

- A. All of Scripture is relevant for us today, but this little book of Second Peter almost feels like Peter had us in mind — our day, our place, our situation — when he wrote it.
- B. I get the impression that if Peter were on social media, he would have the biggest following in the world. Until it got shut down.
- C. The Word of God never goes out of date.
 - 1. God doesn't change. Truth doesn't change. Human nature doesn't change.
- D. The early Christians of the first century faced in many ways the same conditions we are facing today.
- E. So I'm excited to wrap my mind with you around this book of Second Peter, and around the premise that *Faith Wins*. And today we look at a short paragraph about *God's Divine Power*.

II. Manifesting

- A. A while back I was on a five hour flight, stuck next to a man who wouldn't stop talking.
- B. I wanted to put in my ear buds and sleep.
- C. He wanted to evangelize me. He wanted to evangelize me about his spirits, and about the powers of manifestation.
- D. If you don't know what that is, you should, and even without my message, you will.
- E. Manifesting is a new cultural phenomena. Even the New York Times talks about this viewpoint experience a re-birth. The Times tells us...
 - 1. "This is not a fad. This is a major movement among younger Americans, younger Americans who are dispirited and fatigued in the midst of a pandemic."
- F. What is manifesting?
- G. Manifesting is the teaching that your thoughts have the ability to create reality. If you think it, if you think it hard enough, sincerely enough, and often enough, you can make it happen.
- H. The bottom line is that...
 - 1. *Manifesting: Reality bends to the power of human thought.*
- I. This is the gospel of Oprah Winfrey. It is the gospel of Deepak Chopra. Of Madonna. And sadly it is the gospel of an increasing portion of young people brainwashed against Christianity, yet hungry for some kind of transcendent spirituality.
- J. I need to point out that manifesting is just the latest term for the New Age movement. It is demonic. It is not of Christ. It is opposed to Scripture.
- K. Even the New York Times points out:
 - 1. "Manifesting sits alongside a smattering of belief systems, astrology, tarot, paganism, and their metaphysical cousins being resurrected by a youthful generation in the name of wellness."
 - a) It is all over Tik-Tok, Snapchat, Instagram and social media. The meme "Shut up, I'm manifesting" is everywhere.
 - b) The universe has become the god of this age, and the devil is laughing all the way to the bank... I mean the Lake of Fire.
- L. If that isn't enough to trouble your heart, manifesting has come into the church. It has come in through the power of positive thinking, and supremely through what is called the Word-Faith movement.
 - 1. If you can visualize your mansion or your new Tesla, or your healing hard enough, and if you can picture how you will feel when you get it, you can slingshot that thought to the universe, I mean to God, and all your dreams will come true.
 - 2. This is manifesting dressing up in Christian garb and cooking up a stew the devil delights to serve bubbling hot.
 - 3. Manifesting is part of a larger lie, a larger philosophy that the early church spit out as soon as it could. That philosophy is called Gnosticism. Today it is called by a thousand names including Wicca, Christian Science, Religious Science, positive thinking, T.M., Eckankar, Yoga, the Word Faith movement, and the Prosperity gospel.
- M. In the Christian message, God is the creator of everything.
 - 1. We create nothing. We manifest nothing. Reality does not bend to human thought.
 - 2. Reality flows out from the being and existence of God, and is not subject to us in any way shape or form.
 - 3. You cannot send thoughts and prayers to anyone. You can only pray to God.
 - 4. You cannot manifest God's promises. You can only pray, trust him to do what's best, and wait.
 - 5. You cannot save yourself by manifestation. You can only believe on the Savior, Jesus Christ, and receive the gifts he has for you.

III. Second Peter

- A. Second Peter is a book to Christians in trouble. Peter was an expert in this topic.
- B. He was battling Gnosticism.
- C. This letter was most likely written from Rome, where Peter was a prisoner. He is going to say that the time is near for his death and he knew it.
- D. History and tradition tell us that Peter actually was crucified... upside down.
 - 1. So when he writes a book to Christians in trouble, I think he knows what's talking about.
 - 2. His message here is about what it's going to take to stay true to God as you're swimming in a sea of deceptions and temptations and lies.
- E. We are picking up where we left off... in verse 3.

IV. as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue. (2 Peter 1:3)

- A. *It is not your power to manifest, but God's power to give that defines everything in your life.*
- B. God has previewed every single day of your life. From beginning to end, he knows it all. He knows all the twists and turns, all the victories, all the defeats, all the hopes, all the dreams, every moment, every circumstance, every event, and most of all every need.
- C. God already knows what you need for every moment of every day of your life. This is called his Omniscience. But he didn't stop there.
- D. God not only knows what you need, he has also provided it. This is God's omnipotence.
- E. His divine power, his omnipotence, has done this. Not you. Not your mind force. Not your thoughts.
 - 1. Peter includes this here for a very important reason.
 - 2. Yes, you may be going through difficult times. Yes you may be faced with all kinds of temptations and trials.

- a) There are giants in the land... bills you can't pay, medical news you don't want to hear, heartbreaks too hard for words, assignments beyond your abilities...
- b) There are delusions and deceptions on every side. False teachings. Bad theology. Misinterpretations of Scripture.
- c) God is up in heaven. You're stuck on this giant pain machine called earth, in this swamp of delusion.
- d) Here's why Peter brings up the power of God:
 - (1) The omnipotence of God tells you that there is no iron curtain of tribulations or deceptions that can blockade the blessing of God once he intends to send it.
- e) If Peter says his divine power has given us something, consider it given.
 - (1) *No force on earth can blockade the blessing of God, once He decides to give it.*
 - (a) Prison bars can't stop His blessing, God is stronger than them.
 - (b) Evil people can't stop His blessing, God is stronger than them.
 - (c) Distortions and lies can't stop His blessing, God is stronger than them.
 - (d) Corrupt politicians can't stop his blessing, God is stronger than them.
 - (e) A struggle in your life, your marriage, your family, your parenting, your dating, your health... can't stop his blessing. God is stronger than all these things.
- 3. What foe stands in your way? Which of the devil's whispers, which of the doctrines of demons crush confuse your mind and hurt your heart?
- 4. The mighty hand of God stretches forth for you. He will protect you. He will defend you. He will provide for you. He will bless you. He will save you.
 - a) *All that omniscience has seen, omnipotence has supplied, and omnipresence has delivered.*
- 5. Peter writes, "His divine power has given us..."
 - a) If God's power has given something, consider it well and truly given.
- 6. This word for given means *given as a gift*.
- 7. It is a gift of grace. It is free. It is unearned. It is not paid for. It is not deserved. It is a freely given unmerited favor of a God who delights to bless his children.
 - a) There is something else really powerful packed into this word *give*. It is not the normal Greek word for give. It is a more elevated word. That's why some translations say that God's divine power has granted us all things. The word carries a hint of formality, a regal sense.
 - b) This verb is in a tense called the perfect tense. The perfect tense is a really strong kind of past tense.
 - (1) It means that what God has given, he has given fully, completely, and once for all... there is a finality to this giving.
 - c) On the day you received Jesus as your Savior, you became a child of God. And not just a child of God, you became a royal child of God.
 - d) And God has bestowed upon you, completely — fully, and once for all — something magnificent, something wonderful, and something that most Christians don't really believe most of the time.
 - e) Your job is not to manifest anything.
 - (1) Your job is to believe in the provision of God, and to wait for the timing God while keeping faith with him.
- 8. *His divine power has bestowed upon us all things that pertain to life and godliness.*
 - a) Every Christian who has ever lived or will ever lived has four phases in their lives.
 - (1) *Phase 0 — Before salvation*
 - (2) *Phase 1 — Your Salvation*
 - (3) *Phase 2 — Your Christian Life*
 - (4) *Phase 3 — Your Life in Heaven*
 - b) When Peter says God's divine power has bestowed upon us all things that pertain to life and godliness, he is talking about Phase 2, your Christian Life.
 - c) He means your whole life on earth from the moment you're saved till the moment you see Jesus face to face.
 - (1) By the way, I know very well that not everybody joining us today is saved
 - (2) You might not know what saved means. You might think that the word saved is a relic of an age long past...
 - (3) I get that. I respect that. If you're in that position, you make sense to me.
 - (4) I would just ask you to consider that maybe this word "saved" is supposed to catch your attention.
 - (5) Maybe it's supposed to be weird and not natural.
 - (a) To talk about being saved and not saved is to open up a whole new realm of thinking and believing.
 - (b) It is to enter into a transcendent realm where nobody is a natural expert.
 - (c) It is to enter into the meaning of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ... and to consider your life from a whole new perspective you may have never considered before. It is to think about God and eternity and ultimate truth.
 - (6) Because until a person hears the message and meaning of Jesus and embraces the purposes of his Cross... that person is not saved, and is in what I'm calling Phase Zero.
 - (7) If that describes you, my message to you is that God loves you, Jesus died for you and rose again, and he offers a free gift to you today. Believe and be saved.
 - (8) Please keep an open mind and think about it.
- 9. There is a way of life that is possible for Christians only.
- 10. There is a way of life that is specific to Christians only.
 - a) It is called newness of life, the walk of faith, life in the Spirit, the sanctified life, and Victorious Christian living.
 - b) In this life you have privileges you never had before and powers you never had before.
 - c) All of this is energized by promises you never had before.

11. Christian, God has bestowed upon you all things that pertain to this life. All things that pertain to Phase 2... the Christian life.
 - a) Every single necessity for handling life, and every single necessity for displaying the character of Christ, in every single situation you will ever encounter, is already yours.
 - b) It has already been given to you.
 - (1) He has known your need. Omniscience.
 - (2) He has provided your provisions. Omnipotence.
 - (3) He has delivered your provisions. Omnipresence.
 - (a) It is not your power to manifest, but God's power to give that defines everything in your life. My hunch is that many Christians would say Amen with their words, but then obliterate that Amen with their attitudes, thoughts, and actions.
 12. Here is Peter — hunted, slandered, persecuted, excited — announcing that God has given to us all things... not just a few things... but all things to fulfill our great potential here in this Christian life...
 - a) All things to rise above darkness and despair. All things to have victory over temptation. All things to leave childishness behind. All things to grow along the Grace Pathway. All things to keep your testimony in times of satanic deceit.
 - b) All things to shine the light of the gospel to a world that doesn't seem care... but is desperate on the inside.
 - (1) You can be godly. You can be Christlike. You can be holy. You can be whole.
 - (2) You can live the abundant life that Jesus promises, rich in things that money can't buy.
 - c) God has given all things to walk in victory.
 - (1) Not one thing is missing. Not one resource, not one bit of power, not one dollar, not one great idea, not one bit of strength is missing, not one truth is missing.
 - (2) God has bestowed upon you, completely — fully, and once for all — everything you need to be a thriving radiant child of God in this dark and messed up world.
 - (a) *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Romans 8:32)*
 - (b) *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19)*
 - (c) *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (Psalms 23:1)*
 - d) As you listen to me today, you are the richest person you know. Do you believe it?
 - e) A lot of Christians don't.
 - (1) They are always looking for something more.
 - (2) A new mystical emotion. A better manifestation. A stronger visualization.
 - (3) Another secret prayer or magic incantation or mountaintop experience.
 - (4) They're on a dysfunctional race to find something more.
 - f) Other Christians are so obsessed with what they don't have they completely overlook the mountains of blessings they do have.
 - (1) So they complain and murmur and feel sorry for themselves.
 - g) By their lives, they take this wonderful revelation that His divine power has bestowed upon us all things that pertain to life and godliness, roll it up, and lose it in the junk at the bottom of their backpack.
 - h) But do you see how flatly Peter denies this? He says, if you come to Christ, you have him; and if you have him, you have all that God is ever going to give you. You have all power and all things that pertain to life and godliness though the knowledge of him.
 - (1) Quit searching for something before you start your life.
 - (2) Quit waiting for God to zap you with something more.
 - (3) Go live in in, with him, by him, and for him.
 - (4) Go possess your Promised Land in spite of all the giants.
 - (a) That's Peter's idea here. If you need something, pray for it, believe for it, and go forward either way because if you don't get it, God has determined you don't need it yet. He is the sovereign.
 - i) Now if this is true, then there is no excuse for failure, is there?
 - (1) There's no excuse for complaining, right?
 - (2) Your Christian life is not one bit about you manifesting more from Christ. It is all about you knowing more of Christ and who you are and realizing that what you have in him is plenty for today.
 - j) So the next phrase says...
- F. *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by his own glory and virtue.*
1. One thing I know for certain:
 - a) *To know God is to love him, and to love God is to live for him.*
 2. The whole machinery of a victorious Christian life is continually fueled by the biblical knowledge of God himself...
 - a) Just as you regularly refuel your car, you have to regularly refuel your knowledge of God. Fill up on truth, again and again.
 3. What an incredible privilege to have a Bible. What an indescribable blessing to be part of a church. There are Christians the world over who would give anything to have access to the knowledge of God that you have in this great land.
 4. We don't have to travel anywhere, uproot our families to move anywhere, or scour the world for some magical, mystical place where God shows up in a special way.
 - a) *Do you want God to show up in your life? Open your Bible.*
 5. Because his omnipotence has granted you everything for your victorious Christian life, and all of this is accessed through the knowledge of him which has been lovingly and painstakingly written down for us in Scripture.
 - a) That is all the knowledge of God you will ever need, no matter what you feel or how you feel.

6. Now, Peter actually specifies a particular truth about God, one that puzzles a lot of Bible teachers.
7. He says... Through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and virtue.
8. When we interpret the Bible, we have to ask, why is that here?
 - a) Why did he write that of all things?
 - (1) He could have said, God has given you everything through the knowledge of him who loves you.
 - (2) Or through the knowledge of God who cares for you.
 - (3) Or through the knowledge of God who provides for you.
9. But no. Of all things, he writes,
 - V. *God has given you everything through the knowledge of him who calls you by his own glory and virtue.*
 1. Huh? Let's break it down.
 2. First, God is the one who calls you. Calling is an important word in the Bible.
 - a) When God calls you it means that God orchestrated everything that had to happen for you to get saved — externally through the communication of the gospel, and internally through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) This is not about predestination and all that.
 - (2) Jesus said, "And I, if I am life up, will draw all people to myself" (John 12:32) All people.
 3. Here's the point. If you're saved, the reason you got saved started with God.
 - a) *Both your salvation and your Christian life depend on God's initiative and grace all the way.*
 4. He was seeking for you long before you ever gave him a thought.
 5. Here is Peter writing a letter to us. He will urge us to stand against the devil. Defy tyranny. Go to war against deception. Be a soldier of the Cross. Be bold. Stand firm. Be strong. Be holy. Grow mature in the Lord. Kick the devil in the teeth.
 - a) Quit manifesting your desires and start living God's will.
 6. And from the very opening verses he wants to make absolutely sure that God is everything.
 7. It's grace all the way. Every single inch of victory in your Christian life is through Christ himself working through you, serving through you, living through you.
- VI. Conclusion
 - A. Manifestation is narcissism veneered with fake-religion.
 - B. There is too much *human* in American Christianity and not enough God.
 1. Too much self effort. Too much self indulgence.
 - a) Make me feel good. It's about me. A Disney Church where all my dreams come true.
 2. Too much emotion. Too much Holy Spirit and not enough Jesus Christ.
 3. Too much biblical illiteracy and not enough spiritual maturity.
 4. Too much of my dreams and not enough of God's will.
 5. Too much pop-psychology and not enough of the Word of God.
 - C. Where is the focus on glory of God? The Virtue of God? The calling of God? The power of God? Where is a vision the Righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ?
 1. Peter packs all these things into four short verses.
 - D. Where is the truth of God? And the Knowledge of God? And the exceedingly great and precious promises of God?
 - E. Where's all God's grace?
 1. John pointed to Christ and said, "He must increase; I must decrease" (John 3:30).
 - F. Peter is doing his level best to put the same words into our mouths today.
 - G. God is bigger than you think. Let's manifest that in our lives.
 - H. And the bigger God is in your heart and mind, the greater your faith will be.
 - I. And, as we're saying in the title of this whole series, *Faith Wins... because God is on his throne.*
 - J. So let's make our faith as mighty, and muscular, and mature as we possibly can.