

Christians experiencing the outward change, but not the inward change,  
will realize the loss of their souls/lives.  
They will enter into the presence of the Lord  
with redeemed spirits, changed bodies, but forfeited lives.  
Consequently, they will occupy no position among the many sons  
who will be brought to glory to rule and reign with Christ in His kingdom.

The great problem among Christians today is spiritual immaturity,  
which often results in fleshly or worldly living and resultant defeat in one’s spiritual life.  
There is no increase of “grace,” “mercy,” “peace,” and “love.”  
Such Christians, not in possession of a mature knowledge of the Word (*epignosis*),  
cannot be in possession of the things pertaining to “life and godliness”;  
and they can know very little to nothing of the “great and precious promises,”  
or being “partakers of the divine nature.”  
They, thus, can be easily “carried about with every wind of doctrine,  
by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”

**Maturity in the Faith  
By Arlen L. Chitwood of** [**Lamp Broadcast**](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

Peter directs his second epistle to *“those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ”* ([2 Peter 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.1&t=NKJV)). This is a “faith” possessed by all Christians. We were all accorded the same measure of “faith” at the time we *“passed from death to life”* ([John 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+5.24&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 2:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.1&t=NKJV), [5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+2.5&t=NKJV)). Every Christian begins at the same point with the same “like precious faith.” Then, in verses five through seven, Christians are told:

*But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to* [*lit*., ‘abundantly supply in’] *your faith virtue, to* [‘in’] *virtue knowledge,*

*to* [in] *knowledge self-control, to* [in] *self-control perseverance; to* [in] *perseverance godliness,*

*to* [in] *godliness brotherly kindness; and to* [in] *brotherly kindness love.* ([2 Peter 1:5-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-7&t=NKJV))

Peter then states in verse eight:

*For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge* [Greek: *epignosis*, mature knowledge] *of our Lord Jesus Christ.* ([2 Peter 1:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV))

The Greek word *epignosis*, referring to a “mature knowledge,” occurs three times in 2 Peter, chapter one ([2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV)). In verse two, *“grace and peace”* are multiplied through a *mature knowledge “of God and of Jesus our Lord* [*lit*., “of God, even Jesus our Lord” (*cf*. [2 Peter 1:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.1&t=NKJV))].” In verse three, Christians are given *“all things that pertain to life and godliness”* through the *mature knowledge* “*of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue*” (KJV); and in verses five through eight, abundantly supplying the things listed (with “faith” as the *foundation*) will result in “fruit-bearing” (if these things “abound” in the person) within *one’s mature knowledge* “of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

[Colossians 2:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2-3&t=NKJV) is a corresponding passage concerning a *mature knowledge* “of Jesus our Lord” which deals with the same basic truths as [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [5-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.5-8&t=NKJV). In the Colossians passage, the “mystery of God” is *revealed to be Christ*, and *in Him* “*are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*.” The words appearing between “God” and “Christ” ([2 Peter 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2&t=NKJV)) in the Authorized Version are not found in the best Greek manuscripts, and the latter part of this verse should literally read:

*“. . . to a mature knowledge* [*epignosis*] *of the mystery of God, Christ.”*

The name “Christ” is placed in *apposition* to the word “mystery” in the Greek text, making Christ *to be* “the mystery of God.” The things in this mystery were *not fully opened up in the prior dispensation*; but *now*, through additional revelation, *the Holy Spirit is making these things known to the saints*. Man *today* has the complete revelation of God, and as this revelation is *received* into man’s saved human spirit, the indwelling Holy Spirit *takes* the Word of God and *reveals* things concerning the Son (things previously made known but *not* fully *opened* up and *revealed* until dealt with in *later* revelation [[John 16:13-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+16.13-15&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 2:6-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+2.6-13&t=NKJV); *cf.* [Genesis 24:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.4&t=NKJV), [10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.10&t=NKJV), [36](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.36&t=NKJV), [53](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+24.53&t=NKJV)]).

In [Colossians 2:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2-3&t=NKJV), it is only the person coming into a *mature knowledge* of the “mystery of God” who *will see* the great storehouse of “treasures of wisdom and knowledge” in Christ. In like manner, *only* the person coming into a *mature knowledge* of “Jesus Christ our Lord” in [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV), [8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.8&t=NKJV), contained in the “mystery of God” in [Colossians 2:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+2.2&t=NKJV), will *realize* an *increase* of “grace” and “peace” (*cf*. “Mercy, peace, and love be *multiplied* to you” [[Jude 1:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Jude+1.2&t=NKJV)]), or come into *possession* of the numerous other things mentioned in this chapter.

In [2 Peter 1:3-4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.3-4&t=NKJV), a *mature knowledge* of God’s Son will result in the *realization* of two things:

a) Possessing “all things that pertain to life and godliness”: “Life” (Greek: *Zoe*) is used *referring* to life in its *absolute fullness*, which a Christian is *to exhibit* during his *present* pilgrim walk; and “godliness” *refers* to piety or reverence, which is to be *exhibited* at the *same* time. A godly walk in the fullness of life is *appropriating* that which God has for man (revealed in His Word) and, at the same time, *walking* in a Godlike manner.

b) Possessing “great and precious promises”: Through these “great and precious promises” (revealed in God’s Word) individuals *become* “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world [by means of *epignosis*]…” (*cf.* [2 Peter 1:2-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.2-3&t=NKJV); [2:20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+2.20&t=NKJV)). The “divine nature” has been planted *within* the inner being of every Christian; but it, as faith, can be *either* dormant or very active. To assure that the “divine nature,” along with faith, does *not* lie dormant, a Christian must *lay aside* the things having to do with corruption in the world and *receive* the Word of God into his saved human *spirit* ([James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV); [1 Peter 2:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Peter+2.1-2&t=NKJV)). It is the *reception* of this Word and the corresponding work of the Holy Spirit *alone* that bring individuals into that *position* where spiritual growth is *wrought*, partaking of the “divine nature” is *effected*, and victory over the things of the world, the flesh, and the devil *come to pass*.

The great problem among Christians today is spiritual *immaturity*, which often *results* in fleshly or worldly living and resultant defeat in one’s spiritual life. There is *no* increase of “grace,” “mercy,” “peace,” and “love.” Such Christians, *not* in possession of a *mature knowledge* of the Word (*epignosis*), *cannot* be in possession of the things pertaining to “life and godliness”; and they can know *very little to nothing* of the “great and precious promises,” or being “partakers of the divine nature.” They, thus, can be *easily* “carried about with every *wind* of doctrine, by the *trickery* of men, in the *cunning craftiness* of deceitful plotting” ([Ephesians 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.14&t=NKJV)).

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[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Jude, Ch. 2, Maturity in the Faith, excerpt](http://bibleone.net/J_02.htm)