

- A. We live in an age of lies. We live in an era of mass hypnosis. We live in times of the devil's rage.
- B. Anybody who keeps up with the news knows the world is battering itself against the bedrock of God's truth.
- C. Anybody who keeps up with the church knows that the church is like a palace perilously slipping off its biblical foundation.
  - 1. There is a theological drift happening that is weakening the church.
    - a. There is an attempt to redefine Christianity. And with that to redefine Christ and the gospel. And with that to evaporate apostolic message we have stood upon for 2,000 years.
  - 2. Resistance is futile, they say.
  - 3. You will be assimilated into this new corrupted Christianity. You will comply or you will die. Those days are coming.
- D. There is a word for this kind of biblical, theological train wreck. It is the word APOSTASY.
  - 1. *Apostasy is what happens when deceivers who claim to be Christians, but are not, willfully disrespect God by trashing the truth, trampling the Cross, and spitting on the authority of Scripture.*
- E. The Bible predicts a pandemic of apostasy in the last days... before the Antichrist is revealed.
  - 1. *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away [apostasia] comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, (2 Thessalonians 2:3)*
    - a. The world is broken. In many ways, the church is broken.
- F. But God saw our day coming long, long ago. He has given us a handbook on keeping the faith in times of apostasy, and on standing strong in times of peril.
- G. That handbook is what we call Second Peter.
  - 1. Peter's epistle arose out of a struggle with a radically false, and totally seductive philosophy that arose in his day. It was a philosophy still in its early stages. This seductive philosophy is called Gnosticism.
  - 2. *Gnosticism was creeping into churches.* It was disturbing believers. It was sucking fools away from Christ.
    - a. It taught an insider knowledge. In fact, *The Greek word for knowledge is "Gnosis",* so that's where it got its name.
    - b. Gnosticism was cool, it was hip, it was radical, it was popular.
    - c. In reality, however, this insider knowledge—this gnosticism—was a shiny, pretty, poisonous, life-sucking lie, belched up from the belly of Satan. The devil is awesome at that.
  - 3. So Peter writes this little letter to shove a dagger in the heart of these false teachings.
    - a. Therefore, everything we need to survive and to thrive and to repel the devil's hypnosis, and break Satan's spell is right here in God's Word. Ignore it at your own peril.
- I. Text
  - A. *Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. (2 Peter 1:1, 2)*
    - 1. My message today is called *The Grace/Peace Pipeline*.
  - B. Let me put on my professor hat. Our paragraph has three Bible verses.
    - 1. The first one is a prayer. The second two are the answer to the prayer.
- II. *The Benediction*
  - A. The prayer is a prayer of blessing. Technically, it's called a benediction.
    - 1. *"Grace and peace be multiplied to you."*
  - B. What's he saying?
    - 1. He's saying I hope and pray that you put yourself into a position to *experience* the riches and treasures that belong to you because you belong to Christ.
    - 2. Do you belong to Christ?
      - a) Then God has his vault of grace to you. You have been made an heir of the infinite stores of grace.
        - (1) When you need, God supplies.
        - (2) What you lack, God provides.
        - (3) What you break, God mends.
        - (4) What you seek, God gives.
      - b) Every Christian has title and deed to the inexhaustible stores of grace that are in Christ Jesus.
    - 3. Are you in Christ Jesus?
      - a) Then not only has God given you his grace, he has also given you his peace.
        - (1) *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27, NKJV).*
      - b) How has 2020 worked out for you so far?
        - (1) God's peace is here for you. We bounce up and down like a cork on the ocean. But God is undisturbed. He is unperturbed. He is unflustered.
        - (2) The only place of perfect peace the human mind can know is heaven itself and the throne room of God.
        - (3) Jesus is saying that that same perfect, unflustered, unbroken peace has been given to you by him on the very day that you were saved.
        - (4) And now Peter is praying that that grace, and that peace would be multiplied to you.
      - c) *Peter prays that you would know in your experience the grace and peace you already possess in your portfolio.*
    - 4. As a Christian, you don't have to work for grace. You don't have to buy peace. These things are already yours.

5. But you do need to lay hold of them more and more. How do we enter into a fuller experience of what is already ours in Christ? How?

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

1. Do you remember what the Greek word for knowledge is? Gnosis.
2. Peter uses a more intense word: epignosis.
3. *Epignosis goes beyond gnosis. It is knowledge that goes deeper than knowledge.*
  - a) Here's the difference. If you read a book about ballroom dancing, do you know how to do ballroom dancing? Yes you do. You know the how-to's of dancing.
  - b) But what are you going to look like on the dance floor? You're going to look like you don't know how to dance.
    - (1) *Textbook knowledge is Academic Knowledge...*
      - (a) *This is gnosis. Head knowledge.*
      - (2) *Lifestyle knowledge is Integrated Knowledge...*
        - (a) *This is epignosis. Heart knowledge, or wisdom.*
  4. Peter is praying for you. He is praying that the two most awesome things in the world that any person could ever want — grace and peace — would be bigger and bigger in your life every single day.
  5. Then he drops the biggest clue ever for how that happens.
  6. It happens as you live in, and grow in, and operate in epignosis.
    - a) Meaning... *When you multiply wisdom, God multiplies grace and peace.*
    - b) Let's call that the surge that matters most! When you surge in the *epignosis* knowledge of God's Word, God causes a surge in grace and peace in your life.
    - c) Is that something you would like in your life? More experience of Grace? More experience of Peace? Interested? Anyone? Anyone?
  7. I remember as a kid in church, hearing over and over again that what matters isn't head knowledge, it's heart knowledge. Head knowledge bad, heart knowledge good.
    - a) It drove me crazy, because I didn't know how to get heart knowledge.
    - b) It was a cliché. It didn't make sense. My mind can read and learn and study and acquire knowledge... but how does my heart do that?
    - c) Please decode this, somebody! This made me jittery. It also made me frustrated and a little angry.
    - d) Dear preacher... tell me what's supposed to happen without telling me exactly, precisely how to make it happen.
  8. So, where can we fuel up on epignosis? So, let's build a pipeline, okay?

III. *The Grace/Peace Pipeline*

A. *The Input: THE BIBLE.*

1. Dear Church, we urgently need to get back to the Bible. All wisdom starts here. All knowledge starts here. In the Bible. And not just the Bible lite. Not just memes. Not just emotional talks with Bible verses sprinkled on top.
2. We need the Bible in context, showing its interconnections, and moving deeply into the vocabulary, and understanding the theology.
  - a) The Bible is the divine blueprint of reality.
  - b) The Bible is the laws of the universe written into digestible form.
  - c) The Bible is inspired.
  - d) The Bible is inerrant.
  - e) The Bible is authoritative.
  - f) The Bible is sufficient.
  - g) The Bible is what you need.
  - h) The Bible is all you need.
3. The Bible is THE SOURCE, the perfect source, the authoritative source, the supreme source, and the only source for the gnosis and the epignosis that will change your life.
4. I am sick of churches that put the Bible in the back seat.
  - a) I am sick of pastors who pay lip-service to the Bible, and then preach emotion, and experience, and encounters, and signs, and wonders...
  - b) I'm tired of preachers who spend all their time telling you how to behave, and flogging you into compliance....
  - c) I am angry at books and messages and sermons and social media posts, of so-called pastors who inspire, but don't instruct, and who give talks that could have been given by Oprah or Tony Robbins, and then throw on a Bible verse so twisted out of context that the biblical author would puke.
    - (1) We know our culture is sick. We know our society is sick. We know the whole world is tranquilized by Satan.
    - (2) But when the church is sick because her leaders are too lazy to overcome the theological ignorance, God help us all. In Christian love.
  - d) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children. (Hosea 4:6, NKJV).
5. A pastor is a teacher. That is our primary duty. A teacher of the Word of God. (Acts 6;2,4; Eph 4:11, pastor-teachers).
6. Because the whole Grace/Peace Pipeline starts right here in this book. The source is the Bible.

B. *The Intake Valve: THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE*

1. You can't love a God you don't know.
  - a) You can't claim a promise you've never heard. You can't believe a truth you've never learned.
    - (1) You can't pray for peace, and spit on God's method of peace.
    - (2) You can't pray for grace, and pay no heed to God's method of grace.
2. There is a word in the Christian vocabulary that is radically overused, and extremely misunderstood.
3. It is the word "Disciple."
4. The Greek word is *mathetes*. This was a common word in ancient cultures, even outside the Bible.
  - a) Here is the dictionary definition of Mathetes from the official dictionary of classical greek, called Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon:
    - (1) *Mathetes... learner, pupil, student.*
  - b) This word doesn't really mean follower—though we should follow Jesus—but it mainly means learn, student in the academy.
  - c) That's why Jesus said, Go make disciples of all the nations, teaching them... teaching them...
  - d) Because before you can be an apprentice, you have to first be a student.
5. The source is the Bible.
6. But the intake valve is you setting yourself under the Bible as a learner, pupil, and student.
7. Learn it, study it, be taught it, read it, meditate on it, memorize it... take it in.

C. *The Storage Tank: ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE IN YOUR MIND*

1. Now, you have stockpiled truths from the Bible. At this point, you have gnosis-knowledge. Academic knowledge.
  - a) Promises. Doctrines. Principles. Stories. Commands. Warnings. Vocabulary. Structures.
    - (1) *God uses the Bible to replicate in your mind the same truths that informed the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16)*
2. Some are immediately relevant to your life. Some are not.
3. It doesn't matter. Because all God's truth (*gnosis*) will be relevant sooner or later to your life.
4. So you might as well store it up now, because once you're skiing down the double black diamond, it's too late to watch a YouTube video.
5. In fact, this is a good place for me to add this:
  - a) Every piece of the Grace/Peace Pipeline is energized by the Holy Spirit.
    - (1) The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible. (2 Tim 3:16)
    - (2) The Holy Spirit illuminates the Bible when you study it. (Eph 1:8)
      - (a) And on and on. This is a supernatural pipeline. It is a Holy Spirit Contraption. And you have all of it in your soul, right now. I hope you don't let it get rusty.
6. So, the source is the Bible. The intake valve is you setting your life as a student of the Bible. The storage tank is your mind filled with gnosis-knowledge, and a growing familiarity with the awesome, wonderful, powerful truths of the Bible.
7. So now, we need to get this from head knowledge to heart knowledge, right? From gnosis to epignosis, or from academic to integrated knowledge.

D. *The Activator: FAITH*

1. Check this out:
  - a) *For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. (Hebrews 4:2)*
  - b) *For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe. (1 Thessalonians 2:13)*
    - (1) Faith is the activator. Faith is the catalyst. Faith is yeast that makes the whole loaf rise.
2. You know how your car has a water pump? It circulates water and antifreeze through your engine and radiator...
  - a) Your faith is the water pump. It keeps gnosis circulating through the system to become epignosis.
  - b) And, just to drive this analogy right off the cliff..
  - c) The Holy Spirit is the belt that drives the faith that drives the pump.
3. Let's just say that the difference between head knowledge and heart knowledge is faith.
  - a) Faith expressed in words is prayer, according to Scripture.
  - b) Faith expressed in words is a declaration of victory, according to Scripture.
  - c) Faith expressed in actions is obedient choice, according to Scripture.
  - d) Faith expressed in actions is the courageous choice, according to Scripture.
  - e) Faith expressed in thoughts quiet confidence, according to Scripture.
4. This is what faith looks like:
  - a) Prayer. Victorious Words. Obedient Choice. Courageous Choice. Quiet Confidence (self-talk).
5. Pick a situation that comes before you—
  - a) You are going to sign a multi-million dollar contract.
  - b) You're going into surgery.
  - c) You struggle with addiction.

- d) You want to be married, but you're single.
  - e) You want to be single, but you're married.
  - f) You are starting a business, but Covid.
  - g) You are building a business, but can't find qualified employees.
  - h) Your kids are going to college, and where's the money?
  - i) You cannot shake away your guilt and shame.
6. Pick any situation, any opportunity, any problem, any struggle...
- a) In that moment, just in time...
    - (1) The Holy Spirit reminds just the right promise, or principle, or command of Scripture.
    - (2) And now you mix the word of God with faith...
    - (3) And BAM... in that moment gnosis becomes epignosis.
      - (a) You sign the contract, or walk away, however God's Word leads.
      - (b) You go under surgery with a prayer on your lips and a confidence in your soul.
      - (c) You face that addiction, not with words of self-loathing, but with words of victory, and courage, and faith.
      - (d) You build relationships, and go out of your way to make friendships, and start stepping your way to marriage — following God's wisdom... OR
      - (e) You look at your broken marriage, take complete ownership for what you're doing wrong, and follow God's Word toward reconciliation.
  - b) *Whatever stew your life is cooking, you have to mix in faith.*
    - (1) Faith in your words. Faith in your thoughts. Faith in your actions.
      - (a) All according to the precepts of the Word of God.
7. I stand before you today to call you to two things: the Word of God and faith.
8. Or to put them into one thing...
- a) *I am calling you to a life in which you believe that what God has said is true, enough to act like it, speak like it, and think like it.*
9. Because that moment of faith catalyzes gnosis into epignosis.
- a) One act of faith moves your knowledge from head knowledge into heart knowledge...
  - b) One moment of faith integrates the invincible truths of God's Word into the deepest part of your soul.
10. So here we have our divine machine, our Holy Spirit Contraption of Grace and Peace.
- a) The Input is the Bible. The Intake valve is you making yourself a student of Scripture.
  - b) All that Scripture goes into your mind, which is the storage tank for academic knowledge.
  - c) Then a situation comes up, good or bad, and the Holy Spirit bring just the right truths, just the right principles to the forefront of your mind, and you add a few drops of the catalyst which is faith.
  - d) Faith makes everything go round and round, it turns gnosis into epignosis, it transforms your soul and that leads to...
- E. *The Output: GRACE AND PEACE*
- 1. *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge [epignosis] of God and of Jesus our Lord.*
  - 2. Peter does not come to us writing pretty nothings. Every word matters, and every phrase is carefully thought through. There's a fire in Peter's belly.
  - 3. The world is falling apart. The Great Apostasy is coming. The Antichrist is coming, and the mini-antichrists are already here. The world is in trouble.
  - 4. And the church is in trouble too.
    - a) We are way too wimpy, way too emotional, and way too biblically clueless to handle what's about to come.
    - b) We don't have this machine set up, because way too many Christians don't even know it exists.
  - 5. We rush past 2 Peter 1:2 like it's just words on a page.
  - 6. We miss the universe-expanding clues to what's can actually go on inside our own hearts.
    - a) Christian, hunger for the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.
    - b) Christian, fill your mind with truth.
    - c) Christian, mix that truth with faith in the most impossible situations, and stand up for Christ.
      - (1) Do not tell me you care about this nation, if you care little for God's Word.
  - 7. With God's help, we can turn this nation around. But we have to turn the church around first.
    - a) Back to the Bible. Back to Bible study.
    - b) Back to the principles that made our country great, and formed the most free, most prosperous, most humane civilization the world has yet seen.
    - c) Back to the Word of God.
      - (1) The grace we need is here. The peace we crave is here. The power we're lacking is here.
      - (2) You who are younger... high school, college, young adult.
        - (a) There is never been a greater opportunity than the one before you right now.
        - (b) Your generation is on a precipice.
        - (c) You be the ones to stand up for truth, and stand up for the only love that is real, by standing up for the invincible word of God.
  - 8. Grace and peace to you through the epignosis knowledge of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.