

CALL2DISCIPLE



THE AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN

STUDY GUIDE

12 PART SERIES



BY ERILYNNE BARNUM

The Authentic Christian
STUDY GUIDE
By Erilynne Barnum

Copyright © 2004 by Erilynne Barnum
All rights reserved.

Lesson outlines in this book may
be reproduced only for small group handouts.

CALL2DISCIPLE



Contact:

call2disciple@gmail.com

203.383.9320

www.call2disciple.com

Main Address:

PO Box 1493, Fairfield, CT 06825

Finance Office:

c/o All Saint's Church, 3560 Kings River Road
Pawleys Island, SC 29585

The Authentic Christian

It is thought that the books of 1st and 2nd Peter were written between 64 and 67 A.D. with the second letter being written shortly before the Apostle's death. They were penned for those who were enduring great suffering and afflictions with the certain threat of more to come. The letters make it clear that the object the Apostle had in mind when he wrote both these letters was to comfort, to encourage and to strengthen these people. Peter's primary message is to trust the Lord, live obediently no matter your circumstances, and keep your hope fixed on God's ultimate promise of deliverance.

The second Epistle of Peter is particularly concerned with troubles arising from within the church. Twisted versions of Christian truth were being taught. Believers were in danger of being confused by false teachers. Peter teaches them, and us, how to deal with this problem and with false teaching, commending a wholesome combination of Christian faith and practice.

This series concentrates on the first chapter of 2 Peter, verses 1-11. The Apostle begins by presenting the very foundation of the Christian faith. After affirming who an authentic Christian is, Peter begins to develop the growth of this faith by setting forth the characteristics manifested in the life of a true believer.

The Christian church of today is facing much the same situation that was facing the early church. In such a time there is a tendency to ask certain questions and the one thing that is necessary at this present time is that Christian people should be very certain of who they are in Jesus Christ. If we really do desire revival and reawakening, we must concentrate on the church for she is the bearer of the message of salvation. If we are unhappy and uncertain, how can we be about the work?

Lesson 1 - The Faith Received

Our text for the next 12 weeks will be 2 Peter 1:1-11. As we journey through these verses we will see how Peter develops the growth in faith of a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostle begins in verses 1-2 by answering the question, "Who is the authentic Christian?"

Teaching:

- "You have received a faith" 2 Peter 1:1
 - what is faith?
 - something that God does Ephesians 2:4-5, 8
 - do we have a part? Romans 8:15

- "as precious as ours"
 - same faith as the apostles Ephesians 2:20
 - our foundations and gates Revelation 21:9-14, Ezekiel 48:30-35

- "through the righteousness of..... Jesus Christ" 1 Peter 2:24
 - God's righteousness Psalm 89:14
 - given to Abram Genesis 15:6
 - given to first Christians Acts 2:38-39
 - given to us Romans 4:1-8

- "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus...." 2 Peter 1:2
 - true knowledge 1 Corinthians 8:1-3
 - personal knowledge 2 Corinthians 4:6-7

- results in grace and peace John 14:27, Ephesians 2:14-18

Discussion:

- Are you a possessor of the "faith we have received" in Jesus Christ? Share how you know this is true for you.
- How is this doctrine of authentic Christianity – the faith given to us in the righteousness of Jesus Christ – *precious* to you?
- How does the truth of this gospel give you the assurance you need to stand firm against the difficulties we face in the world and in the church of today?

Next Lesson: Power Given

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11), Exodus 35:30-36:1 and Acts 1:4-8

Lesson 2 - Power Given

In the first two verses of 2 Peter 1, we hear the Apostle Peter give us a powerful description of the *authentic* Christian. It is someone who has obtained the same precious faith as was received by the Apostles; faith given in the true knowledge of God, and of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, and through His righteousness. Now we come to the question, "How do we live as authentic Christians in our world?" Peter begins to show us the dynamics of the Christian life....

Teaching:

- "His *divine power*..."
 - is everything we need 2 Peter 1:3
 - through the knowledge of Him 2 Peter 1:2
 - by His own glory and goodness Titus 3:4-7

- God's *power manifested*
 - creation Genesis 1
 - the Exodus Exodus 14
 - His mighty deeds Psalm 145:10-13

- God's *power realized*
 - the incarnation Luke 1:35
 - the resurrection Ephesians 1:19-21
 - power from on high Luke 24:49

- God's *power appropriated*
 - receiving God's power Titus 2:11-13
 - being alive to God Romans 8:10-11
 - the key to Christian living 2 Corinthians 12:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness...1 Peter 1:3

Discussion:

- In what ways have you experienced the power of Jesus Christ in your life?
- Share how you believe that the power of Jesus Christ is sufficient on its own to strengthen the resolve of tempted Christians in this tough and *attractively* pagan world?
- Describe how the knowledge of the "*resurrection life*" within you through the Lord Jesus Christ empowers your daily life.

Next Lesson: Great and Precious Promises
Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11), Acts 2:37-39 and Hebrews 10:19-11:1

Lesson 3 - Great and Precious Promises

The great gift of faith brings two mighty resources: 1) power, and 2) promises. Though they are inseparably linked in their application, they must be taken hold of individually to understand more fully the call of God on our lives and how He has equipped us to live a holy life. After considering the power that has been given to us who believe, we now come to the study of the Lord's great and precious promises in this context.

Teaching:

- God's promises – what are they?
 - definition
 - for us
 - for God
 - when God makes a promise
 - “exceeding great” *because of who He is* Joshua 23:14
 - precious, costly *as high in value as He Himself is*
- God's promises – what do they say?
 - Salvation through the Messiah
 - God said it Genesis 3:15
 - to Moses Deuteronomy 18:15-18
 - to David 2 Samuel 7:11b-14a
 - to Abraham Romans 4:13-16
 - to the prophets Jeremiah 33:15-18
 - Coming of the Holy Spirit Ezekiel 36:25-27, Joel 2:28-29
 - The Age to come Isaiah 65:17-19, Matthew 24:30-31, 2 Peter 3:10-13
- God's promises – are they true?
 - Jesus is the fulfillment 2 Corinthians 1:18-22
 - Jesus sends the Holy Spirit Acts 1:4, Acts 2:33
 - We receive *the Promise of the Father* Acts 2:39
 - God reveals
 - Spirit searches 1 Corinthians 2:9-13
 - We receive
- God's promises – all based on His glory and goodness
 - He will remain faithful 2 Timothy 2:11-13
 - He is worthy Revelation 5:9-10

God said it; I believe it; that does it!

Discussion:

- Talk about what “making a promise” means to you.
- Share times in your lives when broken promises have caused you emotional pain, or have caused you to distrust others.
- How do these things affect your response to the promises of God? Can we trust and believe God and what He says? Are we afraid?

Next Lesson: Escaping, Becoming, Partaking

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) Romans 6 and 1 John 2:28-3:3

Lesson 4 - Escaping, Becoming, Partaking

In past weeks we have been learning that the essence of the authentic Christian life is that we have been given His divine power through our growing knowledge of, and faith in, the Lord Jesus Christ. By this knowledge we have received His very precious and magnificent promises. The Apostle now shows us how, through these promises, 1) there is something we are escaping, 2) that we are in the process of becoming something, and 3) because of this we are partaking of something.

Teaching:

- "...and escape the corruption in the world..." 2 Peter 1:4
 - who we were before knowing Jesus Christ Ephesians 2:1-3
 - sin and why the cross
 - what coming to know Jesus has done Acts 26:14-18
 - from one kingdom to another
 - the corruption that surrounds us 2 Peter 2:10,18-20
- "...that through them (the promises) you may (might NASB) become..." 2 Peter 1:3-4
 - new life in Him Ephesians 2:4-10
 - the old is gone 2 Corinthian 5:14-18
 - union with Him Romans 6:1-14
 - growing in the knowledge of Him Colossians 1:9-14
- "...participate in (partakers of [NASB]) the divine nature..." 2 Peter 1:4
 - partakers of Christ's suffering 1 Peter 4:13, Philippians 3:10
 - partakers in Christ's glory 1 Peter 5:1
 - sharers in God's own nature John 1:12
 - family likeness begins to be seen 1 John 3:1-3
- therefore, "what kind of people ought you to be?" 2 Peter 3:1-15
 - holy and godly lives
 - living a life worthy of the Lord Colossians 1:10
 - understanding life in the Spirit 1 Corinthians 2:9-12

2 Peter 1:3-4—ESV (2001)

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his only glory and excellence, by which he has granted to his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Discussion:

- What kinds of things make you more aware of the separation God has put between you and the world in which we live?
- In what areas of your life do you feel the strongest pull of the world around you to be more like them?
- In what ways is the "family likeness" (Christ in you) beginning to show up in your every day life?

Next Lesson: Realizing the Faith

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) James 2:17-26 and Luke 6:43-49

Lesson 5 - Realizing the Faith

We have learned how the power, promises and person of the Lord Jesus Christ not only make it possible to become a born-again believer but also enable us to live as a sharer in God's own nature, so that the family likeness begins to be seen in us. We then become part of a growth process and certain characteristics are manifested in our lives. The faith we have obtained is to be lived out, practically realized, in our everyday life.

Teaching:

- “For this very reason...” 2 Peter 1:5
 - the logical result of what has gone before
 - because of what God has given 2 Peter 1:2-4
 - because of what God has done on our behalf
 - same as the “therefore” of Paul Hebrews 12:1
 - what follows is the logical result of our faith
- “Make every effort...” 2:Peter 1:5
 - “earnestness,” “diligence,” “do your best” 2 Timothy 2:15
 - indicative of a process
 - working out what God works in Philippians 2:12-13
- “Add to your faith...” 2 Peter 1:5
 - definitions –
 - the word in Greek “epichoregeo” “abundantly supply”
 - other translations: NASB = “applying all diligence in your faith supply...”
“generous and costly cooperation”
 - the two extremes James 2:17-26
- What Peter is saying to us
 - use of the word “abundantly supplied” 2 Peter 1:5 & 11
 - abundant provision 2 Corinthians 9:10
 - attitude, motivation and intentionality Philippians 3:12-16

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge;... 2 Peter 1:5

...for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. 2 Peter 1:11

This is Discipleship!!!

Discussion:

- Talk about the times when you feel unable to manifest “Christian virtues.” Do you see that as “failure” on your part? Do you get frustrated?
- What do you see as the difference between what we are learning in this passage and what is usually taught as “legalism” (the “have-to’s” and “ought-to’s”)?
- Share how the Lord is beginning to bring understanding to you about “living life as a Christian.”

Next Lesson: Able to Excel

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) 1 Peter 1:13-2:3

Lesson 6 - Able to Excel

The call of God on the life of the Christian is to live a godly, holy life. As we apply all diligence to living out this life of faith in practical ways, the Lord abundantly supplies the ability to do it. We now come to a look at the character of the Christian life and how Peter presents the “balanced” Christian life.

Teaching:

- The balanced Christian life 2 Peter 1:1-7
 - begins with faith vs. 1
 - continually depends on faith vs. 2
 - by means of that faith, furnishes or supplies Christian character vs. 5-7
- “add to (supply in) your faith *goodness*” vs. 5
 - definition: “arête” = virtue, moral excellence
 - belongs to God alone; but seen in His children 2 Peter 1:13-16, 2 Peter 1:3
 - the Grace that saves also enables Titus 2:11-14
- “and to goodness, *knowledge*”
 - furnished with knowledge 2 Peter 1:5
 - different than verse 2 Proverbs 2:2-11
 - faith governed by Godly understanding
 - 2 biblical examples
 - negative 2 Samuel 11 & 12
 - positive 1 Kings 3:5-15
- Are we able?
 - the call Ephesians 3:20-32
 - the power and the grace 2 Peter 1:3, Titus 2:11-12
 - THIS IS GOD’S WILL FOR US! 1 Thessalonians 4:3a

The Lord abundantly supplies the ability to live out our call of a godly, holy life.

Discussion:

- Talk about the basic differences between our idea of “moral excellence,” or virtue, and our growing understanding of God’s moral excellence.
- What kinds of things prevent us from submitting to the process of becoming more like the Lord?
- In what practical ways can we begin to let the Holy Spirit manifest God’s *moral excellence* in and through us right now?

Next Lesson: Able to Handle

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) Galatians 5:16-26 and Colossians 3:1-17

Lesson 7 - Able to Handle

We are now looking at the character of the Christian life. Peter has shown us that because of the faith we have been given, and because of God's power and promises, we now manifest in our lives a "family likeness." Last week we heard that by means of our faith we are to furnish, or supply, God's goodness. A moral excellence based on God's wisdom and understanding. Now we come to self-control and perseverance.

Teaching: *(the inward dispositions)*

- Self-Control 2 Peter 1:6
 - what we think it means 1 Samuel 24
 - hold your breath and do what's right
 - "yes, I can; yes I can; yes, I can"
 - the biblical view 1 Samuel 16:3,13
 - "yes, He can; yes, He can; yes, He can"
 - no excuses, please 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8
- Perseverance 2 Peter 1:6
 - definition: "patience" "endurance" Colossians 1:10-11
 - "Queen of Virtues"
 - parable of the sower Luke 8:15
 - Jesus Hebrews 12:2
 - Peter's story
 - said he would die for Jesus John 13:37
 - denied Jesus three times John 18:17, 25-27
 - received Jesus' forgiveness John 21:15-17
 - persevered to the end John 21:18-19

Self control is discipline in action; perseverance is self-control over time
- The Empowered Life
 - "His Divine Power" 2 Peter 1:3
 - gift of the Holy Spirit Galatians 5:22-23, Romans 15:4-5
 - self-control for the moment and perseverance to the end produces maturity James 1:3-4
 - "generous and costly cooperation"

Discussion:

- Talk about why we tend to "give in" in the face of temptations that present themselves every day of our lives.
- Why is it difficult for us to believe that the Lord has given us all we need to exercise self-control, even in the smallest things?
- In what ways can we begin to persevere and begin to live more disciplined lives right now?

Next Lesson: Able to Focus

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) Psalm 37 and Ephesians 4:17-5:1

Lesson 8 - Able to Focus

Now that we have looked at the “inward dispositions” of the faith given, we come to a characteristic that is uniquely placed between the inward and outward manifestations – an “upward disposition.” A large part of understanding the faith we have obtained and the realization of that faith is to understand the quality referred to by Peter as “Godliness.”

Teaching:

- What’s “Godliness” all about, anyway 2 Peter 1:6
 - its meaning
 - difference between holiness and Godliness
 - what it is not
- ***Godliness is born of faith and covers everyday conduct in honoring God***
- Knowledge of the truth leads to it ... Titus 1:1
 - Godliness without knowledge 2 Timothy 3:1-7
 - wrong focus - self vs. God
 - always learning, never able to come to the truth 2 Timothy 3:7
 - having the wrong kind of godliness vs 5
 - coming to know Jesus Christ Ephesians 4:17-5:1
 - taught in accordance with the truth
 - undergirded with prayer 1 Timothy 2:2
- Spiritual training to achieve it ... 1 Timothy 4:7-8
 - daily discipline
 - hard submission to God’s Word 2 Timothy 3:14
 - a Godly example
 - Ruth Ruth 1:16
 - decision made Ruth 2:11-12
 - a life that honors God Ruth 4:13-14 (Matthew 1:5)
 - God honors Ruth 1 Timothy 6:11-16
- Focusing to realize it ... 1 Timothy 6:11-16
 - pursuit (a choice to go for it)
 - equipped (given all you need)
 - persecuted (an inevitable result) 2 Peter 1:3-4
2 Timothy 3:12

A life that is lived with an eye on God ... Psalm 37

Discussion:

- In what ways do we exhibit a “form of godliness” with no power? How do we approach our worship? our devotions? our daily dialogue with the Lord?
- How would living “a life lived with an eye on God” change our conduct, our prayer life, our decision-making?
- Read Psalm 4:3 and share your comments.

Next Lesson: Able to Act

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) 1 Corinthians 13 and 1 John 3:11-24, 4:7-21

Lesson 9 - Able to Act

We've looked at the "inward dispositions" of self-control and perseverance and last week we studied the "upward disposition" of Godliness. We now come to the "outward dispositions" which sum up the actions related to our life of faith – brotherly kindness and love.

Teaching:

- What's the difference?
 - *Brotherly Kindness (affection)*
 - "Phileo" – Relationships within the Body
1 Thessalonians: 3:12, 4:9-10
 - "Love your neighbor as yourself"
Luke 10:25-37
 - Love is known by the actions it prompts
Romans 12:9-10, 13:8-10, 2 Peter 1:7
 - *Love*
 - "Agapeo" -- loving as God loves
1 Corinthians 13
 - The Father's love
1 John 4:7-21
 - The love of the cross
1 John 3:16
 - commanded
John 13:34-35
 - provided
Romans 5:5
- Don't you get it?
 - Peter, "Agape me?"
John 21:15-17
 - Lord, "I phileo you!"
- To sum it all up!
 - the inward dispositions
2 Peter 1:5-6a
 - the upward disposition
2 Peter 1:6b
 - the outward dispositions
2 Peter 1:7
 - given by God and supplied by means of faith
2 Timothy 1:7
 - increasing measure; effective and productive
Colossians 1:9-12

*And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son
Jesus Christ and love one another, just as He has commanded us.*

1 John 3:23

Discussion:

- If love is known by the actions it prompts, what are some of the ways in which we can more quickly respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in "practical love."
- Talk about ways in which you find yourself expressing a growing love of the Lord; what sorts of obstacles hold you back? what kinds of things help?
- Share how the Lord is deepening in you the desire to be more effective and productive in your walk with Him.

Next Lesson: The Forgetful Christian

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) John 9 and Matthew 13:10-17

Lesson 10 - The Forgetful Christian

In wrapping up our study of the six qualities of the Christian life we realize that these manifestations of the Godly life within us cause us to be effective and productive in our lives. Our actions speak of the life within. We now move to see what it is like to not be growing in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

Teaching:

- *One who is “near-sighted”.....*
 - cannot see what lies ahead 2 Peter 1:9
Matthew 16:1-4, 11-12
 - willfully closing eyes to the light Matthew 13:10-17
 - unable to discern truth Matthew 25:1-13

- *Is also “blind”.....*
 - cannot see at all 2 Peter 1:9
Matthew 13:15
 - fails to realize there’s a war on Revelation 3:14-18
 - remains largely under the control of the “god” of this world” 2 Corinthians 4:4

- *And has “amnesia”!*
 - can’t remember what lies behind 2 Peter 1:9
John 1:1-5
 - forgets that they have been cleansed Titus 3:3-8
 - remain in their sin John 9:41

Our actions speak of the life within...

Discussion:

- Share times in your life when you know that you willfully turned away from the truth and the effect that had on your life and on those around you.
- Talk about what it’s like to feel controlled by the “god of this world.” What kinds of circumstances produce this feeling?
- Can you remember times when you acted as if you really had forgotten that you were a Christian? How does the Holy Spirit remind you?

Next Lesson: The Eternal Christian

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) Romans 4 and Romans 8:28-39

Lesson 11 - The Eternal Christian

Peter has told us that if we do not increasingly manifest the qualities of God's life within us, we are as blind persons, unable to have spiritual perception. We act as if we have spiritual amnesia forgetting what the Lord has done for us. We now come to Peter's suggested remedy for this condition.

Teaching:

- “be all the more eager...” 2 Peter 1:10
 - God's sovereignty
 - our responsibility
 - ‘doctrine of assurance’ 2 Timothy 1:12
 - know your sins are forgiven
 - know you possess divine life 1 John 5:11-13
 - know you partake of the divine nature

- “if you do these things...” 2 Peter 1:10
 - supplied in abundance vs. 5-7
 - living the life 1 Peter 1:13-24
 - ‘practice these things’ Hebrews 5:11-14

- Therefore, “you will...” 2 Peter 1:10-11
 - never fall (stumble) James 3:2, 1 John 1:9
 - receive a rich welcome
 - the abundant supply of God Philippians 1:18-19
 - the eternal kingdom Colossians 1:13-14
 - all of God 2 Peter 1:3-4

Discussion:

- Talk about the kinds of things that rob you of your confidence before the Lord.... things that the ‘deceiver’ uses to make you question your faith.
- Now, share how you have experienced the Holy Spirit drawing you back and speaking truth to your heart.....how does this reaffirm your identity in Christ?
- How does the knowledge of seeing Jesus face to face one day and being eternally with the saints in glory influence how you live your life every day? (See *Colossians 1:27b*)

Next Lesson: The Effective Christian

Read: (2 Peter 1:1-11) John 15:1-17 and Colossians 3

Lesson 12 - The Effective Christian

In coming to the end of this series we now step back and visit the whole as Peter has presented it. In looking at the life of Peter himself, we can find no finer example to understand the power and authenticity of his instruction in this passage. His own journey and growth in the Lord Jesus stands as a testimony to the truth of 2 Peter 1:1-11.

Teaching:

- THE FAITH – “...have received a faith as precious as ours” 2 Peter 1:2
 - an encounter with the living God
 - first revelation John 1:41-42
 - confronted with holiness; realization of sin Luke 5:1-11
 - commitment to follow Matthew 4:18-22
- THE LIFE – “has given us everything we need...” 2 Peter 1:3-9
 - further revelation
 - stepping up and out Matthew 16:16
 - seeing His Glory Matthew 17:1-8, 2 Peter 1:16-18
 - when the going gets tough
 - crossroads of faith Matthew 26:69-75
 - Jesus’ intercession Luke 22:31-34
 - abiding in Him John 15:1-17
 - empowered to live Acts 2:33, 37-39
- THE HOPE – “you will receive a rich welcome...” 2 Peter 1:10-11
 - living for the will of God 1 Peter 4:1-2
 - we participate 1 Peter 4:12-13, John 21:18-19
 - to share his glory 1 Peter 5:10, Colossians 1:27
- THEREFORE, we... Colossians 3
 - set our minds
 - take off the old and put on the new
 - do all in the name of the Lord

“If we do these things we will never fall.”

Discussion:

- Share your experiences during the study of this passage: your struggles; how you’ve grown; what you’ve learned.
- How will your life be different from now on?

