

[R1531 : page 155]

GRACE AND PEACE MULTIPLIED

– 2 PET. 1:1-4. –

MANY Christians refer with special delight to the day when first they realized the pardoning grace of God and the consequent peace that silenced all their fears and enabled them to realize the love of God to them personally. And well indeed may we sing with all such –

"O happy day that fixed my choice
On thee, my Savior, and my Lord."

But if we have to refer back to the day when we took our first steps as babes in Christ, as the happiest day in our life, there has been something wrong in our experience: we have not been developing as we should and experiencing that wealth of divine favor which is the privilege of every consecrated and faithful soul.

To all such the Apostle Peter sends greeting, saying, Grace and peace be *multiplied* unto you. If our hearts leaped for joy when we realized the first droppings of grace and peace, how should our songs abound now, with the increasing evidences of divine favor – with the multiplication of grace and peace now experienced. [R1532 : page 155] But is it really so with us? are grace and peace really multiplied to us? The Apostle indicates that such should be the experience of all who have obtained like precious faith with him (verse 1); and, further, that this increase of blessing should come through an increasing knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. – Verse 2.

Some Christians seem to look for the increase of divine favor and peace through other agencies than the knowledge of God; but such is not God's order. Our Lord prayed for his disciples, saying, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The

knowledge of the truth is the sanctifying power, the peace-and-joy-imparting power, and is the precious evidence of divine grace or favor. Those who expect to be sanctified without this divinely provided agency and who expect to enjoy abiding peace without it, make a great mistake. Their peace may last while the sun of prosperity shines, and so long as they do not permit themselves to think beyond the immediate present, or to consider future possibilities; or they may for a time, upon a very slight knowledge of the truth, build up beautiful castles of wood, hay and stubble, with here and there a precious stone of truth, and for a time be filled with even ecstatic joy over them; but soon such flimsy structures must fall, and the transient joy end in bitter disappointment – in a loss of both joy and peace and, measurably at least, of the realization of the divine favor.

But such disappointments are never realized by those whose peace has its fountain in the perennial springs of God's eternal truth; for, the Apostle says, he "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." But this knowledge of God is not only an intellectual knowledge of his great and loving plan: it includes also a personal acquaintance with God, a heart to heart communion and fellowship with him – an established sympathy of love and common interest **[R1532 : page 156]** and co-operation. Such a knowledge or acquaintance with God is gained through the study of his precious word with reverence and diligence, through the personal application of the principles of that word in every day life and through secret prayer and communion with God.

If we would have this inspiring acquaintance with God we must not forget our privilege of secret prayer. Remember the Lord's words, – "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is invisible, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee." "The Father himself loveth you,

because ye have loved me and have believed that I came out from God." And again, "If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him."

Thus it is our privilege to know God; but only those who have had the blessed experience can appreciate how greatly the grace and peace of God can be multiplied to us through the knowledge of him thus acquired. As we draw near to him in prayer and communion and the study of his precious Word, we are made to understand the wealth of the divine love and favor toward us who are in Christ Jesus, and who, through entire consecration of ourselves to God, have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust [the worldly desires and ambitions]. We learn that to us are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature; that we are called to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; that, if we are faithful to our covenant of entire consecration to God, we shall be made like him and see him as he is; that we may behold the King in his beauty; and that through us in the ages to come God will manifest the exceeding riches of his grace. Oh, what heights of glory are we called to share with our beloved Lord; and what fathomless love is manifested toward us in Christ Jesus!

In humble thankfulness let us ponder these precious promises more and more as in secret we bow at the throne of the heavenly grace; and here let the holy spirit of God apply the instruction to our hearts, and so may we be filled with the spirit, and grace and peace be multiplied unto us.
