

Fresh Start
Week Four: Fresh Start Church
2 Peter 1:1-9; Ephesians 1:15-23

Read 2 Peter 1:1-9

1. What one word is repeated most often in this passage?
2. What does this tell us about our understanding of the gospel?
3. What then is the source of maturity in Christ?
4. We all base our Christian life on some knowledge of God – whether that knowledge is true or false. What are some lies you've found yourself believing about God and how have they impacted your relationship with Christ and others?
5. According to verse 3, what is the basis for Christ calling us? How do these things change the way you think about God?
6. Peter calls us to labor in verse 5-7, but what does he tell us to base this labor on? Which of these do you struggle with? How can understanding that you already possess these things in Christ help you see victory in these areas?
7. According to verse 9, Peter says if we do not have these qualities, we have forgotten that we have been cleansed from past sins. What does this mean? How could you do that more often?

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

8. Paul says that there is power working in us. What does he compare this power to? (v. 18-20)
9. What does the resurrection prove Christ to be victorious over? How does this same power then help us in our Christian life?
10. According to verse 22, why did God appoint Christ to be Head over everything? How does that encourage you to labor both in and for the good of the church?

Read 2 Peter 1:1-9

1. What one word is repeated most often in this passage?

Knowledge

2. What does this tell us about our understanding of the gospel?

What we believe about the gospel must be based on the truth of God's Word and not our emotions or experiences.

3. What then is the source of maturity in Christ?

You mature in Christ as your understanding of Him deepens. Apart from growing in the knowledge of God and the Holy Spirit's transformation, you cannot cultivate a relationship with Christ. The moment you became a Christian everything you need for a mature Christian life – wisdom, love, power, faith, etc. – all became available to you. But you have to invest in and appropriate those spiritual resources that are already yours. You cannot grow in knowledge of Jesus and remain ignorant of His Word. Any failure to live in maturity is due to our weakness and not God's lack of supply. Power is given to us as our understanding of God and Jesus increases. Sanctification (the process of maturity) is something that requires participation on your part. The Bible continually gives us imperatives (a command or direction, i.e. be kind) based on indicatives (an accomplished fact already declared, i.e. Christ has forgiven you). This principle is in complete agreement with how God works in the Bible and tells us that growing in your faith requires a progressive, active Christianity.

4. We all base our Christian life on some knowledge of God – whether that knowledge is true or false. What are some lies you've found yourself believing about God and how have they impacted your relationship with Christ and others?

5. According to verse 3, what is the basis for Christ calling us? How do these things change the way you think about God?

Christ calls us based on His "glory and goodness." This radically shifts our focus from any merit of our own and forces us to realize that God saved us solely by His grace.

6. Peter calls us to labor in verse 5-7, but what does he tell us to base this labor on? Which of these do you struggle with? How can understanding that you already possess these things in Christ help you see victory in these areas?

We should base any labor and striving in the Christian life on our standing in Christ. Only as we operate out of this fact instead of our own ability, we will be able to grow into mature believers.

- 7. According to verse 9, Peter says if we do not have these qualities, we have forgotten that we have been cleansed from past sins. What does this mean? How could you do that more often?**

If someone claims to have knowledge of God, yet these qualities are missing, something is drastically wrong. Peter tells us that the Christian who does not possess these qualities is shortsighted. That word stems from a Greek word in which we get our English “myopia”. A myopic person is one who only sees what is close at hand. This person is only concerned with earthly, material realities and does not look beyond them to spiritual realities. When you are concerned only with the present life, you become blind to the things of God. This inability to see causes you to forget what you looked like before Christ cleansed you and takes your eyes off the pure grace He poured out to forgive your sin.

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

- 8. Paul says that there is power working in us. What does he compare this power to? (v. 18-20)**

Paul compares the power that is at work in us to the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. God’s Word tells us that without the resurrection of Jesus, our faith is pointless (1 Cor. 15:17). So, the very same inconceivable power and indescribable might that went into accomplishing the centerpiece of our faith has gone into creating and preserving the blessings Paul describes. He is telling you that your hope and inheritance and your experience of God are a demonstration of the same strength that raised Jesus from the dead.

- 9. What does the resurrection prove Christ to be victorious over? How does this same power then help us in our Christian life?**

Christ is victorious over death, hell and the grave. Because Christ defeated these things we are free from them and are not enslaved or mastered by them.

- 10. According to verse 22, why did God appoint Christ to be Head over everything? How does that encourage you to labor both in and for the good of the church?**

Christ was appointed as head over everything for the Church. Just as the head functions as the source of guidance, life and direction for the physical body, so does Jesus for His Body, the Church.