth.

If we have real faith, it gives us the same standing and spiritual privileges as the apostles. It doesn’t matter whether you are an apostle or a most obscure believer, whether you are Jew or Gentile, man or a woman, freeman or a slave, you have the same standing, the same blessings, same promises, the same forgiveness in Christ as even the apostles. So, this is a “like precious faith.”

I want you to note a word in verse 1. The word there is that you “have obtained.” It doesn’t say attained, it says obtained. You say, “What’s the difference?” One is that you attain by your self efforts. Obtain is that you’re given by grace or, in this case specifically, by lot. It’s given to you as a free gift of God’s grace. So, we don’t attain the faith, we obtain the faith. It’s given to us as a free gift. That may sound like a minor point, but it is a major issue. We can’t attain a right standing before God by our own works or own righteousness or by our own religion, our own rites or rituals, it’s something that is given to us as a free gift.

What is this “ . . . like precious faith,” that we read about in verse 1 bring to us as believers equally, all believers, share equally? Three things. First, it justifies us. The word “justify” means that God declares righteous by acquittal those who believe on Jesus Christ, and He does it on the basis of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. If you are a Christian sharing like precious faith with the apostles, you are justified before God. That literally means God declares—now, listen carefully—He doesn’t make us righteous practically, that’s sanctification, and I’m going to get there in just a moment, He declares us righteous—that’s justification—and that’s our standing or our position. You know, you’ve heard me mention several times that salvation has three tenses: Past, present, and future—we have been saved, we’re justified; we’re being saved, sanctified; we will be saved, glorified. That ties together with what I’m saying here, and every Christian needs to understand that all Christians share equally in their standing and the position before God, they’re all declared righteous. Write down the word “position, justified, declared righteous.”

The second thing that we have in our “like precious faith” is that it sanctifies us. It sanctifies us. Write down the word “practice.” This is a process. Justification is a position—instantaneous, declared righteous, cannot change. Sanctification is a lifelong process of being made righteous. Remember I said justification God declares us righteous? Sanctification God actually makes us righteous. That’s holiness. The word “saint,” “sanctified,” and “holy,” come from the same Greek word *hágios*. It means to be set apart and declared as holy. When you become a Christian, you’re positionally perfectly righteous—you can’t get any more righteous, it’s not progressional—but then the lifelong process is of growing in grace and knowledge is that He’s changing you into the image of Jesus Christ.

A Christian is not sinless, but they should sin less and less and less as they walk with God. If you’re sinning more today, after you’ve walked with God for many years, something’s wrong with your relationship to Christ. Now, we’ll never—in this body and in this life—reach a state of sinless perfection. Now, I’ve met people who think they have, and they’ll even argue with you until they freak out and get in the flesh, but no one is going to be perfect until we get to heaven.

Which leads me to my third word that we all share in the “like precious faith,” that is, glorifies. So, it justifies, it sanctifies, and it glorifies. You’ve heard me say a million times, “What begins with grace, ends in glory.” This is the process of our salvation—past, present, and future—and the word there is “perfect.” So, justifies, position; sanctifies, practice; glorifies, perfect. Now, won’t that be awesome? No more sin? You could say, “Amen,” to that. No more sickness. No more sorrow. No more suffering. Everything will be...all the former things will be wiped away. What a perfect state we will be in all because we have a “like precious faith.”

In Ephesians 2:8, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves,”—not faith, but salvation—“it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.” So, we share together a “like precious faith,” and that’s what he wanted them to know and us as well. He wants us to know the real faith. It’s a “like precious faith.”

Here’s the second, true faith is a faith in a Person. It’s faith in a Person. Look at verses 1-2, the

last half of verse 1. He says, “. . . to them that have obtained like precious faith”—and ‘precious’ is one of Peter’s favorite words—“with us through the righteousness of”—and it should read literally in the Greek, our—“God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” I actually believe that Peter is declaring Jesus as God and our Savior, and it’s a marvelous confirmation of His deity, so he says, “. . . God and our Saviour . . .”—and notice verse 2—“Grace and peace be multiplied,”—this is the greeting or salutation—“unto you through the knowledge of God”—there’s again the key word, ‘knowledge of God’—“and of Jesus our Lord.” He mentions the Father in verse 2 and Jesus, and he uses the word “Lord,” and primarily as Peter mentions Christ and Jesus through this epistle, he will use that word *kýrios*, Lord, which also affirms His deity.

Go back with me again to the end of verse 1. So, we’ve “. . . obtained like precious faith . . . through the righteousness of”—our—“God, and Saviour Jesus Christ.” People say, “The Bible doesn’t teach that Jesus is God.” They haven’t read this verse. It’s pretty clear. Let me give you some more verses to write down. Write down Titus 2:13. It says, “Looking for that . . . glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” That’s pretty clear, right? We’re looking for “. . . the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” and I believe it’s one and the same Person, that Jesus is God. You also have Titus 3:4, and the classic John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” It’s very strong in the Greek, “God was the Word.” So, you have Jesus who is the eternal Word, the personal Word, the divine Word, and then in verse 14, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” He’s the incarnate Word. In verse 18, He’s the revealing Word. Clearly, the Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is God.

One of the number one doctrines denied by false teachers is the deity of Christ. They deny sometimes His humanity, but they more so today deny His deity. Write down also John 20:28, Jesus is called God by Thomas after His resurrection. Remember when Jesus rose from the dead and Thomas said, “I don’t believe unless I see Him myself,” and He appeared in the room. When he saw the Lord he said, “My Lord and my God.” Now, I’ve had Jehovah’s Witnesses on my doorstep say that Thomas was just so frightened he said, “Oh, my God!” I don’t think so. Jesus would’ve corrected him, would’ve straightened him out or rebuked him, and told him, “No, Thomas, I’m not God and that’s blasphemy.” But he was declaring Jesus to be God. There’s also Hebrews 1:8, where actually quoting from the Old Testament psalm, “Thy throne, O God,” it’s a reference to Jesus Christ. There’s just a few sampling of some verses that affirm the deity of Jesus Christ.

Notice Peter’s description here, he’s actually called, “. . . God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” He’s God, He’s our Savior, He’s Christ, and He’s Lord. Those are all the terms that Peter uses for Jesus. The faith that is genuine, the faith that is precious, is faith in a Person, Jesus Christ; and it brings us verse 2, “Grace and peace,” grace being the Greek greeting *cháris*, and *shalom*, so grace produces peace as we come to Christ, and it all comes “. . . through the knowledge of,”—the Word of God and the Spirit of God revealing that in the Bible.

What’s the object of your faith? It’s not the church. It’s not the Pope, and that’s the second time I’ve mentioned the Pope tonight, and I’ll not mention him again. But our faith is not in the Pope.

Our faith is in our Lord Jesus Christ. It's not in the church. It's not in sacraments. It's not in baptism. It's not in rites, not in rituals, it's not in religion. It's not in a race. It's not in a creed. It's not in a conduct. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand: all other ground is sinking sand. That's what Peter wants them to know and understand.

Any time you're dealing with false teachers and doctrine, you always want to know the Person and work of Jesus Christ. You get Jesus wrong, you're in big trouble. You don't have Jesus, you don't have God. You must have the Word of God and the truth of God, and Jesus is our Lord and Savior, and He is God. Now, I love the fact that our faith is on Christ and Christ alone.

The third mark of genuine faith is that it's a faith that involves God's power. A true believer has experienced the power of the Spirit in what we call regeneration or being born again or given new life. This is verse 3 of the text, "According as his divine power"—which, by the way, I believe is still a reference to Jesus Christ or Jesus our Lord, the end of verse 2, goes into verse 3, "his divine power," so Jesus' power is divine, He's God. So, "According as his divine power hath given unto"—notice this—"us all things"—not some things, all things. As a believer, you have everything you need, "unto life and godliness."

In Colossians 2:10 it says, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." So, He " . . . hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness,"—that's the life of God in the soul of man—"and godliness,"—how you live that life out before a watching world—"through the knowledge of him,"—again, Peter wants to keep driving that home all through this epistle the importance of the knowledge of Him. You must be increasing in knowledge of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. " . . . that hath called us to glory and virtue,"—He's called us to heaven, He's called us to glory, but He's also called us to live holy lives and called us to virtue. So, just as faith in Jesus Christ saves us from the penalty of sin, it also saves us from the power of sin. A so-called Christianity that teaches that we're saved and forgiven and on our way to heaven, but it's okay to live a sinful life, and God doesn't care how you live, is not biblical Christianity. True Christianity not only saves our soul from its penalty, but it saves our lives from its power. It is the sanctifying work of the Spirit in the life of a true believer.

I believe that all true Christians have that needed power, the Holy Spirit. There's not the have's and the have not's. Don't ever let someone tell you that you need the Spirit, you have the Spirit—the Spirit needs you. It's not having more of the Holy Spirit, it's the Holy Spirit having more of you. I believe that's the surrendering of your mind, your heart, your will in obedience to the Word of God. You cannot have sanctification and a life of holiness without the B-I-B-L-E, without the Bible and the Spirit of God. That's the dynamic duo—the Spirit of God, using the Word of God, transforming the child of God, into the image of Jesus Christ the Son of God. It's not emotion. It's not excitement. It's the Spirit of God, using the Word of God, to sanctify me into the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God has given us all we need to live godly lives, the " . . . life of godliness," by the power of His Spirit and by His holy Word.

The false teachers claimed that they had a special, new doctrine that would bring them victory in their daily lives, and that is so typical of today. They always have some little insight that God revealed to them that no one else knows, that they're going to dispense to you, so you can just close your Bible, lean forward in your chair, and hear a direct word from God through them to you. That's not the way it works. Any true preacher of the Word is just that—a preacher of the Word, not someone who gets direct revelation from God separate from the Word for people today.

Now, can God speak to us? Yes, but He's already spoken objectively in His Word, and we must submit all subjective experience and reason and doctrine to the authority of Scripture. Without that, we're in big, big trouble. Even my dear Pentecostal Christian friends make a big mistake when they put the emphasis on experience and contrary to the objective truth of God's Word. And I know, people don't like that because we want experience, we want to hear God speak, we want to have a powerful experience. But that's how God works, He works through His Word to sanctify us, but it involves God's power.

Now, this power that Peter is referring to is what happens to us when we are born again, when we are regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit. Every believer is equally regenerated. You can't be saved without that. This is what Jesus told Nicodemus, "You must be born again." And, each believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Let me give you the fourth as to the fact about true faith, it's a faith based on promises. It's a faith based on the promises of God. True saving faith is a faith that rests on, acts on, the promises found in God's Word, the Bible. Look at verse 4, "Whereby,"—this is his conclusion—"are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." Now, pray tell me, where are those promises found? You say, "In my promise box on the window sill in my kitchen." They're found in the Bible. Amen? They're found in the Word of God. God's given to us as believers who share equal in value a " . . . like precious faith . . . precious promises."

It's interesting, Peter uses that word "precious" so frequently. In 1 Peter 1:7 he spoke of our " . . . faith . . . more precious than of gold." In 1 Peter 1:19 he spoke of " . . . the precious blood of Christ." In 1 Peter 2:4, he said Jesus is the, " . . . living stone . . . precious." In 1 Peter 2:6, Jesus is, " . . . chief corner stone . . . precious." In 1 Peter 2:7, to all who believe, " . . . he is precious." In 1 Peter 3:4, he says, " . . . a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." In 2 Peter 1:4, our text, God's promises are precious, " . . . exceeding great and precious promises."

Someone said there's at least thirty thousand promises in the Bible. John Bunyan once said, "The pathway of life is strewn so thickly with the promises of God that it is impossible to take one step without treading upon one of them." Every step you take, there's a promise of God to stand on such as, Hebrews 8:12, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more;" such as Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." That's a promise. Such as Hebrews 13:5, " . . . I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." We have that promise. Such

as John 14, where Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." So, there's the promise of His coming to take us to heaven to be with Him for all eternity. The Bible is full of promises, and we all share them in this "like precious faith."

Two things about the promises of God, they are " . . . exceeding great and precious." Why are they great? Because God is great. God is holy, God is just, He cannot lie; God is all-knowing, He cannot forget. Can you imagine if you got to heaven and God forgot who you were? "John who?" "John Miller." "Hey, Peter, do we know a John Miller? He says he pastors a church called Revival." You're like, "Ahhhhhh!" Freak out. Do you ever go to check in a hotel, you have reservations, they say, "You know, we don't have any record of...we don't know who you.... You're like, "Ahhhhhh!" You don't want that to happen when you go to heaven, "Sorry, we don't know who you are." He'll never forget; He knows all things. He's unchanging, which I love! So, He cannot change. He's all-powerful, so He can do what He's promised.

Have you ever made a promise and then something goes wrong that you can't control and you can't keep your promise? I remember when the kids were little and we said, "We're going to take you to Disneyland Saturday," and then the car blew up. What did they say, "But you proooooomised." "I know, but I didn't know the car would burst into flames in the driveway. I didn't know the engine would blow up." "But you proooooomised." I mean, can you imagine that with God, "But, God, you proooooomised." "I know, I'm sorry I can't help you." It doesn't happen with God. Nothing can thwart His promises. Whatever He promises, He is able to fulfill. And, I love the fact that it's "precious." It's of value to us beyond calculation.

It was said that J. Hudson Taylor, the great missionary, started a bank account for China Inland Mission in Barrington, England. On the application of the bank account he was asked to designate his assets, and he wrote down these words, "Ten pounds and the promises of God." I love that! So, we're standing on the promises that cannot fall.

Here's the fifth. What is the genuine faith? A real faith makes us partakers of the divine nature. I've already talked about regeneration, and that's again a clear statement of that fact. Look at verse 4, he says, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might,"—here's the statement—"be partakers of the divine nature,"—and through being partakers of the divine nature, we have been able to—"escaped the corruption that is in the world"—and there is corruption in the world because of evil desires or lust.

When do we become partakers of the divine nature? The moment you are born again; the moment you are regenerated by faith in Jesus Christ. That's what makes you a believer. It's not a process. It happens instantaneously. We become " . . . partakers of the divine nature," not meaning that we're divine. Don't ever let anyone teach you that you become God or that you're divine. That's not biblical. But we are born of the Spirit of God, and we are the temple of God living in us, so we have the life of God in our soul. That's what it means that we are " . . . partakers of the divine nature." The moment we are born again or saved, we escape the corruption of the world caused by lust or evil desires.

Do you know that nature determines appetite? Nature determines behavior. Nature determines environment. Nature determines association. Godly living is the result of cultivating the new nature within. Let me make a statement that you should write down, and I won't amplify much on it, but it's super important. The Christian life is lived not by addition, it's lived by appropriation. It's not lived by addition, it's lived by appropriation. What do I mean by that? I mean the minute you're born into God's family, you become a partaker of the divine nature. You have everything you need for life in godliness, so now all you need to do is grow in knowledge and then be able to, by faith, appropriate what is yours through faith. So, you're not getting anything added to you, you're just appropriating what is already yours by faith.

I think of our oldest daughter. Her name is Sarah. When she was born she was the most bald baby I've ever seen. I don't know, my wife could tell you, but she was about two or three. She still had no hair on her head; she was just bald. Everybody thought she was a little boy, so we used to have to tape bows on her bald head. She's got a dress on, she's got a taped bow on her head, and people still thought it was a little boy because she was so bald. Eventually, the hair grew, and if you saw her today she's got beautiful hair, as do all our girls, but the genes and everything was there, it just needed time to come out or be appropriated.

When you're a believer, you don't need "addition," you need appropriation. That's why I love that verse in Colossians where it says, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power," because so many times people will have you believe that there's something missing that you need in your Christian life. The problem is you need to appropriate by faith. You don't need anything, you just need to know what you have and appropriate it. You can't use what you don't know you have.

Have you ever needed money, and you had money. You didn't know you had money? Sometimes I'll throw cash in the night drawer by my bed, and I'll forget about it. I remember more than once I needed some cash, needed some money, and I didn't have it. Then, days later, I found it in the drawer and said, "It was there! I had it! It was right there! What a bummer, I could've used it. Ahhhhh!"

That's the way people go in their Christian life. They go through their whole Christian life, it's there, it's theirs in Christ, and they don't know it so they can't use it or enjoy it. You can't use what you don't know you have. This is why the word "knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, knowledge, knowledge" is all through this second epistle because it's growing in that knowledge and then appropriating by faith what is ours in Christ as the defense against false teachers.

Now, let me just give you a quick summary of these five points. Real faith is the same "precious faith" the apostles had. Secondly, real faith is a faith in the Person and the work of Jesus Christ. Thirdly, real faith involves God's power for life and godliness. You can't say you can't do it because God gives you the power. Fourthly, real faith rests on God's great and precious promises. Fifthly, real faith produces the new nature within us. You have been born of God, you have a new nature, you become, " . . . partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Amen?