



## Pursuing Godliness: Second Peter

### Is It Possible to Live a Life of Godliness? 2 Peter 1:3-4

#### **The Power, The Promise & Godliness**

Some say that it is impossible to live a godly life. Twice Peter quotes the Old Testament where God says, “Be holy for I am holy.” (*Lev. 11:44*) The really good news is that God has made provision for us to live a godly life according to His power and His promises.

#### **A. Given the Power 2 Peter 1:3**

1. God’s power: **“His divine power has been given to us.”**  
The source of a godly life is ‘His divine power.’ Just as His power saves us in the first place, so His power energizes us to live holy lives. The order is—first life, then godliness.
2. God’s provision: **“All things that pertain to life and godliness.”**  
The ‘**all**’ things that pertain to ‘life and godliness’ include the high priestly work of Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the activity of angelic agencies on our behalf, and the instruction of the Word of God.
3. God’s presence: **“Through the knowledge of Him.”**  
The power to live a holy life comes through the knowledge of Him who called us. In vs :2 Peter says that ‘grace and peace’ come from the ‘knowledge’ of Him [Jesus]. What kind of ‘knowledge’ is this? See “Knowledge” in the sidebar
4. God’s people: **“Who called us by glory and virtue.”**  
Peter is saying that God’s people have been ‘called’ to a life of godliness. Our ‘calling’ is one of Peter’s favorite themes: Peter reminds us that: We have been called out of darkness into His marvelous light (*1Pet 2:9*), we have been called to follow Christ in a path of suffering (*1Pet 2:21*), we have been called to return blessing for reviling (*1Pet 3:9*), we have been called to his eternal glory (*1Pet 5:10*), and in this passage we have been called by glory [*Christ in us*] and virtue [*goodness*]. (*2Pet 1:3*).

#### **B. Given the Promise 2 Peter 1:4**

1. God’s promise: **“Given to us exceedingly great and precious promises.”** Included among the “all things” which God’s power has given to promote a life of holiness are His exceedingly great and precious promises in the Word. It is estimated that there are at least 30,000 promises in the Bible.
  - a. **The promise of the Father**: The promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit (*Acts 1:4; 2:1-4*) must have been in the mind of Peter as a key ‘promise.’ References to ‘divine power,’ ‘divine nature’ are a more than subtle link to the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Spirit in our lives.
2. God’s partnership: **“You may be partakers of the divine nature.”**  
The promise of the Father [the empowerment of the Holy Spirit] works within us to transform us into His image. Rom 12:1-2 We are not divine but He who is in us is.
3. God’s protection: **“Having escaped the corruption...”** Lust is the root of the worlds corruption. God’s power and promises are the root of godliness. A godly lifestyle comes from living in the promises of God rather than the promises of the world.

#### 2 Peter 1:1-4 (NKJV)

**:1** 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:

**:2** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

**:3** [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,

**:4** by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

#### **Knowledge [Epignosis]**

Peter uses this Greek word in 2 Peter 1:2; 3; 8; 2:20. The word literally means “coming to know.” It is often referred to as ‘experiential’ knowledge but it goes much deeper than that. It’s not just “learning from my mistakes.”

“What is clear is that this knowledge implies an ethical lifestyle. Therefore the knowledge is not simply intellectual (*knowing things about God and Jesus*), or even personal in the sense of having met someone, but knowledge that results in committed living.”

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Letters of 2 Peter & Jude  
Eerdmans p. 164