

# **“Facing the Divine Nature”**

## **2 Peter 1:1-9**

**Context:** In view of his impending martyrdom and thus absence, Peter writes a final encyclical that warns the Christian community of the danger of false teachers. The warning describes three characteristics for which Peter was primarily concerned: (1) rejection of the return of Jesus as Messiah, (2) a rejection of the word of God as prophetic truth, and (3) a promotion of a libertine, licentious lifestyle. Positive exhortations primarily focus upon depictions of Christian virtues. This short letter may be Peter’s own writing without the aid of an amanuensis, or perhaps one different than Silvanus, the scribe of his first epistle. For me, the debate regarding authenticity and authorship is little more than a distraction from a message of warning pertinent to our place and time.

**Pivotal verse:** Be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness (cf. 2 Peter 3:17).

### **1. Features of exact knowledge – 2 Peter 1:1-4**

Simon Peter teaches that we can experience the freedom of divine nature. That nature has but one source, however. It is God’s gift for us to receive from Him, through Him, and by His design. Partaking of it gives us the means wherein we can take flight from this world of decay and death.

### **2. Features of divine virtue – 2 Peter 1:5-7**

Diligence is called for in progressively picking up and bearing virtues so that faith may come full circle and so connect with the virtue of agapaic love. Through the Holy Spirit’s empowered partaking of these, we can experience some restoration of God’s image and perhaps develop a thirst for what comes in our glorification in the hereafter,

### **3. Features of the divine way – 2 Peter 1:8-11**

Peter states that if a believer possesses and grows in these virtues, that person will by their very nature work out the truth that the Spirit has cultivated within them. This outworking leads one along God’s way through the doors of His sacred kingdom.

### **For Further Study:**

- As a **Bible study method**, use Vine's NT Expository Dictionary to contrast [\*epiginosko\*](#) kind of knowing from the other types of knowing. What participation in this kind of knowing makes it different from the other kinds of knowing, for example, math (i.e. Ephesians 1:17)?
  
- In verse 5, Peter appeals to a reason why we should play a part in the list of virtues that follows in verses 5-7. What is our part when trying to actualize God's promises to partake in the list of these virtues (Philippians 2:12-13)?
  
- 2 Peter 2:11 speaks of an entrance into the eternal kingdom. How does the practice of virtues in verses 5-7 make sure the path of entrance as one of the eternal Kingdom's elect? What is God's part in our entrance (cp. Ephesians 1:13-14)?

### **Transformation exercise:**

Pick one virtue from the list in 2 Peter 1:5-6 upon which to reflect each night. Ask God to open your eyes to an opportunity to exercise that virtue the following day.