

2 Peter 1

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Tape #8229
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now to Second Peter chapter one. Peter introduces himself again in his second letter as,

Simon Peter, as a servant [or a bonds slave] and an apostle of Jesus Christ (1:1),

So he sees himself as a bonds slave. But as a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, he is one who has been sent out. Apostle means one who is sent out. So he is both a slave and one who has been sent out by Jesus Christ,

to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (1:1):

We've obtained, Peter says, this like precious faith. It is by faith that we are saved. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And we all come the same way. Like precious faith, that a similar faith that we all have in Jesus Christ that brings us the hope of salvation "through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord (1:2),

Notice how he is tying together the Father and the Son all the way through. The righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ. "Grace and peace be multiplied through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." Oh, that we might know Him more fully, more completely. Paul's cry was to know Him and to be found in Him. But to know Him and to know the power of His resurrection. Oh, "that we might know that power of the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead."

And we talk about power, we say, Oh yes, I want to know the power. But Paul went on to say, "And the fellowship of His sufferings" (Philippians 3:10). A lot of times people back off there. I like the power but can we do something without the suffering? But in reality, they go together. In order to have the power, it is necessary to share the suffering. So grace and peace is always multiplied. Paul spoke about growing in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And so this knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord causes our grace and peace to be multiplied.

According as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness (1:3),

Everything that you need to live a life of godliness is provided for us by God. We cannot live that life in and of ourselves. We don't have the capacity. I can't say, Well I'm going to live like God. And by my resolve, do it. But God has given to us all that is necessary to live that life of godliness. It's imparted to us,

through the knowledge of him (1:3)

That is, through the word of God. The formula is there, all that is necessary is there in the word. We do not need further revelation. I'm not interested in new truth. I'm interested in new experiences in the old truth. It's all there! I am not interested in these religious systems that want to peddle their formulas for the church. The Latter Day Saints with their special revelations. Don't need it. All that is necessary to live the life of godliness has been provided for us. And we don't need further revelations.

So it is “through the knowledge of Him,”

that hath called us to glory and virtue (1:3):

God has called us to be His children. God has called us to spend eternity in the glory of His kingdom. But not only are we called to this glorious future, but God has called us to live a virtuous life. So often we think of the term virtue in the term of sexual purity but this Greek word is much more than that. It is a word that speaks of courage, of valor. And God has called us to live a courageous life, of purity, holiness. And this is all wrapped up in this word, virtue.

Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature (1:4),

Interesting study is to go through the Bible and mark the promises. What tremendous promises Jesus gave to His disciples. Exceeding great and precious promises. “I will pray the Father, He will give you another Comforter. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but you know Him; He dwells with you, and shall be in you.” What a glorious promise! “I will not leave you comfortless or as orphans. But the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I have commanded you” (John 14:16-18,26). What a glorious promise!

Even if you just go through and take the promises of Jesus and that would probably be a good place to just start. Take the gospels and just underline the promises of Jesus. We used to sing years ago, *Every promise in the book is mine, every chapter, every verse, every line. And I'm living in His love divine, for every promise in the book is mine.* I think it's great to personalize those promises. When it says, Whosoever, put your name there because the promise is yours. And of course, these great promises of salvation.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him,” and again, insert your name, “shall not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). The promise of eternal life. The promise of the Holy Spirit. Wonderful promises. The promises that the Lord gave to us in regards to our prayer life. The encouragement and the incentive to pray. “Exceeding great and precious promises that by these, we are made partakers of the divine nature.”

This morning we were talking about the word of God and Jesus in the parable of the sower declared that the seed that was sown was the word of God. The seed, He said, is the word of God. Planted in the hearts of people has varying results according to the kind of soil upon which the word of God comes. With some people there is a hardened heart to God, to the things of God and to the word of God. So that it has no effect, it has no beneficial effect to them because they don't receive it.

There are others who are like seed that falls on stony ground that has no depth of earth. There is a reception, there is a quick springing forth but then soon it dies out because of the lack of depth of earth. When persecution comes or difficulties arise, when things don't go the way they want them to go, they fall by the wayside and the plant perishes.

Then there is the seed that falls among thorns. That grows up but with it, the thorns also grow up and the effect of it is that it isn't bearing fruit. The thorn choke out the fruitfulness. And I'm afraid that there are many people in the church that lie in that particular category. You're growing but thorns are growing with you. And the thorns actually choke out the fruitfulness from your life so that you don't really live a fruitful life.

The fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and long-suffering and gentleness and goodness and meekness and temperance. But there are people who have been in the church for a long time and they are lacking in these fruit in their lives. The thorns have choked it out. And it is interesting that Jesus said the thorns are the cares of this life. The deceitfulness of riches and the lust for other things, these are the things that choke out your being a fruitful believer.

But then there is the fertile soil upon which the seed also falls. And it brings forth fruit. Some thirty, some sixty, some a hundredfold! We talked this morning about the fact that the seed has within it the DNA code to reproduce the original. The original plant, the original tree, the original flower, all of the information for the creating of the new plant, the new tree, the new flower—all of the information is coded in the DNA molecule within the seed. It's all there. Looking at the word of God as the seed that is planted in our hearts, it is God's word, it is God's seed that is planted in us, and in it all of the coded information to make you into the image of God. To bring to you the divine nature. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, it doesn't yet appear what we're going to be: but when He appears, we will be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

This to me is an exciting thing. As we are here tonight studying the word of God, there is a work that is going on in your heart as you receive the word of God. And if it is falling on fertile soil, then it is going to develop within you the divine nature and the aspects of the divine nature. So God has given to us all that is necessary to be like God, it is through the knowledge of Him and our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is imparted to us by these exceeding great and precious promises. It's laying hold on the promises of God, claiming as your own these promises of God as the word of God, the seed, is planted in your heart. The coded information is there to bring the transformation in your life to bring you into the divine nature or into the likeness of God.

having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (1:4).

Recognizing that behind the corruption of the world is lust, is greed, the problems with government is that government is run by men. And men is not capable of governing over others with impartial judgment but will always be influenced by His own desires--that which He wants to see done. Ultimately, government becomes corrupted and it falls into the hands of corrupt people. Invariably throughout history, every form of government has ended in corruption.

It was the desire of the founding fathers of the United States to somehow avoid corruption within the government. And so they established what they hoped to be checks and balances between the legislative and judiciary aspects of the government. But gradually and over time, there's been the compromises as there's been sort of this fight between the judicial and the legislature over the laws, over the government, and so the legislature will provide some law and then the judicial system will overturn it on some premise that it is not according to the Constitution or whatever, and thus you have this vying between the legislative and judicial systems. Ultimately again the breakdown and the corruption within man attempting to govern man.

But thank God we've escaped this corruption in the world because the corruption goes back to greed. It goes back to lust. And James talks about how that a person lusts but has not. And how we are consumed with lust. It's the thing behind the wars and the fightings. "From whence come the wars and fightings among you? Come they not from your own lusts, from your own greed" (James 4:1). It is our desire for the material things that creates the problem of envy, strife, wars, fightings, dispute, corruption. It's all there in the lust that man has. The desires for the material things.

Jesus said, Don't worry about the material things. After these things do the Gentiles worry. But you just seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and God will take care of the other things. In other words, Jesus is saying, To be freed from the corruption, you've got to have new values, new goals and you must seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and God will take care of the things aspect

(Matthew 6:31-33). And so thank God, a true child of God has escaped the corruption that is destroying the world because of the lust.

Beside this, giving all diligence (1:5),

The idea is to really put this a priority, work on this.

add to your faith virtue (1:5);

Our relationship always begins with faith. It is when we put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ that we are born again and there is where the beginning of our relationship with God comes by faith. I come to believe and trust in God. But that isn't sufficient, Peter is saying. Give all diligence to go beyond just faith.

In the book of Hebrews, it said, "Therefore laying aside the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, repentance from dead works, baptisms, the laying on of hands, let's go on into completeness" (Hebrews 6:1,2). And so Peter is giving us the path to completeness and herein is another listing. There are several of these listings in the New Testament.

Paul spoke in Galatians of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long suffering; and he gives that list of the characteristics of the divine nature. And now Peter is urging us also to develop these characteristics of the divine nature. "Add to your faith virtue,"

and to your virtue knowledge (1:5);

Growing in the knowledge and the understanding of Jesus Christ as we live a virtuous life.

And then to knowledge temperance (1:6);

Moderation. It's also listed as one of the fruit of the Spirit or one of the characteristics of love is temperance. And to learn to be moderate, not to go overboard on issues.

and to your temperance patience (1:6);

Or another word for patience is long suffering. And so we grow in these things. This is the progress of the believer as we are being endued with the power of the Holy Spirit, enabling us to be these things.

and to patience godliness (1:6);

Being like God.

And to godliness brotherly kindness (1:7);

The word of philadelphia in the Greek. And it is a love on an emotional level and it is a brotherly love.

but then even beyond that, we're to enter into the agape (1:7).

The brotherly love is pretty much a give-and-take kind of a situation whereby because we have similar desires, similar tastes, similar interests, we love each other. And so we have this love for one another. And I love you because you love me. And I want to do nice things for you because you do nice things for me. It's sort of reciprocal kind of thing. I love you because you're attractive. I love you because you're so good and there is that cause for love.

But when you get to agape, there's no cause. I just love you because God's love is in my heart! It causes us to love those who are say, incompatible to us, people that do things that upset us and irritate us, people that if it weren't for Jesus Christ, we couldn't stand to be around them. There's nothing that would draw out our love for them except that God's love has been planted in our hearts. And thus I love because God's love is being perfected in me. And this interestingly enough is when you get there, you've pretty much arrived.

Paul describes it in First Corinthians chapter thirteen. And that is sort of the ultimate of our walk with Jesus Christ. When we love with that kind of love, that deep, spiritual, godly love that He puts within our heart.

For if these things (1:8).

That is, these characteristics of virtue and faith and temperance and all, "if these things,"

be in you, and abound (1:8),

Not just in you, abound. A lot of times we think, I'm fairly temperate, I'm fairly virtuous, fairly patient, I'm somewhat patient, but if they abound,

then they will cause you or make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (1:8).

Now we talked earlier about how the word of God produces the fruit in our lives. These things are the characteristics of God. Each one of these things is one of the characteristics of God. And so as I am conformed into the divine nature, through the word of God. As the seed is planted in my heart and it's transforming me into the image of God, these then are the characteristics of God that will be manifested in my life. And if these are in my life and abound in my life, I will never be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But he that lacks these things is blind, and he is nearsighted, and he's forgotten that he was purged from his old sins (1:9).

Unfortunately, there are many Christians who have never developed in their Christian walk. They've never taken a step beyond faith. When they say, I believe in Jesus Christ, they pretty much express the totality of their experience. They've never gone beyond that. There are no real godly characteristics that mark their life. There's just that, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. But we are encouraged to go beyond that and if you lack in these other characteristics, you're blind to the truth.

I really don't think that there is any place for sort of a static relationship whereby we're just sort of treading water. We're just sort of coasting. Where there is not a developing, a growing. I think that if you're not going forward, you're sliding backward. You're drifting away from the heart of Christianity. I think that in the Christian life, there's always a necessity for progression and growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I don't think you can really stand still. And those who have endeavored to just maintain usually don't. They'll fall into sin and into sinful practices. They'll drift away. And that is why in the book of Hebrews, we're exhorted to "take the more earnest heed to the things which we've heard, lest at any time we should drift away from them" (Hebrews 2:1).

And so if you lack in these things, there's a spiritual blindness and you cannot see that which is far off. Shortsightedness. And you've forgotten that the Lord has cleansed you, He's washed you from that old life, from the pollution and the corruption of the old nature and the old life. You've been purged from your old sins.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence (1:10)

Again we're encouraged to give diligence. Back in verse five, giving diligence to see that we are progressing and growing. That we're adding to our faith the virtue and the knowledge, but now again give diligence,

to make your calling and election sure (1:10):

Make sure, give diligence to this. This should be one of the most important issues in each of our lives. That we are sure of our salvation. "Make your calling and election sure."

for if you do these things (1:10),

That is, if you're developing in these characteristics,

you will never fall (1:10):

You're going forward. You're progressing and you'll never fall back into the old life. You won't be as the seed that fell among the stony ground that popped up for a moment but soon withered and died. You've got to grow. And so "give diligence to make your calling and election sure." How? By seeing, examining yourself. Therefore "let a man examine himself. For if we will judge ourselves, we'll not be judged of God" (1 Corinthians 11:28,31).

Am I growing in my knowledge of Jesus Christ? Am I growing in the characteristics of Jesus Christ? Can I look at my life and see the difference between where I am now and where I was a year ago? Have I progressed that much further in this past year as the Spirit of God and the word of God has been working in my life. Am I more conformed to the image of Jesus than I was a year ago?

There are so many people that come along and they like to talk about the good old days. I can remember when. And of some great spiritual experience, some highlight in their spiritual walk in some time past. I'm not really at all interested in the good old days, I'm interested in the now and my present relationship with the Lord. And if it isn't deeper, richer, fuller, then I am retrogressing rather than progressing! Retrogression is always a dangerous thing in your spiritual walk in life.

So if you will do these things, if you will give diligence to grow, you will never fall. You have that glorious assurance that God is working in you, conforming you into the image of His Son. You will never fall.

For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (1:11).

Years ago there was a song and it didn't last long and I'm glad for that. But the song went, *If I can just make it in. I don't mind the load I'm bearing. I don't care the cross I'm carrying. If I can just make it in.* Unfortunately, I think too many people have that attitude. They want to just make it in. I'll be satisfied if I can just make it in. I don't want to just make it in. The door is closing and I slip past it. Made it, alright.

Peter is saying that we might have an abundant, I want the band to be out. The welcoming committee. To stand before my Lord and hear His words, Well done, good and faithful servant. And so an abundant entry into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus! I don't see anything wrong with desiring to have an abundant entry into the kingdom!

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things (1:12),

I'm not embarrassed to remind you, he said, of these things.

though you know them (1:12),

I'm not telling you anything new, Peter said. You know these things. And I'm putting you in remembrance of these things because things you already know,

you're established in the present truth (1:12).

But, I think it is necessary, as long as I am in this tabernacle (1:13),

As long as I'm living in this body, this tent,

to stir you up by putting you in remembrance (1:13);

I think it is necessary as long as I'm alive to put you in remembrance of these things. To stir up your memory. To prod, to push you on to the growth and the development of your walk and of your life. So many of the things that we say to you, and of course, teaching is by repetition. We learn by the repetition of truth. And so many times the things that we are saying, we've said before but we say them perhaps in a little different light or in a little different way but things that you know, but things that you need to be reminded of because it's so easy to get caught in sort of a groove of normalcy, not progressing or growing anymore. And so you need to be prodded again into activity, into growth in your spiritual walk and life. So "as long as I'm in this tabernacle, I need to stir you up by putting you into remembrance;"

Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me (1:14).

Peter was in Rome and the Lord had shown him that he would not leave Rome. That he would be martyred there in Rome. The prophecy of John chapter twenty would be fulfilled when Jesus prophesied the death by crucifixion that Peter would experience. So now the Lord has told him that it's just about time, Peter. You're going to be leaving this tabernacle. And Paul the apostle said, "For we know that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved [that is, our body goes back to dust], that we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). So Peter's about ready to move out of the tabernacle and into the mansion. So he said,

I will endeavor that you may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance (1:15).

In other words, knowing that I'm going to be leaving, I'm writing this to you so after I am dead, you'll still be put in remembrance every time you read my letter. You'll be put in remembrance of the necessity of making your calling and election sure. The necessity of developing and growing in your walk and in your relationship with the Lord. For then Peter tells us,

We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty (1:16).

We didn't get together and make up a story. The story of the glory of Jesus. John and James and I didn't get together and say, Let's say that we went up into the high mountain with Jesus and He suddenly was

transfigured before us and all. No, that isn't a cunningly devised story. It was something, Peter said, of which I was an eyewitness of that majesty, of that glory.

For he received from God the Father honour and glory (1:17),

There on the mount of transfiguration, "He received from the Father this honor and glory,

when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory declaring, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (1:17).

Peter said I was an eyewitness there on the mount of transfiguration. I heard the voice of God declaring this was His Son, in whom He is well pleased.

And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount (1:18).

I'm an eyewitness. I declare that this is not a cunningly devised fable. This is the truth. But then he went on to say,

We have also a more sure word of prophecy (1:19);

I was an eyewitness of this event. But you might accuse me of going into a swoon, having some kind of a trance or dream. So I don't trust in just what I saw and what I heard. I have something that is more certain than seeing and hearing. I have the "sure word of prophecy." And so concerning Jesus Christ, that He is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour, we turn to the prophecies and the more sure word of prophecy when you realize that Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies in His birth, life, death and resurrection! You realize that it would be totally, completely impossible that any one person could fulfill these predictions by accident or even by design.

There was a book that was written many years ago now called *The Passover Plot* in which the author sought to prove that Jesus planned the whole experience of His death and He really didn't die, He went into a swoon and how that the disciples, of course, stole His body, and the passover plot. And tried to explain that Jesus knew the prophecies and so was deliberately fulfilling these prophecies. And it was actually a plot on the part of Jesus.

It's interesting to think of how Jesus perhaps bribed the soldiers to part His garments among them but to cast lots for His robe. So He had to bring the soldiers into the plot. He had to bring the soldiers into the plot to pierce Him because it said that they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced. But of course, if you look at the whole issue as Jesus plotted it all and planned it all and just sought to go around fulfilling the prophecies, you have a pretty hard time explaining how He plotted to have Mary, a virgin, bring forth a Son. That's sort of hard to arrange in advance. "The more sure word of prophecy."

There is a very interesting little book called *Science Speaks* by Peter Stoner. It is a Moody Press book and in this book he seeks to show the chance factors of Jesus predicting, first of all, eight of the prophecies. And then going to sixteen and finally to forty-eight and the chance factors which become so totally astronomical that it is absurd and incredible to think that Jesus was something other than the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. "We have the more sure word of prophecy."

Jesus said to His disciples, "Now I have told you these things before they come to pass so that when they come to pass, you might believe" (John 13:19). The purpose of speaking of them in advance was to alert them that these are the things that are going to happen. But when they do happen you will then believe because I have told in advance of these things. Of course, it was pretty clever of Jesus to arrange with Titus,

the Roman general, to destroy Jerusalem and to arrange with the drunken soldiers of the Roman army who weren't even born yet when Jesus said it, to destroy the temple so that they would not leave one stone left standing on another.

Now Titus, the Roman general, ordered them not to destroy the temple. But some of the soldiers were drunken and they set fire to the temple and it was destroyed. The gold melted, went down the crevices and the temple was dismantled. One stone after another until there was not one stone left standing on another. The prophecy of Jesus was completely fulfilled. How can you explain His plotting that when He prophesied it some forty years before it actually took place?

“The more sure word of prophecy;”

whereunto you do well to take heed (1:19),

In other words, if you're a skeptic, if there's a question, here's a good thing to study. You would do well to take heed and to study the prophecies of the Old Testament relative to the Messiah and to observe how that Jesus fulfilled them. To help you in that study is the book of Matthew. For Matthew is constantly, as Jesus was doing particular things, he would say, In order that the prophecy might be fulfilled which declared, and He goes on and He points out how that Jesus through His lifetime was fulfilling so many of the prophecies from the Old Testament.

“You do well to take heed,”

as unto a light that is shining in a dark place (1:19),

God's work “shining in this dark world.”

until the day dawn (1:19),

Oh, a glorious new day. A new day is dawning and I believe that really the skies are already beginning to turn a little light in them. The day is going to dawn, the day of our Lord. And how we long for the day of the Lord and the kingdom of God to be established. And so until then, we have the light of the scriptures that shine in the dark places until that day does dawn,

and the day star arise in our hearts (1:19):

The glorious day of our Lord.

Knowing this first, that there is no prophecy of the scripture that is of private interpretation (1:20).

I had a fellow a while back when we were first starting Calvary Chapel that came and he called me up one day and said, Chuck, I need to talk to you. The Lord has revealed something to me and I have to share it with you. Can you come over this afternoon? It's very important that I talk to you. So I went over and he said, The Lord has revealed to me that we are the two witnesses of Revelation 11. I'm Elijah and you are Moses. You didn't know that, did you? I'm Moses. It is interesting there is this cult we read about just recently in the paper where this cult leader in Denver feels that he is one of the witnesses and destined to die in Jerusalem in December of this year. And how that some of the cult members went ahead and they've been deported and so forth. But there's a Jerusalem complex that they call and people get these weird ideas.

Incidentally, Elijah died.

But no scripture is of private interpretation. In other words, the Lord gave me a special revelation on this scripture. No one else has ever had this revelation. They start going into these crazy spiritualizing and this represents this and this represents this. But no scripture is of any private interpretation. God did not try to hide the truth in the word. He sought to reveal the truth in the word.

It is interesting that the word apocalypse which we translate revelation literally means an unveiling. It isn't a covering, it isn't a hiding, it's an unveiling. And God seeks to reveal the truth. It isn't hidden in little secret messages or in codes that you have to really figure out to find out what God really meant. I can assure you that God meant what He said! And He said what He meant! For if God didn't mean what He said, then why didn't He say what He meant? He meant what He said and He said it plainly so all of us can understand! There is no secret or private interpretation.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man (1:21):

Isaiah didn't say, Well I think I'm going to write about the Messiah. What shall I write about Him? No, it didn't "come by the will of man:"

but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (1:21).

As Paul wrote to Timothy, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" (1 Timothy 3:16). Holy men wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It is interesting on the day of Pentecost when the great crowd gathered together as the result of the phenomena that accompanied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church, filled with curiosity and wonder, wondering what this meant—all of these people speaking in various languages declaring the glorious works of God—and they were saying, What does this mean? And Peter standing up said, Men and brethren, hearken unto me. And he told them what it meant. This is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel where God promised that in the last days, He would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh: your sons and daughters would prophesy, your old men would dream dreams, your young men would see visions. And upon the servants and handmaidens would God pour out of His Spirit in that day (Acts 2:14-18). And then Peter went on to preach to them concerning Jesus Christ.

Peter then mentions how that David by the Holy Spirit spoke of the resurrection. In the first chapter as the church was assembled together waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit, Peter addressed the assembly, about a hundred and twenty, and he said, This scripture must needs be fulfilled which was spoken by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David. Recognizing that the Holy Spirit was the One that was speaking though it came from David's pen. The Holy Spirit spoke through the mouth of David saying. And so the belief that scripture is inspired by God. "Holy men wrote as they were moved upon by the Holy Spirit."

That, of course, I think, is foundational for the church. I think that that is one of the most important doctrines that we must hold tenaciously to. There's a real battle for the Bible and I think that God's word will stand as it always has against every assault. And when it's all over, those who have attacked the word of God will fall but the Bible will continue to stand. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." God has given to us in the scriptures all that is necessary for the life of godliness. And as that word of God is planted in the fertile soil of our hearts, it's going to bring forth the nature of God in our lives. The word of God, the emphasis here is on, This is God's word, it has a transforming effect upon those who will read it, those who will study it, those who will take it to heart. It will change your life and transform you into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. The power of the word of God, alive and powerful and it will work in our lives in a powerful way if we allow it.

Father, we thank You for the word. And Lord, even again as Peter felt it was necessary to stir up their minds and their hearts concerning the necessity of growing and developing in their spiritual walk of being conformed into the image of Jesus Christ, of taking on the characteristics of the divine nature and seeing

them develop and progress, so Lord in our lives, let the word of God dwell in our hearts richly through faith that we might begin with all the saints to comprehend just how much You really do love us. And that through the word of God, we might grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord and in the knowledge of Your love for us. And Lord, with David, we will be satisfied that day when we awake in Your likeness and we see You as You are. Until then, Lord, may we give diligence to the word and to the study of the word and to our own lives and to the growth and the development of the spiritual characteristics in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.