

2 Peter 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

Analysis

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. Peter's greeting employs the standard Christian adaptation of Jewish and Greek salutations, but with crucial theological content. "Grace" (charis, χάρις) denotes God's unmerited favor, while "peace" (eirēnē, εἰρήνη) represents the Hebrew shalom—comprehensive well-being and reconciliation with God. These are not merely wished for but "multiplied" (plēthyntheiē, πληθυνθείη), indicating abundant increase.

The means of multiplication is critical: "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (en epignōsei tou theou kai Iēsou tou kyriou hēmōn). The term epignōsis (ἐπίγνωσις) denotes not mere intellectual awareness but deep, experiential, relational knowledge. This word appears three times in chapter 1 (vv. 2, 3, 8) and stands in sharp contrast to the false knowledge (gnōsis) claimed by heretics Peter opposes.

The Greek construction again closely associates "God" and "Jesus our Lord," reinforcing Christ's deity. True spiritual growth comes through knowing God as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, not through mystical experiences, secret teachings, or philosophical speculation. This sets the stage for Peter's emphasis on apostolic eyewitness testimony and prophetic Scripture as the foundation for genuine knowledge of God.

Historical Context

The emphasis on epignōsis (deep knowledge) directly counters early Gnostic tendencies infiltrating the church. Gnostics claimed secret knowledge (gnōsis) necessary for salvation, often divorced from moral transformation and historical facts about Jesus. Peter's insistence that grace and peace multiply through true knowledge of God and Christ establishes that authentic Christianity is rooted in revealed truth, not esoteric speculation.

In the Greco-Roman world, various mystery religions and philosophical schools promised enlightenment through secret teachings and mystical experiences. The Jewish background emphasized knowing God through covenant relationship and Torah obedience. Peter synthesizes these by affirming that true knowledge comes through Jesus Christ—the fulfillment of Old Testament revelation and the incarnate Word who makes God known (John 1:18). This knowledge is accessible to all believers through apostolic teaching, not restricted to an elite spiritual class.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does your pursuit of spiritual growth reflect Peter's emphasis on knowledge of God versus contemporary emphasis on experiences?
2. What practices cultivate deep, experiential knowledge of God and Christ versus superficial familiarity?
3. How can churches distinguish between legitimate spiritual experiences and subjective mysticism untethered from biblical knowledge?

Interlinear Text

χάρις	ὑμῖν	καὶ	εἰρήνη	πληθυνθείη	ἐν	ἐπιγνώσει
Grace	unto you	and	peace	be multiplied	through	the knowledge
G5485	G5213	G2532	G1515	G4129	G1722	G1922
τοῦ	θεοῦ	καὶ	Ἰησοῦ	τοῦ	κυρίου	ἡμῶν
G3588	of God	and	of Jesus	G3588	Lord	our
	G2316	G2532	G2424		G2962	G2257

Additional Cross-References

2 Peter 3:18 (Grace): But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

John 17:3 (References Jesus): And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Philippians 3:8 (References Jesus): Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

1 Peter 1:2 (Grace): Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Jude 1:2 (Grace): Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

Isaiah 53:11 (Parallel theme): He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Romans 1:7 (Grace): To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 10:22 (Parallel theme): All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

Daniel 4:1 (Peace): Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you.

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