

God's Precious Gifts to You (*Part 1*)

2 Peter 1:1-2

Thought for the Day: Because of our faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior of our soul and the Lord of our life, God has blessed us with a number of precious spiritual gifts that are worthy of our careful consideration.

Verses 1-2 have a theological depth that is clearly inspired and informed by the Holy Spirit. Acts 4:8-14 reveal three keys, available to all of us, that made Peter the powerful instrument that he was in the hands of God: 1) He was filled with the Holy Spirit; 2) He proclaimed the Gospel; and 3) He spent much time with Jesus.

I. The Greeting / Introduction (1:1-2)

A. The Author (vs. 1a)

1. His Identity

1 Simeon Peter...

- Simeon is the Hebrew translation of the Greek name Simon.
- This is the Apostle Peter, Simon Bar-Jonah, Simon the son of John (Mt. 16:17; John 1:42).
 - Simeon was the name given to him at birth by his parents.
 - Peter, meaning "the rock," is the name that Jesus gave him when He called Peter to be one of His followers. (Luke 6:14; John 1:42).
 - Jesus named Peter, not on the basis of the man he was, but on the basis of the man he would become as he learned to follow Jesus.
 - As he followed and spent time with Jesus, Simon, the man of weakness, was transformed into Peter, the man of strength.
- **GIFT #1: As we spend time in the presence of Jesus, through the Word and Prayer, God the Holy Spirit transforms us into the men and women that He wants us to be. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Colossians 3:9-10)**

2. His Credentials

- We see here a balance of humility and authority—an important balance that all of us need to discover and develop with the Lord's help.

...a servant...

- *Servant* is the translation of the Greek word, *doulos*.
 - A slave. Of the five words used in Greek to speak of one who serves, a *doulos* is the lowest and most humble of all. (*Wuest, 2 Peter, p. 15*)
 - "The word *doulos* referred to one whose will is swallowed up in the will of another. . . The word spoke of one who is bound to another in bands which only death can break. . . Again, *doulos* refers to one who serves another to the disregard of his own interests." (*Wuest, 2 Peter, p. 15*)
 - *Doulos* refers to a purchased slave. 1 Corinthians 6:20 – "You were bought with a price [referring to Christ's sacrifice on the cross]. So glorify God in your body." (*R.C. Sproul, 1-2 Peter, p. 180*)

- *Doulos* also refers to a bondservant. A bondservant was a slave who, because of love for and gratitude to his master, voluntarily offered himself in lifelong, willing and glad service.

➤ **GIFT #2: We have the privilege of being the willing, devoted servants of the Lord Jesus Christ for time and all of eternity.** (John 12:26; Revelation 22:3)

...and apostle of Jesus Christ.

- The Apostles were Christ's divinely appointed, authoritative representatives; they were commissioned by Christ to serve as His ambassadors to the world.
- "In the Christian community, the lowest possible layer...of society was that of a slave, and the most elevated office...was that of Apostle. To the Apostles was given the authority of Jesus to such a degree that He announced, 'He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent me.' (Matt. 10:40). . .So the highest authority operating in the early church, apart from Jesus, was that of the Apostles. . .Here Peter claims the highest authority that anyone could claim in the early church—that of being an Apostle. . .He is simultaneously the highest and the lowest of Christian society." (*Sproul, 1-2 Peter, p. 179-80*)

➤ **GIFT #3: We have the privilege of being Christ's ambassadors and representatives to the world.** (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

B. The Readers (vs. 1b)

1. Their Status

...To those who have obtained (received) a faith of equal standing with ours...

"All Christians, both 'high' and 'low,' have received the same priceless, saving faith [that Peter and the rest of the Apostles received]; there are no first- and second-class believers." (*MacArthur, 1 & 2 Peter, p. 70*)

"There is no distinction between believers. All alike are sinners who owe their presence in the heavenly city. . .to the [mercy] of the King." (*Green, Second Epistle of Peter, p. 61*)

➤ **GIFT #4: Every believer in Jesus Christ is a first class citizen in the kingdom of God.** (Gal. 3:26-28; John 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 12:12-13)

Suggested Applications:

1. Are you committed to regular time with the Lord through the Word and Prayer?
2. Have you offered yourself to the Lord to be His devoted servant? (Romans 12:1)
3. Do you regard yourself as God's chosen representative in the mission field where He has placed you?
4. Do you realize that God has chosen you, gifted you, and placed you exactly where He wants you to be in order to serve and glorify Him?