



# CONNECT GROUP NOTES

## Sunday 12.05.2024

---

“Divine Power”

### **Preacher**

Ps. Nathan Bean

### **Scriptures**

*“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:*

*2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

*3 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. 4 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.*

*5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 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. 9 But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.*



*10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."*

2 Peter 1:1-11

## **Thought**

As disciples of Christ, we are called to grow into maturity in our faith, but we don't grow in our faith by constantly rebuilding our foundations. The foundations of our faith are essential and always there, but we must, at some point, move beyond these into the depth of what Christ has for us. We must walk the path of spiritual maturity in thought, in character and in deed. This process is intentional, it's a matter of engaging faith and putting in effort. As Dallas Willard states, "Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning."

As we read through 1 Peter chapter 1, we read the words of an apostle who knew what it meant to have fallen and failed. Peter was acutely aware of his own weaknesses after denying Christ, yet also aware of the power of Christ's grace in being called back into service despite his frailty and history.

Part of being a disciple is knowing what to do with our failings and disappointments. With Christ, our weaknesses only further highlight His grace, and our failures can grow us in maturity. God's goal is not always to just 'fix' us, but rather to walk with us through each challenge of our lives, bringing us to a greater understanding and awareness of His character and heart for us, and for those around us.

We all have days where our old self is a bit present, but we know that we are a new creation. There may be brokenness in us, but we don't live from that place. We live with the awareness of our weaknesses, and our scars, but we don't let it define who we are. Just as Jesus was intentional in calling Peter back into service, so He calls us, no matter our failings.



Yet, as Peter says in 1 Peter 1:3, Christ's divine power has given us everything we need for a Godly life. Our brokenness is real, but so is His power given to us. We do not lean on our brokenness as an excuse or blame our human insufficiency for our decisions, for Christ has given us power to be Godly.

This is not a moralistic matter. It's not about our own strength or outward adherence, but rather it's about leaning into Him, and allowing His divine power to move in us. It's pursuing Him with all that we are, it's setting our eyes on Him and allowing His power to transform us from the inside out.

Christ has given us everything we need, we just need to start using it. It's the internal work of His divine power as we put effort into the relationship. Time spent with God, time bringing our thoughts and hopes and worries before Him, time spent in ongoing conversation with Christ, held throughout the day. He longs to participate dynamically in our lives, but we have to open the door of our hearts to that.

It's connection with other people - not just occasional catch ups, but deep journeying with those who can keep us accountable, those who can pray for us, help us grow, and help us develop in the fruits of the spirit.

Without this, we just don't grow. It makes us blind, nearsighted, and forgetful. If we refuse to grow, if we don't put effort and time into investing into our relationship with God and others, we're likely to lose sight of what God is doing now, what He has for us in the future, and what He has already done in our lives.

So today, let us look up and look to our loving heavenly Father. Let us step beyond our weaknesses and failings, and stride into the power that time spent with Him brings, looking towards what God is doing in our lives right now, excited and ready for what He is going to do, and forever thankful and grateful for where he has brought us from.

Our failures are not final, but our grace-filled God keeps calling us and strengthening us on the journey as we lean into Him. May we truly lean into Him afresh today.

## **Becoming Christlike**

### **BEING, THINKING, AND DOING**

**Conviction of a Disciple:** Heart after God.

*Lives out of abiding in Christ.*

#### **Thought**

The Christian walk is only possible because of Christ, and His grace and sacrifice for us. Yet it remains a walk, and one that we have to walk out in obedience to His call. This leads to a beautiful journey of dependency, where we make choices and actions to move towards Christ in response to His grace, and He empowers us as we take those steps of faith, calling us further on towards himself and a deeper understanding of His love and calling upon our lives. We may be broken vessels, and it would be foolish to pretend that we are not - yet we must also choose to carry the weight of His glory despite our frailty, and be vessels of his love and grace towards others. He pours out His power, not just into the empty, but into the willing.

#### **Practice**

Step 1 - **Reflect:** What stood out to me in this message?

Step 2: **Assess:** We often fall into one of two errors when it comes to our human frailty. We either struggle to see ourselves as frail and broken and therefore fall prey to pride, or we lean too much on our brokenness, becoming comfortable in failure and inactivity. How do I think I could determine which of those I may default toward?

Step 3: **Act:** What can I do this week to lean further into God's power in and through my life despite my weaknesses and failures?

#### **Prayer**

Father,

Thank you that my failures are not final, that You keep strengthening me on the journey as I lean into You. May your divine power flow through me and into those around me as I follow You into Your calling.

Amen.