

Introduction to 2 Peter Chapter 1

Partakers of the Divine Nature: Diligence, Eyewitness Testimony, and the More Sure Word of Prophecy

Second Peter is a shorter, more urgent letter than its predecessor, written not primarily to comfort believers under external persecution, the great concern of First Peter, but to fortify them against a danger arising from within, false teachers who would soon be named directly in chapter 2 and whose scoffing denial of Christ's promised return would be addressed at length in chapter 3. The letter is traditionally understood to come from the same Simon Peter of the Gospels and of First Peter, now writing, by his own account in this chapter, in the full awareness that his death is near, giving the whole letter something of the character of a final testament, a last, deliberate effort to leave these believers permanently equipped after his own departure.

Chapter 1 opens with a salutation strikingly similar in structure to First Peter's but immediately distinctive in emphasis, moving quickly from grace and peace multiplied through the knowledge of God to a sweeping statement of what that divine power has already supplied, all things pertaining to life and godliness, and exceeding great and precious promises through which believers become, in the letter's most theologically bold single phrase, "partakers of the divine nature." From this exalted foundation the chapter immediately turns practical, listing a chain of virtues believers are to add to their faith with all diligence, precisely because genuine knowledge of Christ, in Peter's own argument, cannot remain merely theoretical without becoming barren and unfruitful.

The chapter's second half turns personal and testimonial: Peter explains his own urgency as a man who knows his death is near, and grounds the entire letter's authority not in speculation but in direct eyewitness experience, having been present at the Transfiguration and having heard, with his own ears, the voice from heaven declaring Jesus God's beloved Son. The chapter closes by placing that eyewitness testimony alongside the even more established authority of Old Testament prophecy, itself the product not of human invention but of holy men of God moved by the Holy Ghost, establishing, before the letter's warnings against false teachers even begin, the sure and tested foundation on which everything that follows will stand.

Opening Prayer

Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

We thank you that your divine power 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, and that by exceeding great and precious promises we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Give us grace, giving all diligence, to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity.

Lord, let these things be in us, and abound, that we may be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Give us diligence to make our calling and election sure, that we may never fall, and that an entrance may be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And Lord, we thank you that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, but stand upon the eyewitness testimony of your Son's majesty, and upon the more sure word of prophecy, unto which we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in our hearts. In Jesus' name, Amen.

2 Peter 1:1–4

Like Precious Faith: Partakers of the Divine Nature, Having Escaped Corruption Through Lust

(1) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

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

(3) According as his divine power 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:

(4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

The Context

Verse 1's "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ" opens with a fuller name than First Peter's simple "Peter," using the Hebrew-form "Simon" alongside the given name "Peter," and pairs "servant" with "apostle," humble self-designation alongside genuine authority. "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" addresses believers whose faith, though received later and through different circumstance, is nonetheless "like precious," of identical worth to the apostles' own, grounded not in the recipients' own achievement but in "the righteousness of God," a phrase that, alongside "our Saviour Jesus Christ," already anticipates this letter's recurring, deliberate emphasis on Christ's full deity.

Verse 2's "grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord" echoes First Peter's identical opening blessing (1 Peter 1:2) while adding "through the knowledge," introducing a keyword that will recur throughout this short letter, "knowledge" serving as one of its central, organizing concerns, likely in direct response to false teachers who would soon claim a superior, secret knowledge of their own.

Verse 3's "according as his divine power 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" makes an emphatic claim of sufficiency: believers already possess, through genuine knowledge of Christ, everything necessary for both spiritual life and practical godliness, with nothing lacking that some further secret teaching might supply, a direct rebuttal in advance of the false teachers' later claims. Verse 4's "whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" makes one of the boldest theological statements in the New Testament, "partakers of the divine nature" describing genuine, real participation in God's own nature, not identity with God but authentic sharing in his character, achieved specifically through escape from the world's lust-driven corruption rather than through any mystical technique.

Plain American English

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Key Observations

“to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”: This signifies **Every Believer’s Faith Named Equal in Worth to the Apostles’ Own, Regardless of When or How It Was Received.**

By calling his readers’ faith “like precious” to that of the apostles themselves, Peter refuses any hierarchy of spiritual status based on proximity to Christ’s earthly ministry, grounding equal worth entirely in the shared righteousness of God rather than in personal history or experience.

“his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness”: This signifies **A Direct Claim of Present Spiritual Sufficiency, Anticipating and Refuting Any Later Claim to Additional Secret Knowledge.**

This emphatic statement that believers already possess everything necessary for life and godliness functions as an advance rebuttal to the false teachers this letter will soon confront, establishing genuine knowledge of Christ as fully adequate before any competing claim is even introduced.

“that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust”: This signifies **Genuine, Real Participation in God’s Own Character, Achieved Through Moral Escape Rather Than Mystical Technique.**

One of the boldest statements in the New Testament, this phrase describes authentic sharing in God’s nature and character, tied specifically and concretely to escaping lust-driven corruption rather than to any secret ritual or esoteric practice.

What This Means for Us Today

- 1. Receive One's Own Faith as Genuinely Equal in Worth to That of Any Other Believer, Past or Present:** Verse 1's "like precious faith" invites contemporary believers to resist any sense of spiritual inferiority based on when or how they came to faith, trusting that the same righteousness of God grounds every believer's standing equally.
- 2. Trust the Sufficiency of Genuine Knowledge of Christ Rather Than Seeking Secret or Additional Spiritual Knowledge:** Verse 3's claim that believers already possess all things pertaining to life and godliness challenges contemporary believers to resist any teaching that implies ordinary faith in Christ is somehow incomplete without further esoteric insight.

How This Relates to Today

The claim that believers are already given "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" speaks usefully into any contemporary spiritual marketplace offering additional secrets, techniques, or higher levels of spiritual attainment beyond ordinary faith in Christ, offering a settled confidence in the sufficiency of what has already been given.

The phrase "partakers of the divine nature" continues to shape historic Christian reflection on the goal of the Christian life, and offers contemporary believers a vision of spiritual growth aimed not merely at behavioral improvement but at genuine, deepening participation in God's own character.

Key Lesson: **This opening unit greets believers whose faith is named "like precious" to the apostles' own, grounds present spiritual sufficiency in genuine knowledge of Christ rather than any additional secret teaching, and closes with one of the New Testament's boldest claims, that through God's exceeding great and precious promises believers become genuine partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the world's lust-driven corruption.**

2 Peter 1:5–11

Add to Your Faith Virtue: Giving All Diligence to Make Your Calling and Election Sure

(5) And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

(6) And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

(7) And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

(8) For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(9) But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

(10) Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

(11) For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Context

Verse 5's "and beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge" launches one of the New Testament's most carefully structured ethical chains, seven qualities linked each to the next in an unbroken sequence, "add" carrying the sense of generously supplying or supplementing, and "giving all diligence" insisting that this growth requires deliberate, energetic effort rather than passive expectation, directly following the sufficiency just declared in verse 3, effort and divine provision working together rather than in competition.

Verses 6 and 7 continue the chain: "to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Each link builds logically on the one before it, knowledge requiring self-control to be rightly applied, self-control requiring patience to be sustained over time, patience maturing into godliness, godliness naturally overflowing into brotherly kindness toward fellow believers, and brotherly kindness culminating in charity, the same comprehensive, others-directed love that closes First Peter's own ethical instruction, so that the chain moves from internal character formation toward outward, relational love as its final aim.

Verse 8's "for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" names the positive

outcome of this diligent growth, genuine fruitfulness in the very knowledge of Christ already declared sufficient in verse 3, while verse 9's "but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" describes the opposite condition sharply, a spiritual near-sightedness that has, strikingly, forgotten its own past forgiveness, unable to see far enough to connect present conduct with the reality of past cleansing.

Verses 10 and 11 draw the unit's practical conclusion: "wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Make your calling and election sure" does not suggest election is uncertain in God's own mind but that diligent growth in these seven qualities provides the believer's own subjective assurance and outward confirmation of a calling already, objectively, secure, and such diligence, far from earning salvation, is named as the very means by which believers "shall never fall" and receive an abundant, rather than merely narrow, entrance into Christ's everlasting kingdom.

Plain American English

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control perseverance, and to perseverance godliness, and to godliness mutual affection, and to mutual affection love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Key Observations

"add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance... and to brotherly kindness charity": This signifies A Carefully Structured Sevenfold Chain in Which Each Quality Logically Enables and Builds Toward the Next.

Rather than a random list, this sequence moves deliberately from internal character formation toward outward, relational love as its culmination, picturing spiritual growth as an ordered, cumulative process rather than a set of disconnected virtues.

“he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins”: This signifies **Spiritual Stagnation Pictured as a Forgetfulness That Severs Present Conduct From the Reality of Past Forgiveness.**

The image of near-sightedness ties failure to grow not merely to poor behavior but to a kind of spiritual amnesia, an inability to see far enough to connect one’s present life with the genuine cleansing already received.

“give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall”: This signifies **Diligent Growth Named as the Means of Subjective Assurance Rather Than a Condition for Earning an Objectively Secure Calling.**

This instruction does not suggest election is genuinely uncertain, but that active pursuit of these qualities provides the believer’s own confirming assurance of a calling already secure, and functions practically as the means by which believers are kept from falling.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Pursue Spiritual Growth as a Deliberate, Ordered Process Rather Than a Vague Aspiration: The sevenfold chain’s careful structure invites contemporary believers to think concretely about which specific quality most needs cultivating next, rather than pursuing generic spiritual improvement without clear direction.

2. Guard Against Forgetting One’s Own Past Cleansing as a Root Cause of Present Spiritual Stagnation: Verse 9’s diagnosis, that spiritual blindness stems partly from forgetting past forgiveness, invites contemporary believers to actively remember and rehearse what Christ has already done for them as a means of renewed diligence rather than merely trying harder without that remembrance.

How This Relates to Today

This passage’s insistence that faith be actively supplemented with deliberate character growth speaks to a contemporary tendency to treat faith as a purely internal, static state, offering instead a vision of faith that is meant to visibly, progressively bear fruit through sustained effort.

The connection between forgetting past forgiveness and present spiritual blindness offers a useful diagnostic for contemporary believers experiencing spiritual stagnation, suggesting that renewed remembrance of grace already received may be as important to growth as any new effort or technique.

Key Lesson: **This unit calls believers to giving all diligence in adding to their faith a carefully ordered chain of seven qualities, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity, warning that lacking these produces a spiritual blindness that forgets its own past cleansing, and closing with the assurance that such diligent growth confirms one's calling and election, keeps a believer from falling, and secures an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**

2 Peter 1:12–15

Stirring You Up by Putting You in Remembrance: Shortly I Must Put Off This My Tabernacle

(12) Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

(13) Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;

(14) Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

(15) Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

The Context

Verse 12's "wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth" reveals the letter's underlying pastoral method, repeated reminder rather than novel instruction, addressed to

readers Peter explicitly acknowledges already know and are established in “the present truth,” a phrase suggesting truth currently held and needing reinforcement rather than truth yet to be discovered. This models a form of teaching valuable precisely because forgetfulness and drift, not ignorance, are the real danger being addressed.

Verse 13’s “yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance” uses “tabernacle,” a temporary tent-dwelling, as a deliberate metaphor for the body, echoing similar language in 2 Corinthians 5:1–4, framing Peter’s own physical existence as temporary lodging rather than permanent residence. “Stir you up” pictures active, energetic prompting rather than gentle suggestion, an urgency matching the pastoral weight of a man aware his time for such reminders is limited.

Verse 14’s “knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me” names Peter’s awareness of his approaching death directly, most naturally connected to Jesus’ own earlier prophecy of Peter’s death by martyrdom in John 21:18–19, lending the whole letter, and this chapter’s testimony in particular, the weight of a final, deliberate testament rather than routine correspondence. Verse 15’s “moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance” names Peter’s explicit strategy for ensuring these truths outlast his own life, most plausibly referring to this very letter itself as the durable means by which his teaching would continue to “stir up” its readers long after his death, a strategy that has, in the plainest historical sense, succeeded across every subsequent generation of the letter’s readers.

Plain American English

So I will always remind you of these things, even though you already know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, just as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

Key Observations

“I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them”: This signifies **A Pastoral Method Built on Repeated Reminder Rather Than Novel Instruction, Addressing Forgetfulness Rather Than Ignorance.**

By explicitly acknowledging that his readers already know these truths, Peter reveals that the real danger he is addressing is drift and forgetfulness, not lack of information, making repetition itself a deliberate and necessary pastoral strategy.

“as long as I am in this tabernacle... knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle”: This signifies **The Body Pictured as Temporary Lodging, Framing Peter’s Present Ministry Within the Full Awareness of His Approaching Death.**

The tabernacle metaphor names Peter’s physical existence as a temporary tent rather than permanent home, lending his urgency in this final letter the particular weight of a man consciously writing in the shadow of his own imminent departure.

“I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance”: This signifies **This Very Letter Identified as Peter’s Own Deliberate Strategy for Outlasting His Own Life.**

By naming his intention to ensure remembrance continues after his death, Peter points to the letter itself as the durable instrument of that intention, a strategy whose success is evidenced in every subsequent generation that has continued to read and be stirred by these words.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Value Repeated Reminder of Known Truth as Genuinely Necessary Rather Than Redundant: Peter’s own explicit strategy of reminding readers of what they already know challenges contemporary believers, and teachers, to resist the assumption that repetition of familiar truth is unnecessary, recognizing instead that forgetfulness and drift require ongoing reinforcement.

2. Consider How One’s Own Legacy of Faith Might Be Deliberately Preserved for Those Who Follow: Peter’s intentional effort to ensure remembrance after his death invites contemporary believers to consider their own deliberate stewardship of faith for the next generation, whether through written words, spoken testimony, or consistent example.

How This Relates to Today

Peter's awareness of his own approaching death, and his deliberate response to write rather than merely wait, offers a model for contemporary believers facing their own mortality, that awareness of limited time can become the occasion for intentional, lasting investment rather than passive resignation.

Key Lesson: **This brief, personal unit reveals Peter's pastoral method of repeated reminder rather than novel instruction, names his own approaching death, foretold by Christ himself, as the occasion for particular urgency, and identifies this very letter as his deliberate strategy for ensuring these truths remain in his readers' remembrance long after his own decease, a strategy whose success spans every generation that has since read his words.**

2 Peter 1:16–18

Not Cunningly Devised Fables: Eyewitnesses of His Majesty on the Holy Mount

(16) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

(17) For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

(18) And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

The Context

Verse 16's "for we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty" directly answers, in advance, the skepticism this letter will confront at length in chapter 3, particularly regarding Christ's promised return, "the power and coming" likely already anticipating that later discussion. "Cunningly devised fables" names precisely the accusation false teachers would likely level against apostolic preaching, clever invention rather than genuine history, and Peter answers not with argument alone but with the

simple, weighty claim of direct, personal eyewitness experience, “we,” almost certainly referring to Peter, James, and John, present at the Transfiguration.

Verses 17 and 18 recount that Transfiguration event directly (compare Matthew 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8; Luke 9:28–36): “for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.” Peter selects, from the entire span of his years with Jesus, this single moment as his climactic proof, not the resurrection appearances, not the miracles, but a direct, audible divine testimony to Christ’s sonship, heard with Peter’s own ears “when we were with him in the holy mount,” a detail emphasizing physical presence and genuine, verifiable experience rather than secondhand report or theological deduction.

Plain American English

We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

Key Observations

“we have not followed cunningly devised fables... but were eyewitnesses of his majesty”: This signifies **Apostolic Preaching Grounded in Direct, Personal Eyewitness Experience Rather Than Invention or Speculation.**

Peter answers the accusation of clever invention not with abstract argument but with the concrete, weighty claim of having personally witnessed Christ’s majesty, grounding the letter’s entire authority in verifiable, firsthand experience.

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”: This signifies **A Direct Divine Testimony Selected as Peter’s Climactic Proof, Above Even the Resurrection Appearances or Miracles.**

Of everything Peter witnessed across years with Jesus, he singles out this particular audible voice from heaven as his proof text, a choice that highlights the unique, unmediated character of divine testimony heard directly rather than inferred.

“this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount”: This signifies **Physical Presence and Genuine, Shared Experience Emphasized as the Basis of Credible Testimony.**

The specific detail of being physically present and personally hearing the voice underscores that Peter’s testimony rests on verifiable, shared experience rather than secondhand report, private revelation, or theological speculation.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Ground Confidence in the Christian Faith in Its Historical, Eyewitness-Testified Foundations: Peter’s appeal to direct experience rather than invented story invites contemporary believers to recognize that the Christian faith rests on claims of genuine historical testimony, not merely inspiring ideas, and to engage that historical grounding seriously.

2. Recognize That Genuine Encounters With God’s Glory May Anchor Faith More Than Accumulated Argument: Peter’s selection of a single, vivid experience of divine testimony as his climactic proof suggests that contemporary believers’ own genuine encounters with God, however described, can serve as durable anchors for faith alongside intellectual conviction.

How This Relates to Today

Peter’s direct rebuttal of “cunningly devised fables” speaks to ongoing contemporary skepticism about the historical reliability of the Gospel accounts, offering the reminder that the earliest apostolic testimony was explicitly, self-consciously offered as eyewitness report rather than legend or invention.

Key Lesson: **This unit grounds the letter’s entire authority in direct eyewitness testimony rather than invented fable, recounting the Transfiguration’s audible divine voice, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, as Peter’s chosen, climactic*

*proof of Christ's majesty, heard and witnessed personally alongside physical presence on the holy mount.**

2 Peter 1:19–21

A More Sure Word of Prophecy: A Light That Shineth in a Dark Place, Until the Day Dawn

(19) We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

(20) Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

(21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The Context

Verse 19's "we have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" places Old Testament prophetic Scripture alongside, and in some sense even above, the extraordinary eyewitness experience just described, "more sure" likely indicating not that prophecy is more reliable than eyewitness testimony in the abstract, but that it offers a settled, tested, publicly available body of Scripture that believers can continually consult, unlike a single unrepeatable experience. The image of "a light that shineth in a dark place" pictures Scripture's function precisely amid present uncertainty and coming false teaching, sufficient guidance for the present darkness "until the day dawn," Christ's own return, when the "day star," likely Christ himself, arises fully in believers' hearts.

Verse 20's "knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" makes a foundational claim about the nature of prophetic Scripture, that individual prophets did not generate their own private, self-derived interpretations of what they wrote, a claim about origin rather than a statement forbidding readers from interpreting Scripture themselves. Verse 21's "for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"

explains this claim directly, naming the Holy Spirit as the true moving force behind prophetic Scripture, human authors genuinely speaking yet “moved,” carried along, by divine initiative rather than by their own independent will, a foundational statement of Scripture’s divine origin that will ground this letter’s entire subsequent argument against the false teachers of chapter 2, whose teaching, by contrast, will be shown to originate in merely human, even destructive, will.

Plain American English

We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Key Observations

“we have also a more sure word of prophecy... as unto a light that shineth in a dark place”: This signifies **Scripture Named a Settled, Continually Available Guide Sufficient for Present Darkness Until Christ’s Own Return.**

By placing the tested, public authority of prophetic Scripture alongside his own extraordinary eyewitness experience, Peter offers believers a durable, ongoing source of guidance available to every generation, not dependent on any single, unrepeatable encounter.

“no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation”: This signifies **A Claim About Scripture’s Divine Origin Rather Than a Restriction on Readers’ Own Engagement With the Text.**

This statement addresses how prophecy originated, not by the prophet’s own private invention, rather than forbidding ordinary readers from interpreting Scripture, grounding the text’s authority in its source rather than restricting its use.

“holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”: This signifies **Human Authorship and Divine Origin Held Together, With the Spirit Named as the True Moving Force Behind Prophetic Scripture.**

By naming human authors as genuinely speaking while being “moved” by the Holy Ghost, this verse describes a cooperative process of inspiration in which real human voices convey a message whose ultimate source and initiative belong to God.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Treat Scripture as a Sufficient, Continually Available Light Rather Than Seeking Guidance Primarily Through Extraordinary Experience: Verse 19’s image invites contemporary believers to root ongoing spiritual guidance chiefly in Scripture’s settled testimony rather than in the pursuit of dramatic personal encounters, without denying the value of genuine experience.

2. Approach Scripture’s Authority as Grounded in Divine Origin Rather Than in Any Individual Interpreter’s Private Insight: Verses 20 and 21 invite contemporary readers to hold their own interpretations of Scripture with appropriate humility, remembering that the text’s authority rests in its Spirit-moved origin, not in any single reader’s, ancient or modern, private interpretive claim.

How This Relates to Today

The image of Scripture as a light shining in a dark place offers real comfort to contemporary believers navigating genuine uncertainty, confusion, or competing claims to truth, naming ongoing, careful attention to Scripture as sufficient guidance until the day fully dawns.

The teaching that prophecy originated not by human will but through Spirit-moved human authors continues to shape contemporary Christian confidence in Scripture’s authority, offering a foundational doctrine of inspiration that grounds trust in the Bible in its divine source rather than in any claim about the prophets’ own personal cleverness or authority.

Key Lesson: **This closing unit places the settled, tested authority of prophetic Scripture alongside Peter’s own extraordinary eyewitness testimony, naming it a light shining sufficiently in present darkness until Christ himself, the day star, fully arises, and*

*grounds that authority in Scripture's true origin, not any prophet's private interpretation, but holy men of God speaking as they were genuinely moved by the Holy Ghost, a foundation on which the letter's coming warnings against false teachers will directly depend.**

Closing Prayer

Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

We thank you for like precious faith obtained through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and for grace and peace multiplied unto us through the knowledge of you and of Jesus our Lord. Thank you that your divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, and that by your exceeding great and precious promises we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Lord, give us all diligence to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity, that we may neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that our calling and election may be made sure.

And Lord, we thank you that your apostles did not follow cunningly devised fables, but were eyewitnesses of Christ's majesty, having heard the voice from the excellent glory saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Thank you also for the more sure word of prophecy, a light that shineth in a dark place, given to us not by the will of man, but by holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Let us take heed to it until the day dawn, and the day star arise in our hearts.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria

Glory to God Alone