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Knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Pet 1:3-11 and the Canonical
Relationship between 1 and 2 Peter

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Knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 Pet 1:3-11 and the Canonical
Relationship between 1 and 2 Peter

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The area most neglected in modern investigation of 2 Peter is perhaps what would appear the most obvious: the relationship of 2 Peter with 1 Peter. Despite the fact that these two letters share a common attribution to the apostle Peter and that 2 Peter most probably refers explicitly to 1 Peter (2 Pet 3:1), several modern commentators do not regard these texts as substantially related. The relationship between 1 and 2 Peter, suggested by the letters' traditional titles and canonical transmission, represents a way forward in the study of 2 Peter and the Catholic Epistles in general.

In order to study the bond between the Petrine letters more closely, I undertake an audience-oriented exegesis of the prooemium of 2 Peter (1:3-11). This reading concentrates on the reaction of the implied ("ideal") audience to the opening section of 2 Peter. I have read 2 Pet 1:3-11 closely with an ear to the echoes of 1 Peter in the words and concepts of the text, such as the implied audience with knowledge of 1 Peter would notice. The structure and vocabulary of 2 Peter's salutation resemble the structure and vocabulary of 1 Peter's salutation (1:1-2). Second Peter 1:3-4 echoes much of 1 Peter's teaching on Christ and develops 1 Peter's teaching on the appropriation of life through knowledge of Christ. The sequence of virtues in the catalogue (2 Pet 1:5-7) echoes 1 Peter's exhortation and portrait of Christ. The use of the terms "firm," "call," and

“election” in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes the language of construction and Christian identity in 1 Peter (2:4-9).

My exegesis highlights words and themes that demonstrate a substantial connection between 1 and 2 Peter, best explained by a deliberate use of 1 Peter by 2 Peter. Second Peter summarizes 1 Peter’s teaching about Christ and the Christian identity in a brief fashion, in service of its overarching goal: defense of the faith against those who would vitiate the truth about Christ by their false teaching (2 Peter 2–3). Second Peter 1:3-11 draws on 1 Peter for material in the development of its defining theme: the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

This dissertation by William Cleary fulfills the dissertation requirement for the doctoral degree in biblical theology approved by John Paul Heil, S.S.D., as Director, and by Frank Matera, Ph.D., and Francis T. Gignac, D.Phil., as Readers.

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Danker, F. W., W. Bauer, W. R. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 rd ed. Chicago, 2000.
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago, 1961.
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BTC	Brazos Theological Commentaries
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
ConBNT	Coniectanea biblica, New Testament
EBib	Études bibliques
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>HvTSt</i>	<i>Hervormde theologiese studies</i>
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
<i>IBS</i>	<i>Irish Biblical Studies</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IVPNTC	InterVarsity Press New Testament Commentary
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
LD	Lectio divina
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
NABPRSS	National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion Special Series
NAC	New American Commentary
NEchtB	Neue Echter Bibel
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTG	New Testament Guides

NTL	New Testament Library
NTT	New Testament Theology
PAST	Pauline Studies
<i>PL</i>	J. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia latina</i>
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
SacPag	Sacra Pagina
SB	Sources bibliques
SBLAbib	Society of Biblical Literature Analecta Biblica
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
<i>SBLSP</i>	<i>Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers</i>
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>SEÅ</i>	<i>Svensk exegetisk årsbok</i>
<i>SNTSU</i>	<i>Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt</i>
SPNT	Studies in the Personalities of the New Testament
<i>SPR</i>	<i>Southern Presbyterian Review</i>
TCB	The Century Bible
TCGNT	B. M. Metzger, <i>A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of The New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids, 1964-1976.
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
THNTC	Two Horizons New Testament Commentaries
<i>TLNT</i>	C. Spicq, <i>Theological Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . Translated and edited by J. D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, Mass., 1994
<i>TRu</i>	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
TynNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WestBC	Westminster Biblical Companion
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZBNT	Zürcher Bibelkommentare, Neues Testament

Chapter One

State of the Research on 2 Pet 1:3-11

1. Introduction

Since the early centuries of Christianity various churchmen and other readers have objected to the inclusion of 2 Peter in the canon of the New Testament. Originally, authorities were concerned about the possibly spurious nature of the letter. Even Jerome noticed the difference in style between 1 and 2 Peter.¹ In more recent times the concern over 2 Peter involved its theology. According to Käsemann, for example, the theology of 2 Peter represented not a genuine, eschatologically oriented Christianity but a dogma-centered “early Catholicism.”² Yet, 2 Peter did enter the NT canon and has yielded much fruit to those critical scholars bold enough to study it. Research into its character as a “farewell speech” of Peter as well as studies of its literary relationship with Jude have deepened our understanding of the letter and of the Catholic Epistles (CEs) in general. The area most neglected in modern investigation is perhaps what would appear the most obvious, especially in light of the challenges to 2 Peter’s canonicity: the relationship of 2 Peter with 1 Peter. Despite the fact that these two letters share a common attribution to the apostle Peter and that 2 Peter most probably refers explicitly to 1 Peter (2 Pet 3:1), several modern commentators do not regard these texts as substantially related. Bauckham and Harrington, e.g., claim that 1 Peter

¹ Jerome (*Epist.* 120) explains the difference in style between 1 and 2 Peter by suggesting that Peter used different amanuenses for each letter.

² Ernst Käsemann, “An Apologia for Primitive Christian Eschatology,” in *Essays on New Testament Themes* (SBT; Chatham: SCM, 1964) 169-95.

exerts little or no influence on the language and ideas of 2 Peter.³ The fact that several major commentaries do not even treat 1 and 2 Peter in the same volume illustrates this conviction clearly. Accordingly many scholars have largely abandoned a reasonable presumption of affinity between 1 and 2 Peter.

NT studies in recent years have, by contrast, witnessed a surge of interest in the canonical relationship among the CEs. Wall, among other scholars, has called for a more intensive study of the textual interaction of James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude. For Wall, the canonical link between 1 and 2 Peter deserves particular attention. Wall praises the attempt to discern apostolic traditions in 2 Peter but points to the lack of study on its relationship with 1 Peter, “which is certainly the prompt of the canonical process.”⁴ Thus, the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter, suggested by the letters’ traditional titles and canonical transmission, represents a way forward in the study of 2 Peter and the CEs in general. However, this avenue remains relatively unexplored.

In order to study the bond between the Petrine letters more closely, I propose to undertake an audience-oriented exegesis of the *prooemium* of 2 Peter (1:3-11). This reading will concentrate on the reaction of the implied audience to the opening section of 2 Peter. This “ideal” audience knows 1 Peter and catches all of the echoes and resonances of 1 Peter within 2 Pet 1:3-11. I will argue that the *prooemium* of 2 Peter (1:3-11) serves as both a recapitulation and a redirection of certain major themes of 1 Peter, transposed into different

³ Richard Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter* (WBC 50; Waco: Word, 1983) 146; Daniel Harrington, “Jude and 2 Peter,” in *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter* (ed. Daniel J. Harrington; SacPag 15; Minneapolis: Liturgical Press, 2003) 232.

⁴ Robert Wall, “The SNTS Seminar on the Catholic Epistles (2001-2006),” in *The Catholic Epistles and Apostolic Tradition* (ed. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert Wall; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009) 1-5, here 4.

language and at the service of a different agenda. With regard to language, the style and vocabulary of 2 Peter demonstrate greater influence of Hellenistic motifs and concepts. With regard to agenda, the hortatory function of 1 Peter is replaced by a polemical interest in 2 Peter. These differences in language and purpose, however, do not extend to the common interest of 1 and 2 Peter in the connection between eschatology and ethics. I will argue that the *prooemium* of 2 Peter adopts, continues, and extends the teaching of 1 Peter about Christ and the intellectual choice of Christian life and virtue over stereotypical human life and desire. Second Peter adopts and adapts the theme of knowledge of Christ and other key ideas from 1 Peter in the service of its own original paraenesis against those who would distort the content of the faith.

Despite the lack of extensive lexical parallels, certain language in 1 Peter and 2 Pet 1:3-11 does overlap. The author of 2 Peter continues several important ideas from 1 Peter at the beginning of 2 Peter, including a personal knowledge (*ἐπίγνωσις*) of Christ, an intellectual battle against desire (*ἐπιθυμία*), and an eschatological entrance into the kingdom of the Savior (*σωτήρ*). At this point, in the second letter attributed to Peter, these are not random or general Christian ideas but themes harvested from 1 Peter and placed deliberately as a substantive introduction to 2 Peter. These and other words serve to recall 1 Peter to the mind of the implied audience. Thus, while I will not argue for a strict literary dependence of 2 Pet 1:3-11 on 1 Peter, I will show how the explicit canonical link of these letters has a substantial, theological, and textual basis too often overlooked by scholars.

In the interest of brevity the scope of this dissertation encompasses the *prooemium* of 2 Peter only. I chose to focus on this section because it functions as an introductory

summary, a presentation of the correct theology defended in the rest of the letter.

Additionally, an audience hearing 2 Peter immediately after hearing 1 Peter is most sensitive to allusion and thematic resonance at the beginning of 2 Peter. For these reasons I focus on 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a logical place to discern the influence of 1 Peter.

Overview of the State of the Research

In contrast to earlier research lamenting the state of study of 2 Peter, recent research has witnessed a marked increase in scholarly attention to this long-neglected text.⁵ Recent studies take up not only traditional questions (authorship, canonicity, relationship with Jude) but also apply rhetorical criticism and stylistic evaluation to 2 Peter, seeking to place it in its proper cultural context and understand its theological contribution on its own terms.⁶ A brief sketch of the history of research on 2 Peter will provide an entrée into the study of the document. It will also reveal the need for the current project. Whereas other studies discuss the literary and theological relationship between 1 and 2 Peter only in passing or as a means to answer a larger question (such as the question of authorship), this study of 2 Pet 1:3-11 will help place this important canonical relationship center stage.

⁵ Earlier complaints about lack of attention to 2 Peter included those of Tord Fornberg (*An Early Church in a Pluralistic Society: A Study of 2 Peter* [ConBNT 9; Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1977] 1) and Thomas J. Kraus (*Sprache, Stil und historischer Ort des zweiten Petrusbriefes* [WUNT 2/136; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 2001] 1).

⁶ See for instance the work of Kraus (*Sprache, Stil*) and Terrance Callan (“The Style of the Second Letter of Peter,” *Bib* 84 [2003] 202-24) and the older work of Duane Frederick Watson (*Invention, Arrangement, and Style: Rhetorical Criticism of Jude and 2 Peter* [SBLDS 104; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988]) and Lauri Thurén (“Style Never Goes Out of Fashion: 2 Peter Re-Evaluated,” in *Rhetoric, Scripture, and Theology: Essays from the 1994 Pretoria Conference* [ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht; JSNTSup 131; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996] 329-47).

My review of the state of research on 2 Peter will consist of the following parts. The first and still primary question that arises in any approach to 2 Peter concerns its authorship. I will discuss this question insofar as it sheds light on the similarities and differences between 1 and 2 Peter. The consideration of arguments for and against Petrine authorship will highlight the perceived similarity or dissimilarity of 1 and 2 Peter, and will serve as an introduction to my presentation of the literary relationship between the letters. This research into literary relationship will allow for some preliminary remarks about the canonical relationship between the two texts. Finally, I will give due consideration to the past treatment of the unit 2 Pet 1:3-11, including a survey of the proposed outlines and possible sources of this material. A treatment of all of these areas will provide an entrée into the study of 2 Peter and an introduction to the questions surrounding 2 Pet 1:3-11.

2. Background: The Authorship of 2 Peter

Bauckham once stated that a certain preoccupation with introductory matters—authorship, date, integrity, literary relationships, and identity of opponents—characterized the investigation of 2 Peter in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁷ That statement holds true for contemporary research as well, and necessarily so. The text of 2 Peter admits of divergent interpretations while offering no concrete evidence that would end debate about its provenance. Over the last century most scholars have regarded 2 Peter as a

⁷ Richard Bauckham, “2 Peter: An Account of Research,” *ANRW* 2.25.5 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988) 3713-52, here 3713.

pseudepigraphical writing.⁸ Others, however, defend its Petrine authorship or at least do not rule out the possibility that Peter had some hand in the composition of 2 Peter.⁹ A decision on this matter is not strictly speaking necessary for the current project, which will read the texts of 1 and 2 Peter as they stand. Peter is the implied author. An audience-oriented approach, concerned with the reactions of the implied audience, does not depend on Petrine authorship. Nevertheless, anyone who investigates 2 Peter must be familiar with the debate over authorship. This holds true especially for a study that intends to explore the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. I will include a brief discussion of some aspects of the text of 2 Peter relevant to the question of authorship in order to illustrate the similarities and dissimilarities between 1 and 2 Peter. Thus I will prepare for the consideration of their literary relationship.

Anachronisms in 2 Peter

Interpreters arguing against the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter frequently have recourse to a range of apparent anachronisms within the letter. They claim that various statements

⁸ For instance, most famously Käsemann (“Apologia”). Among introductions, see Raymond Brown (*An Introduction to the New Testament* [New York: Doubleday, 1997] 761) and Udo Schnelle (*The History and Theology of the New Testament Writings* [trans. M. Eugene Boring; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998] 425-26). Among commentators, see Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 158-59), Lewis Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude* [NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010] 1), Daniel Harrington (“Jude and 2 Peter,” 236), and Henning Paulsen (*Der Zweite Petrusbrief und der Judasbrief* [KEK 12, 2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992] 94).

⁹ Among these are certain contemporary Evangelical scholars such as Robert Harvey and Philip H. Towner (*2 Peter & Jude* [IVP New Testament Commentary Series 18; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009] 12-16) and Thomas Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude* [NAC 37; Nashville: B&H, 2003] 260); also Gene Green (*Jude & 2 Peter* [BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2008] 150) and Michael Kruger (“The Authenticity of 2 Peter,” *JETS* 42 [1999] 645-71). John Robinson (*Redating the New Testament* [London: SCM, 1976] 193-98) believes that the apostle Jude wrote 2 Peter from Rome around the year 62 C.E. Peter Davids (*The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* [Pillar NT Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006] 149) admits that the evidence does not warrant the conclusion that 2 Peter is certainly pseudepigraphical. J. Daryl Charles (*Virtue Amidst Vice: The Catalogue of Virtues in 2 Peter 1* [JSNTSup 150; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997] 63-64) levels a scathing critique against the academy for adopting its own a priori orthodoxy concerning the pseudepigraphical nature of 2 Peter.

about Peter himself, Paul, and other apostles, as well as theological ideas and the identity of the false teachers, betray a *Sitz im Leben* after the death of the apostle Peter, perhaps in the late first or early second centuries.¹⁰ Some of their arguments are: the use of Hellenistic language and ideas, e.g., “sharers of divine nature” (θεΐας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως, 2 Pet 1:4) and the virtue list in 1:5-7; the appeal to the transfiguration (1:16-18) as opposed to the resurrection; the appeal to “your apostles” in 3:2, apparently excluding Peter himself; the affectionate reference to Paul in 3:15; and the reference to Paul’s letters as “Scriptures” seemingly belonging to a canon (τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς, 3:16). The apostle Peter would not have known such rare Greek words or concepts, and he certainly would not have known about a “canon” of Scripture. It is doubtful that Peter would have appealed to the transfiguration and not to the resurrection as proof of God’s power. The author of 2 Peter does not mention the cross—a prominent theme in 1 Peter. He does mention Paul in favorable terms, which might stem from a later desire to unify these two prominent apostles and their teaching. Besides these troublesome signs, the delay of the parousia and the apparently anti-Gnostic polemic argue for a composition date well beyond Peter’s lifetime. Sidebottom claims that the “religion envisaged [in 2 Peter] is entirely different from that of the first age of Christians, and entirely different from that in 1 Peter.”¹¹

¹⁰ For a brief introduction to these themes, see Brown, *Introduction*, 763, or Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 256-58. For more depth, see Anton Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief* (EKKNT 22; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1994) 122-31.

¹¹ E. M. Sidebottom, *James, Jude, and 2 Peter* (TCB; London: Nelson, 1967) 98.

The most forceful attack on the Petrine authorship of 2 Peter on theological grounds came from Käsemann.¹² He characterized 2 Peter as a failed attempt to defend original Christian eschatology, since it betrays a postapostolic vantage point. For 2 Peter “faith” no longer means the act of becoming or remaining a believer but the saved state of heavenly citizens. Doctrinal traditions have been objectified against the Gnostics and their errant interpretations of Scripture. The apostles have become guarantors of church tradition based on salvation history. The eschatology of 2 Peter lacks any vestige of Christological orientation; in fact, it is entirely man-centered. The real content of parousia is characterized by 2 Pet 1:4 as an “escape from the world’s corruption.” For Käsemann, “no other NT sentence so clearly marks the relapse of Christianity into Hellenistic dualism.”¹³ Orthodoxy has taken over the dualistic mark of Gnosticism, having lost the primitive Christian tension between present and future salvation.

Käsemann’s critique of 2 Peter has generated several responses that seek to cast the letter in a more positive light. The label of “early Catholicism” has been rejected as an artificial category that reflects confessional differences of our own time and so cannot do

¹² Käsemann, “Apologia,” 169-95. The rest of this paragraph is a synopsis of his major points. Among those who followed Käsemann’s critique of the “early Catholicism” of 2 Peter are Werner Kümmel (*Introduction to the New Testament* [14th ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966] 305) and especially Wolfgang Schrage (*Die “katholischen” Briefe: Die Briefe des Jakobus, Petrus, Johannes, und Judas* [ed. Horst Balz and Wolfgang Schrage; NTD 10; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993] 122), who calls the continuing presence of 2 Peter in the canon a “problem for Evangelical theology.” The underlying attitude of this position is perhaps best exemplified in the statement of J. D. G. Dunn: “I would want to insist that not a few compositions of Martin Luther and John Wesley, for example, were as, if not more, inspired than the author of 2 Peter” (quoted by Ben Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians Vol. II: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1-2 Peter* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007] 260).

¹³ Käsemann, “Apologia,” 179-80.

justice to 2 Peter.¹⁴ A close reading of the text suggests a vital theological interest using Hellenistic ideas and language—the proclamation of the gospel to a new situation.¹⁵ Against Käsemann’s charge that 2 Peter’s soteriology does not accord with the rest of the NT’s emphasis on the cross of Christ, it should be noted that 2 Pet 1:9 and 2:1 use redemption language.¹⁶ It seems that 2 Peter presupposes the cross. Furthermore, the account of the transfiguration—which demonstrates a high Christology—does not undermine hope in the future resurrection. To the contrary, it confirms Peter’s authority as a witness of the divinity of Christ. The balance of present and future in 2 Pet 1:3-4 maintains the standard NT tension between “already” and “not yet,” as do the frequent references to the parousia and judgment. In short, 2 Peter does not differ substantially from 1 Peter or other NT writings.

Conclusion

At the outset I noted that an audience-oriented exegesis of 2 Peter in light of 1 Peter does not depend upon the authorship of 2 Peter. Obviously, the canonical relationship between these letters does not depend on their composition by the apostle Peter or any other single author. I offer this account of the research into the authorship of 2 Peter not to solve the question of authorship but to highlight some similarities and dissimilarities between 1 and 2 Peter. Recent work, including the series of articles on the theology and structure of 2 Peter by Terrance Callan, focuses on the letter’s intrinsic theological contributions, rather than on

¹⁴ Fornberg, *Early Church*, 4-6. I agree with Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 254): “The negative views of some relative to 2 Peter tell us more about these scholars than they tell us about 2 Peter.”

¹⁵ Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 255.

¹⁶ Kruger (“Authenticity of 2 Peter,” 666-69) includes this and the following points in his succinct criticism of Käsemann.

its supposed later witness to the development of Christian theology.¹⁷ This approach—letting 2 Peter speak for itself—represents a welcome development.¹⁸

Perhaps the most important reason for this section on 2 Peter's authorship is this: it provides a preparation for the discussion of the literary relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. Not surprisingly, the treatment of the literary relationship between these two texts figures in arguments about the authorship of 2 Peter; however, it rarely extends beyond this introductory question. For this study, the examination of the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter must emerge from the authorship debate and stand on its own.

3. Literary and Thematic Relationship between 1 and 2 Peter

Students of 1 and 2 Peter have long noted certain verbal and thematic parallels between the two letters. However, commentators have given different weight to these similarities. Some regard these common words and phrases as “echoes” of 1 Peter within 2 Peter that prove the use of the former in the composition of the latter. Others dismiss them as coincidence or as traditional material and claim that 1 Peter exerted no influence on the composition of 2 Peter. A survey of the linguistic and thematic evidence facilitates an evaluation of the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter.

¹⁷ Terrance Callan, “The Christology of the Second Letter of Peter,” *Bib* 82 (2001) 253-63; idem, “The Soteriology of the Second Letter of Peter,” *Bib* 82 (2001) 549-59; idem, “The Style of the Second Letter of Peter,” *Bib* 84 (2003) 202-24; idem, “Use of the Letter of Jude by the Second Letter of Peter,” *Bib* 85 (2004) 42-64; idem, “The Syntax of 2 Peter 1:1-7,” *CBQ* 67 (2005) 632-40. In a similar vein, Peter Müller (“Der 2. Petrusbrief,” *TRu* 66 [2001] 310-37, here 323) calls attention to the originality of 2 Peter with regard to its presentation of the coalescence of past, present, and future for the Christian.

¹⁸ In his recent assessment, Kevin McCrudden (“2 Peter and Jude,” in *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament* [ed. David E. Aune; Sdn Bhd, Malaysia: Blackwell, 2010] 596-612, here 596-98) acknowledges the endurance of negative evaluations of 2 Peter's theology but points to the abandonment of the categories of “early Catholicism” and Gnosticism. Newer perspectives on the letter include those studying honor and shame language, traditional material, and rhetorical and pastoral dimensions of the text. Focus on historical issues has yielded to investigations of the Jewish Christianity of 2 Peter.

Vocabulary and Style

The following list, while not exhaustive, gives the most prominent examples of words and phrases shared by 1 and 2 Peter:¹⁹

* No parallel is more striking than the salutation, “Grace to you and peace be multiplied” (χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη πληθυνθείη, 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2). This salutation occurs only in 1 and 2 Peter in the NT.²⁰

* The noun ἐπόπτης (“witness,” 2 Pet 1:16) and verb ἐποπτεύω (1 Pet 2:12; 3:2) share the same root and represent the only NT occurrences of these words.

* The noun ἀπόθεσις (“removal”) occurs in the NT only at 2 Pet 1:14 and 1 Pet 3:21.

* The terms ἄσπιλος and ἀμώμητος (“spotless and without blemish,” 2 Pet 3:14) describe the addressees in contrast to the false teachers, who are σπίλοι and μῶμοι (2 Pet 2:13); these terms also recall the description of Christ as ἄμωμος and ἄσπιλος in 1 Pet 1:19. The pairing of these terms occurs only in 1 and 2 Peter in the NT.

* Several words occur in both 1 and 2 Peter, including: φιλαδελφία (“mutual love,” 2 Pet 1:7 and 1 Pet 1:22); μακροθυμία (“patience,” 2 Pet 3:15 and 1 Pet 3:20); ἀρετή (“virtue,” 2 Pet 1:3 and 1 Pet 2:9); ἀσέλγεια (“licentiousness,” 2 Pet 2:2, 7, 18 and 1 Pet 4:3); ἀναστροφή (“behavior,” 2 Pet 2:7; 3:11 and 1 Pet 1:15, 18; 2:12; 3:1, 16) and ἀναστρέφεσθαι

¹⁹ The most comprehensive word lists for 2 Peter were compiled by Joseph Mayor (*The Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter* [London: Macmillan, 1907] lxix- lxxiv). My listing draws on Mayor, Benjamin Warfield (“Canonicity of Second Peter,” *SPR* 33 [1881] 45-75, here 67), Kruger (“Authenticity of 2 Peter,” 659), Joseph Chaine (*Les Épîtres Catholiques* [EBib; Paris: Gabalda, 1939] 31), Charles Bigg (*The Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* [ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1902] 224), and Terence Smith (*Petrine Controversies in Early Christianity* [WUNT 2/15; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1985] 73), who agree substantially in the parallels they cite.

²⁰ On the strength of this parallel alone, Walter Grundmann (*Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus* [THKNT 15; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1974] 56) and Fornberg (*Early Church*, 13) perceive a connection between 1 and 2 Peter. Terence Smith (*Petrine Controversies*, 73) believes that 2 Peter copies this line from 1 Peter.

(“behave,” 2 Pet 2:18 and 1 Pet 1:17); ψυχή (“life,” 2 Pet 2:8, 14 and 1 Pet 1:9, 22; 2:11, 25; 3:20; 4:19).

* The verb στηρίζειν occurs at 1 Pet 5:10, and words from the same root occur in 2 Peter: ἐστηριγμένος 1:12; στηριγμός 3:17; ἀστήρικτος 2:14; 3:16.

* The phrase ἀκατάπαυστος ἀμαρτίας (“unceasing from sin,” 2 Pet 2:14) recalls the phrase πέπαυται ἀμαρτίας (“he ceased from sin,” 1 Pet 4:1).

* The description of false teachers as κατάρας τέκνα (“cursed children,” 2 Pet 2:14) contrasts with the description of believers as τέκνα ὑπακοῆς (“obedient children,” 1 Pet 1:14).

* Both letters refer to God as “the one calling us” or “you” (ὁ καλέσας ἡμᾶς or ὑμᾶς, 2 Pet 1:3 and 1 Pet 1:15; 5:10).

* Both letters employ words from the root τιμή (“honor”) at the outset: ἰσότημος (2 Pet 1:1); τίμιος (2 Pet 1:4; 1 Pet 1:19); τιμή (1 Pet 1:7).

On the other hand, linguistic parallels one might expect do not occur. Key words in both 1 and 2 Peter do not appear in the other letter. For example, words central to the message of 1 Peter—such as ἀποκάλυψις (“revelation”), ἐλπίς (“hope”), κληρονομία (“inheritance”), πάροικος (“stranger”), πρεσβύτερος (“elder”), and ὑπακοή (“obedience”)—do not occur in 2 Peter.²¹ In like manner, words critical for 2 Peter’s discourse—including ἄκαρπος (“fruitless”), ἐντολή (“commandment”), ἐπάγγελμα (“promise”), ἐπίγνωσις (“knowledge”), σωτήρ (“savior”), and ὑπομονή (“endurance”)—do not occur in 1 Peter.

²¹ For fuller lists, see Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 225), Chaine (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 24-25), and Warfield (“Canonicity of Second Peter,” 72-73).

Besides these lexical differences, the two letters use different words to express the same idea. Whereas 1 Peter speaks of the “revelation” (ἀποκάλυψις, 1 Pet 1:7, 13; 4:13) of Jesus Christ at his second coming, 2 Peter discusses his “coming” (παρουσία, 2 Pet 1:16; 3:4, 12). In other cases, the letters use similar but not identical words and expressions.²² Whether or not these divergences can be explained by different epistolary situations or the attempt to convey various tones through word choice remains debatable.²³

Statistical studies of the vocabulary of 1 and 2 Peter do not suggest a close relationship between the letters. There are 399 different words in 2 Peter, and 57 of these (14% of the total) are *hapax legomena* in the NT.²⁴ Of these 57 words, 32 do not occur in the rest of the Bible (LXX), and 11 of those biblical *hapax legomena* can be designated rare words in the Greek language.²⁵ By comparison 1 Peter contains 543 different words, and only 12% of these are *hapax legomena*. The two letters only share 153 words; therefore, 2 Peter shares approximately 39% of its vocabulary with 1 Peter. These statistics do not prove anything about the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter; they merely show the lexical diversity between the two letters.²⁶

²² Chaîne (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 25) gives some examples: ἐπιχορηγέω (2 Pet 1:5, 11) and χορηγέω (1 Pet 4:11); ἡγέομαι (2 Pet 1:13; 2:13; 3:9, 15) and λογίζομαι (1 Pet 5:12); ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως (2 Pet 3:4) and πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου (1 Pet 1:20); and ἐπόπτης (2 Pet 1:16) and μάρτυς (1 Pet 5:1).

²³ Michael Green (*The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude* [TynNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976] 19) argues that 1 Peter uses ἀποκάλυψις for Christ’s second coming in order to convey comfort for those afflicted, whereas 2 Peter employs παρουσία as a warning for scoffers.

²⁴ For this statistical analysis, see Kruger, “Authenticity of 2 Peter,” 656.

²⁵ Ralph Martin, “The Theology of Jude, 1 Peter, and 2 Peter,” in *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude* (NTT; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 135.

²⁶ Kruger (“Authenticity of 2 Peter,” 657) points out that similar results could be obtained for 1 and 2 Corinthians.

A comparison of 1 and 2 Peter with respect to style reveals both similarities and differences. On a grammatical level, both letters display a similar use of the article, the genitive absolute, cases, verbs, and accumulation of prepositions; the stylistic differences are less marked than the difference in vocabulary.²⁷ Both 1 and 2 Peter exhibit a propensity for repeating words.²⁸ However, the literary style of 2 Peter appears more complex than the straightforward prose of 1 Peter. Some commentators have labeled the style of 2 Peter “grandiose,” and have argued that the letter uses an elaborate “Asia Minor style” to communicate the lofty tone appropriate to its important content.²⁹ The peculiar word choices give a poetic impression, while 2 Peter’s complex grammatical constructions (e.g., stringing of participles) betray the influence of pagan Greek literature; it is as if the author wants to use unusual words and a grand style to make a point.³⁰ Although strict rhetorical analysis might not classify 2 Peter as a pristine example of the grand Asiatic style, the complexity of the document and its linguistic force “implies that the author saw himself expressing powerful

²⁷ Mayor, *Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, lxxxix-cv. Chaine (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 26) agrees with this assessment.

²⁸ Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 226-27) calls this a “striking link” between 1 and 2 Peter, and states that this habit of repeating words could be the mental habit of the real author breaking through in both letters.

²⁹ For example, Thurén, “Style,” 339; Watson, *Invention*, 144; Bo Reicke, *The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude* (AB 37; New York: Doubleday, 1964) 147.

³⁰ Kraus, *Sprache, Stil*, 361-62. With regard to Greek literary influence, Reicke (*Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*, 147) discusses parallels between 2 Peter and the inscription at Nemrud-Dagh in eastern Asia Minor honoring Antiochus I of Commagene. Callan (“Style of the Second Letter of Peter,” 217) picks up on this comparison and argues that the similarity proves that 2 Peter is written in the grand Asiatic style.

and impressive thoughts” in an emotional appeal.³¹ Therefore, despite surface similarities, the stylistic complexity of 2 Peter seems to dissociate the two letters.³²

Faced with these observations about vocabulary and style, most commentators do not detect any literary relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. In their view 1 Peter has exerted little or no influence on 2 Peter.³³

Ideas and Themes

Approached from the perspective of the themes and ideas shared by 1 and 2 Peter, however, the two letters appear much closer. Both treat many of the same subjects. This leaves the question of 1 Peter’s influence on 2 Peter open.³⁴ Neyrey lists the following common themes between the letters: the confirmation of prophetic inspiration (2 Pet 1:16-21

³¹ Callan, “Style of the Second Letter of Peter,” 223. He seems to classify 2 Peter as an example of Asiatic style, whereas Watson (*Invention*, 144-45) maintains that 2 Peter does not adhere exactly to Cicero’s definition of rhetorical “Asianisms.” Watson does argue that 2 Peter possesses a high style, with its figures of speech and lack of restraint in its use of tropes. However, Anders Gerdmar (*Rethinking the Judaism-Hellenism Dichotomy: A Historiographical Case Study of Second Peter and Jude* [ConBNT 36; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2001] 59-63) offers a cautionary observation to these estimates of style when he argues that 2 Peter does not possess the literary style of Josephus or 4 Maccabees.

³² Kruger (“Authenticity of 2 Peter,” 658) objects that these arguments do not consider 2 Peter’s different *Sitz im Leben*. Also, given the dearth of Petrine material, it is hard to identify a definite style of Peter, so it is difficult to judge 2 Peter against 1 Peter. For an argument in favor of common authorship based on stylistic evidence (variations in sentence length), see George Barr, “The Structure of Hebrews and of 1st and 2nd Peter,” *IBS* 19 (1997) 17-31.

³³ Otto Knoch, *Der Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief, Der Judasbrief* (RNT; Regensburg: Pustet, 1990) 207; Harrington, “Jude and 2 Peter,” 232; Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 146. Steven Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 2002] 75) sees “no intersection” between 1 and 2 Peter. Sidebottom (*James, Jude, and 2 Peter*, 96) acknowledges similarity at the beginning and end of the letters only. Müller (“Der 2. Petrusbrief,” 325) remarks that the similarities between 1 and 2 Peter were not taken up in the research since the great majority of exegetes gives prevalence to the greater differences between the letters, with good reason. PHEME PERKINS (*Peter: Apostle for the Whole Church* [SPNT; Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994] 124-25) holds that there are no verbal connections between the letters and that the author of 2 Peter might not have even had a copy of 1 Peter.

³⁴ Perhaps partly in light of the canonical tradition, no authors argue for the influence of 2 Peter on 1 Peter (see 2 Pet 3:1).

and 1 Pet 1:10-12); the example of Noah and seven others saved (2 Pet 2:5 and 1 Pet 3:20b); forbearance and repentance (2 Pet 3:9, 15 and 1 Pet 3:20a); and the affirmation of divine judgment (2 Pet 2:4-9 and 1 Pet 1:17; 4:5).³⁵ This common material—in theme if not in verbal parallels—leads many students of these letters to conclude that 1 Peter did influence 2 Peter. Despite differences in vocabulary and expression, these common topics indicate that “2 Peter shows signs of careful study of 1 Peter.”³⁶ Bauckham objects that these common points probably come from shared traditional material; moreover, the lack of resemblance between 1 and 2 Peter implies that “the author of 2 Peter cannot . . . have been influenced by his reading of 1 Peter.”³⁷ The thematic resemblances have convinced several other commentators to advocate the opposite conclusion: 2 Peter knew and used 1 Peter, implicitly in thought if not explicitly in language.³⁸ In view of the proximate interests of the letters—concern with the avoidance of immorality, pursuit of a holy life and blessed inheritance—the idea that there is some broad similarity between the contents of 1 and 2 Peter is not far-fetched.³⁹

³⁵ Jerome Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude* (AB 37C; New York: Doubleday, 1993) 134-35. See also Kruger, “Authenticity of 2 Peter,” 659-60. He wonders how a different author could weave such subtle connections.

³⁶ Mayor, *Epistle of St. Jude and the Second Epistle of St. Peter*, cxiv.

³⁷ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 146.

³⁸ Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 263; Ceslas Spicq, *Les Épitres de Saint Pierre* (SB; Paris: Gabalda, 1966) 187; Green, *Second Epistle General of Peter*, 33; Jonathan Knight, *2 Peter and Jude* (NTG; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995) 23. David Horrell (“The Product of a Petrine Circle? A Reassessment of the Origin and Character of 1 Peter,” *JSNT* 86 [2002] 29-60, here 51) perceives few echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Peter but maintains that 2 Peter knows 1 Peter and wishes to continue its admonitory purpose. Smith (*Petrine Controversies*, 74) holds that “these considerations make it likely that the author of 2 Peter has used vocabulary and imagery from 1 Peter.”

³⁹ J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and of Jude* (HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1969) 353. Along these lines, William J. Dalton (“The Interpretation of 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6: Light from 2 Peter,” *Bib* 60 [1979] 547-55) points out broad similarity between the ideas and structure of 1 Pet 3:13-4:11 and 2 Pet 2:1-3:18. He argues that dependent parallel passages in 2 Peter explain unclear passages in 1 Peter.

This thematic relationship between 1 and 2 Peter, extending beyond strict lexical parallels, has not been fully exploited in the research up to this point. While the debate over direct verbal influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter continues, a circumspect exploration of both common language and shared themes can advance understanding of the relationship between these letters. Boobyer made one such contribution in 1959 in his still relevant essay “The Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter.”⁴⁰

Boobyer’s “The Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter”

Although it is now more than fifty years old, Boobyer’s essay still represents the most serious attempt to trace the theological influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter. As such, every subsequent commentator must engage his work on the question of the literary relationship between the Petrine letters. His essay holds special relevance for my study, since it focuses on 2 Pet 1:3-11. A review of Boobyer’s work and a survey of reactions to it will summarize my presentation of research on the literary relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. It will also lead into my discussion of their canonical relationship.

Boobyer begins by noting the propensity of 2 Peter to borrow from Jude and wonders if 2 Peter uses 1 Peter in the same way.⁴¹ In light of the similarities between 1 and 2 Peter noted by Bigg and Mayor, and mindful of the claim of 2 Pet 3:1-2 that this is now the second letter from Peter intended to remind the audience of a proper understanding based on the

⁴⁰ G. H. Boobyer, “The Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter,” in *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of Thomas Walter Manson* (ed. A. J. B. Higgins; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959) 34-53.

⁴¹ In the following summary I follow Boobyer’s argument sequentially; see Boobyer, “Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter,” 34-44.

words of the prophets and apostles and the command of the Savior, Boobyer proposes to reexamine the relationship between these two letters. When he takes a closer look at 2 Pet 3:1-4, he finds that this statement is appropriate as a reminder of the themes of 1 Peter. Certain sections of 2 Peter are intended to remind the audience about the parousia and the need to avoid error and lust. These sections are based on the authority of prophecy and the apostolic tradition (2 Pet 1:12-21; 3:1-4). When Boobyer compares 1 Peter, he notices that the themes of the parousia and the need to avoid error and lust are also prominent (e.g., 1 Pet 1:4-5, 9, 13-16) and are similarly based on the authority of prophecy and apostolic tradition (1 Pet 1:10-12). Boobyer concludes that 2 Pet 3:1 refers directly to 1 Peter.

Boobyer continues with an examination of the structure of 2 Peter 1. He reasons that signs of indebtedness are likely to occur at the beginning of 2 Peter, since 2 Peter 2 contains much of Jude and 2 Peter 3 contains material unparalleled in 1 Peter or Jude. The exact reproduction of the greeting formula of 1 Pet 1:2 in 2 Pet 1:2 encourages this approach. When he compares 1 Pet 1:3-9 and 2 Pet 1:3-11, Boobyer notes differences in expression and emphasis. Whereas 1 Peter mentions faith twice in this span (1:5, 7), 2 Peter mentions it only once (1:5) and links faith with other virtues. In light of 2 Pet 3:15, Boobyer thinks that 2 Peter took the reference to faith from 1 Peter and added the additional virtues in order to counteract a misunderstanding of Paul. If one makes allowance for this “digression” at 2 Pet 1:5-9, then there is no great disparity of substance or train of thought between 2 Pet 1:3-4, 10-11 and 1 Pet 1:3-9. The opening lines (2 Pet 1:3-4 and 1 Pet 1:3-5) share a measure of likeness, and both letters arrive at the same point in 2 Pet 1:11 and 1 Pet 1:9, respectively. Boobyer goes on to note the expression “remind you of these things” in 2 Pet 1:12. He

argues that “these things” (περὶ τούτων) refers back to 2 Pet 1:3-11 and possibly 1 Pet 1:3-9 as well, because the author claims that his audience already knew them and was established in truth (2 Pet 1:12). Thus it seems likely that the author wrote 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a review of 1 Pet 1:3-9.

Boobyer proceeds with his argument by comparing the remaining parts of the opening chapters of each letter (2 Pet 1:12-21 and 1 Pet 1:10-25). In 1 Pet 1:10-12, the author appeals to the testimony of the OT prophets, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, and to those who preached the gospel in the Holy Spirit. In 2 Pet 1:12-15, the author introduces his task of reminding his audience about “these things”; at this point, the phrase seems to look forward (to the parousia theme of 2 Pet 1:16-21) as well as backward (to 2 Pet 1:3-11 and 1 Pet 1:3-9). Here too the emphasis falls on the witness of OT prophets (2 Pet 1:19-21) and the witness of apostles (2 Pet 1:16, 18-19), in which the Holy Spirit assumes a prominent role (2 Pet 1:21). Only the account of the transfiguration (2 Pet 1:17-18) represents a seemingly inexplicable difference between 1 and 2 Peter in this section. Boobyer responds that the transfiguration account takes up 1 Pet 5:1 and presents the parousia glory of Christ. The transfiguration would come to mind in the author’s discourse concerning belief in the parousia of Christ (2 Pet 1:12-21) as he developed the thought of 1 Pet 1:10-12. Thus Boobyer maintains that 2 Peter 1 shares substance with 1 Peter 1:2-12 because the author of 2 Peter was influenced by his reading of 1 Peter.⁴²

⁴² It is sufficient for my purposes to end the recap of Boobyer here. In the remainder of his essay (“Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter,” 44-51), he goes on to examine 2 Pet 1:14 in light of 1 Pet 5:1. He concludes that the presentation of Peter in 1 Peter, drawing on Synoptic tradition, has influenced the portrait of Peter in 2 Peter. Hence Boobyer perceives influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter throughout the text.

Scholarly reaction to Boobyer's argument has been mixed. Some commentators admit that the case for 1 Peter's influence on 2 Peter has some weight.⁴³ Others disagree, pointing out that 2 Peter failed to use parts of 1 Peter that would seem germane to 2 Peter's point, or holding that 2 Peter does not consciously imitate 1 Peter's style.⁴⁴ Overall, Boobyer demonstrates a remarkably similar sequence of ideas in the opening chapters of 1 and 2 Peter. It would be surprising if 2 Peter were not influenced by 1 Peter and still manages to present traditional themes in the same order as 1 Peter.

In his comments on Boobyer's argument, which he termed "refreshing," Brevard Childs notes the parousia theme shared by 1 and 2 Peter.⁴⁵ He credits Boobyer with a contribution in posing the canonical question. This canonical analysis, advanced by Boobyer's theological inquiry, still has much to offer. A brief survey of the state of research on the canonical question regarding 1 and 2 Peter brings this potential to light and prepares for the discussion of 2 Pet 1:3-11.

4. The Canonical Relationship between 1 and 2 Peter

Given the disagreement among scholars over the literary and theological relationship between 1 and 2 Peter, it comes as no surprise that there is no consensus about their

⁴³ For example, Smith, *Petrine Controversies*, 72.

⁴⁴ Ben Witherington ("A Petrine Source in Second Peter," in *SBLSP 1985* [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985] 187-92, here 188) argues that 2 Peter passes over potentially helpful material in 1 Peter. Michael Gilmour (*The Significance of Parallels between 2 Peter and Other Early Christian Literature* [SBLAbib 10; Leiden: Brill, 2002] 95) and Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 146) claim that the relationship of 2 Peter to 1 Peter is analogous to the relationship between 2 Peter and Paul: the reference proves that it is recognized as an authority, but for whatever reasons the author chose not to imitate its style or content. However, Gilmour mentions the possibility that the author of 2 Peter would not want to repeat material found in 1 Peter.

⁴⁵ Brevard Childs, *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction* (Valley Forge: Trinity, 1994) 475.

canonical relationship. There is no general agreement that 2 Peter knows and builds on 1 Peter or is meant to complete its message. Recently, however, some commentators have taken this position. A brief survey of the research on the “Petrine school” in the NT, the function of 2 Peter, and recent work on the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter will help to gauge the canonical relationship of these texts.

The theory that 1 and 2 Peter and Jude emerged from a Petrine school developed as an explanation for the similar themes in these letters. Soards argued that Peter, like other NT figures such as John and Paul, always acted in a group and assumed a definite function within his own group.⁴⁶ Evidence from 1 Corinthians 3 indicates that in early Christianity groups aligned with different authoritative figures. Obviously, the two Petrine letters begin and end similarly, in addition to their identical attribution to Peter. In terms of theology both emphasize the dependence of humanity on God. While 1 Peter describes Christ as an exemplar, 2 Peter and Jude urge loyalty. The account of faith in 2 Peter stands between that given in 1 Peter (faith as a dynamic activity) and Jude (faith as normative Christian practice). Therefore, if 1 Peter teaches that Christians preserve the faith by its exercise, 2 Peter and Jude teach that they preserve the faith by loyalty. Additionally, the knowledge and use of other NT works—including gospel traditions—by 2 Peter indicates the existence of a community in which texts and traditions were preserved and studied. Lastly, Soards cites the physical evidence of *P*⁷², the earliest manuscript containing 2 Peter. It also contains 1 Peter and Jude, as well as two Psalms and six noncanonical writings. This evidence proves that 1 and 2 Peter and Jude were collected and transmitted together from an early time.

⁴⁶ This and the following material is a summary of Marion Soards, “1 Peter, 2 Peter, and Jude as Evidence for a Petrine School,” in *ANRW* 2.25.5 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988) 3827-49.

Chatelion-Counet has supplemented Soards's arguments for a Petrine school in a recent article.⁴⁷ He argues that 1 and 2 Peter and Jude have central doctrinal authority in view. The characteristics of the Petrine school include adherence to tradition, support for an authoritative body to interpret Scripture, a common eschatological expectation, and the use of an OT/Apocrypha florilegium concerning infidelity. The common denominator of the Petrine circle is the use of Wisdom literature. The literary similarities between the letters are best explained by positing authors from the same group. The main cohesive factor visible in all three letters—which also indicates a common origin—involves the perceived need to maintain a common scriptural and exegetical tradition. Tradition and exegesis are safe in the hands of those who have received the Spirit, i.e., Peter and Jude. Finally, these letters exhibit certain patterns of religion: the activity of the Holy Spirit in safeguarding tradition; the close relationship between ethics, sanctification, and eschatology; and the ever-present danger of infidelity, from inside as well as outside the Christian community.

While other students of 1 and 2 Peter acknowledge the presence of shared Petrine tradition in these letters, they are skeptical as to their common origin in a Petrine school.⁴⁸ Horrell offers a cogent rebuttal to Soards's contentions, arguing that 1 Peter represents the product of a consolidating Roman Christianity, not of a Petrine school.⁴⁹ He demonstrates links between 1 Peter and the Pauline corpus in order to show their theological proximity. Even if 1 and 2 Peter display something unique to a Petrine presentation of the gospel, the

⁴⁷ The following is a summary of Patrick Chatelion-Counet, "Pseudepigraphy and the Petrine School: Spirit and Tradition in 1 and 2 Peter and Jude," *HvTSt* 62 (2006) 403-24.

⁴⁸ For example, Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 146) calls a Petrine circle "unlikely." Smith (*Petrine Controversies*, 63) claims that while little evidence exists for a school or circle, a common point of origin might explain why 1 and 2 Peter share attribution to Peter.

⁴⁹ The following is a summary of Horrell, "Product of a Petrine Circle," 29-60.

differences between the letters obscure it. Rather, these letters (and the pseudonymous Petrine literature) witness to Peter's growing importance in the early church. While 2 Peter knows of 1 Peter, there is little evidence for a Petrine school. Therefore 1 Peter (and presumably 2 Peter as well) results from a synthesizing interest in the early church: the desire to link Peter and Paul.⁵⁰

Scholars have ascribed a broad canonical function to 2 Peter as well. Vögtle regards 2 Peter as the primary witness to the committal of apostolic paradosis to written form.⁵¹ Childs agrees.⁵² By committing the apostolic teaching to writing, 2 Peter extends apostolic authority to future generations. This written form, which can be accessed at any time, serves to remind the church of the truth. Thus the content of 2 Peter is not as important as its witness to apostolic authority or to the transfer of this authority to written form. In this view the early church composed 2 Peter in order to extend the apostolic witness and to equip the community with a trustworthy norm for future internal or external challenges. Aletti goes further when he argues that 2 Peter announces a theory of canon.⁵³ He compares 2 Peter with Deuteronomy: each has the function of closing the corpus of Scripture, and both feature a farewell discourse. At the end of the first century, without central authority, this letter in the name of the apostle Peter appeared in order to close the canon and rule out any subsequent

⁵⁰ Horrell ("Product of a Petrine Circle," 51-55) notes that 2 Peter mentions Paul explicitly and so testifies to the consolidating nature of 1 Peter as well. He concludes by stating that F. C. Bauer and the Tübingen School were correct in that 1 Peter represents a reconciliation of Jewish and Hellenistic Christianity.

⁵¹ Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 297.

⁵² Childs, *New Testament as Canon*, 471. The following material is a summary of his position. Obviously, both Vögtle and Childs take 2 Peter to be pseudepigraphical.

⁵³ Jean-Noel Aletti, "La Seconde Épître de Pierre et le Canon du Nouveau Testament," in *Le Canon des Écritures* (ed. C. Theobald; LD 140; Paris: Cerf, 1990) 239-54. The following sentences give a brief synopsis of his position.

apostolic pronouncements. Thus 2 Peter discloses a process of canonization internal to the NT.

All of these interpretations share a sensitivity for the function of 2 Peter and its place among the Catholic Epistles (CEs) and in the NT generally. In the context of the present study, however, one area demanding more attention is the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. Does 2 Peter possess a canonical function vis-à-vis 1 Peter? In a recent major study, Martin Ruf has examined the “metatextual” relationships between 2 Peter and other early Christian literature.⁵⁴ Ruf argues that 2 Peter stands in relation to 1 Peter as an independent supplement. Second Peter presupposes 1 Peter, taking up certain topics broached in 1 Peter and adding its own contributions, but does not explicitly refer to 1 Peter. Second Peter assigns 1 Peter a place beside itself; 2 Peter serves as the authoritative final word in the Petrine series. Thus Ruf presents the case for a canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter.

Robert Wall has done much work in the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter.⁵⁵ He begins with the methodological assumption that 2 Peter’s function in the NT is to provide the reading community familiar with 1 Peter with a “more robust” Petrine witness to God’s revelation in Christ, because of and not despite the differences between 1 and 2 Peter. Wall argues that 1 and 2 Peter were put together for this purpose. The authoritative

⁵⁴ Martin G. Ruf, *Die Heiligen Propheten, eure Apostel und ich: Metatextuelle Studien zum zweiten Petrusbrief* (WUNT 2.300; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 2011). In the following sentences I summarize Ruf’s work on 2 Peter with regard to 1 Peter; see especially pp. 569-73.

⁵⁵ See especially Robert Wall, “The Canonical Function of 2 Peter,” *Int* 9 (2001) 64-81. The following paragraphs give a summary of this article.

testament in 2 Peter supports the theological conceptions of 1 Peter; therefore, 2 Peter complements 1 Peter.

Wall contends that a simple schema of salvation history unites the two letters. Both focus on God as creator. In 1 Peter God's creation underlies a moral vision, and in 2 Peter God's creation provides the basis for eschatological consummation. With regard to Christology, the portrait of Christ's exemplary suffering, sacrifice, and obedience in 1 Peter forms a central part of the letter's theology. But 2 Peter stresses obedience to the traditions as if it had an eye on the example of Christ's obedience in 1 Peter. Furthermore, Wall argues, why would 2 Peter need to repeat the Christology of 1 Peter if both were intended to be read together? Also in connection with Christology, it seems that 2 Peter extends and "brackets" the teaching about Christ offered in 1 Peter. Whereas 1 Peter focuses on the passion and resurrection of Christ, 2 Peter extends the scope backwards and forwards to the transfiguration and parousia. By doing this 2 Peter keeps the present in tension with the past and future in terms of its meditation on the nature of Christ. With regard to the presentation of the Christian community, Wall argues that 2 Peter continues 1 Peter's emphasis on obedience to God's rules in hope. Both letters focus not on the world *per se* but on being Christian in the world, with the prospect of suffering and the obligation to accept appropriate authority and inspired writings. In general Wall perceives 2 Peter to be a continuation and substantiation of the beginning of 1 Peter, where the eschatological cast of salvation first appears. Rather than moribund traditionalism, the teaching of 2 Peter represents a new attempt to translate Christian ideas for a new audience and purpose. Historically, these shifts proved necessary in order to keep the faith vibrant in its surroundings. But Wall's

contribution comes from his canonical point of view, which consists in showing how 1 and 2 Peter form a vital whole.

Although Wall has offered other suggestions about the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter and the other CEs, this exposition suffices to show the main lines of his argument and the value of his insight.⁵⁶ His quick comparison of the theological themes of 1 and 2 Peter—including God, Christ, and the Christian community—indicate that these two letters are not so disparate as they might first seem. Wall’s writings constitute an encouragement to further comparison and exploration of the theological continuity between 1 and 2 Peter.

5. Current Research on 2 Pet 1:3-11

Although detailed analysis of 2 Pet 1:3-11 must wait until the audience-oriented exegesis begins in the following chapters, a brief appraisal of current research on the unit in terms of structure and content will serve to familiarize the reader with the issues involved in interpreting this dense text.

⁵⁶ In one essay (“Introduction: New Testament Ethics,” in *The New Testament as Canon: A Reader in Canonical Criticism* [ed. Robert W. Wall and Eugene E. Lemcio; JSNTSup 76; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992] 300-334, here 326-27) Wall explains that the CEs share an ethic of suffering (*Leidensethik*) which emphasizes rules and submission to authority. He argues that the *imitatio Christi* of 1 Peter guides other submissions and enhances communal survival at the parousia (2 Pet 1:10-11). In another essay (“Ecumenicity and Ecclesiology: The Promise of the Multiple Letter Canon of the New Testament,” in *The New Testament as Canon: A Reader in Canonical Criticism* [ed. Robert W. Wall and Eugene E. Lemcio; JSNTSup 76; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992] 184-207, here 202-4) Wall notes the shared “pilgrim” ecclesiology among the non-Pauline letters. On this view 2 Peter’s description of the parousia as final end meshes with the homecoming described in 1 Peter.

Structure of 2 Pet 1:3-11

Most commentators take 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a distinct unit, clearly separate from the letter's salutation (2 Pet 1:1-2) and from the following autobiographical section in which Peter seeks to remind his audience of earlier teaching (2 Pet 1:12-15).⁵⁷ The unit's grammar indicates these demarcations. The salutation clearly ends with 2 Pet 1:2, in which Peter prays that grace and peace be multiplied among his audience. The next sentence, beginning with the conjunction $\omega\varsigma$ and a genitive absolute, starts a new thought and looks forward.⁵⁸ With regard to the end of the unit, the conjunction $\delta\iota\acute{o}$ at the beginning of 2 Pet 1:12 combined with the transition from the imperative (2 Pet 1:10-11) to the first person singular indicative (2 Pet 1:12) indicates the start of a new section.⁵⁹

The content of 2 Pet 1:3-11 confirms these grammatical boundaries. These verses offer a discrete summary of God's gifts and promises (vv. 3-4) and appropriate human response through a life of virtue, culminating (with God's help) in entrance into Christ's kingdom (vv. 5-11).⁶⁰ In the context of 2 Peter as a whole, this unit represents a "sketch" of

⁵⁷ In fact it proves easier to list the few scholars who do not regard 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a distinct unit: Kelly (*Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, 295, 304) takes 2 Pet 1:1-11 as the introduction to the letter. Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 144) regards 2 Pet 1:3-15 as an *exordium*. Martin ("Theology of Jude, 1 Peter, and 2 Peter," 136) and Watson (*Invention*, 141) do the same but take 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a distinct unit within the *exordium*.

⁵⁸ Callan ("Syntax of 2 Pet 1:1-7," 640) argues that vv. 3-7 form one conditional sentence, with vv. 3-4 as the apodosis; vv. 3-4 supply the reason for what to do in vv. 5-7. While one might disagree with his sentence division, his point that vv. 3-4 look forward is well taken. Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 216) takes the opposite position, believing that the beginning of v. 3 is so ambiguous as to not rule out a connection with vv. 1-2.

⁵⁹ Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 216) disputes the perceived lack of connection between vv. 11 and 12, maintaining that the personal testimony of 2 Pet 1:12-15 must reinforce the content of vv. 3-11. The change in verb form, however, justifies regarding vv. 12-15 as separate.

⁶⁰ Karl Schelkle (*Die Petrusbriefe, Der Judasbrief* [HTKNT 13; Freiburg: Herder, 1961] 186), Johann Michl (*Die Katholischen Breife* [RNT 8; Regensburg: Pustet, 1968] 164), and Fred Craddock (*First and Second Peter and Jude* [Westminster Bible Companion; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995] 93) propose dividing 2 Pet 1:3-11 into two parts, vv. 3-4 and 5-11, which deal with God's actions and human response,

the theology to be presented, a positive statement of beliefs and traditions that gives the substance of Peter's reminders and supports the negative characterization of false teachers in 2 Peter 2.⁶¹ Boobyer suggested that 2 Pet 1:3-11 consists of a summary of 1 Peter, placed at the beginning of 2 Peter in order to remind the audience of the capital points of the former letter.⁶² This section holds great importance for 2 Peter as an introduction, describing in broad terms God's dispensation and eternal plan for Christians. It forms the foundation upon which the rest of 2 Peter stands.

Rhetorical Exordium or Epistolary Introduction?

Although 2 Pet 1:3-11 stands out conspicuously as a unit, commentators debate how best to unlock its meaning. Is this section best understood as an introductory rhetorical unit (an *exordium*) or as the introduction to the body of the letter? This question arises in light of earlier research into the nature of 2 Peter as a whole. Commentators who take 2 Peter as a testament (or, in Bauckham's case, a "testamentary letter") prefer to analyze the letter rhetorically, and see 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a miniature homily in line with testamentary convention. This homily summarizes Peter's teaching and appears at the beginning of the farewell discourse. Watson argues that the testamentary genre necessitates a long *exordium* in

respectively. Sidebottom (*James, Jude, and 2 Peter*, 105-7) also adopts this outline of the pericope. Others, including Harvey and Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 32, 50), Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 216), and François Viljoen ("Faithful Christian Living Amidst Scoffers of the Judgment Day: Ethics and Ethos in Jude and 2 Peter," in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament* [ed. Jan G. van der Watt; BZNTW 141; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006] 511-34, here 525), divide the unit differently but would not disagree with Craddock's assessment of its content.

⁶¹ Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 224) calls 2 Pet 1:3-11 a "sketch" which assumes a larger theological discussion. While he might mean the rest of 2 Peter, the rest of this dissertation will argue that the assumed theological discussion involves 1 Peter. Watson (*Invention*, 83) describes 1:3-11 as a belief system and synopsis of doctrine, the standard by which all else in the letter is measured.

⁶² Boobyer, "Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter," 40.

2 Peter.⁶³ The homily in 2 Pet 1:3-11 summarizes the doctrine threatened by false teachers and facilitates the receptivity of the rest of the rhetorical structure of 2 Peter. Watson detects standard features of early Christian homilies in 2 Pet 1:3-11, which include a theological section (vv. 3-4), ethical exhortations based on the preceding and anticipating the following sections (vv. 5-10), and an eschatological section (v. 11). Even commentators who do not espouse the testamentary hypothesis see the value in a rhetorical analysis of 2 Peter and this section specifically. For them 2 Peter is a “speech in letter clothing,” a rhetorical piece with a letter opening affixed to the beginning, whose *exordium* introduces the major topic of the speech: divine goodness leads to an ethical lifestyle, and a departure from this lifestyle entails a departure from Christ.⁶⁴

Recently, Dennis Sylva has offered a rhetorical reading of 2 Pet 1:3-15 which highlights the passage’s graphic depiction of a journey from this world to a world of righteousness.⁶⁵ He argues that this graphic dimension of the text relates to the theme of knowledge of Christ: the text casts growth in knowledge as a moral journey from this world’s corruption to Christ’s eschatological kingdom. The journey imagery encourages perseverance in the ears of the audience.⁶⁶

⁶³ The following sentences summarize Watson, *Invention*, 87-96.

⁶⁴ Davids, *Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 143-45. Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 216) calls 2 Pet 1:3-11 a “self-contained rhetorical piece” and agrees with Watson’s homiletic outline. Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 118) exploits rhetorical study to categorize 2 Peter as a “formal argument of praise and blame.”

⁶⁵ Dennis D. Sylva, “A Unified Field Picture of Second Peter 1:3-15: Making Rhetorical Sense Out of Individual Images,” in *Reading Second Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of Second Peter* (ed. Robert L. Webb and Duane F. Watson; LNTS 382; 91-118; London: T&T Clark, 2010). In the next few sentences I summarize Sylva’s conclusions; see especially pp. 91, 117.

⁶⁶ Duane F. Watson (“Comparing Two Related Methods: Rhetorical Criticism and Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation Applied to Second Peter,” in *Reading Second Peter*, 27-57) and Terrance Callan (“Rhetography

An epistolary approach offers an alternative—or at least a companion—to the rhetorical analysis of 2 Peter generally and 2 Pet 1:3-11 specifically. Green notes that the categories implied by “letter” and “rhetoric” and “testament” are not mutually exclusive. He chooses an epistolographic analysis of 2 Peter rather than a rhetorical one because the document does not easily fit a rhetorical outline; moreover, 2 Peter claims to be a letter (2 Pet 3:1).⁶⁷ For other commentators, the fact that 2 Peter possesses an epistolary introduction discredits the attempt to categorize it as rhetoric.⁶⁸ But it is possible to subscribe to an epistolary study of 2 Peter without discounting the aural nature of the text. Like other NT documents, this letter was meant to be read aloud, probably in the liturgical assembly. The attempt to discern rhetorical features and insights, therefore, is not misguided.⁶⁹ The recognition of 2 Pet 1:3-11 as the introductory section of a letter that contains rhetorical overtones gives rise to the classification of this unit as an *exordium* or *prooemium*.⁷⁰

and Rhetology of Apocalyptic Discourse in Second Peter,” in *Reading Second Peter*, 59-90) contribute fresh rhetorical studies of 2 Peter that do not relate directly to 1:3-11.

⁶⁷ Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, 163-64. He criticizes Watson’s rhetorical outline in several places, noting that a *narratio* is missing from the discourse. Watson’s claim that the homily in 2 Pet 1:3-11 is a “partially faulty” *exordium* since it treats only indirectly the false teachers in 2 Peter 2 is also a problem. Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 217) admits honestly that “no familiar rhetorical pattern, from either speeches or letters, precisely explains the format and function of this section [2 Pet 1:3-11].”

⁶⁸ Gerdmar (*Rethinking*, 103, 94) makes this point and argues against Neyrey and Watson, who see multiple genres at play in 2 Pet 1:1-15. Gilmour (*Significance of Parallels*, 135) and Müller (“Der 2. Petrusbrief,” 316) insist on respecting the intention of the author and taking 2 Peter as a letter.

⁶⁹ Regarding the aural nature of the written text and its performance in liturgical gatherings, as well as the detection of rhetorical strategy in the broadest sense, see John Paul Heil, *Hebrews: Chiasmic Structures and Audience Response* (CBQMS 46; Washington: CBA, 2010) 24.

⁷⁰ Some German scholars, including Hubert Frankemölle (*1. Petrusbrief, 2. Petrusbrief, Judasbrief* [NEchtB 18, 20; Würzburg: Echter, 1987] 175), Müller (“Der 2. Petrusbrief,” 317), and Käsemann (“Apologia,” 178), opt for the term *prooemium*, which is merely the Latinized version of the Greek προοίμιον. The Latin term *exordium* means the same thing.

Hellenistic Influence in 2 Pet 1:3-11

The Hellenistic influence evident in 2 Pet 1:3-11 has generated much discussion about this unit. Käsemann regarded 2 Pet 1:4 as clear evidence of a relapse into Hellenistic dualism.⁷¹ Other commentators have acknowledged the Hellenistic material in the section but regard it as an attempt to inculturate the gospel rather than as a failure on the author's part. The language of 2 Pet 1:3-11 clearly indicates a Greek audience that would appreciate rhetorical style and the virtue list in 1:5-7.⁷² It is possible that Peter adopts the ideas and phrases of 1:3-7 in order to engage Hellenistic concepts.⁷³ Fornberg believes that the virtue list in 1:5-7 depends on Stoic virtue lists, in part because 2 Peter (unlike 1 Peter) does not present Christ as an ethical example or dwell on his teachings.⁷⁴ Other examples of virtue lists occur in the NT and early Christian literature, so it is possible that the virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7 represents traditional material or a new list composed after a traditional model.⁷⁵ The structure and content of the list in 2 Pet 1:5-7, however, makes the suggestion of Hellenistic and Stoic influence more plausible. Virtue lists have a long history in Greek literature from

⁷¹ Käsemann, "Apologia," 179-80. See above, p. 11-12.

⁷² Eric Fuchs and Pierre Reymond, *La Deuxième Épître de Saint Pierre, L'Épître de Saint Jude* (CNT 2/13b; Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1980) 29.

⁷³ Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 25) sees 2 Pet 1:3-4 as an assault on Stoic and Platonic philosophy, which think that φύσις or νόμος makes a person a partaker in divine nature. The stress in 2 Peter falls on grace.

⁷⁴ Fornberg, *Early Church*, 138. I argue that 2 Peter's presentation of Christ depends on 1 Peter's.

⁷⁵ I. Howard Marshall (*New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004] 676 n. 9) calls attention to the verbal overlaps between 2 Pet 1:5-7 and Gal 5:22-23 (which shares πίστις, ἐγκράτεια, ὑπομονή, and ἀγάπη), 2 Cor 6:4-6 (which shares γνώσις, ὑπομονή, and ἀγάπη), and 1 Tim 6:11 (which shares πίστις, εὐσέβεια, and ἀγάπη). Marshall (*New Testament Theology*, 676 n. 10) concludes that the spirit of the list—both the qualities and the idea of putting them in a list—can be traced back to Paul. As examples of virtue lists in other early Christian literature, Käsemann ("Apologia," 179) points to Ignatius *Eph.* 14.1 and Chaine (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 2) to Herm. *Vis.* 3.8.7.

Homer on, and pagan ethical lists contain all eight of the virtues found in 2 Pet 1:3-11 (the terms ἀρετή, γνῶσις, ἐγκράτεια, and εὐσέβεια are more frequent).⁷⁶ The list's interlocking structure (a *sorites*) displays a logical progression: each virtue is rooted in the preceding and leads to the next, with faith as the foundation and love as the climax.⁷⁷ Thus there are firm grounds for the opinion that Peter adopts a standard Hellenistic hortatory device for use in the service of Christian paraenesis.⁷⁸

Apart from the Hellenistic character of the virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7, scholars have offered other suggestions of Hellenistic influence on 2 Pet 1:3-11. Fredrick Danker proposes the theory that 2 Pet 1:3-11 is a formal decree, after the model of language and style found in other Hellenistic imperial and civic decrees.⁷⁹ He argues that 2 Pet 1:3-4 corresponds to the preamble of a formal decree and lists 27 phrases common to extant decrees and 2 Pet 1:3-11. He argues that the unit shows signs of careful crafting in pursuit of a “decretal effect,” in which believers are cast as benefactors called to acknowledge the true Benefactor. While some have questioned his conclusions, Danker highlights the thoroughly Hellenistic tenor of the beginning of 2 Peter.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Charles, “The Language and Logic of Virtue in 2 Peter 1:5-7,” *BBR* 8 (1998) 55-73, here 57, 65-66.

⁷⁷ Bauckham, “2 Peter: An Account of Research,” 3735; Viljoen, “Faithful Christian Living,” 526; D. Edmond Hiebert, “Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1: The Necessary Growth in the Christian Life: An Exposition of 2 Peter 1:5-11,” *BSac* 141 (1984) 43-54, here 45.

⁷⁸ Charles (“Language and Logic of Virtue in 2 Peter 1:5-7,” 57, 59) is particularly strong on this point, calling 2 Pet 1:5-7 a “touch point of Stoic discourse and the NT.” But he emphasizes the difference between Stoic ethics, which is motivated by reason or knowledge, and Christian ethics, which is motivated by a transcendent authority.

⁷⁹ Frederick Danker, “2 Peter 1: A Solemn Decree,” *CBQ* 40 (1978) 64-82. What follows is a brief précis of Danker's argument.

⁸⁰ Gerdmar (*Rethinking*, 107-8) calls Danker's methodology “dubious.”

PHEME PERKINS highlights the interplay between 2 Pet 1:3-11 and Hellenistic literature when she claims that 2 Pet 1:3-4 substitutes for the thanksgiving section of the letter.⁸¹ In light of recent work on the comparison between the *formula valetudinis* of the Hellenistic letter and the thanksgiving sections of the Pauline letters, several points appear relevant to 2 Pet 1:3-4, if not to 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a whole.⁸² Like Paul, Peter focuses on God at this point and displays concern for the spiritual rather than the physical well-being of his audience. Furthermore, unlike the Hellenistic thanksgiving convention but like Paul, Peter does not focus on the relationship between himself as author and the recipients but on the recipients' relationship with God. While these observations do not prove Pauline influence on 2 Peter, they do invite more investigation of this part of 2 Peter in terms of Hellenistic epistolography.

Themes and Theology

In general commentators view the content of 2 Pet 1:3-11 as a summary or synthesis of apostolic teaching presented as the positive ideal of the Christian life, which is contrasted with the errors of false teachers.⁸³ The *prooemium* gives the organizational principle of the whole letter, linking orthodoxy and orthopraxy by stressing the past, present, and future

⁸¹ PHEME PERKINS, *First and Second Peter, James, and Jude* (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1995) 168.

⁸² For this material I rely on David Pao, "Gospel within the Constraints of an Epistolary Form: Pauline Introductory Thanksgivings and Paul's Theology of Thanksgiving," in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams; PAST 6; Leiden: Brill, 2010) 101-28, here 120.

⁸³ WITHERINGTON, *Letters and Homilies*, 270; HARRINGTON, "Jude and 2 Peter," 229.

dimensions of the faith.⁸⁴ Accepting God's gifts in the knowledge of Christ has logical consequences for the present and future. Good works and the realization of virtue represent signs of faith. The knowledge of salvation granted and made firm leads to the assurance of entrance into the kingdom of Jesus Christ at the eschaton, even as the present/future tension leads to ethical responsibility. This initial summary sets the tone for 2 Peter and underscores its paraenetic and polemical quality.

From the believer's point of view, the *prooemium* offers a definition of holiness.⁸⁵ The actions of God allow for and invite a radical response from those who experience and hope for salvation. These nine brief verses contain a sweeping account of God's dispensation in Christ and chart a sure course for fruitful cooperation in the knowledge of Christ. The density of this passage's vocabulary and style belie the utter simplicity of its intention: a call to Christian holiness, the result of a true knowledge of Christ.

Scott Hafemann offers a fine theological insight into 2 Pet 1:3-11 by means of a comparison with Jude 5.⁸⁶ Both texts share a deliberate emphasis on the tension between the conditionality of the grace of God in regard to inheriting God's promises and the unconditionality of the promises themselves. Hafemann contends that this emphasis reflects both texts' reliance on the structure of biblical covenants as the model for God's relationship

⁸⁴ This and the following sentences recapitulate Frankemölle, *1. Petrusbrief, 2. Petrusbrief, Judasbrief*, 75-80. Viljoen ("Faithful Christian Living," 525-27) agrees that the central issue is the relationship between ethics and eschatology. He recommends reading 2 Pet 1:3-11 with the "little apocalypse" of 2 Pet 3:11-14.

⁸⁵ See Frederic Howe, "The Christian Life in Peter's Theology," *BSac* 157 (2000) 304-14, here 307; also Ruth Anne Reese, "Holiness and Ecclesiology in Jude and 2 Peter," in *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament* (ed. Kent Brower and Andy Johnson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007) 326-42, here 339.

⁸⁶ Scott Hafemann, "Salvation in Jude 5 and the Argument of 2 Peter 1:3-11," in *The Catholic Epistles & Apostolic Tradition* (ed. Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr and Robert Wall; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2009) 331-42, here 339-42. This paragraph gives a summary of the relevant part of the article.

with his people. He divides 2 Pet 1:3-11 into parts in accord with the sections of a covenant or treaty: vv. 3-4 correspond with the historical prologue; vv. 5-7, 10a with covenant stipulations; vv. 8-9, 10b-11 with covenant promises and curses. This covenant framework explains how the promises for entrance into Christ's kingdom can be conditional while at the same time being expressions of grace and election. Hafemann concludes by stating that the purpose of 2 Pet 1:3-11 is to "codify and summarize the covenant relationship" in Christ between God and his people.

These evaluations of the theology of 2 Pet 1:3-11 characterize the unit as a positive, summary statement of God's action and the proper Christian response. The tension among the past, present, and future aspects of faith charges the section and gives it urgency. This valid appraisal of current research points to a way forward, especially in light of the canonical approach now applied to 2 Peter. What is the source of the theology and tone of this initial summary in 2 Peter? I will show that this section recapitulates and reinterprets the theology of the earlier letter of Peter.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this account has been to familiarize the reader with issues relevant to serious study of 2 Peter and to underscore the need for the current project. Even as studies on 2 Peter emerge more frequently and delve more deeply into the language, theology, and rhetoric of the document, the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter remains a path largely unexplored. This issue receives cursory consideration in connection with introductory questions on 2 Peter such as authorship and source, but it does not occupy a central role in

advancing our understanding of 2 Peter and its canonical relationship with 1 Peter. This study aims to contribute to this understanding by focusing on the relationship between 2 Pet 1:3-11 and 1 Peter.

A discussion of the authorship of 2 Peter provided a ready entrance into the letter's content and prepared for the consideration of the literary relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. A comparison of vocabulary and style revealed some shared expressions but on balance a greater disparity between the two letters. Thematically, however, the Petrine epistles appear much closer. Both describe the necessity of an ethical, holy life in the face of a certain future revelation of Christ. Boobyer showed that this similarity probably results from the influence of the thought of 1 Peter on the thought and structure of the beginning of 2 Peter, rather than from some earlier common tradition. With the exception of recent work by Wall, however, the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter remains largely unexplored. The material in 2 Pet 1:3-11, which represents a summary of traditional teaching linking ethics and eschatology in a Hellenistic key, offers an opportunity to discern the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter.

This account of the research points to the need for the present study. The usual method of exegesis of 2 Peter takes little or no account of 1 Peter. The differences between the two letters mandate an independent study of each, and "We don't expect the other to jump in and clarify difficult passages for us. This is to say, we will not expect that messages in 1 Peter will be completed or modified in 2 Peter, nor will we assume that 2 Peter presupposes a knowledge of 1 Peter."⁸⁷ The connections between 1 and 2 Peter, however, seem to invite such an analysis. Moreover, the nature and placement of the summary in 2 Pet

⁸⁷ Craddock, *First and Second Peter and Jude*, 2.

1:3-11 offers an excellent opportunity to discern the influence of themes from 1 Peter. I adopt this point of view in order to find previously unnoticed interaction between 1 and 2 Peter. The presence of echoes and resonances of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11 suggests that 2 Peter deliberately employs concepts from 1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and knowledge of Christ.

In the subsequent chapters of this dissertation I will analyze the *prooemium* of 2 Peter in terms of the content and theology of 1 Peter, noting the linguistic and conceptual points of contact that would not escape the notice of the implied audience of 2 Peter, which has knowledge of 1 Peter. Chapter Two treats 2 Pet 1:3-4, including the introduction of God's dispensation in Christ, knowledge of God and Christ, and the avoidance of corrupting desire in order to share divine nature. I will explore the roots of these ideas as they appear in 1 Peter. Chapter Three discusses 2 Pet 1:5-9 and traces the exposition of Christian virtue and the reference to baptism within these verses to corresponding material and interests in 1 Peter. Chapter Four covers 2 Pet 1:10-11 and affords an opportunity to follow the development of the election theme and eschatological teaching between 1 and 2 Peter. Finally, Chapter Five provides an overview of my findings. I will show that the opening section of 2 Peter knows and builds upon 1 Peter and that exegesis of 2 Peter requires greater attention to the influence of 1 Peter than has been acknowledged to this point.

Chapter Two

Audience-Oriented Exegesis of 2 Pet 1:3-4 in Light of 1 Peter

1. Introduction

In this chapter I will read 2 Pet 1:3-4 in light of 1 Peter. I will take care to note verbal and thematic resonances between these verses and the words and themes of 1 Peter. The nature of 2 Pet 1:3-4 as a summary of the action and value of Christ gives an initial clue that these verses are meant to recapitulate a previous instruction about Christ. I will argue that 2 Pet 1:3-4 functions as a reminder of 1 Peter's presentation of the person, work, and example of Christ. Furthermore, the theme of knowledge of Christ in connection with the notion of fleeing the corruption of the world recalls passages and ideas from 1 Peter. I will argue that the repetition of these themes in close proximity to each other rises from a conscious recapitulation of 1 Peter. All of these factors imply not only that the author of 2 Peter knew and alluded to 1 Peter, but that he expected his brief summary at the beginning of 2 Peter to recall 1 Peter to the minds of the audience. These echoes of 1 Peter suggest that 2 Peter deliberately employs concepts from 1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and knowledge of Christ.

This chapter will begin with an examination of the salutation (2 Pet 1:1-2), which forms the literary context of 2 Pet 1:3-4. I will then offer an exegesis of the individual elements of 2 Pet 1:3-4 in light of 1 Peter. A short conclusion will summarize my results.

2. Literary Context: 2 Pet 1:1-2

In order to appreciate the impact of words and phrases in 2 Pet 1:3-4 on the implied audience, we must review what the audience has heard previously in 2 Peter. The audience has only heard two verses (1:1-2), the salutation of the letter. Thematically, the salutation prepares for the information in 1:3-4 and beyond. But the salutation also prepares for the following section by recalling 1 Peter, thereby establishing a “hermeneutic of continuity” between the two letters.

The similarities between 2 Pet 1:1-2 and 1 Pet 1:1-2 are striking. Many commentators decide that 2 Peter knew and used 1 Peter on the strength of the similar salutations alone.¹ I will read the salutation of 2 Peter against the salutation of 1 Peter, noting similarities and differences. I will argue that 2 Peter deliberately imitates and alters the salutation of 1 Peter in order to emphasize the knowledge of Christ shared by author and audience.

The following chart compares the salutations of 1 and 2 Peter. I have divided both salutations into four sections that correspond to each other thematically if not lexically: author, addressees, a description of God’s agency with regard to the addressees, and a wish for grace and peace. By noting the similarities and differences between the language and themes of 1 and 2 Peter, I will demonstrate how the salutation of 2 Peter refers to ideas from 1 Peter. Thus I will show how the summary function of 2 Pet 1:3-11 is anticipated by the synthesizing tendency and substance of 1:1-2.

¹ See above, p. 11 n. 20.

A Comparison of 1 Pet 1:1-2 with 2 Pet 1:1-2

1 Peter 1:1-2 ²	2 Peter 1:1-2
Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ	Symeon Peter, slave and apostle of Jesus Christ
to elect sojourners of the diaspora in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithinia	to those who receive a faith equal in honor to us
according to God the Father's foreknowledge in holiness of spirit for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ	in righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ
may grace and peace be multiplied among you	may grace and peace be multiplied among you in knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord

*"Symeon Peter, Slave and Apostle of Jesus Christ"*³

The first section of the salutations of 1 and 2 Peter involves the identification of the author, Peter. Second Peter employs an additional name (Συμεών) and title (δούλος); otherwise these sections are identical. "Symeon" reflects the Hebrew origin of the name; the form "Simon" represents a Greek simplification. The combination of the names "Simon" and "Peter" occurs in the gospel traditions (e.g., Matt 16:16; Luke 5:8; John 6:68). Here, however, the occurrence of "Symeon" with "Peter" emphasizes his Jewish origin and suggests familiarity with the audience.

² This and every text cited in this dissertation is based on the Greek text of Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece* (27th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001).

³ The text of 2 Peter 1:1 is not certain. Some witnesses (*P*⁷² B Ψ 69. 81. 614. 623. 630. 1241. 1243. 2464. *al* vg co) read "Simon" but others (Ⲙ A K P 49. 56. 142. 1739. syr^{ph,h} arm al) read "Symeon." Since a scribe would naturally insert the familiar form "Simon" for "Symeon," the reading "Symeon" seems more likely to be original.

Another difference in the description of the author involves the word “slave” (δοῦλος), which appears in 2 Pet 1:1 but not in 1 Pet 1:1. In the OT several important figures were identified as “slaves of God.”⁴ Rather than expressing a dishonorable state, the identification of Symeon Peter as a slave of Jesus Christ in 2 Pet 1:1 gives Peter great status as the property and legitimate spokesman of Christ.⁵ As Christ’s slave, Peter knows his master and has the ability to convey a personal knowledge of Christ. The word (δοῦλος) plays an important role in 1 Peter. In 2:16 the author describes his audience as “slaves of God” who do not use freedom as an opportunity for evil. The context (2:15-16) establishes a dichotomy between the will of God, doing good, being God’s slave, and true freedom on one hand, and human ignorance and using freedom as license for evil on the other. A slave of God or Jesus Christ knows the will of God and behaves accordingly, using this knowledge to do good and rejecting evil rising from human ignorance. The application of the term “slave” to Symeon Peter recalls a charge of obedience and goodness for slaves and certifies Peter as a faithful agent of Christ. The common designation of believers as “slaves of Christ” also associates 1 and 2 Peter.

“To Those Who Receive Faith Equal in Value to Us”

The description of the audience named as addressees in the salutations of 1 and 2 Peter varies in length and specificity. Whereas 1 Peter cites the “elect sojourners of the diaspora” and names five geographical regions where those elect currently live, 2 Peter

⁴ Joshua in Josh 24:30; Moses in 2 Kgs 18:12; David in Ps 35:1; Jonah in Jonah 1:9; “slaves of the Lord” in Pss 133–34.

⁵ Neyrey, *2 Peter, Jude*, 144; Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, 173.

contains a more general address to “those who have received faith equal in honor to us.”

Although the theme of election emerges later in the *proeomium* of 2 Peter (1:10), the salutation of 2 Peter emphasizes faith of equal honor to that held by Peter and his associates.⁶ The concept of “faith” (πίστις) holds an important place in 1 Peter’s *proeomium*. Through faith those reborn by the resurrection to living hope are guarded by God’s own power for the salvation to be revealed at the last time (1:3-5). These believers undergo testing so that the quality of their faith might appear for praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:6-7). They love the Christ they cannot see, rejoicing and awaiting the end of their faith: the salvation of their souls (1:8-9). The occurrence of “faith” at the beginning of 2 Peter recalls these foundational teachings of 1 Peter. But “faith” also occurs near the end of 1 Peter as part of a closing exhortation to resist the devil by standing firmly in faith and in the knowledge that all Christians undergo the same sufferings (5:9). The first instance of “faith” in 2 Peter recalls this final instance of the word in 1 Peter. It associates the implied audience of 2 Peter with that of 1 Peter.⁷

The adjective *ισότημος* (“equally honorable” or “precious”) describes faith in 2 Pet 1:1. Words containing the root *τιμ-* occur frequently in 1 Peter. As we have seen, faith and honor (*τιμή*) are associated at 1:7. They occur together again in 2:6-7, where Peter introduces a quotation from Isa 28:16 LXX about the placement of a precious cornerstone in

⁶ It is not necessary to take “to us” (ἡμῖν) as a reference to Peter and the other apostles (Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 168; Bigg, *Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 250). It can just as easily mean Peter and his circle or community, given the general tenor of Christian exhortation addressed to other believers (see 2 Pet 1:10-11).

⁷ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 168) and Shreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 285) think that “faith” indicates subjective faith, i.e., volitional trust in God; Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 86) and Knoch (*Der Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief*, 234) argue for an objective, content-oriented definition of faith as teaching and reason for hope. Either interpretation works in 2 Pet 1:1.

Zion and explains it in reference to Christ. His honor (τιμή) appears to those who believe (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν), but for those who do not believe, Christ is the stone rejected but established as cornerstone. Believers are redeemed from the empty way of life inherited from their fathers by the “precious” (τίμιος) blood of Christ, as of a spotless lamb (1:18-19). The association of faith and honor in 2 Pet 1:1 echoes their conjunction in 1 Peter (1:7; 2:6-7).

The gratuitous quality of faith as the gift of God appears clearly in the verb λαγχάνω (“receive by lot”).⁸ In the OT this verb and the noun κλήρος (“lot”) appear frequently. The land of Israel is the people’s heritage (Exod 6:8) and the people is God’s heritage (Deut 9:29). The quotation from Ps 21:19, “for my garments they cast lots,” which occurs prominently in the gospel tradition, employs the verb λαγχάνω (John 19:24) and the noun κλήρος (Matt 27:35, Mark 15:24, Luke 23:34, John 19:24).⁹

The noun κλήρος occurs in 1 Pet 5:3 in connection with Peter’s exhortation to community leaders to shepherd the people willingly and eagerly according to God’s will. The leaders are not to lord it over their “lot.” The appearance of the verb λαγχάνω at the beginning of 2 Peter recalls this instance of the noun κλήρος at the end of 1 Peter. If the believing people of God represent the “heritage” of the leaders, then faith as the “heritage” of believers constitutes them as a unity (cf. 1 Pet 2:6-10). The presence of this terminology at the beginning of 2 Peter introduces a parallel: just as the faithful represent the “lot” of the

⁸ BDAG, s.v. See Kraftchick, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 87; Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, 174. H. Hanse (“λαγχάνω,” *TDNT*, 4. 2) makes this point but notes the appearance of δικαιοσύνη in 2 Pet 1:1, implying both the grace and righteousness of God.

⁹ The verb κληρώ occurs in the NT only in Eph 1:11. The occurrence of the similar verb λαγχάνω therefore represents a conceptual rather than a lexical parallel.

elders in 1 Peter, so the common faith represents the “lot” of those believers addressed by 2 Peter. The association between the two letters created by the shared idea “received by lot” appears stronger in light of its eschatological significance in both passages. In 1 Pet 5:3-4 elders are to care for their “lot” in view of the “unfading crown of glory” expected at the return of the chief shepherd. The eschatological meaning of “a faith equal in honor to us” in 2 Pet 1:1 becomes clear over the course of 1:3-11, especially in 1:4 (where believers are described as sharing the divine nature) and 1:11 (where the prospect of entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ appears). Thus the use of *λαγχάνω* in 2 Pet 1:1 echoes 1 Pet 5:3.

Since the noun “faith” (*πίστις*) occurs in 2 Pet 1:5, I will postpone discussion of its significance until my exegesis of that verse. A single observation on the occurrence of the word in the salutation of 2 Peter will suffice with regard to the placement and meaning of *πίστις* in 1 Peter and parallel usage in 2 Peter. The noun *πίστις* plays an important role in 1 Peter’s opening (1:5, 7, 9) and conclusion (5:9). I have already noted the association of faith and honor shared by 1 Pet 1:7 and 2 Pet 1:1. According to 1 Pet 1:5 faith guards believers. Christians await the “end” or “goal” (*τέλος*) of their faith: salvation (1:9). But 1 Peter does not distinguish between an objective and subjective interpretation. Although “faith” suggests a personal belief in these passages, nothing hinders an objective interpretation of “faith” as a set of teachings or correct “knowledge” of God.¹⁰ The appearance of *πίστις* in 5:9 (a charge to resist the devil, “firm in the faith”) recapitulates and underscores this ambiguous description. The occurrence of *πίστις* in 2 Pet 1:1 continues this ambiguity. Although an objective interpretation—“faith” as content—fits the context better,

¹⁰ As some commentators (John Elliott, *1 Peter* [AB 37B; New York: Doubleday, 2000] 337, 340 and Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Letter of Peter* [Waco: Baylor University Press, 2008] 78) point out, “faith” here entails more than trust in God. Accepting the gospel requires knowledge of God’s action.

the verse does not disqualify a subjective reading (“faith” as trust in God).¹¹ Thus the position and content of πίστις in 2 Peter hark back to its placement and range of meaning in 1 Peter.

The address “to those who receive faith equal in honor to us” classifies 2 Peter as a “general” epistle. Second Peter nevertheless contains links to 1 Peter and betrays an interest in the structure, language, and thought of the former Petrine letter. From the very first verse 2 Peter focuses on the faith shared by author and addressees. The fact that the salutation does not elaborate the content of “faith” indicates that 2 Peter assumes a previously elaborated definition, or at least a general presentation of the content of the faith. I have highlighted some signals that 1 Peter outlines the meaning of “faith” for 2 Peter. The reference to “faith” in 2 Pet 1:1 anticipates 2 Peter’s preoccupation with the content of Christian belief, as witnessed by the formulation “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” in 1:2 (cf. 1:3, 8) as well as the presentation of “everything necessary for life and piety” in 1:3-4. These passages contain further indications that 1 Peter shapes the description and informs the content of “faith” and “knowledge” in 2 Peter.

“In the Righteousness of Our God and Savior Jesus Christ”

The use of “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη) in 2 Pet 1:1 strengthens the connection between 1 and 2 Peter. Although the word does not appear in a parallel position in 1 Peter’s salutation, the instances of the word at 1 Pet 2:24 and 3:14 are relevant to the exegesis of 2 Pet 1:1. The term appears first in the midst of a hymn (1 Pet 2:21-25) detailing Christ’s

¹¹ Both positions are represented among the commentators: Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 86) holds that “faith” stands for content and teaching, not a volitional act of trust; Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 168) takes this as subjective faith, putting the believer in the same privileged position as the apostles according to God’s justice.

sufferings and the example of endurance he left to believers. Christ carried believers' sins to the cross in his body, so that believers might live in righteousness, set free from sin and healed by Christ's wounds (2:24). Therefore, righteousness belongs to Christ, since he handed himself over to the one who judges justly (2:23). Christ is the source of righteousness for believers, who can live a life free of sin because of Christ's sacrifice. In light of 1 Peter, therefore, the phrase "in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" in 2 Pet 1:1 encompasses both of these interpretations: Christ as the source of righteousness and righteousness belonging to Christ.¹²

The word δικαιοσύνη appears again in 1 Pet 3:14: "But if we too suffer for the sake of righteousness, we are blessed." It seems that "righteousness" here bears the meaning "ethical rectitude" without any reference to faith in Christ. Several commentators draw the same conclusion about "righteousness" in 2 Pet 1:1.¹³ However, the context of 1 Pet 3:14 leads to a different conclusion. The second half of 1 Pet 3:14 and 3:15 contain a partial quotation of Isa 8:12-13 LXX urging trust in God: "Do not be afraid of their terror nor be shaken but sanctify [Christ] the Lord [in your hearts]." The context of Isa 8:12-13 describes the closeness of the Lord to his people and the need to trust the Lord. The addition of "Christ" in 3:15 extends this essential message to Christians who suffer for the sake of righteousness: righteousness always has reference to Christ, who established true righteousness with God (2:24). Since "righteousness" describes whatever is in accord with

¹² The chain of genitives beginning with τοῦ θεοῦ can be explained as either subjective genitives or genitives of origin.

¹³ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 175) thinks δικαιοσύνη is not about righteousness by faith but moral quality. Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 215) holds that δικαιοσύνη refers to the fairness of God: that Christ gives equal faith to all generations.

God's will, suffering for the sake of righteousness involves a perception of and decision for God's plan in concrete circumstances.¹⁴ Read in light of the instances of δικαιοσύνη in 1 Peter, the reference to righteousness in 2 Pet 1:1 suggests upright ethical conduct based on the understanding of God's plan and Christ's actions. What the world calls "good conduct" stems from the believers' relationship with God established by Christ's sacrifice. They share the righteousness whose origin is Christ; the genitive is a genitive of origin. Based on knowledge of Christ "righteousness" will bring an eschatological reward for believers (2 Pet 1:8-11).

The text of 2 Pet 1:1 permits a further observation on the occurrence of "righteousness." The phrase "in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" represents the first of four similar constructions within 2 Pet 1:1-11.¹⁵

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 2 Pet 1:1 | in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ |
| 2 Pet 1:2 | in knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord |
| 2 Pet 1:8 | for the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ |
| 2 Pet 1:11 | into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ |

Although no two phrases are identical, the similarities provide hints for the interpretation of the *prooemium*. There is a progression from sharing the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ to knowledge of God and Jesus the Lord, to the knowledge of our Lord Jesus

¹⁴ Paul Achtemeier (*1 Peter* [Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996] 202-3) discusses living in accord with God's will in 1 Peter. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 60) points to 1 Peter's reliance on the OT witness for the ethics and fairness of God.

¹⁵ James Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature: 2 Peter 1:4 in Its Hellenistic Context* [ConBNT 33; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000] 27) notes that the phrase "of our Lord Jesus Christ" occurs four times in 2 Pet 1:1-11.

Christ, to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The relationship and lifestyle established by Christ's righteousness leads to knowledge of Christ and finally to his kingdom. This schema summarizes the movement and major themes of 2 Pet 1:1-11.

“Our God and Savior Jesus Christ”

The phrase “our God and Savior Jesus Christ” in 2 Pet 1:1 is ambiguous: does it refer to Christ alone or to God and Christ? Both titles (“God” and “Savior”) describe Jesus Christ. The text does not envision a separation between God and Christ here (unlike in 1:2). The single article intimates a singular substance or being; moreover, parallel constructions throughout 2 Peter support the application of “God and Savior” to Christ.¹⁶ Another argument for this interpretation comes from the identical construction of 1 Pet 1:3, in which the phrase “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” uses “God” and “Father” for one entity, namely God.¹⁷

Since the term “savior” (σωτήρ) occurs in 2 Pet 1:11, I will postpone discussion of its overall significance for the *prooemium* until that point in the exegesis. I will argue that σωτήρ serves as a summary of Christ's action. The presence of the title “savior” in 2 Peter's introduction, however, holds significance. The title does not appear in 1 Peter. But the related verb σώζω (“save”) and noun σωτηρία (“salvation”) occur frequently. The verb occurs in 1 Pet 3:21 (“baptism saves us now”) and 4:18 (a quotation of Prov 11:31 LXX: “If

¹⁶ Fornberg (*Early Church*, 142-43) gives a summary of why both titles apply to Christ; cf. 2 Pet 1:11; 2:20; 3:18. Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 148) takes the opposite view, arguing that 2 Pet 1:1 distinguishes between God and Jesus since it is parallel with 1:2, which distinguishes them. However, the parallel is not exact, since two instances of the definite article appear in 1:2, whereas 1:1 contains only one.

¹⁷ Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 251) states correctly that it is hardly possible to translate 1 Pet 1:3 as “the God and Father” and 2 Pet 1:1 as anything but “the God and Savior.”

the just man is saved with difficulty, how does the impious or sinner appear?”). The noun σωτηρία plays a prominent role in 1 Peter’s *prooemium*: salvation is the end of faith, explored by the prophets (1:5, 9-10). Both instances of σωτηρία follow closely upon an instance of “faith” (πίστις). The appearance and connection of these terms in the introductions of 1 and 2 Peter are not coincidental. Both letters are at pains to show the link between faith in the world and eschatological salvation (1 Pet 1:3-12; 2 Pet 1:10-11). Whereas 1 Peter makes constant mention of the future revelation of Christ and salvation (1 Pet 1:4, 5, 7, 9; cf. 2 Pet 1:11), 2 Peter emphasizes knowledge of the person of Christ in the present and describes the attitude and virtues that flow from a knowledgeable relationship with Christ. Once again, it makes sense to take the material in 1 Peter as background for 2 Peter, which does not reiterate the teaching of 1 Peter but starts from the assumption that it is well known. There was no need to restate the nature of future salvation in Christ; however, there was a need to refocus attention on the practical implications of the knowledge of Christ and his salvation. The introduction of 2 Peter recycles and recasts the language and ideas of 1 Peter in pursuit of its own paraenetic goals: the exhortation to knowledge of Christ and its practical implications. Thus the title “savior” appears as an echo of the “salvation” described in 1 Peter, applied directly to the person of Christ.¹⁸

“May Grace and Peace Be Multiplied among You”

The salutations of both 1 and 2 Peter contain the identical wish, “May grace and peace be multiplied among you.” Some commentators view this as conclusive evidence that

¹⁸ This is not to argue that “savior” was not a common term for the audience of 2 Peter.

2 Peter knew and used 1 Peter.¹⁹ The exact parallelism suggests that 2 Peter modeled its wish on that of 1 Peter.²⁰ This single instance of exact lexical overlap invites speculation about the absence of further verbal parallelism between the salutations (and bodies) of 1 and 2 Peter. I have argued that the salutation of 2 Peter displays a structure parallel to the salutation of 1 Peter. Furthermore, the presence within the salutation of 2 Peter of key words reminiscent of themes and ideas from 1 Peter indicates 2 Peter's familiarity with the former Petrine letter. I have also noted that, compared with 1 Pet 1:1-2, the salutation of 2 Peter contains additional terminology at certain points (Symeon, slave, savior) but lacks specific references at other points (mention of the Holy Spirit and place names). This stems from 2 Peter's tendency to modify the material in 1 Peter in the service of its own distinctive agenda. No single verse confirms this view more clearly than 2 Pet 1:2. In this verse 2 Peter takes an extensive and exact lexical unit from 1 Pet 1:2 and affixes to it a central concept of 2 Peter, "the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus 2 Peter uses the language of 1 Peter as an introduction for its own insight. Grace and peace come through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ. Thus 2 Pet 1:1-2 introduces this central theme and prepares for its elucidation in the *prooemium* (1:3-11).

"Grace and Peace"

Although the words "grace" (χάρις) and "peace" (εἰρήνη) represent a standard greeting in NT letters, their significance is not limited to this role. Both terms appear

¹⁹ See above, p. 11 n. 20.

²⁰ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 166) objects that the contemporary epistolary corpus witnesses to the frequency of this wish.

elsewhere in 1 Peter. In 1:10 the grace announced by the prophets is equated with the salvation they sought and investigated. In 1:13 the author urges his audience to hope fully in the grace brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ by girding the loins of their understanding. According to 2:19-20 endurance of unjust suffering is a grace if it is done because of knowledge of God. These verses connect grace with knowledge of God and hint at the prevalence of the unheralded knowledge theme in 1 Peter. In 3:7 women are called coheirs of the “grace of life.” Christians become stewards of the various graces of God (4:10). All of these occurrences of χάρις communicate the present and future qualities of grace, both of which depend on the gift of God through Jesus Christ. The word χάρις also occurs in the conclusion of 1 Peter. The “God of all grace” who calls believers to the glory of Christ will strengthen those who suffer now (5:10). In 5:12 the author summarizes the teaching of the letter in these words: “I have written, encouraging and witnessing that this is the true grace of God in which you should stand.” The use of “grace” at the beginning of 2 Peter recalls the breadth of meaning of its usage in 1 Peter and suggests that 2 Peter stands in line with the teaching of 1 Peter.

The word “peace” (εἰρήνη) occurs three times in 1 Peter: in the wish formula (1:2); in a quotation from Psalm 34 LXX in 3:11; and in the letter closing (5:14). The connections between grace and knowledge in 1 Peter underscore the connection of grace and knowledge in 2 Pet 1:2. The context of the quotation of Psalm 34 speaks to the association of peace and knowledge in 1 Peter. The psalm speaks of the one who wants to love life and see good days: “Let him seek peace.” The author of 1 Peter argues that if believers suffer for the sake of righteousness, they are blessed (1 Pet 3:13-14). They are to sanctify Christ in their hearts

and be ready with an explanation (*ἀπολογία*) for their hope for all who seek its reason (*λόγος*, 3:15). Believers maintain a good conscience (*συνείδησις*), mindful of the suffering of Christ (3:16-18). Thus the correlation of peace and knowledge of God in 2 Pet 1:2 has some basis in 1 Peter.²¹

*“In Knowledge of God and Jesus Our Lord”*²²

One of the central themes in 2 Peter and the focus of my study—knowledge of God and Jesus Christ—appears at the end of 2 Peter’s salutation. I have argued that 2 Peter introduces this theme here purposefully in connection with terms and words meant to recall and summarize 1 Peter. Knowledge (*ἐπίγνωσις*) of God and Christ will appear again over the course of the *prooemium* (2 Pet 1:3, 8); therefore I will have several opportunities to discuss this theme in the context of 1 and 2 Peter generally. At this point I will take up a few pertinent issues with regard to the text of 2 Pet 1:2.

The phrase “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” implies an objective understanding of God’s plan and the salvation available through Christ; i.e., knowledge about God and Jesus.²³ But can the words “of God and Jesus our Lord” be taken as subjective genitives? In that case 2 Peter states that grace and peace come in God’s and Christ’s own knowledge, and that believers share in divine knowledge. In light of 1:4, where the audience

²¹ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 176) comments on the relationship between peace with God and salvation. Knoch (*Der Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief*, 236) regards the link of knowledge and grace or peace as logical since knowledge brings power and peace.

²² Some manuscripts (P Ψ 1852. 2464. [1505 *pc*] *pc* *vg*^{st.ww}) do not read “of God and Jesus,” which produces the shorter reading “through the knowledge of our Lord.” Metzger (*TCGNT*, 629) explains that certain scribes’ eyes passed from one τοῦ to the next, resulting in the omission of the words in question.

²³ Robert Picirelli (“The Meaning of ‘Epignosis,’” *EvQ* 47 [1975] 85-93) explores several possible meanings for the term and settles on “conversion.”

hears of participation in divine nature, this idea is not farfetched. I take the objective content—knowledge about God and Christ—as the meaning of “knowledge of God and Christ” without denying the possibility of a subjective reading.

Another observation about the initial occurrence of ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:2 involves the appearance of the related word πρόγνωσις (“foreknowledge”) in 1 Pet 1:2. In the context of 1 Peter’s salutation believers are “elect sojourners of the diaspora according to God’s foreknowledge.” The word relates God’s knowledge and plan with regard to people, not believers’ knowledge of God or of Christ. Therefore ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:2 and πρόγνωσις in 1 Pet 1:2 seem unrelated. But knowledge of God and Christ implies some understanding of God’s eternal plan accomplished in Christ and the very realization that God does indeed have a plan. The beginning of the *prooemium* (2 Pet 1:3-4) gives a cursory review of the plan of God, stating that “everything necessary for life and piety” has been given through knowledge of Christ, so that believers might become sharers of divine nature after fleeing the world. Moreover, the word προγνωσκω appears in 1 Pet 1:20 with regard to Christ: Christ was foreknown and revealed. These factors, and the previously noted tendency of 2 Pet 1:1-2 to echo language and ideas from 1 Pet 1:1-2, make the relationship between ἐπίγνωσις and πρόγνωσις intriguing. It would be quite a coincidence if these two related words occurred in the salutations of both 1 and 2 Peter—at the beginning of two letters intent on knowledge of God and Christ—but were unrelated. Put more accurately, it would be surprising if the presence of πρόγνωσις in 1 Pet 1:2 did not influence the thinking, or even word choice, of 2 Pet 1:2. Jesus Christ manifests God’s foreknowledge and plan; therefore, knowledge of Christ encompasses Christ’s role in the fulfillment of the plan of God (see 1 Pet 1:10-11;

2 Pet 1:3-4). Once again 2 Peter selects and magnifies a theme from 1 Peter in view of its practical goal: a life truly in accord with knowledge of Christ that will gain entrance to the eschatological kingdom of Christ (1:11).

Besides the affinity between *πρόγνωσις* in 1 Pet 1:2 and *ἐπίγνωσις* in 2 Pet 1:2, other considerations also argue for taking “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” as a summary reference to the teaching of 1 Peter. At the beginning of a second letter from Peter, the audience expects continuity with earlier Petrine teaching. In addition to the verbal parallels and echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Peter’s *prooemium*, the audience does not fail to notice that the global reference to “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” describes 1 Peter as a whole. From the reference to God the Father and Jesus Christ (not to mention the Holy Spirit) in 1:2 onward, 1 Peter is replete with substantial teaching about God and Jesus Christ (e.g., 1:2–2:10).²⁴ Teaching about Christ even appears in the midst of hortatory sections and parts of the *Haustafeln* (2:21-25; 3:18-19). Since 2 Peter claims that everything necessary for life and piety has been given through the knowledge of Christ (1:3; see 1:12), but omits an extensive outline of that knowledge (such as the one in 1 Pet 1:3-12), the author believes that his audience already has sure knowledge. No long review is necessary—only short references to knowledge already gained. A presumption of audience familiarity with the teaching of 1 Peter explains the use of “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” as a brief recapitulation of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:2.

“Knowledge of God and Christ” occupies an important position in the salutation of 2 Peter, since it modifies the wish for grace and peace and leads directly into the *prooemium*

²⁴ Achtemeier (*1 Peter*, 37) notes that 1 Peter is predicated on Christology. Jesus’ sufferings form a prelude to his exaltation.

(1:3-11). This pride of place anticipates the two further instances of the word ἐπίγνωσις in 1:3 and 1:8.²⁵ Obviously the theme of knowledge takes center stage in this section of 2 Peter. Each successive instance of the word ἐπίγνωσις appears as the object of a different preposition (1:2 ἐν, 1:3 διά, 1:8 εἰς) and takes a different construction. The occurrence of ἐπίγνωσις in 1:2 serves as a general introduction to the theme, which will develop as the *prooemium* continues. Thus “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” in 1:2 looks backward and forward: backward as a summary of 1 Peter and forward to the development of the idea in 2 Peter.

Conclusion

An audience-oriented study of 2 Pet 1:3-11 requires this review of the salutation of 2 Peter, since material previously heard offers a key to the interpretation of subsequent occurrences of words and themes. The similar structure, words, and themes of 2 Pet 1:1-2 hearken back to 1 Pet 1:1-2 and 1 Peter in general. The four-part structure of 2 Pet 1:1-2 recalls the similar structure in 1 Pet 1:1-2. The salutation of 2 Peter echoes the teaching of 1 Peter by the use of such words as “slave” (δούλος), “righteousness” (δικαιοσύνη), “savior” (σωτήρ), “grace” (χάρις), “peace” (εἰρήνη), and the phrase “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.” The salutation of 2 Peter also departs from 1 Peter’s salutation through the addition of certain terms and phrases, notably “knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.” Overall 2 Pet 1:1-2 displays and anticipates the hermeneutical tendencies of 1:3-11: a summary of material in 1 Peter and amplification of certain themes in the interest of 2 Peter’s paraenetic agenda.

²⁵ Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 27) believes that the recurrence of ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:8 forms an *inclusio* with 1:2 and so should inform the interpretation of the intermediary material.

This summary and amplification include a practical knowledge of Christ leading to eschatological salvation. The salutation also prepares for the *prooemium* of 2 Peter by the introduction of its dominant theme (ἐπίγνωσις).

3. Introduction to 2 Pet 1:3-4

Translation of 2 Pet 1:3-4

(3) His divine power has presented everything for life and piety to us through knowledge of the one who has called us by his own glory and excellence, (4) through which the honorable and great promises have also been given to us, in order that through these you might become sharers of divine nature, having fled the corruption in the world through desire.

The *prooemium* begins with a grammatical conundrum: the exact construction of 2 Pet 1:3-4 is not clear. The particle ὡς implies that 1:3-4 depends on what has come before (1:1-2) or what follows (1:5-7).²⁶ Both options seem untenable. If 1:3-4 begins a new paragraph, its construction suggests that it functions as a protasis of a conditional sentence whose apodosis constitutes 1:5-7. However, the beginning of 1:5 (καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ) does not suggest such a relationship. The alternative—that 1:3-4 somehow connects with the salutation—runs against the grain of epistolary convention, which features a distinct salutation followed by the body of the letter. The concluding wish for grace and peace in 1:2 sets the salutation apart as a discrete introduction, grammatically independent of the following verses.

²⁶ This account is based loosely on Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 173.

A major break between 2 Pet 1:1-2 and 1:3 governs my interpretation of these verses.²⁷ The fact that 1:5 (with its inferential adverbial phrase καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ) begins a new sentence leads me to translate 1:3-4 as a single sentence. However, this decision still has to reckon with the particle ὡς. The sentence does not make good sense as it stands. It is possible that the author changed constructions in the midst of writing these verses: after he began with a ὡς phrase, he deliberately inserted ἵνα and the subjunctive verb γένησθε. His concern for the rhetorical effect of the opening of the letter body—a sweeping ὡς phrase to introduce the action of God, followed by a verb construction meant to stress the idea of sharing divine nature—outweighed the resulting grammatical anacolouthon.²⁸ In terms of an English translation, this composition presents a choice: translate ὡς along the lines of “because” or “since,” which results in awkward English, or disregard ὡς for the purposes of clarity. I have chosen the latter.²⁹

The decision to take 2 Pet 1:3-4 as an independent sentence linked with the following material underscores the unity of 1:3-11. I have noted that some commentators detect a homiletic structure in the *prooemium*: 1:3-4 represents the historical section, 1:5-9 represents the ethical exhortation, and 1:10-11 represents an eschatological section.³⁰ Whether or not the *prooemium* mirrors a homiletic structure, however, the content of 1:3-4 marks these

²⁷ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 173) concludes that the main break lies between vv. 2 and 3. Translations must respect that break. Verse 3 must go with what follows.

²⁸ Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 218) argues that anacolutha are common in rhetoric, so he links 2 Pet 1:3-4 with what follows. Vögtle (*Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 136) sees 1:3-4 as an anacolouthon. Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 25-26) disagrees, arguing that καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ indicates only a slight separation of the statements. Verses 3-4 should be read with v. 5-7.

²⁹ This is Bauckham’s (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 172-73) solution as well.

³⁰ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 173; Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude*, 216.

verses as a “preamble” of sorts.³¹ In a single dense sentence the author of 2 Peter presents a summary account of the dispensation of God in Jesus Christ. Christ has given believers everything necessary for salvation through the knowledge of himself; he calls them to his own glory. Christ’s glory and excellence—which provide everything necessary for life—also form the basis of the promises bestowed on believers. Through these promises, i.e., through knowledge of Christ, believers flee the corruption in the world through desire and become sharers of divine nature. This last statement points to the following ethical exhortation in 1:5-9 and the eschatological benefit of a life spent living out the knowledge of Christ described in 1:10-11. The positive statements about Christ in 1:3-4 support the practical thrust of the remainder of the *prooemium*.³²

I will argue that the text of 2 Pet 1:3-4 demonstrates familiarity with 1 Peter’s teaching about Christ. The use of certain words and expressions as well as the description of present and future salvation in Christ suggests the conclusion that 2 Pet 1:3-4 recapitulates 1 Peter’s teaching about Christ, albeit in a concise fashion and with some different terminology. This brief summary serves the overall interest of the *prooemium*: an instruction in the practical consequences of knowledge of Christ leading to union with Christ here and in eternity.

³¹ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 179-80) construes 2 Pet 1:3-4 as a “preamble.”

³² I will show how the *prooemium* concerns practical Christian life, especially in 2 Pet 1:5-9. Martin (“Theology of Jude, 1 Peter, and 2 Peter,” 162) states that the practical tenor of 2 Pet 1:3-11 comes out at every turn. This recalls Feldmeier’s (*First Letter of Peter*, 43) characterization of 1 Peter as *scientia eminens practica*.

4. The Central Function of Knowledge of Christ: 2 Pet 1:3

“Everything”

Based on my grammatical analysis of 2 Pet 1:3-4 as an anacolouthon, I take the word ὡς as redundant. Since no parallel uses of ὡς appear in 1 Peter, I judge its contribution to my reading of 2 Pet 1:3 to be negligible. The second word of 2 Pet 1:3, the neuter plural adjective πάντα (“everything”), supplies the direct object for the genitive absolute phrase “his divine power has presented.”³³ Its appearance at the beginning of the sentence and separated from the appositional phrase “for life and piety” indicates its importance in the author’s mind. Christ has supplied everything necessary; believers have only to appropriate what is already available in Christ. The fact that the vague and general “everything” begins the *prooemium*—and the subunit of the *prooemium* devoted to positive statements about Christ (1:3-4)—indicates that the author felt no need to go into the details of Christ’s life or gifts. A brief summary suffices to recall for the audience the essential and shared teaching about Christ. Subsequent phrases and ideas will identify that shared teaching as 1 Peter.

“To Us”

The indirect object ἡμῖν (“to us”) also occupies an emphatic position at the beginning of 2 Pet 1:3. The author highlights his solidarity with his audience by this placement: everything is “ours.” The audience heard the first person plural pronoun three times in 1:1-2: a faith equal in honor to us (ἡμῖν); our (ἡμῶν) God and Savior Jesus Christ; knowledge of God and Jesus our (ἡμῶν) Lord. This fourth occurrence in three verses recalls the content of

³³ Although some manuscripts (Ⲛ A Ψ 33^{vid}. 81. 614. 623. 1505. pc) read “τὰ πάντα” the greater number (P⁷² B C P 0209. 1739 20) does not read the article.

faith in God and Jesus. It also binds author and audience. The first verse of 1 Peter's *prooemium* employed the first person plural pronoun twice: "Blessed be the God and father of our (ἡμῶν) Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has given us (ἡμᾶς) rebirth into living hope" (1 Pet 1:3). After that, however, the focus of 1 Peter switches to the audience; forms of the second person plural pronoun predominate for the remainder of the *prooemium* (1:4, 7, 9, 10, 12) and the letter as a whole (forty-five more instances throughout 1 Peter). By contrast, first and second person pronouns alternate in 2 Peter's *prooemium*, with first person plural forms appearing in 1:3, 4, 8, 11 and second person plural forms occurring in 1:5, 8, 10, 11. This alternating pattern emphasizes solidarity and common faith: statements and references to "us" encompass imperatives and references to "you."³⁴ The description of Jesus as "our Lord" or "our Savior" (1:8, 11) in particular confirms this sense of commonality.

"His Divine Power"

The first part of the genitive absolute phrase "his divine power . . . has presented" follows its object ("everything") and indirect object ("to us"). This placement draws attention to the concept of divine power. The last name mentioned in 2 Pet 1:2 was Jesus

³⁴ Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 34-35) notes that the pronoun alternates with the subject: "us" in 1:3-4 (a section about Christ), "you" in 1:5-10, then back to "us" in 1:11 (about entering Christ's kingdom).

Christ; therefore, Christ is the antecedent of the pronoun αὐτοῦ.³⁵ Thus 1:3 highlights the divine power of Christ.³⁶

The word δύναμις occurs at 1 Pet 1:5 and 3:22. The first instance—in a roughly parallel position in 1 Peter’s *prooemium*—underscores the agency of “God’s power” in guarding believers for eschatological salvation (1:3-5). With its benediction of God the Father and reference to his power, the *prooemium* of 1 Peter begins with a focus on the action of God through Jesus Christ. This initial reference to Christ’s own divine power in 2 Pet 1:3 represents a subtle shift in emphasis. The focus here is on Christ’s own power. In both letters, however, divine power works to secure believers in faith for the ultimate goal of salvation (1 Pet 1:3-5; 2 Pet 1:3-4). A reference to God’s power at the beginning of 2 Peter recalls a similar reference at the end of 1 Peter (κράτος, 1 Pet 5:11). Furthermore, the idea of Christ’s own power is hardly foreign to 1 Peter. One description of Christ (3:21-22) mentions his ascent to heaven to sit at God’s right hand, where angels, authorities, and powers (δυνάμεις) are subject to him.³⁷ That Christ rules “powers” illustrates the great extent of his own power. These lexical and functional parallels suggest that 2 Peter echoes the theme of divine power from 1 Peter. A more narrow application to Christ placed in emphatic position at the beginning of 2 Peter’s *prooemium* indicates the direction of the letter’s

³⁵ The adjective θεῖος confirms this: Christ as God in 1:1 implies the “divine power of Christ” here. Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 39) argues that all four occurrences of θεῖος or θεός in 2 Pet 1:1-4 are governed by Christological concerns.

³⁶ Vögtle, *Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 139. Fornberg (*Early Church*, 81) takes the phrase as an *abstractum pro concreto* for “Christ in his divine power.”

³⁷ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 177) comments on the Hellenistic nature of this terminology, but notes that the expression rather than the idea is strange. Walter Grundmann (“δύναμαι κτλ.,” *TDNT*, 2. 310) discusses “power” as a Hellenistic substantive, a “mediator.”

discourse: Christ's personal significance for believers. The subsequent introduction of the knowledge theme grows out of this initial emphasis on Christ's power.

“For Life and Piety”

The phrase “for life and piety” defines the substantive “everything” at the beginning of 2 Pet 1:3. Taken as a whole, “everything for life and piety” implies everything necessary for attaining life and piety. Life refers to eternal life or salvation, while piety denotes a way of life on earth that leads to salvation.³⁸ Since 2 Peter does not list the things necessary to attain life and piety, the *prooemium* takes the audience's familiarity with these things for granted. The phrase “life and piety” recommends 1 Peter as a source of this material and indicates that 2 Peter had that letter in mind.

The noun “life” (ζωή) occurs twice in 1 Peter. In 3:7 men and women are termed “coheirs of the grace of life.” In 3:10 a quotation from Psalm 34 LXX begins, “He who wants to love life.” In the first instance “life” entails salvation, the future life with God.³⁹ Both sexes share equally in God's invitation to true life. Since the next instance of ζωή occurs only three verses later, the audience understands the reference to life in 3:10 in terms of salvation also.

The use of the related verb ζάω (“live”) underscores the eschatological sense of “life.” The critical verse 1 Pet 1:3 states that believers are reborn to a living hope. Therefore hope pertains to sharing in God's life in the present. The terms “he has given rebirth”

³⁸ Grundmann (*Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 69) argues for this interpretation, whereas Fornberg (*Early Church*, 90) holds that “life” refers to an ethical life on earth.

³⁹ Achtemeier (*1 Peter*, 218) takes the genitive ζωής as epexegetic: “grace that consists in life,” with an eschatological implication.

(ἀναγεννήσας) and “resurrection (ἀνάστασις) of Jesus Christ” describe the necessary conditions for God’s bestowal of the gift of life. Believers are reborn (ἀναγεννάω) not from perishable seed but from imperishable, the living word of God (1:23). Thus the revelation of God—and specifically Scripture—pertains to life. The description of Christ as a “living stone” (λίθον ζώντα) in 2:4, followed immediately by the same description of believers in 2:5 (λίθοι ζώντες), discloses the necessary foundation for salvation: Christ. Built upon this foundation, believers offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God (2:5). Thus a relationship with Christ, articulated in worship and the community, leads to life. The sacrifice of Christ allows believers to “live in righteousness;” his death leads to our healing and life (2:24).

All of these occurrences of the verb ζάω, taken collectively, give insight into true life in its present and future aspects. A list of themes associated with “life” emerges: hope, Christ’s resurrection, the word of God, spiritual worship, and community life. Besides these, a reference to “baptism that saves” (3:21) suggests a sacramental understanding, especially in light of the two earlier references to rebirth (ἀναγεννάω, 1:3, 22). Thus 1 Peter supplies quite an extensive catalogue of themes and practices provided by the power of God and associated with “life.” The expression of 2 Pet 1:3 suggests that 1 Peter provides the background for “everything for life.”

The presence of the word εὐσέβεια (“piety”) in conjunction with ζωή might lead to a focus on the ethical rather than the eschatological nature of “life.”⁴⁰ Bauckham claims that

⁴⁰ Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 91) believes that the words used in tandem here imply “a life characterized by godliness.” Harrington (“Jude and 2 Peter,” 243) thinks both present and future aspects are at play.

ζωή and εὐσέβεια form an “ethical hendiadys.”⁴¹ But the point of the *prooemium* involves eternal life (2 Pet 1:11); all practical concerns and advice regarding piety and virtue lead to the goal of salvation. The understanding of life in 1 Peter supports this conclusion: life with God begins here and now and continues at the revelation of Christ (1:3, 5, 7, 13). Thus ethical exhortation in both 1 and 2 Peter ultimately concerns eschatological life with God. The diligence with which both letters present ethical guidelines speaks to their great zeal for all believers to attain salvation, not just a “good life” on earth (1 Pet 1:9; 2 Pet 1:4, 11).

Although the word εὐσέβεια (“piety”) does not occur in 1 Peter, there is reason to take its appearance in 2 Pet 1:3 as a summary reference to the ethical instruction of 1 Peter. Although εὐσέβεια connotes a sense of duty or obligation in general, the context of 2 Pet 1:3 requires a religious interpretation: εὐσέβεια describes fulfilling duty towards God.⁴² Based on confidence in God, εὐσέβεια entails respect for God’s will expressed in a moral life.⁴³ This characterization recalls the charge in 1 Pet 1:15 to “become holy in all behavior.” While piety does not correspond exactly with holiness, the command in 1 Pet 1:15 requires an advertence to the will of God. This sense corresponds with “piety” in 2 Pet 1:3. Furthermore the reference to moral behavior in both 1 Pet 1:15 and 2 Pet 1:3 follows an initial positive statement of God’s power and gift of life. The extensive *prooemium* in 1 Pet 1:3-12 precedes the transition to the imperative mood in 1:13, whereas the compact statement

⁴¹ Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 178. Rather, the use of the two words compartmentalizes the end and the means.

⁴² Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 182) and Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 41-42) maintain the ambivalence of εὐσέβεια.

⁴³ Grundmann (*Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 69) recalls its role in Proverbs: εὐσέβεια is the beginning of perception (Prov 1:7). Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 178) equates εὐσέβεια with respect for God’s will and moral life.

of Christ's power in 2 Pet 1:3-4 introduces piety and anticipates the transition to the imperative mood in 1:5 (already in 1:4 the verb γένησθε has a hortatory function). I maintain that the presence in 2 Pet 1:3-4 of this emphasis on piety—as well as on God's power and gift of life, insistence on knowledge of Christ, and combat vs. desire—constitutes a compact recapitulation of the themes of 1 Peter.

Besides this similarity to the call for holiness in 1 Pet 1:15, the idea of “everything for piety” in 2 Pet 1:3 recalls 1 Peter's teaching on Christian conduct in general.⁴⁴ If “piety” means proper and reverent behavior in the midst of the world, such as leads to eternal life according to God's promise in Christ, then 1 Peter contains vast amounts of instruction concerning piety. In addition to the overarching call to holiness in 1:15, other exhortations to a lifestyle determined by faith abound: 2:2 urges believers to desire spiritual nourishment; 2:11-12 admonishes them to avoid fleshly desires while exhibiting exemplary conduct among nonbelievers; 2:17 calls for honor and respect toward all; 2:18–3:7 gives specific advice to different groups within the Christian community; 4:1-2 demands conformity to the mind of Christ in order to concentrate on God's will and not human desires; 4:7-11 offers guidelines for relationships within the believing community. All of these citations (and many others) speak to 1 Peter's concern for the pious conduct of Christians in the world. The reference to piety in 2 Pet 1:3 recalls this extensive theme of 1 Peter.

⁴⁴ Elliott (*1 Peter*, 81) regards 1 Pet 2:13–5:11 as a series of exhortations based on the general principle expressed in 1 Pet 2:11-12 to avoid evil and live honorably among nonbelievers. But 1 Pet 1:13-16 begins exhortation with general principles as well. Both of these passages (1 Pet 1:13-16; 2:11-12) contain intellectual language. It seems that what Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 211) observes about 2 Pet 1:3 is true of 1 Pet 1:13-16 and 2:11-12 as well: piety comes from an exact knowledge of Christ.

Taken as an echo and brief recapitulation of 1 Peter, the rich content of the phrase “everything for life and piety” in 2 Pet 1:3 becomes clear. Christ’s power has provided everything necessary for life in this world and eschatological life with Christ.

“Has Presented”

The perfect middle participle δεδωρημένης completes the genitive absolute phrase that began with “his divine power.” By postponing the participle until this point in the text, the author of 2 Peter has interwoven the genitive absolute and its object. The verb δωρέομαι means “give as a gift” and implies some formality.⁴⁵ It stresses the value of Christ’s gifts and a formal process of bestowal, which confirms the background of 1 Peter (traditions of revelation, community, and sacramental life). The verb does not occur in 1 Peter. The related verb δίδωμι occurs only twice, in 1:21 and 5:5. In both cases God is the giver: he gives glory to Christ (1:21) and grace to the humble (5:5, quoting Prov 3:34 LXX). Thus the portrayal of Christ as the giver in 2 Pet 1:3 accords with 1 Peter’s presentation of God.

“Through Knowledge of the One Who Has Called Us”

This phrase recalls the first mention of knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις) of God and Christ in 2 Pet 1:2. Here the reference is to knowledge of Christ, since the antecedent of the participle καλέσαντος matches the antecedent of the genitive pronoun αὐτοῦ earlier in 1:3. The phrase “through knowledge of the one who has called us” explains how God’s power gives believers what they need for life and piety. It describes how believers appropriate the graces bestowed

⁴⁵ BDAG, s.v. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 178) notes that the verb can signify a royal or divine bounty.

by Christ. I will argue that 2 Peter's emphasis on knowledge of Christ echoes and expands a similar theme in 1 Peter.

The preposition *διὰ* ("through") appears frequently in 1 Peter and is construed with "Christ" often. God has given us new birth through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1:3). Believers are guarded through faith (1:5). Christ's mysteries have been announced through evangelists (1:11-12). Believers remain faithful to God through Christ (1:21); they are reborn through the living word of God (1:23) and offer spiritual sacrifices through Christ (2:5). Christians endure suffering through their knowledge of God (2:19); they suffer for the sake of righteousness (3:14). Baptism is a pledge of a good conscience through the resurrection of Christ (3:21). These instances of *διὰ* in connection with Christ highlight the similarity of thought and style between 2 Pet 1:3 and 1 Peter.

The exact nuance conveyed by *ἐπίγνωσις* remains a topic of discussion. The OT supplies the background for "knowledge of God and Jesus" (2 Pet 1:2): grateful acknowledgement of God's gifts expressed in a life of obedience and reflection.⁴⁶ The word *ἐπίγνωσις* occurs seven times in the LXX, three of which refer explicitly to "knowledge of God."⁴⁷ In those three cases, "knowledge of God" parallels "fear of God" (Prov 2:5) and "truth" (Hos 4:1) and "mercy" (Hos 4:1; 6:6). "Knowledge of God" denotes a correct mindfulness of and relationship with God.

⁴⁶ Rudolph Bultmann ("*γινώσκω* κτλ.," *TDNT*, 1. 707-8) thinks that the OT determines the Christian view of "knowledge."

⁴⁷ The seven occurrences are 1 Kgs 7:2; Jdt 9:14; 2 Macc 9:11; Prov 2:5; Hos 4:1, 6; 6:6. The three references to "knowledge of God" are Prov 2:5; Hos 4:1; 6:6. In each case *ἐπίγνωσις* translates the Hebrew word *הָיָה*.

The difference between the compound ἐπίγνωσις and the simple noun γνώσις also generates interest. Some commentators claim that there is no distinction in meaning between the two related words.⁴⁸ Others insist that ἐπίγνωσις conveys a deeper knowledge and intimates conversion.⁴⁹ The fact that 2 Peter uses the form ἐπίγνωσις as an overarching summary of the theme of knowledge of Christ in 1:2, 3, and 8 suggests that some distinction exists. The form γνώσις occurs in a subordinate position, in the midst of the virtue progression in 1:5-6. There the text does not link γνώσις explicitly with “God” or “Christ.” Despite this distinction, both forms highlight the prevalence of the knowledge theme in the *prooemium*. The roots of this theme lie in 1 Peter.

The fact that the word ἐπίγνωσις does not occur in 1 Peter must not obscure the letter’s constant recourse to the importance and effectiveness of knowledge of Christ. The language of 1 Peter illustrates the presence of this theme. The word γνώσις occurs in 3:7. As I have mentioned in the consideration of 2 Pet 1:2, the word πρόγνωσις occurs in 1 Pet 1:2. The related verb προγινώσκω occurs in 1 Pet 1:20. These two passages describe the plan of God in Christ, whom God foreknew before the foundation of the world but revealed at the end of time for the sake of the faithful. Hence these passages concern knowledge of Christ, possessed by God and later given to people.

The word συνείδησις (“awareness” or “conscience”) occurs three times in 1 Peter. It is a grace to endure suffering through awareness of God (2:19). Believers maintain a good

⁴⁸ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 169) sees no difference between the two terms; Vögtle (*Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 134) cites evidence from the LXX and NT to prove that the nouns (like the corresponding verbs) show no difference.

⁴⁹ Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 209) argues that ἐπίγνωσις amounts to knowledge of a determined object or identification of a truth or object of faith and thus represents progress from γνώσις (pure and simple knowledge). Grundmann (*Der Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 68) takes ἐπίγνωσις as the process in which the content of faith teaching is acquired.

conscience in order to shame detractors (3:16). Baptism is the pledge of a good conscience through Christ's resurrection (3:21). Each of these passages speaks of knowledge of Christ as the overriding consideration in dealings with the world. Knowledge of Christ introduces a larger perspective on life and casts social convention in a different light. It directs attention to future salvation and the believing community rather than to self and this transitory world. It appropriates the gift of life through baptism and looks to the future share in the resurrection of Christ. The word συνείδησις underscores the importance of knowledge of Christ in 1 Peter.

Another group of words related to the verb νοέω (“understand”) occurs in 1 Peter and belongs to the “knowledge” theme. In 1:13-14 the nouns διάνοια (“mind”) and ἄγνοια (“ignorance”) stand in opposition: “Therefore gird the loins of your mind . . . do not conform yourselves to the desires of your former ignorance.” The word ἔννοια (“attitude” or “understanding”) appears in 4:1 in an exhortation for the believers to arm themselves with the same understanding as Christ. These passages make explicit the need for the knowledge of Christ. The material preceding each of these pericopes discloses the content of this knowledge of Christ. The *prooemium* (1:3-12) recounts God's gift of new life and eschatological salvation through Christ; therefore, “gird the loins of your mind” involves clinging to knowledge of Christ whereas “ignorance” bespeaks unfamiliarity with the revealed plan of God. The suffering of Christ and its role in leading believers to God through baptism (3:18-22) elucidates “the same understanding as Christ” in 4:1. Therefore the νοέω word group highlights the knowledge theme.⁵⁰ The presence of an invective against “desire”

⁵⁰ Fornberg (*Early Church*, 14-15) perceives that 2 Peter emphasizes “knowledge” more than 1 Peter, but 1 Pet 1:14 portends the importance of the theme in 2 Peter.

(ἐπιθυμία) in these passages and in 2 Pet 1:4 offers further evidence of 2 Peter's use of 1 Peter.

The verb οἶδα provides a final conceptual parallel between 1 Peter and ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:3. The exhortation in 1 Pet 1:17-19 calls on believers to live uprightly during their pilgrimage on earth knowing (εἰδότες) that they were redeemed by the blood of Christ, a spotless lamb. A similar exhortation at the end of the letter (5:9) urges resistance against the devil knowing (εἰδότες) that all believers throughout the world share the same sufferings. Once again 1 Peter presents knowledge of Christ's sacrifice and example as the key to life in the world.

The presence of so many references to knowledge of Christ within the exhortation of 1 Peter suggests that 2 Peter draws on and resumes this theme by the use of ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:2 and 1:3. The presentation of "knowledge of Christ" in 1 Peter makes sense of this unelaborated but critical concept. Given the revelation of God's plan in Christ, believers abandon their former ignorance and embrace Christ. Their knowledge of and familiarity with Christ entails conversion and participation in the life of the Christian community. It also dictates moral behavior. Mindful of the sacrifice of Christ, believers model their lives on Christ and look to their future life with him. According to 1 Peter knowledge of Christ implies all of this. Such a background fits the context of 2 Pet 1:3-4 perfectly. Everything for life and piety has been presented through the knowledge of the one calling the audience to his own glory and excellence, in order to share divine nature.⁵¹ Believers must strive to add virtue and love to their faith in order to arrive at eschatological knowledge of Christ (1:5-8).

⁵¹ Ruth Anne Reese (*2 Peter & Jude* [THNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007] 181) states "The book of 2 Peter continually relates all of its other themes to the person of Jesus Christ. Ethics, eschatology, and soteriology all rely on knowing and understanding the person and work of Jesus Christ in this epistle."

Although 2 Peter develops the concept in the *prooemium*, and despite the lack of exact linguistic parallels, there can be little doubt that 2 Peter draws upon 1 Peter for the content of and emphasis on “knowledge of Christ.”

“Of the One Who Has Called Us”

“The one who has called us” refers back to the same antecedent intended by the pronoun αὐτοῦ earlier in 2 Pet 1:3, namely Christ. “Knowledge of the one who has called us” means “knowledge of Christ.” By concentrating on Christ’s act of calling—an action usually reserved for God—2 Peter maintains its stress on the divine power of Christ and the efficacy of the knowledge of Christ to make believers sharers in divine nature (1:3-4).

The verb καλέω occurs several times in 1 Peter. In 1:15 God calls (καλέσαντα) believers to be holy as he is. As God’s people Christians proclaim the works of the one calling (καλέσαντος) them out of darkness into his own light (2:9). God calls (καλέσας) his faithful to eternal glory in Christ (5:10). In addition to these references to God’s act of calling his people, the verb occurs elsewhere in connection with ethical exhortation: believers are called (ἐκλήθητε) to imitate Christ’s example and return blessings for curses (2:21; 3:9). All of these instances of καλέω demonstrate the prominence of God’s call in 1 Peter. God invites his people to share in his blessings, including the ultimate blessing: eternal glory in Christ (5:10). The reference to “the one who calls us by his own glory” in 2 Pet 1:3 echoes this invitation. Therefore it is reasonable to see 1 Peter’s use of “calling” language as the background for this part of 2 Pet 1:3.

If 2 Peter adopts 1 Peter's depiction of God as calling believers, however, a major modification appears. In 2 Peter Christ calls, not God.⁵² The previous descriptions of Christ as "God" (1:1) and possessing "divine power" (1:3) prepare for this transition; since Christ is divine he can perform actions usually attributed to God alone. Once again 2 Peter emphasizes the divinity and power of Christ. Believers share a direct relationship with Christ who calls them personally. First Peter's use of "calling" language alludes to the imitation of Christ and participation in his glory but focuses primarily on God's role as the one who calls. However, the activity of the spirit of Christ in 1:11 leaves open the question of the role of Christ in prophecy and evangelization; i.e., the act of "calling." Second Peter affirms Christ's role in calling. This development of the "calling" theme from 1 Peter stands in line with 2 Peter's interest in the person and significance of Christ and believers' direct knowledge of him. By making such a conspicuous change—not without some basis in 1 Peter—2 Peter focuses on Christ as the origin of the divine call and prepares for its discussion of the direct knowledge of Christ as the means to sharing divine nature in this life and at the eschatological revelation of Christ.

⁵² Vögtle (*Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 138) maintains that 2 Peter, like the NT in general, portrays God as the one who calls. However, with Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 178), we must remember that whenever 2 Peter speaks of "knowledge" in the rest of the discourse, Christ is always the object (1:2 [with God]; 1:8; 2:20).

“By His Own Glory and Excellence”⁵³

The phrase “by his own glory and excellence” gives the means of Christ’s call: his glory and surpassing excellence invite people to a new understanding.⁵⁴ This phrase also discloses—albeit tacitly—the goal of Christ’s call: eschatological glory with Christ. The word “excellence” (ἀρετή) also hints at the earthly means to this goal. The signs associated with Jesus (especially the resurrection) distinguish him as divine and worthy of trust. While no one can achieve status equal to Christ by individual effort, believers can imitate his moral excellence and cultivate the virtues that facilitate and support knowledge of Christ (2 Pet 1:5-8). Just as “life and piety” delineated the eschatological and practical aspects of Christ’s gifts (in that order) in 1:3, so “glory and excellence” convey the same ideas at this point in order to clarify how Christ calls.

The occurrence of δόξα (“glory”) in 2 Pet 1:3 recalls the frequent and important use of the word in 1 Peter. In 1:6-7 believers rejoice in the midst of trials, confident that the value of their faith will lead to praise and glory (δόξα) and honor at the revelation of Christ. Prophets have investigated the sufferings and glories of Christ (1:11). God raised Christ and bestowed glory upon him for the sake of believers’ faith and hope in God (1:21). Christ’s transcendent glory contrasts with the passing glory of the world (1:24). The doxology in 4:11 charges believers to glorify God in all things through Christ, to whom belong glory and

⁵³ The text of this section of 2 Peter has many variants. The majority of manuscripts (\mathcal{P}^{72} B [0209^{vid}] \mathcal{N}) reads “through glory and excellence” (διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀρετῆς) instead of “by his own glory and excellence” (ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ). Several factors recommend the latter reading, including the strength and variety of external evidence (\aleph A C P Ψ 33. 81. 614. 630. 945. 1241. 1505. 1739 *al* lat sy co) and the fact that “by his own glory and excellence” maintains the emphasis on Christ constant throughout 1:3.

⁵⁴ The words δόξῃ and ἀρετῇ are instrumental datives; they do not supply the object of Christ’s call (“to his glory and excellence”), which would be signified by εἰς + accusative (cf. 1 Pet 2:9, 21). See Green, *Jude & 2 Peter*, 183-84; Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 178.

power forever. The eschatological revelation of Christ's glory will bring joy to those who have shared Christ's suffering (4:13). Peter claims that he is a "sharer in the glory to be revealed" (5:1) and mentions the "unfading crown of glory" awarded to the faithful at the appearance of Christ (5:4). The final exhortation of the letter affirms that God calls believers to eternal glory in Christ (5:10).

These references to Christ's glory in 1 Peter refer to two realities: the glory of Christ revealed already through the resurrection (1:11) and the glory of Christ to be revealed at his second coming (1:6-7; 4:13; 5:1, 4, 10). The earlier manifestation of Christ's glory invites faith and hope in its future revelation. The sense of "glory" in 2 Pet 1:3 matches the earlier, historical revelation of Christ's glory: he calls believers by the glory he has manifested. But, as in 1 Peter, the glory of Christ's resurrection looks forward to and guarantees a future glory in which believers will share. Second Peter goes on to discuss the present (1:4) and future (1:11) aspects of this sharing. Thus the background of δόξα in 1 Peter makes sense of the appearance and context of the term in 2 Pet 1:3. Once again 2 Peter has introduced a subtle change. The instrumental dative construction emphasizes the person of Christ—that he calls by means of his own glory. The audience notices the development from the claim that God calls believers to glory in Christ (1 Pet 5:10) to the claim that Christ calls them by his own glory (2 Pet 1:3). Second Peter explains how Christ calls by his past, present, and future glory.

The word ἀρετή ("excellence") also provides a link between 1 Peter and 2 Pet 1:3. The only occurrence of the word in 1 Peter concerns the believing community's role in announcing the "marvels" (ἀρετάς) of the one who calls believers from darkness to light

(2:9). The term has the same sense in 2 Pet 1:3.⁵⁵ By the parallel construction with δόξα, the word ἀρετή means “astounding works,” i.e., whatever manifested Christ’s power and glory during his public ministry.⁵⁶ The word ἀρετή has this meaning in the NT only in 1 Pet 2:9 and 2 Pet 1:3.⁵⁷ I chose the translation “excellence” because it encompasses both the surpassing work of Christ intended in 2 Pet 1:3 and the general moral excellence intimated in 1:5. Additionally, the ambiguity of the term ἀρετή calls to mind the moral excellence of Christ in 1:3 as well. Certainly Christ’s uprightness forms part of his attraction and fits the subsequent moral exhortation of 1:5-8.⁵⁸ Thus the meaning of ἀρετή in 1:3 looks back to 1 Pet 2:9 while accommodating the moral sense of its context.

5. Sharing Divine Nature, Fleeing Desire: 2 Pet 1:4

At the conclusion of 2 Pet 1:3 the audience begins to understand the gift of God. Christ has provided everything necessary for life—present and future—through knowledge of himself, recommended by his glorious life and works. The summary continues in 1:4, which recalls God’s past promises and promise of future glory in Christ. Through Christ, and avoiding the world’s corruption brought about by desire, believers share divine nature. I

⁵⁵ In light of this it is hard to agree with Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 179) when he claims that there is no influence of 1 Pet 2:9 here.

⁵⁶ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 183) holds that ἀρετή invites fame or glory (BDAG, s.v.). Otto Bauernfeind (“ἀρετή,” *TDNT*, 1. 459, 461) notes the nuance of “self-declaration” from secular usage.

⁵⁷ Fornberg (*Early Church*, 144-45) comments on the link with 1 Pet 2:9, the only other nonmoral sense for ἀρετή in the NT. He considers the phrase ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ an *abstractum pro concreto*, presumably for Christ’s resurrection and other miracles.

⁵⁸ Harvey and Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 32) take Jesus’ glory and goodness as the basis of believers’ morality. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 63-64) discusses the attraction of Jesus’ excellence and his power enabling believers to respond. The idea of Christ as an example for believers appears in 1 Pet 3:21; 4:1-2.

will argue that 1:4 continues the practice of adopting and modifying language and ideas from 1 Peter in service of its own synthetic presentation of the person of Christ. I will pay particular attention to the relationship between treatment of divine nature and desire in 1 and 2 Peter. The material of 1:4 continues the presentation of Christ and looks forward to the ethical material of 1:5-9.

“Through Which”

The short prepositional phrase “through which” provides a grammatical and conceptual link with 2 Pet 1:3. The most natural antecedent for the plural relative pronoun ὧν is the closest pair of nouns in 1:3, “glory and excellence.” Christ’s glory and powerful deeds—especially the resurrection—support the promises discussed in 1:4.⁵⁹ However, the “glory and excellence” of Christ in 1:3 functions as a description of the knowledge of Christ, who calls by means of his glory and excellence. Therefore the phrase “through which” also includes knowledge of Christ. By acquiring familiarity with Jesus and insight into the foundational relationship of the Christian life, believers appropriate the promises of Christ. Thus “through which” summarizes more than just the final phrase of 1:3.

⁵⁹ Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 26) affirms that “through which” refers to “his own glory and virtue.” The promises are bestowed by means of Jesus’ exaltation and glory.

“The Honorable and Great Promises”⁶⁰

The description of the “honorable and great promises” in 1:4 begins with the word τίμιος (“honorable”). The audience encountered the similar word ισότιμος describing “faith” (πίστις) in 1:1. In 1 Peter faith leads to honor in the present and at the future revelation of Christ (cf. 1:7; 2:7). Moreover the word τίμιος occurs in 1:19 as a description of the costliness of the blood of Christ, the price of believers’ redemption from a futile way of life and the basis of faith and hope in God (1:18-21). Thus the association of “honor” with “faith” in 1 Peter and 2 Pet 1:1 indicates the substance of the promises in 2 Pet 1:4. They involve Christ’s redemption, the promise of future glory with him.⁶¹ This great theme of 1 and 2 Peter warrants the superlative form of the adjective μέγας with regard to the promises of 2 Pet 1:4.⁶²

The previous verses of 2 Peter do not mention or allude to any promises, but it is reasonable to conclude that “knowledge of Christ” (2 Pet 1:2, 3) includes familiarity with the promise of life and glory in Christ (1:3). The word ἐπάγγελμα expresses a “promise” or “profession.”⁶³ The overall presentation of Christ in 1:3-4 forms a profession of faith in Christ, the basis on which promises of salvation rest (1:4, 11).

⁶⁰ The order of the words τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα varies in the textual tradition. While the important witness *P*⁷² places ἡμῖν after ἐπαγγέλματα, the majority (Ⲛ Ⲙ) places ἡμῖν after τίμια. Other manuscripts ([A] C P Ψ 33. 69. 81. 945. [1241]. 1739. *al* [h] *vg*) transpose τίμια and μέγιστα. I agree with Metzger (*TCGNT*, 630) that the given order (witnessed by B 614. 630. 1505. *pc*; *Spec*) best explains the advent of these other variants.

⁶¹ Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 172) believes that 1 Pet 1:3-4, 9 supplies the content of the promises in 2 Pet 1:4 (cf. 2 Pet 1:11).

⁶² No form of the adjective μέγας or its compounds occurs in 1 Peter.

⁶³ Julius Schniewind and Gerhard Friedrich (“ἐπαγγέλω κτλ.,” *TDNT*, 2. 585-86) discuss ἐπάγγελμα as a “declaration.”

The reference to “promises” (ἐπαγγέλματα) in 1:4 relies on the background of 1 Peter. Although 1 Peter does not contain the words ἐπάγγελμα or ἐπαγγελία (“promise”), several related words occur. In 1:12 the verb ἀναγγέλλω (“announce”) appears in connection with the sufferings and glories of Christ, announced to the audience by evangelizers (εὐαγγελισαμένων). Angels (ἄγγελοι) long to glimpse these mysteries. This verse and its immediate context (1:10-12) prove helpful in discerning the nature of God’s promises. Prophets have spoken about Christ’s salvation of souls (1:10). The spirit of Christ within those prophets witnessed beforehand to the sufferings and glories of Christ (1:11). These things were revealed to the prophets not for their sake but for the sake of present believers; these mysteries are announced by evangelists in the Holy Spirit (1:12). Thus 1 Peter offers an account of the promises concerning Christ which appeared in the OT and still apply in the preaching of the gospel.

The sense of 1 Pet 1:10-12 fits the meaning of 2 Pet 1:4 exactly. Christ has fulfilled God’s promises. Moreover, both 1 and 2 Peter attribute the promises to Christ himself. First Peter 1:10-11 states that the spirit of Christ witnessed to his suffering and resurrection and inspired the prophets to predict them. Second Peter 1:3-4 affirms that the promises come through Christ’s glory and excellence; indeed, Christ himself has given everything for life and piety. Christ is the source of the promise of salvation. First Peter emphasizes the OT prophecies concerning Christ and affirms the continuing usefulness of these prophecies for the Christian community (1:25). Second Peter develops 1 Peter’s idea of the spirit of Christ as source of prophecy and promise of salvation.⁶⁴ Once again 2 Peter demonstrates a

⁶⁴ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 179) admits that references to Christ’s promises are rare in early Christianity and its literature. This fact makes the link in this regard between 1 and 2 Peter more remarkable.

Christocentric perspective. Christ makes and guarantees the promises for life and glory. Believers appropriate these promises through knowledge of Christ.

“Have Been Given to Us”

The phrase “have been given to us” introduces another link between Christ and the promises of 2 Pet 1:4. The audience has heard the pronoun ἡμῖν followed by the verb δωρέομαι in 1:3. Christ’s divine power has presented everything to them for life and piety through knowledge of Christ. Now the audience hears that the promises have been given to them through the glory and excellence of Christ. The phrase “glory and excellence” in 1:3 depends grammatically on the preceding words: everything is given to the audience through the knowledge of Christ who calls the audience by means of his glory and excellence. Therefore “knowledge of Christ” is situated between two parallel constructions of ἡμῖν . . . δωρέομαι, both of which are related to this knowledge of Christ. Since the first appearance of δωρέομαι in 1:3 took Christ as subject, it confirms that Christ is the source of the promises in 1:4. The parallel construction of 1:3-4 identifies what is necessary for life and piety with the promises of salvation. All of these gifts come to the audience through knowledge of Christ.

“In Order That through These You Might Become”

Like the first clause of 1:4 this section of the verse features the preposition διὰ with a genitive plural pronoun (in this case the demonstrative τούτων) as a summary of preceding material. Like the earlier phrase “through which,” the phrase “through these” refers to what

has immediately preceded—the promises presented to believers—as well as what has occurred previously in 1:3-4. “These” promises of Christ depend on his glory and amount to what has been given by Christ’s divine power for life and piety.

The progression of 1:3-4 and its repeated consideration of Christ’s promises do not take away from the knowledge theme. The line of thought develops from the general to the specific: everything necessary for life and piety is presented by Christ’s divine power through knowledge of Christ, who calls believers by his own glory and excellence. The honorable and great promises (of eschatological life) are presented through Christ’s glory and excellence, and through these promises believers become sharers of divine nature. According to 1:4 the goal of eschatological life depends on the promises of Christ. But to believe a promise is to know and trust the one who makes the promise. The development of 1:3-4 does not abandon the preliminary emphasis on the knowledge of Christ. Rather, 2 Peter takes this knowledge for granted as it links Christ’s power with the promises of life. After a description of the fulfillment of Christ’s promise—sharing divine nature—the remainder of 1:4 contrasts this new life with corruption and worldly desire. The contrast concerns knowledge of Christ as the operating principle of the Christian life and worldly ignorance of Christ. The next section of the *prooemium* (1:5-9) elaborates on the nature and function of knowledge of Christ. Thus the theme of knowledge of Christ continues to play an important role in 1:3-4 and beyond despite the prominence of the theme of Christ’s promises.

The aorist subjunctive verb γένησθε represents the first direct address to the audience in 2 Peter: “become sharers of divine nature.” It recalls the verb γενήθητε in 1 Pet 1:15.

Besides its form, the situation of this verb towards the beginning of the text as an initial engagement of the audience links these verbs. Both instances of γίνομαι refer to transformation into the divine nature. The object of the verb in 1 Pet 1:15 is the predicate adjective ἅγιοι (“holy”). Holiness describes the nature of God. “Sharers of divine nature” in 2 Pet 1:4 puts the emphasis on eschatological life more explicitly but can be read as an explanation of holiness. Another similarity between 1 Pet 1:14-15 and 2 Pet 1:4 involves the contrast of holiness and divine nature with desire (ἐπιθυμία). All of these indications suggest a link between these passages. Second Peter recapitulates and expands the teaching of 1 Peter with regard to holiness and desire.

“Sharers of Divine Nature”

The phrase “sharers of divine nature” remains one of the most studied passages in the letter and the entire NT. My focus on the phrase involves reading it in light of what the audience has already heard in 2 Peter and 1 Peter. Thus the import of this phrase as evidence for Hellenistic influence or its implications for the subsequent development of theologies of deification and grace stand outside the scope of this dissertation.

To share Christ’s nature represents the end for which Christ’s divine power bestowed everything for life and piety in 2 Pet 1:3. Christ’s life is the goal of the audience’s knowledge of Christ; furthermore Christ’s promises concern this sharing of divine nature. Therefore the phrase “sharers of divine nature” constitutes the discursive climax of 1:3-4. Its affirmation of an eschatological life begun in the present also plays a pivotal role in grounding the ethical material in the rest of the *prooemium* and 2 Peter.

The audience has heard the adjective *θεῖος* (“divine”) twice in 1:3-4. In 1:3 it described Christ’s divine power. The repetition of *θεῖος* in 1:4 in connection with “divine nature” therefore implies Christ’s divine power, through knowledge of Christ who calls by means of his glory and excellence (1:3). The promises hold that believers will share in Christ’s own life. Besides this association with Christ the use of *θεῖος* in 1:3 also discloses the temporal aspect of sharing divine nature. Insofar as Christ’s power presented everything necessary for life and piety in the past, and since “life” pertains to Christ’s immortal nature, “divine nature” has both present and future components. Participation in Christ’s life begins here and now and continues with eternal life.⁶⁵

The teaching of 1 Peter accords with these conclusions. The words *θεῖος* (“divine”) and *φύσις* (“nature”) do not occur in 1 Peter, but the word *κοινωνός* (“sharer”) does. Peter calls himself a “sharer (*κοινωνός*) of the glory to be revealed” (5:1). The use of this word in 2 Pet 1:4 echoes 1 Pet 5:1 and points to the revelation of the glory of Christ at the end time (cf. 1 Pet 1:5, 7).⁶⁶ The connection is clear: if you share (*κοινωνεῖτε*) Christ’s sufferings, you will rejoice in the revelation of Christ’s glory (1 Pet 4:13). First Peter thus envisions a future sharing in Christ’s own life.

As far as beginning this sharing in the present, 1 Peter agrees. Believers have already been reborn into living hope (1:3; cf. 1:23).⁶⁷ Baptism saves in the present through the suffering and resurrection of Christ (3:21). Furthermore, believers assume Christ’s own

⁶⁵ Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 65) understands “participation in divine nature” as the starting point (not goal) of the Christian life. He notes that, like 1 Pet 4:13 and 5:1, this phrase speaks of real union with Christ.

⁶⁶ Kelly (*Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, 301) discerns an echo of 1 Pet 5:1 (“sharer of glory”).

⁶⁷ Harvey and Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 35) mark the relation between 2 Pet 1:4 and the reference to “new birth” (new life in Christ) in 1 Pet 1:3.

understanding (ἐννοια) in the present life and avoid human desires (4:1-2; cf. 1:13-14; 2:11). Thus 1 Peter stresses the present sharing Christ's life and the outward expression of this sharing through specific moral behavior focused on God and the world to come rather than purely earthly pursuits.

The fact that both 1 and 2 Peter emphasize the present moral implications of sharing divine life argues for a present sharing in Christ's divine life.⁶⁸ Both letters concentrate on the gifts of Christ enabling such new behavior ordered to eternal life (1 Pet 1:3-7; 2:11-12; 2 Pet 1:8, 10-11). Both letters use the same language to describe the purely human behavior that must now be avoided as detrimental to the new life of Christ: "desire" (ἐπιθυμία, 1 Pet 1:14; 2:11; 4:2, 3; 2 Pet 1:4). The meaning of "sharers of divine nature" in 2 Pet 1:4 encompasses both the present and future meanings elaborated in 1 Peter.⁶⁹ The association of this phrase in 2 Pet 1:4 with the knowledge of Christ, and its subsequent contrast with corruption and desire, suggest that "sharers of divine nature" recalls and reformulates 1 Peter's central teaching on rebirth and baptism. As in 1 Peter this treatment of the beginning of eschatological life in the present allows for the immediate presentation of Christian morality in the discourse of 2 Peter. These facts betray the influence of 1 Peter on

⁶⁸ *Contra* Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 45), Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 186), and Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 175), who regard "sharing divine nature" as ethical rather than ontological. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 181-82) and Vögtle (*Der Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 141) argue for an ontological interpretation (involving immortality and incorruption) but do not insist on present participation.

⁶⁹ Fornberg (*Early Church*, 88-89) understands the phrase in terms of immortality. He supports an interpretation of present sharing in divine life since escape from desire—not the world—is required. The passages in 1 Peter dealing with desire (1 Pet 1:13-16; 2:11-12; 4:1-2) suggest the same.

2 Peter and suggest that the concise formulation of 2 Pet 1:3-4 serves as a summary of teaching already familiar from 1 Peter.⁷⁰

“Having Fled the Corruption in the World through Desire”⁷¹

The final section of 2 Pet 1:4 provides a condition for sharing Christ’s divine nature: believers must have fled the corruption in the world because of desire. If “sharers of divine nature” represents the goal and discursive high point of 1:3-4, then the following phrase concerning corruption and desire affords a significant counterpoint. “Corruption” (φθορά) and “desire” (ἐπιθυμία) describe antitheses of Christ’s divine life and have the power to take this life away from believers. By following 1 Peter’s description of divine life and what opposes it, 2 Peter displays its indebtedness to 1 Peter.

The audience has not heard the verb ἀποφεύγω previously in 2 Peter. No form of the verb or its compounds appears in 1 Peter. However the phrase “having fled the corruption in the world because of desire” represents the first prohibition in 2 Peter. The aorist tense implies that the exhortation to avoid corruption though desire carries the force of a continuing admonition. It is no coincidence that the first prohibition in 1 Peter also concerns

⁷⁰ Starr (*Sharers in Divine Nature*, 233) states that 2 Peter envisions a participation in Christ that has ethical implications but does so without taking into account the narrative of Christ’s passion. Since 2 Peter does not explain the passion of Christ as the basis for the ethical dimension of participation of Christ, the easiest explanation is that the work of 1 Peter in this regard was sufficient and sufficiently familiar to the audience. This is an example of what Joel B. Green (“Narrating the Gospel in 1 and 2 Peter,” *Int* 60 [2006] 262-77, here 275) describes as 1 Peter “filling in the blanks” for 2 Peter.

⁷¹ The text here also has several variants. The majority of manuscripts (A B pc lat 20 [with a minor variant in 0209]) reads τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς. A grammatical correction to the accusative case to accord with the participle ἀποφυγόντες explains the reading τὴν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐπιθυμίαν φθορᾶς ([*P*⁷² reads φθοράν] & co; Hier). Haplography explains the omission of the second ἐν in the reading τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐπιθυμίας καὶ φθορᾶς (C Ψ [81 does not read τῷ]. 614. 630. 945. 1241. 1505. 1739 *al sy*^h). See Metzger, *TCGNT*, 630.

desire: “Do not conform yourselves to your former desires (ἐπιθυμίας) in ignorance”

(1:14). First Peter’s repeated and multifaceted indictment of desire underlies its negative portrayal in 2 Pet 1:4. The text of 1 Pet 2:1-2 exhorts its audience to “put away” (ἀποτίθημι) all wickedness, deceit, and hypocrisy, and to thirst for spiritual milk. Peter urges his audience to “keep away” from fleshly desires that fight against the soul (2:11). Aside from the link to “desire” in 2:11, both of these passages detail what believers are to avoid; i.e., what is harmful to their new life in Christ. Fleshly desires characterize their former ignorance before believers came to knowledge of Christ. Among these pitfalls are wickedness, deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and malicious speech. All of these betray a concern for the world not consistent with Christian faith. Second Peter picks up on this theme and models its own initial prohibition on 1 Peter’s proscriptions. Knowledge of Christ and the attainment of Christ’s life do not admit of corruption or human desires.

The “world” (κόσμος) refers to the physical world, the realm of the present life, in which corruption and desire are found.⁷² The sense of κόσμος in 1 Pet 5:9 accords with this interpretation: the world represents the environment in which the brotherhood of believers finds itself, suffering and struggling to keep the faith.⁷³ The world is not always a friendly place for believers, as 2 Pet 1:4 maintains.

According to 1:4 believers should flee the “corruption” (φθορά) in the world. Since believers are still alive after they have fled this corruption—it is a prerequisite for sharing

⁷² Hermann Sasse (“κοσμέω, κόσμος κτλ,” *TDNT*, 3. 885) gives the association of κόσμος with the transitory world, the locus of corruption. Witherington (*Letters and Homilies*, 305) calls κόσμος the world organized by human beings against God, as in John and James.

⁷³ The fact that Christ existed before the foundation of the world (κόσμος, 1 Pet 1:20) encourages them to persevere. The word κόσμος also appears in 1 Pet 3:3 with the meaning “decoration.”

divine nature—the text has moral corruption in mind.⁷⁴ The audience has heard that everything necessary for piety has been granted through knowledge of Christ (1:3); furthermore, Christ’s excellence implies curbing moral corruption (1:4). But the audience has also heard that Christ’s divine power has provided everything necessary for life through knowledge of Christ (1:3). Christ calls by his glory, and the content of his promises involves salvation (1:4). Therefore the word “corruption” (φθορά) in 1:4 at least implies a contrast between life in Christ and the mortality of the natural world.⁷⁵ This careful choice of words reinforces the quality of divine nature in the course of explaining its ethical requirement.⁷⁶ It also shows how Christian life in this world and eschatological life are connected: avoiding corruption in the world leads to incorruptibility in Christ’s kingdom (1:11).

The instances of the word ἄφθαρτος (“incorruptible” or “imperishable”) in 1 Peter confirm this suggestion of eternal life and represent the background for the use of φθορά in 2 Pet 1:4. In 1 Pet 1:4 the word ἄφθαρτος describes the inheritance held in store for believers in heaven, the living hope they nourish and salvation ready to be revealed at the last time (1:3-5). Believers have been redeemed not by perishable (φθαρτός) things but by the blood of Christ (1:18). Likewise believers have been born anew from imperishable (ἄφθαρτος) not perishable (φθαρτός) seed (1:23). Thus the predominant usage of these words in 1 Peter stresses the eternal life of faith not bound by the limits of earthly life. The

⁷⁴ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 187) frames the transformation as an escape from moral corruption. This also argues for a present sharing in divine life.

⁷⁵ Günther Harder (“φθείρω, φθορά κτλ.,” *TDNT*, 9. 104) stresses the connotation of physical rather than moral corruption.

⁷⁶ Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 157) respects both poles: “corruption” here refers to perishable nature and moral corruption. A similar contrast appears in 1 Pet 2:11, where “fleshly desires” (σαρκικὰ ἐπιθυμίας) are said to fight against the “soul” (ψυχή).

reference to the incorruptibility (ἄφθαρτος) of a meek and peaceful spirit as the true ornamentation for women in 3:4 insinuates the connection between Christian moral life and eschatological life. The treatment of incorruptibility in 1 Peter covers both the moral and physical senses and serves as the inspiration for the pregnant sense of φθορά in 2 Pet 1:4.

“Desire”

Corruption exists in the world “through desire.” The semantic range of the word ἐπιθυμία can include positive or neutral longings; for example, the desire for happiness or the natural appetites of the human body.⁷⁷ Throughout the NT, however, the word often carries its negative connotation: excessive, destructive, and irrational desires—“lusts” or “passions.”⁷⁸ As a summary term, ἐπιθυμία signifies what opposes the will of God (cf. 1 Pet 4:2). The contrast between desire and divine nature in 2 Pet 1:4 confirms this general definition for ἐπιθυμία.

By claiming that corruption in the world exists because of desire, 1:4 seemingly invokes the story of the Fall (Genesis 3).⁷⁹ The desire for knowledge led to the disregard of God’s command and introduced moral and physical degeneration into the world. Desire still causes moral and physical corruption. Believers struggle continually to become sharers in divine nature by avoiding corruption and its root cause, desire. The method for doing so

⁷⁷ See Friedrich Büchsel, “θύμος, ἐπιθυμία, κτλ.,” *TDNT*, 3. 167-71 for a discussion of ἐπιθυμία as a neutral term (*vox media*). See Luke 22:15.

⁷⁸ See “ἐπιθυμία,” *BDAG*, s.v. Achtemeier (*1 Peter*, 120) calls the use of ἐπιθυμία in 1 Peter “an essentially pejorative description.”

⁷⁹ Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 219) and Witherington (*Letters and Homilies*, 304) suggest a connection to the Fall account, whereas Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 183-84) focuses on the background of Greek philosophy.

proposed in 1:3-4 involves the knowledge of Christ. Unlike Eve's attempt to seize knowledge and become like God through disobedience, the Christian clings to knowledge of Christ, obeys its ethical implications, and shares divine nature.

The presence of ἐπιθυμία in 1:4 used as a summary of what opposes the attainment of the life of Christ echoes the usage of ἐπιθυμία in 1 Peter. Furthermore, the opposition of ἐπιθυμία and knowledge of Christ (ἐπίγνωσις) in 1:4 echoes the same contraposition of desire and a mental attachment to Christ prevalent throughout the discourse of 1 Peter. The appearance of these themes, related as they are in 2 Pet 1:4, represents one of the strongest indications of a linguistic and theological relationship between 1 and 2 Peter.

Desire in 1 Peter

The verb ἐπιθυμέω occurs in 1 Pet 1:12. In the ears of the audience this first mention of the concept of “desire” influences their perception of the following three texts concerning harmful desire. Here the action of desiring attributed to the angels can only be positive: loyal to God, the angels long to understand the saving mysteries revealed fully only at the present time to the audience. They want something precious, which believers themselves are invited to consider. By calling attention to the belief that angels want this knowledge, 1 Peter builds an ethos of desire in its audience. This initial instance of the idea contrasts starkly with the following occurrences of the noun ἐπιθυμία. In 1:14, 2:11, and 4:2-3, people entertain desires. These desires are modified negatively in each case. Furthermore 1 Peter depicts base human desires as unworthy of Christians. Personal, spiritual, and intellectual attachment to Christ forbids such attachment to earthly desire, which distracts from the one

worthy goal of Christians: longing for Christ. Those who crave anything besides Christ do not understand their hope or faith correctly. The discourse establishes a dichotomy between hope and faith in Christ on the one hand and worldly desire on the other. From this point on “desire” (ἐπιθυμία) describes those negative pursuits that oppose life in Christ.

The first instance of ἐπιθυμία in 1:14 summarizes the former lives of the audience, when desire was the only guide.⁸⁰ It is the opposite of holiness, since desire draws and sculpts lives in ways contrary to God’s will.⁸¹ Within the discourse of 1:13-16, it is a *definitio per negationem*, what to avoid in the pursuit of true holiness. Considering the whole context of 1:1-16, pursuing human desires contradicts Christians’ rebirth and life of living hope in all its temporal dimensions. Language of the mind shows the necessity of a dynamic and resilient mindfulness of Christ, the basis of a strong relationship with Christ, which alone can preserve faith in the face of persecution. The discourse depicts ἐπιθυμία as disobedient, ignorant, and *passé*: altogether inappropriate for a spiritual connection with Christ. As the opposite of hope, desire becomes the symptom of despair, the content of life without God or meaning, the ultimately disappointing, human substitute that supplants the goal of serving God.⁸² It represents a choice of self over God, this life over the life God wants to give in Christ. It contrasts with the salvific hope and understanding of the faith at the beginning of the exhortation (1:13). First Peter leads its audience by the sequence of

⁸⁰ Eduard Schweizer (*Der Erste Petrusbrief* [ZBNT; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1949] 34) writes “Wo die Begierden noch herrschen . . . da lebt [der Mensch] noch ohne Christus.”

⁸¹ Joel Green, *1 Peter* (Two Horizons NT Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007) 38.

⁸² See Donald Senior, “1 Peter” (in *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter* [SacPag 15; Colledgeville: Liturgical Press, 2003] 4-160) 42; Peter Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 68.

desire passages to a realization of the importance of combating desire as an opportunity to meet Christ and a development of Christian hope.

The second text about combating desires, 2:11-12, serves as a transition in the discourse of 1 Peter, an introduction to practical advice for daily life in a non-Christian society. The presence of the desire theme at this point indicates its importance: once again, desire—now modified by “of the flesh” (σαρκικός)—summarizes behavior contrary to Christian identity in the context of social convention. For the second time, 1 Peter frames the discussion in spiritual terms, not mentioning the mind specifically but focusing on the destructive effect of desires on the life of the soul, the inner life open to God’s action. The contrast of the terms σαρκικός and ψυχή, however, leaves little doubt as to the rational nature of the inner life. A concentration on this inner life as opposed to simply natural or human desires implies a mindfulness of God.

The audience notices some development in the exposition of desire at this point in the text. The audience heard the description of desire as contrary to Christian identity and hope, and as characteristic of past ignorance in 1:13-16. In 2:11-12 the combat against desire appears as part of a present struggle for life in the context of regular existence in society. “Desires” can corrode the life Christians have received in Christ, and believers must defend that gift by preparing themselves for a continual battle. Only by clinging to God can believers survive in society. The battle against internal desire prepares Christians for their external trials, since it trains Christians to rely on the hope they have in Christ.

In the climactic passage about desire, the audience hears the final development of this theme (4:1-3). Here, the content of ἐπιθυμία reaches its broadest range: all desires of human

beings (ἄνθρώπων) that might impede the will of God. First Peter has been describing the will of God, the new life in Christ, in positive terms since the beginning of the letter (ἐλπίς, 1:3; χάρις, 1:13; ψυχή, 2:11). At this juncture ἐπιθυμία continues to serve as a negative summary of anything that opposes the new life of faith. First Peter 4:1-3 also clarifies the exact nature of the Christian's mental link with Christ: by adopting the same insight shown by Christ, the believer remains faithful to the life of Christ received in baptism. In both of these ways the audience hears in this discussion of desire the final development of themes present in 1:13-16 and 2:11-12.

In 4:1 the audience is exhorted to adopt the “insight” (ἐννοια) of Christ, i.e., that Christ has saved Christians through his own suffering. Christians have the grace to suffer with Christ in their own lives, displaying the same trust in God. Christ is the model of how to suffer and the source of strength for the struggle, since his death and resurrection guarantees life for those who believe in him. Christ himself is the armor worn by the baptized Christian, who maintains a mental connection with the purpose and will of God. The mental understanding of the Christian identity emerges through a confrontation with all human desire. Through a mindfulness of Christ's victory Christians can transcend the trials or temptations of the moment and witness to the power of God (1:5). Their perspective also serves as a preparation for the end times and warns their neighbors to prepare for the coming of Christ (1:5, 13). Like the other ἐπιθυμία passages 4:1-3 balances the past actions of Christ (and baptism) with present struggle and future reward. Unlike 1:13-16 and 2:11-12, however, the emphasis here rests on the future. Believers spend the rest of their lives on the

will of God and not on futility. Thus 4:1-3 completes the consideration of ἐπιθυμία across the past, present, and future.

This brief account of the theme of desire in 1 Peter shows its importance and development throughout the discourse. Confronting desire always involves a mental attachment to Christ in 1 Peter. Desire itself is associated with “ignorance” (1:14). By resisting desire Christians hold true life and prepare for the eschatological life to be revealed in Christ.

Significance for 2 Peter

The prominence and correlation of the “desire” and “knowledge” themes in 1 Peter suggests that the appearance of these themes in 2 Pet 1:4 represents a deliberate summary and recapitulation of 1 Peter. In both letters human desire represents the antithesis of God’s will and the source of corruption in the world. At three points in 1 Peter (1:14; 2:11; 4:2) mental language describing an intellectual attachment to Christ appears as the counterforce against desire. The discourse urges Christians to focus on Christ and to let their knowledge of him—rather than desire—determine their lives. The opposition of “knowledge of Christ” and “desire” at the beginning of 2 Peter recalls this established pattern of 1 Peter. The influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter appears clearly in this connection. Of course, 2 Peter has adapted these themes, expanding the role of “knowledge of Christ” and describing it as the means of partaking in the divine nature in the present life. But the correlation of “knowledge” and “desire” in 2 Pet 1:4 reveals the influence of 1 Peter on the language and thought of the beginning of 2 Peter’s *prooemium*.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented an exegesis of 2 Pet 1:1-4 in light of 1 Peter in order to expose the lexical and conceptual links between the letters and to argue for the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter. Several of the words and phrases in the first part of 2 Peter's *prooemium* also appear in 1 Peter with similar meanings and in passages critical to its presentation of Christ. I have explored these links and argued that they represent the background taken for granted by the author and audience of 2 Peter. The summary character of 1:3-4 requires such background. The amount and arrangement of common material suggests that 1 Peter provides it. As confirmation of my thesis I have shown how the usage and ideas of 1 Peter support and interpret 2 Pet 1:3-4.

I demonstrated how the salutation of 2 Peter shares structural features and common vocabulary with the salutation of 1 Peter. The appearance of ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:2 constitutes an addition to the wish for grace and peace, which 2 Peter copies exactly otherwise. This functions as an introduction of a major theme of the letter and signals the interpretive direction of 2 Peter's indebtedness to 1 Peter: a reaffirmation and development of the importance of knowledge of Christ in connection with ethical and eschatological life.

Second Peter 1:3 demonstrates the summary function of 1:3-4 and echoes the more extensive treatment of the "divine power" and "knowledge" of Christ in 1 Peter by means of several catchwords. "Life and piety" recall the teaching of 1 Peter on the eternal life won for believers by the resurrection of Christ, as well as the practical implications of sharing living hope in a hostile world. The call of Christ through "glory and excellence" further reviews 1 Peter's teaching on Christ. The fact that 2 Peter describes Christ rather than God as the one

who calls believers does not represent a disjunction between 1 and 2 Peter. It reflects 2 Peter's interest in the direct role of Christ in God's overall plan of salvation—a role implied by 1 Pet 1:11. Believers know Christ, and they know God through him. The second instance of “knowledge” (ἐπίγνωσις) in 2 Pet 1:3 harks back to the ubiquitous theme of mental attachment to Christ in 1 Peter. Second Peter uses the knowledge theme to highlight the importance for believers of a personal and considered relationship with Christ. This theme, which will appear again in 2 Pet 1:8, emphasizes the person of Christ as present and accessible.

Second Peter 1:4 continues the focus on Christ and discloses the goal of faithfulness and righteousness in this life. The great promises for life—given by Christ—appear in 1 Peter. Through the sufferings and glories of Christ believers come to share in divine nature. The fact of this “sharing” and its meaning (present and future) are clear from 1 Peter as well as 2 Peter. By contrasting divine nature (achieved through knowledge of Christ) with “desire,” 2 Pet 1:4 gives clear evidence of the influence of 1 Peter, which contrasted these at several points. Despite its brevity 2 Pet 1:3-4 summarizes and recalls much of 1 Peter's teaching on Christ and develops 1 Peter's teaching on the appropriation of life through knowledge of Christ.

These resonances of 1 Peter suggest that 2 Peter deliberately employs concepts and images from 1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and the knowledge of Christ. The audience recognizes descriptions of Christ and the confrontation with desire as familiar from 1 Peter. Second Peter uses this material to legitimize and hone its emphasis on

commitment to the Christian life and true knowledge of Christ in the face of temptations and attacks against faith.

By reiterating an unconditional rejection of “desire,” the short positive summary of Christian faith in 2 Pet 1:3-4 ends on a practical hortatory note and therefore looks forward to the ethical teaching in 1:5-9. In Chapter Three I will offer an exegesis of this middle section of the *prooemium* in light of 1 Peter, noting the lexical and conceptual links and suggesting that the ethical teaching of 1 Peter stands beneath that of 2 Peter in these verses.

Chapter Three

Audience-Oriented Exegesis of 2 Pet 1:5-9 in Light of 1 Peter

1. Introduction

In this chapter I will read 2 Pet 1:5-9 in light of 1 Peter. I will take care to note verbal and conceptual resonances between these verses and the words and themes of 1 Peter. I argued in Chapter Two that 2 Pet 1:1-4 presents the audience with a summary of 1 Peter's teaching on Christ and the moral implications of Christian faith. Both letters use intellectual language in passages concerning resistance to desire (1 Pet 1:14; 2:11; 4:2; 2 Pet 1:4) in order to describe the necessary mental attachment to Christ. Second Peter continues to highlight the theme of knowledge of Christ in 1:5-9 by casting this knowledge as the origin and goal of human virtue. The dichotomy created by the text in 1:4 between divine life and corruption through desire continues in 1:8-9, where the text contrasts a fruitful life based on knowledge of Christ with blindness and forgetfulness of past forgiveness of sins.

I will argue that several key themes from 1 Peter stand behind this section of 2 Peter. In addition to the continuing emphasis on knowledge of Christ which, as I demonstrated in Chapter Two, echoes the language of 1 Peter, the presence of certain virtues in the list in 2 Pet 1:5-7 recalls their use and correlation in 1 Peter. The virtue list as a whole recalls the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter and implies that knowledge of Christ leads to the practical imitation of Christ. The reference to cleansing of former sins in 2 Pet 1:9 echoes the teaching on baptism in 1 Pet 3:21. These are among the signs that 2 Pet 1:5-9 draws on the background of 1 Peter and enhances its stress on the moral dimension of knowledge of

Christ. These echoes of 1 Peter suggest that 2 Peter deliberately employs concepts from

1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and knowledge of Christ

Translation of 2 Pet 1:5-9

(5) For this very reason, make every effort to supply to your faith excellence, to excellence knowledge, (6) to knowledge self-control, to self-control endurance, to endurance piety, (7) to piety brotherly affection,¹ to brotherly affection love.

(8) These things existing and growing among you make you neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (9) The one in whom these things are not present is so nearsighted that he is blind, forgetting the cleansing of his old sins.

2. Christian Virtue from Faith to Love: 2 Pet 1:5-7

The most striking feature of this section of 2 Peter is the catalogue of virtues contained in 1:5-7. The catalogue takes the form of a sorites, a list of elements that proceeds sequentially by the repetition of the last key word of the previous element to a conclusion.² There is no broad consensus on the catalogue's structure: some commentators contend that the list has a purposeful construction, while others maintain that the virtues are not arranged in any particular order.³ Many commentators note the significance of the placement of faith

¹ I translate φιλαδελφία "brotherly affection" in order to reflect the literal sense of its component parts and to highlight its affinity with certain terms containing ἀδελφός in 1 Peter. Of course, this translation does not deny but rather encompasses the ideas of "sisterly affection" and "mutual affection." See BDAG, s.v.

² See Henry Fischel, "The Uses of Sorites (*Climax, Gradatio*) in the Tannaitic Period," *HUCA* 44 (1973) 119-51, here 119. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 174-76) discusses other examples of sorites, including Wis 6:17-20, *m. Sotah* 9:15, and Herm. *Vis.* 3:8:7. A NT example occurs in Rom 5:3-5.

³ Charles ("Language and Logic," 58) argues that the virtues in 1:5-7 have a logical progression, with each rooted in the preceding, faith being the foundation and love the climax. Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 213) thinks that the chain structure stems from rabbinic oratory and so has no theological value; Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 72) does not see a logical sequence but a broad description of Christian life.

(πίστις) and love (ἀγάπη) as the first and last virtues in the list, implying the progression from Christian faith to charitable action.⁴

After considering each virtue individually, I will offer a general evaluation of the list in the context of 2 Peter. I will argue that the arrangement of virtues in 1:5-7 points to a development from personal, internal virtue to external virtue in the community context. Virtue springs from and articulates knowledge of Christ. It manifests itself initially from a logical point of view in knowledge and self-control, and then in external piety and concern for others. I will argue that the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter influenced the choice of the initial virtues, whereas the final virtues appear prominently in the text of 1 Peter (see the admonition to brotherly affection and love in 1:22 and 4:8).

*“For this very reason”*⁵

The adverbial phrase “for this very reason” (καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ) at the beginning of 1:5 shows that the exhortation to virtue in 1:5-9 depends on the summary material regarding Christ’s gifts (1:3-4).⁶ The moral exhortation of 1:5-9 rests on the positive statement of knowledge of Christ and its attendant promises and reality. At this point the discourse

⁴ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 185) maintains that the form is conventional and only the placement of faith and love have significance. Witherington (*Letters and Homilies*, 307) points to a similar structure in 2 Cor 8:7. Schrage (*Die “katholischen” Briefe*, 132) disagrees and argues that no special significance is attached to faith and love since neither term occurs again in 2 Peter. Despite this fact, their position in the virtue list underscores their importance for the *prooemium*.

⁵ The majority of manuscripts (\mathcal{P}^{72} B C* P [049. 0209] \mathfrak{M}) reads αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ preserving the unity of the adverbial phrase. Some manuscripts (N C² Ψ 33. 81. 323. 614. 630. 945. 1241. 1505. 1739 *al sy*) read αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο or omit τοῦτο (*A pc* latt read αὐτοὶ δέ) or δέ (1243. 2298). The unity of the adverbial phrase and the quality and quantity of external witnesses argue for the reading αὐτὸ τοῦτο δέ. See Metzger, *TCGNT*, 630-31.

⁶ On the translation “for this very reason,” see BDAG, 153. Hiebert (“Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1,” 44) states that the adverbial phrase summarizes 1:3-4 as the basis for a logical demand.

discloses the implications of the knowledge of Christ (1:3): believers respond to Christ's gifts and express their knowledge of him through a life of virtue. Moreover, these virtues enhance and deepen the believer's knowledge of Christ (1:8). Thus the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7 depends on two references to the knowledge of Christ. Virtue flows from and enhances knowledge of Christ. At the beginning of 1:5 the audience has learned about the role of knowledge of Christ in terms of sharing divine nature and withdrawal from worldly corruption. Now the audience learns how this knowledge leads to cooperation with Christ's power (1:3). Christ's gifts require a response. Virtue expresses and authenticates faith and knowledge.

“Make every effort”

The participial phrase “make every effort” (σπουδῆν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες) serves as an introduction to the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7. Since the discourse has emphasized the power and gift of Christ (1:3-4) this call for effort does not insinuate confidence in human achievement apart from divine assistance. Rather the situation of this exhortation after 1:3-4 and the fundamental role of faith in 1:5 point to the conclusion that human beings cooperate with Christ by the cultivation of virtue. The aorist tense of the participle and main verb in 1:5 highlight the general nature of the injunction to practice virtue.⁷

This combination of the noun σπουδή and the verb παρεισφέρω represents a familiar expression in Koine Greek relating to benefactors who put their zeal or good will into some

⁷ On the use of the complexive aorist in general commands, see BDF §337. I translated the aorist participle ἀποφυγόντες in 1:4 “having fled” in connection with the ingressive sense of the verb γένησθε (“you might become sharers of divine nature”).

project.⁸ Given the emphasis of 2 Peter on the call and knowledge of Christ as the basis for human response, any attempt to read 1:5 as a description of believers as benefactors misses the mark. Believers must bring all their power and effort to bear in cooperation with the knowledge they have received in order to grow in that knowledge and produce fruit (1:8).

Although the words *σπουδή* and *παρεισφέρω* do not occur in 1 Peter, the compound *ἀναφέρω* appears in connection with the actions of Christ and believers. In 2:5 believers are described as stones built into a spiritual house to offer (*ἀνεύγκαι*) spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. First Peter 2:24 applies the words of Isa 53:4 and 53:12 to Christ: he brought up (*ἀνήνεγκεν*) our sins to the cross.⁹ Both of these passages recall the extensive use of *ἀναφέρω* in the sacrificial language of the LXX.¹⁰ Second Peter 1:5 does not contain the sacrificial nuance of these texts from 1 Peter. However, this verse requires an active response to the knowledge of Christ on the part of believers: they are to “make every effort” to grow in virtue in response to the gifts of Christ (1:3). Therefore, the same active cooperation with Christ is visible in 2 Pet 1:5 as in 1 Peter 2. Although a secular precedent for *σπουδῆν παρεισφέρω* exists and the parallels with 1 Peter are hardly definite, the notion that the pursuit of virtue in 2 Pet 1:5 builds upon the idea of spiritual sacrifice of believers in 1 Pet 2:5 remains an interesting possibility. It is beyond doubt that the exhortation to diligence in 2 Pet 1:5 accords with the general tone of the exhortation of 1 Peter as a whole. The admonition to “hope completely” and behave as “obedient children”

⁸ This is the determination of Spicq, “*παρεισφέρω*,” *TLNT*, 3. 40. He notes occurrences in Josephus, *A.J.* 11.8.4 §324 and Polybius 22.12.12. Cf. *BDAG*, s.v.

⁹ Isaiah 53:4 reads οὗτος τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει. The verb *ἀνήνεγκεν* occurs in Isa 53:12.

¹⁰ Konrad Weiss, “*φέρω*, *ἀναφέρω* κτλ.,” *TDNT*, 9. 60-61.

(1:13-16) demonstrates the need for ongoing effort, as does the general exhortation to “good behavior” among the nations (2:12).

“To supply to your faith”

The main verb of the exhortation, “supply” (ἐπιχορηγήσατε), governs the rest of 2 Pet 1:5-7. Like the participle παρεισενέγκαντες, the charge here to supply specific virtues to faith does not suggest independence from Christ as if human effort alone were enough to partake of divine nature. The verb ἐπιχορηγέω also resembles the verb παρεισφέρω in that ἐπιχορηγέω has a contemporary secular paradigm. Originally χορηγέω meant “pay for a chorus” as the benefactor of a civic dramatic production.¹¹ Its appearance here intimates the task of believers to supply from their own resources and efforts growth in character and outward virtue in response to their knowledge of Christ. Their efforts build on the foundation of faith (1:5) and the gifts bestowed by Christ (1:3).

The occurrence of χορηγέω in 1 Peter supports this interpretation. According to 1 Pet 4:11, the one who serves should do so with the strength God supplies (χορηγῆ), so that in all things God might be glorified through Jesus Christ. Christ supplies the motivation and ability for believers to grow in virtue since they share divine nature and have escaped the corruption in the world through desire (2 Pet 1:4). By supplying their own effort and applying their knowledge of Christ in their own discrete circumstances, believers build on the divine gift and participate in some measure in God’s own activity. The fact that χορηγέω occurs in 1 Pet 4:11—an important doxology in the discourse of the letter—reveals

¹¹ Norman Hillyer (*1 and 2 Peter, Jude* [NIBC; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1992] 164-65) discusses the history of χορηγέω and suggests the nuance “vie in generosity to furnish.” Cf. BDAG, s.v.

something of the gravity of cooperating with God's plan and its significance for the glorification of God. These concepts are present in 2 Pet 1:5 as well. Believers respond to Christ's action by supplying their own contribution and cooperating with Christ's work to some degree.¹²

The audience encountered the word "faith" (πίστις) in 2 Pet 1:1, where the salutation identifies the addressees of the letter as those "who receive a faith equal in honor to us." As I indicated in my exegesis of 1:1 faith includes both subjective attachment to Christ and objective content (familiarity with the action and significance of Christ).¹³ The discourse of 2 Peter subsequent to the first instance of πίστις enhances our understanding of "faith." Those who receive faith share in the righteousness accomplished by Jesus Christ (1:1). The author wishes the faithful grace and peace in the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ (1:2) through which everything for life and piety has been given by Christ's divine power (1:3). This knowledge is of Christ, who calls us by his own glory and excellence, through which the great and honorable promises have been given to those who believe, so that they might partake of divine nature having fled the corruption in the world through desire (1:4). Now the discourse calls on believers to make every effort to supply to their faith specific virtues (1:5). From the beginning, 2 Peter emphasizes the objective value and content of faith as well as its efficacy in the transformation of human life. Believers accept Christ in faith and grow in virtue as an expression of their knowledge of Christ.

¹² Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 72) notes that the phrase "having fled the corruption in the world through desire" in 1:4 alluded to believers' contribution and 1:5 expands on it. He also notes that the human contribution lies between two instances of ἐπιχορηγέω (1:5, 11) and between the initial (1:3-4) and final (1:11) gifts of God.

¹³ Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 158-59), Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 96), and Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 192) perceive "faith" as faithfulness, trust, and loyalty. Harrington ("Jude and 2 Peter," 245) argues for an element of objective truth.

The fact that “faith” serves as the foundation for the rest of the list of virtues in 1:5 shows the fundamental necessity of belief in God and openness to his plan in Christ.¹⁴ Faith in the sense of trust and basic understanding of Christian teaching must be the starting point for all subsequent development in the Christian life. Thus the meaning of πίστις in 1:5 is not a reduction of its objective sense in 1:1, nor is it a retreat from the content expounded in 1:1-4. Although “faith” has an incipient nuance in 1:5, its basic meaning as the subjective appropriation of objective knowledge remains constant.

All of this echoes the function of faith in 1 Peter. The *prooemium* details the rebirth to living hope accomplished by God through the resurrection of Christ, a rebirth to a heavenly inheritance for those guarded by the power of God through faith (1:3-5). Although the quality of faith is tested by trials, it leads to joy at the appearance of Christ (1:6-7). Believers await the goal of their faith, the salvation of their souls (1:9). Faith represents the point of contact with God and the means of appropriating God’s gift of salvation. Those who have faith necessarily have knowledge of Christ, even if they need to grow in the Christian life of knowledge and virtue. The exhortation to hope and holiness in 1:13-16—which features intellectual language and a rejection of ignorant desires—depends on extant faith and urges believers to greater faith and familiarity with Christ. The prospect of eschatological grace at the appearance of Christ also figures prominently in this exhortation (1:13). Thus the *prooemium* of 1 Peter establishes faith as the basis for the hortatory material throughout the letter. Faith is the indispensable element intimately linked with knowledge of Christ that motivates a life of effort and virtue intent on an eschatological reward at the

¹⁴ Thus Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 185) regards “faith” as an explanation of “everything for life and piety” in 1:3. Watson (*Invention*, 97) regards “faith” in 1:5 as another link with 1:3-4, since faith is the basis of the benefits described there.

appearance of Christ. The appearance of faith as the basis of all other Christian virtues in 2 Pet 1:5-7 thus echoes the appearance of faith as the basis of hope and Christian conduct in 1 Peter.

The phrase “to your faith excellence” (ἐν δὲ τῇ πίστει ὑμῶν τὴν ἀρετὴν) marks the beginning of the virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7. The pattern “to [your] _____, [supply] _____” (ἐν δὲ τῇ . . . τὴν . . . , featuring ἐν plus the previous noun in the dative followed by the next noun in the accusative) occurs a total of seven times over these three verses. The structure of the virtue catalogue does not imply a rigid step-by-step progression in virtue according to the order presented; the rhetorical flourish of these verses does not deny the possibility of contemporaneous growth in all of these related virtues.¹⁵ It is a mistake, however, to deny any significance to the arrangement of the virtues in 1:5-7.¹⁶ While the structure of the list certainly highlights its beginning and ending points (faith and love), the virtues in the midst of the list demonstrate a definite progression from internal self-control to external behavior. The progression from personal virtue to community-related virtue echoes the moral exhortation of 1 Peter 1–2. The list in 2 Pet 1:5-7 advances the theme of knowledge of Christ (1:3, 8) by stating what that knowledge entails in practice. I will argue that some of these virtues refer to the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter. Knowledge of Christ leads to imitation of Christ. Growth in these virtues also leads to eschatological knowledge of Christ (2 Pet 1:8,

¹⁵ Witherington (*Letters and Homilies*, 309) warns against confusing the interlocking structure with a chain of dependent clauses and ideas. Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épître de Saint Pierre, L'Épître de Saint Jude*, 56) evaluate the set of virtues as bearing on a global, coherent comportment of life; there is no need to establish a hierarchy or relationship among virtues. Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 220) remarks that to some extent each virtue stands on its own.

¹⁶ Charles (*Virtue Amidst Vice*, 156-58) has a point when he says that the virtues are not random but rather cohere in an organic unity that is a sign of a deeper theological reality.

11). By living these virtues believers partake of divine nature and manifest knowledge of Christ (1:3-4, 8).¹⁷

The second person plural genitive pronoun (ὁμῶν) occurs only in the first element of the catalogue: “to supply to your faith excellence.” This first occurrence of the second person pronoun underscores the hortatory character of 1:5-7. It points to the moral implications of the audience’s faith (1:1). In the remainder of the *prooemium* (1:5-11) first and second person pronouns alternate, emphasizing unity in knowledge of Christ (on earth and in the Kingdom of Christ). Here the pronoun emphasizes the role of faith as the foundation for all growth in virtue. Since the audience has faith (1:1), and since the divine power of Christ has given everything necessary for life and piety through knowledge of him (1:3), the audience has no grounds for anxiety. Believers proceed in confidence in the knowledge of Christ toward greater knowledge of him.

“Excellence”

The first virtue listed in 1:5 is the generic word “excellence” (ἀρετή). In the first place believers are to supply excellence to their faith. I translate the word ἀρετή “excellence” here and in its first instance in 1:3. Although the translation “virtue” is possible, I prefer to emphasize the surpassing quality exhibited by Christ (1:3) and required of believers (1:5). This translation also allows me to refer to the list of “virtues” in 1:5-7 without prejudice to the first element in the list.

The term ἀρετή has a rich history in Greek thought, signifying “eminence” and “manliness” in addition to “merit” and “excellence;” it signifies military, civic, or moral

¹⁷ I will discuss this general interpretation after my exegesis of 1:5-7.

quality deserving of recognition.¹⁸ The concept of moral excellence passed easily into Christian exhortation.¹⁹ While the rich patrimony of Greek philosophy and Christian appropriation associated with the term ἀρετή cannot be dismissed, its earlier appearance in 1:3 provides the key to understanding the word in the context of 1:5. In 1:3 the word refers to Christ's excellence. The excellence and glory of Christ are the means by which he calls believers. While the sense of ἀρετή in 1:3 contains some allusion to divine power and mighty deeds—in accord with its sense in 1 Pet 2:9—such an interpretation entails Christ's quality and the conspicuous nature of his divine power.²⁰ The fact that 2 Peter uses the term ἀρετή in 1:3 in reference to Christ and in 1:5 in reference to believers implies that there is some analogy between the excellence of Christ and that of believers.²¹ The discourse of 2 Peter has emphasized the basis of virtue in the gift and knowledge of Christ (1:3-4). The appearance of “excellence” as the first element of the virtue list, immediately after “faith,” means that believers are to imitate the excellence of Christ. This moral imperative flows logically from the previous exhortation to become sharers of divine nature (1:4). Faith and knowledge of Christ inspire practical imitation of his virtue.

¹⁸ Otto Bauernfeind, “ἀρετή,” *TDNT*, 1. 460-61. He remarks that in the LXX the word represents “an attitude which the righteous man must maintain in life and death.” See BDAG, s.v.

¹⁹ Cf. Phil 4:8. Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épitre de Saint Pierre, L'Épitre de Saint Jude*, 55) regard ἀρετή not as a determined practice but as an attitude informed by faith. Michl (*Katholischen Briefe*, 165) considers it the ability to think and do the right.

²⁰ Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 73) wonders if the sense of ἀρετή is different in 1:3 and 1:5, since both instances involve the notion of capability.

²¹ Douglas Harink (*1&2 Peter* [BTC; Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009] 148) notes that ἀρετή is defined with direct reference to Jesus (1:3); therefore believers are called by and to his virtue. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 67) holds that since Christ is presented as the proper excellence of humanity, believers are called to reflect what is attractive about him (1:3).

This conclusion holds great importance for the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. The observation that 1 Peter offers Christ as an example for believers' imitation (2:21; 4:13) whereas 2 Peter does not—focusing instead on abstractions and virtue lists (1:5-7)—suggests that 2 Peter is not related to 1 Peter. If my interpretation is correct, then 2 Peter does offer Christ as the object of believers' imitation at the outset of its moral exhortation. This represents the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter. Second Peter does not need to offer the same extensive account of the excellence of Christ if it aims merely to recapitulate the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter. It does this by means of the term ἀρετή and the first few virtues in 1:5-7. Although ἀρετή does not appear in connection with Christ in 1 Peter, the moral catchword “excellence” represents a general summary of the surpassing quality of Christ described in such passages as 1 Pet 2:21-25 and 3:18. Christ's divine power and moral quality shine through in the redemption he worked for believers (1 Pet 1:19; 2:22-23; 3:18). Building on faith, believers strive for excellence by imitating Christ and by adopting the same insight as Christ (1 Pet 4:1). They emulate his attitude of obedience to the will of God.²²

“To Excellence Knowledge”

After the admonition to imitate the excellence of Christ the catalogue of virtues urges the audience to supply “knowledge” (γνώσις) to this excellence. This is the first occurrence of the word γνώσις in 2 Peter. In my exegesis of 1:3 I discussed the difference between the compound ἐπίγνωσις and the simple noun γνώσις. The fact that 2 Peter uses ἐπίγνωσις as a

²² The influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter in connection with the term ἀρετή remains even if ἀρετή means general civic excellence rather than the excellence of Christ. If ἀρετή suggests civic duty as the first consequence of Christian faith then 2 Peter appears very close to 1 Peter (see 1 Pet 2:12-17; 3:13-16). But the linguistic link between Christ and believers through the word ἀρετή requires an interpretation of 2 Pet 1:5 in terms of the imitation of Christ's excellence.

summary term always in connection with Christ (1:2, 3, 8) whereas γνῶσις occurs only in 1:5 and without direct reference to Christ implies a distinction between the words.

Admittedly, my use of the translation “knowledge” for both words does not clarify this distinction; however, this remains the most accurate translation for each.²³ On the one hand ἐπίγνωσις refers to an intimate, personal knowledge of Christ consistent with conversion and commitment to the Christian faith, which develops through virtue and the Christian life into an eschatological knowledge of Christ in his kingdom (1:8, 11). It describes the knowledge of Christ underlying the whole orientation of one’s life. On the other hand γνῶσις refers to a more general knowledge of good and evil.²⁴ I do not wish to claim that γνῶσις has nothing to do with knowledge of Christ in 2 Peter; but it entails practical knowledge, the “how to” of the Christian life in the context of ordinary circumstances.²⁵ It incorporates knowledge in the ordinary sense—familiarity with the natural order of things. This nuance explains its presence toward the beginning of the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7. Thus there are two types of knowledge under discussion in 2 Pet 1:1-11, represented by two very similar but different words.

²³ Bultmann (“γινώσκω κτλ,” *TDNT*, 1. 703-8) discusses the similarity in meaning between the words and their interchangeability in the papyri but admits that γνῶσις can mean “theoretical knowledge.” The usage in 2 Peter determines the nuances for each word in this context.

²⁴ Fornberg, *Early Church*, 99. Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 96) thinks γνῶσις is the ability to discern requirements of the faith, the means to transform conviction into practice. Witherington (*Letters and Homilies*, 310-11) describes γνῶσις as “practical wisdom” and denies that it appears simply as a variation of ἐπίγνωσις due to the conventions of Asiatic rhetoric.

²⁵ I agree with Michl (*Katholischen Briefe*, 165), Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 213), and Vögtle (*Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 150), all of whom claim that γνῶσις refers to knowledge of the will of God, in the sense that such knowledge leads to deductions about practical matters. The text uses ἐπίγνωσις for direct knowledge of Christ.

The background of 1 Peter prepares for this distinction. I claimed that the use of the term ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Pet 1:1-11 emerges from and amplifies the theme of knowledge of Christ in 1 Peter. The discourse of 1 Peter begins with a reference to God's foreknowledge (πρόγνωσιν, 1:2), which is associated with Christ who was foreknown (προεγνωσμένου, 1:20). Believers gird the loins of their mind (διανοίας, 1:13) by hoping in the grace to be brought at the revelation of Christ. They abandon the former desires of their ignorance (ἀγνοία, 1:14), i.e., the time before they knew Christ. As my exegesis of 2 Pet 1:3 demonstrated, other examples of intellectual language in connection with Christ abound in 1 Peter (e.g., 1:17-19; 2:19; 3:21; 4:1-2; 5:9). All of these passages contain or can be traced to the theme of knowledge of Christ. The single occurrence of γνῶσις in 1 Peter, however, refers to knowledge in general. In 3:7 the discourse urges men to live "according to knowledge" (κατὰ γνῶσιν) with women, the weaker sex. Men should know the basic differences between the genders; they should act with self-knowledge. A basic understanding of self and others in terms of human nature constitutes general knowledge necessary for the Christian life. Thus the usage of γνῶσις in 2 Peter echoes its appearance in 1 Peter.

The pairing of knowledge to excellence in 2 Pet 1:5 communicates the need for an intellectual application of faith, a reasoned approach to ordinary life in pursuit of the excellence of Christ. But the use of the word γνῶσις as opposed to ἐπίγνωσις together with its position toward the beginning of the list suggests that the knowledge of Christ progresses

beyond the intellectual sphere.²⁶ Knowledge of Christ depends on the intellect but ultimately transcends it (1:8, 11).

“To Knowledge Self-Control”

The catalogue continues in 1:6 with the virtue of “self-control” (ἐγκράτεια). This word echoes themes prominent in 1 Peter: the power and self-control of Christ that his followers share. The word ἐγκράτεια does not appear in 1 Peter; however, the word κράτος (“strength”) appears twice. In 4:11 believers cooperate with the strength supplied by God so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and strength forever. In 5:11 strength belongs forever to God who calls believers to his eternal glory in Christ. In 5:6 the discourse warns believers to humble themselves under the mighty (κραταιάν) hand of God. These passages point to God as the source of strength without discounting the mediation of Christ. The appearance of ἐγκράτεια in 2 Pet 1:6 recalls these texts of 1 Peter in view of the presentation of Christ’s divinity in 2 Pet 1:1 and his divine power in 1:3.

From a thematic viewpoint ἐγκράτεια in 1:6 recalls 1 Peter in two ways. First, the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter intimates the self-control with which he approached his passion. Faced with suffering, Christ did not threaten or return insults (2:23). Despite his innocence he suffered for sinners and trusted in the One judging justly (2:23; 3:18). Thus Christ exhibited heroic self-control. The exhortation to self-control in 2 Pet 1:6 amounts to a charge to imitate Christ. Second, the exhortation of 1 Peter stresses the necessity of self-control

²⁶ Schrage, *Die “katholischen” Briefe*, 132. Fornberg (*Early Church*, 99) notes that γνώσις usually begins or ends Stoic virtue lists.

through its repeated condemnation of desire (1:14; 2:11; 4:2).²⁷ A life of Christian faith and hope requires mastery of the body. Believers avoid desires that war against the soul (2:11) in order to focus on the will of God (4:2).

Another interesting parallel between 1 and 2 Peter involves the correlation of ignorance and desire in 1 Pet 1:14 and knowledge and self-control in 2 Pet 1:6.²⁸ Whereas desire belongs to “former ignorance” in 1 Pet 1:14, self-control follows knowledge in 2 Pet 1:6. Despite the distinction between ἐπίγνωσις and γνῶσις in 2 Peter 1 the connection of knowledge with self-control in 1:6 implies some basis for practical knowledge (and self-knowledge) in Christ. The arrangement of this section of the list echoes the point of 1 Pet 1:14.

“To Self-Control Endurance”

If self-control guards against desire in general, then endurance (ὑπομονή) represents a mindful attitude of patience that weathers external circumstances. Christian self-possession based on knowledge of Christ begins with control of self and progresses to a mastery of self in all contingencies. Endurance arises from memory of God’s promises and the hope of their fulfillment (2 Pet 1:4; cf. 1:9).²⁹ It provides the motivation to undergo trials for the sake of a delayed reward (see 1 Pet 1:6-7, 13).

²⁷ Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 159) notes that self-control functions as the key antidote to pleasure and desire in 2 Peter.

²⁸ Charles (“Language and Logic,” 67) points out these correlations.

²⁹ Spicq (“ὑπομένω, ὑπομονή,” *TLNT*, 3. 418-20) notes how ὑπομονή comes to denote trust in God in the LXX and NT rather than the classical notion of endurance without outside help. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 186) associates endurance with trust in God and hope for the fulfillment of his promises rather than with personal bravery or detachment. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 69) stresses the origin of endurance

Although the noun ὑπομονή does not occur in 1 Peter, the verb ὑπομένω occurs twice in 2:20 in the context of an exhortation to slaves. Enduring a beating because of sin is no cause for pride, but enduring suffering for doing good is a grace before God. This statement forms the introduction to the long description of Christ's own endurance offered as an example of Christian conduct (2:21-25). Like the preceding virtues, endurance relates directly to Christ; its presence in 2 Pet 1:6 recalls the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter and the gifts and promises of Christ in 2 Pet 1:3-4.

Believers imitate the example of Christ in their own particular circumstances even if they do not have to endure outright persecution.³⁰ The Christian life in general involves difficulties and demands a constant focus on the presence and coming of Christ. From the beginning, 1 Peter describes the trials in store for Christians (1:6). Believers should not be surprised by such testing (4:12-16). The identity of Christians as strangers and sojourners (1:1; 2:11) implies that life is in some sense foreign; believers have not yet reached their true home. The pilgrimage through this world requires endurance.

With ὑπομονή the catalogue reaches its midpoint. As the fourth of seven virtues endurance also marks the transition between those virtues pertaining to the individual believer and those virtues concerning others or the community. To this point the catalogue lists qualities visible in individual conduct and lifestyle. The final three virtues (and

in the promises (1:3-4) and knowledge of Christ. Endurance—like the other virtues collectively—leads to a deeper awareness of providence.

³⁰ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 194) perceives moral endurance against temptation, not persecution. Harvey & Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 45) remark that endurance also entails resisting daily “wear” by remembering God's promises and moving on.

endurance itself to some degree) describe qualities visible primarily through relations with others.

“*To Endurance Piety*”

In the context of the virtue list “piety” (εὐσέβεια) expresses a particular nuance.³¹ It includes mindfulness of the “vertical element of human relationships,” the fact that duty to God requires a certain attitude towards others.³² With ὑπομονή it forms the bridge to the second part of the list which concentrates on virtues visible in outward behavior.³³

The occurrence of εὐσέβεια at the end of 1:6 recalls the earlier instance of this word in 1:3: Christ’s divine power has given everything for life and piety. The audience recognizes that growth in piety—or any of the virtues—depends on the gift bestowed through knowledge of Christ.³⁴ This knowledge includes familiarity with Christ’s example and reliance on Christ’s help to follow it. The context of 1:3, which linked piety with “life” (ζωή), also discloses the goal of moral behavior in the world: eschatological union with Christ (1:4, 8, 11). Thus the *prooemium* implies that piety and by extension the whole catalogue of virtues begins from and progresses to knowledge of Christ.

³¹ Werner Foerster (“εὐσέβεια,” *TDNT*, 7. 184) regards piety as synonymous with a generally moral life.

³² Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 160-61); Harvey & Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 45) put it as “seeking right relationships” and “seeing through God to others.”

³³ Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 181-82) calls εὐσέβεια a bridge to the “horizontal virtues” of 1:7; Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 221) notes that the final three virtues share the sense of duty to others. Bede (*In Secundam Epistolam Petri, ad loc.*; *PL*, 93, 70) comments on the intimate relationship between works of piety and brotherly love.

³⁴ Harink (*1 & 2 Peter*, 149) realizes that believers do not strive on their own but depend on Christ’s resources. Knoch (*Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief, Der Judasbrief*, 242) thinks that reverence and fear for the power of God and Christ (1:3) underlies piety.

Despite its absence from the text of 1 Peter εὐσέβεια functions in 2 Pet 1:3 and 1:6 as a summary of the ethical exhortations of 1 Peter as a whole. If piety carries the notion of duty or commitment to God expressed through upright interaction with others, then the moral exhortations of 1 Peter form a single instruction on Christian piety in the world. A general instruction about good behavior among nonbelievers occurs in 1 Pet 2:12. If nonbelievers see the good behavior of Christians they will cease from slander and give praise to God (cf. 3:16). Therefore Christians see themselves as representatives of their faith; they respect others for the sake of God. This admonishment appears again in 1 Pet 2:13 and 2:17 (cf. 4:8) with regard to nonbelievers in general. Even if the exhortations of 1 Peter 4 and 5 concern the community of believers more specifically (e.g., 4:8-11; 5:5), they still support my point about piety in 1 Peter. Believers respect all others for God's sake.

Piety begins with Christ in 1 Peter. Just as the text of 2 Peter gives the power and knowledge of Christ as the basis for piety (1:3, 6), the text of 1 Peter makes substantially the same statement. The motivation for accepting unjust suffering is consciousness of God and mindfulness of the example of Christ (2:19-21). Although this teaching is addressed to slaves, it applies to all believers (cf. the overarching character of the exhortations in 2:13-16 and 3:13-18). The relationship with Christ determines all other relationships and governs every aspect of the believer's life, even reaction to unjust suffering. Christ demonstrates piety and calls his followers to share it. Thus εὐσέβεια in 2 Pet 1:6 depends on a direct reference to Christ in 1:3 and echoes the consonant teaching of 1 Peter.

“To Piety Brotherly Affection”

In φιλαδελφία (“brotherly affection”) the catalogue arrives at a specifically Christian virtue.³⁵ Believers regard all men and women as brothers and sisters for the sake of Christ, who gives them the ability to meet others with sincere affection.

The noun φιλαδελφία represents an important point of contact between 1 and 2 Peter. The term appears in 1 Pet 1:22 in close proximity to the charge to love (ἀγαπήσατε) one another (cf. 2 Pet 1:7). Believers purify their souls in obedience to the truth for sincere brotherly affection. This verse implies that brotherly affection stems from knowledge of the truth, i.e., the truth of Christ (1 Pet 1:13-21). The discourse of 2 Peter echoes 1 Peter by using the catalogue of virtues to elaborate the meaning of the knowledge of Christ (cf. 2 Pet 1:3, 5-7, 8), i.e., the meaning of Christ’s example for the ordinary lives of believers. The virtues leading up to φιλαδελφία can be read as concrete means of purifying the heart in obedience to the truth of Christ (1 Pet 1:22). Both letters place great emphasis on brotherly affection, offering it as a goal of growth in virtue (1 Pet 1:22; 3:8; 2 Pet 1:7).

Words related to φιλαδελφία also occur in 1 Peter and underscore the importance of the theme in the letter. The adjective φιλάδελφος appears in 3:8 (the only NT occurrence) in the course of an exhortation on qualities proper to believers. The term ἀδελφότης (“brotherhood”) appears in 2:17 and 5:9. The letter’s conclusion names Silvanus a faithful “brother” (ἀδελφός). Siblingship in faith and the love it engenders represent prominent

³⁵ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 187) regards φιλαδελφία as a specifically Christian feature of this list since only Christians used it for non-siblings.

related themes in 1 Peter.³⁶ The appearance of φιλαδελφία in 2 Pet 1:7, at the climax of the catalogue of virtues, echoes these themes.³⁷ The notion of sharing divine nature in 1:4 prepares for such familiarity between believers.

“To Brotherly Affection Love”

The final virtue, “love” (ἀγάπη), completes the catalogue of 2 Pet 1:5-7. Its position indicates that love is the final goal of the other virtues and that its practice forms the pinnacle of Christian faith (1:5).³⁸

Like the instance of φιλαδελφία in 1:7, ἀγάπη echoes several passages from 1 Peter that use similar terminology. The term ἀγάπη appears twice in 4:8 as part of a general exhortation: “Above all have constant love for each other, because love covers a multitude of sins.” The overarching importance of love appears in 1:22 as well: believers are to “love (ἀγαπήσατε) each other constantly” having purified their souls for sincere brotherly affection (cf. 2:17). Without seeing Christ the faithful love him (1:8). The discourse of 1 Peter addresses the audience as “beloved” (ἀγαπητοί) at the beginning of important hortatory sections of the letter (2:11; 4:12). These occurrences give a sense of the prominence of love

³⁶ In his comments on 1 Pet 1:22 Leonhard Goppelt (*A Commentary on 1 Peter* [trans. John Alsup; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993] 124) states that this terminology is more prominent in 1 Peter than elsewhere in the NT. Reidar Aasgaard (“‘Brotherly Advice:’ Christian Siblingship and New Testament Paraenesis,” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context* [ed. James Starr and Troels Engberg-Pedersen; BZNW 125; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004] 237-66, here 253) agrees that the theme of Christian siblingship permeates 1 Peter.

³⁷ Kelly (*Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, 307) believes that the appearance of the term here is another indication of 2 Peter’s acquaintance with 1 Peter. Aasgaard (“‘Brotherly Advice,’” 253-54) thinks φιλαδελφία forms the climax of the list with ἀγάπη. He notes that this reference prepares for the address in 2 Pet 1:10 (ἀδελφοί).

³⁸ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 187) comments that the last position in the list implies greater importance (since the last virtue encompasses the others). The position of ἀγάπη indicates that a Christian standard for behavior takes precedence over a purely secular one. This represents a prominent theme in 1 Peter.

in the discourse of 1 Peter. By connecting love of Christ with love of others the moral exhortation of 1 Peter makes ἀγάπη the last and greatest requirement for believers.

The presence of ἀγάπη in 2 Pet 1:7 echoes its frequent appearances and central role in the moral exhortation of 1 Peter. Both letters regard love as the height of Christian exhortation and the life of faith. The placement of ἀγάπη as the final virtue in the list recalls the teaching of 1 Peter on Christian behavior.

3. The Catalogue of Virtues as a Reflection of 1 Peter

My exegesis of 2 Pet 1:5-7 demonstrates that the individual virtues of the list echo elements from the moral exhortation of 1 Peter including 1 Peter's portrait of Christ. However, I have yet to evaluate the list as a whole or offer an explanation for the progression from personal virtue (excellence, knowledge, self-control) to virtue observed in a communal setting (endurance, piety, brotherly affection, love). I will argue that this progression recapitulates the exhortation of 1 Peter 1. This section of 1 Peter proceeds from the personal consequences of knowledge of Christ to the obligation for brotherly affection and love for others. I will examine 1 Pet 1:22 as an important verse in this connection. Situated between two instances of knowledge of Christ in the *prooemium* (2 Pet 1:3, 8), the catalogue echoes and enhances the idea that virtue and love are grounded in the knowledge of Christ familiar from 1 Peter 1. By giving practical expression to the knowledge of Christ as an imitation of

Christ's virtue, the list maintains the *prooemium*'s focus on this theme and prepares for the climactic treatment of knowledge of Christ in 2 Pet 1:8.³⁹

I will begin my comparison of 2 Pet 1:5-7 as a whole with 1 Peter by considering briefly the virtue list in 1 Pet 3:8-9. This list shares some characteristics with the catalogue and provides a precedent for the use of a virtue list in 2 Peter. I will survey the content of 1 Peter 1 in order to highlight parallels with the catalogue of virtues. I will conclude this section by considering the list as a reminder of 1 Peter's portrait of Christ.

Virtue Lists in 1 Peter

There is no exact parallel in 1 Peter for the virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7. However, one smaller list of virtues occurs and provides a precedent for the use of the list form in 2 Peter.⁴⁰ The virtues enumerated in 1 Pet 3:8-9—believers are to be “of one mind, sympathetic, affectionate, compassionate, humble”—serve as a summary of the advice to various segments of the Christian community (2:11–3:7). They give a picture of Christians in their outward interaction with others (note the presence of φιλάδελφος; see 2 Pet 1:7). The list also recalls the portrait of Christ given in 1 Pet 2:21-25 especially in the charge to refrain from rendering evil for evil or mockery for mockery (λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας, 3:9): Christ did not return mockery for mockery (ὅς λοιδορούμενος οὐκ ἀντελοιδορεῖ, 2:23). Believers remember that they are called to these virtues in order to attain their eternal inheritance (3:9;

³⁹ Harink (*1&2 Peter*, 150) perceives that these virtues represent the means of assimilation into saving knowledge and freedom from corruption. Like 1 Peter's emphasis on rebirth (1:3, 23), 2 Peter stresses the transformative power of Christ's glory and sharing his divine nature (1:3-4).

⁴⁰ First Peter contains other small statements of Christian qualities (3:15-16; 4:7) as well as lists of vices (2:1; 4:3). The closest parallel to the catalogue of virtues is 3:8-9.

see 1:4; cf. 2 Pet 1:4-5, 8-11).⁴¹ Thus 1 Pet 3:8-9 offers a list of virtues exercised by Christ for believers to attain in cooperation with the power and invitation of God. This description applies to 2 Pet 1:5-7 as well.

The Catalogue of Virtues as an Echo of 1 Peter 1

The discourse of 1 Peter 1 provides a plausible background for the development of the virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7. First Peter 1, building on an exposition of faith (1:3-12), begins its exhortation by calling for individual obedience and holiness based on knowledge of Christ (1:13-16). Believers avoid desires of their former ignorance (1:14) and conduct themselves in reverent fear of God (1:17). They have knowledge of Christ (1:18-20) on whom their faith depends. By purifying their souls in obedience to the truth believers show brotherly affection and love (1:22). The catalogue expresses the same sequence of growth from personal self-possession to communal behavior in Christ through a series of virtues. Faith gives the foundation for growth in the Christian life (2 Pet 1:4; cf. 1 Pet 1:5, 7, 9, 21 [*bis*]).⁴² The call to excellence, knowledge, and self-control reflects the new life of hope, antithetical to ignorant desire, which results in personal holiness and mindfulness of the divine judgment (2 Pet 1:5-6; cf. 1 Pet 1:13-17). These interior virtues also summarize the charge to purify the soul in obedience to the truth (1 Pet 1:22). The final pair of exterior virtues (brotherly affection and love) corresponds with the climactic exhortation in 1 Pet 1:22. Thus the pattern

⁴¹ Goppelt (*Commentary on 1 Peter*, 232) understands 3:8-9, the concluding directive on social engagement, as paraenesis with roots in the revelation of God through Christ.

⁴² Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 258) claims that “faith” means belief determining action. It is fostered by obedience and issues in love. This is the teaching of 1 Peter and the early church. Thus happiness is learned and ethics is possible.

of virtues in 2 Pet 1:5-7 follows the development of the exhortation in 1 Peter 1 and concludes with an identical emphasis on brotherly affection and love.

Since only three of the virtues from 2 Pet 1:5-7 appear in 1 Pet 1:22, the connection between the catalogue of virtues and the beginning of 1 Peter might seem tenuous. However, additional points of contact between 2 Pet 1:4-7 and 1 Pet 1:17-23 strengthen their association. First, both passages suggest that knowledge of Christ motivates and informs their exhortations. In 1 Pet 1:18-19, the audience is described as “knowing” (εἰδότες) that they have been redeemed by the blood of a spotless lamb. Similarly, 2 Pet 1:3 emphasizes the knowledge of Christ as source of everything necessary for life and piety. Second, both exhortations allude to God’s gift of new life and believers’ eternal destiny. The discourse of 1 Peter maintains that the audience has been born anew of imperishable seed (1 Pet 1:23). This corresponds to the reference to sharing divine nature in 2 Pet 1:4. Finally, the similarity of the conclusions of 2 Pet 1:7 and 1 Pet 1:22 (sharing “brotherly affection” and “love”) suggests a possible interpretive link between the first part of the virtue list (2 Pet 1:5-6) and the initial part of 1 Pet 1:22. This means that the first few virtues (excellence, knowledge, self-control, and endurance) represent a practical restatement of the charge to purify the soul in obedience to the truth.

An exploration of the themes of “purifying the soul” and “obedience to truth” in 1 Peter demonstrates a relationship between the first few virtues in 2 Pet 1:5-6 and the elaborated exhortation in 1 Pet 1:22. The verb ἀγνίζω (“purify”) occurs only at 1 Pet 1:22. The word “soul” (ψυχή) appears again in 2:11 in the exhortation to avoid fleshly desires that fight against the soul (κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς). In 2:25 and 4:19 the discourse describes trusting the

soul to God. According to 1 Peter, purifying the soul amounts to avoiding fleshly desires and trusting in God on an individual basis.

The term “obedience” (ὕπακοή) occurs twice in the text of 1 Peter before 1:22. In the salutation the author describes the audience as elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in the holiness of the Spirit for obedience (εἰς ὑπακοήν) and sprinkling with the blood of Jesus Christ (1:2). In 1:13-15 the first exhortation of the letter commands the audience as “obedient children” (τέκνα ὑπακοῆς) not to conform themselves to former ignorant desires but to be holy as the One calling is holy. The noun “truth” (ἀλήθεια) occurs only in 1:22; however, the adjective form occurs in 5:12 as a global description of 1 Peter (“true grace,” ἀληθῆ χάριν). Thus 1 Peter understands obedience in terms of obedience to Christ expressed in a holy lifestyle. Taken as a whole, 1 Pet 1:22 exhorts believers to purify their souls by avoiding desires and living holy lives obedient to Christ for brotherly affection and love of one another.⁴³ All of these ideas are present in 2 Pet 1:4-7.

Second Peter expresses the ideas of purifying the soul and obedience to Christ through its concentration on sharing divine nature and avoiding corruption through desire (1:4). The catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7 explains how to do this. It illustrates the progression from faith and knowledge of Christ to internal excellence and self-control to brotherly affection and love. The idea of obedience to Christ emerges in the reference to excellence, the first virtue to be added to faith, which the text linked previously with Christ himself (1:3). A practical knowledge of the Christian life, including knowledge of self, leads to self-control in the face of desire and temptation (1:4). Endurance of injustice or external circumstances

⁴³ Commenting on 1 Pet 1:22, I. Howard Marshall (*1 Peter* [IVPNTC; Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity, 1991] 59-60) claims that a purified inner nature allows for new thoughts and motives. Once the mind is free of sinful desire, believers are free for brotherly affection and love.

(see 1 Pet 2:20) strengthens believers and exercises their ability to perceive all other relationships and events in the light of Christ. Christ provides everything necessary for piety in the world (2 Pet 1:3), so this attitude comes from conformity with Christ. Such personal virtues rooted in the heart (see 1 Pet 1:22) provide for brotherly affection and love. The first few virtues of the list parallel 1 Peter's exhortation regarding purification of the soul in obedience to the truth.

The Catalogue of Virtues and the Portrait of Christ in 1 Peter

A glaring difference between the moral exhortations of 1 and 2 Peter concerns the presentation of Christ as a model of the Christian life. First Peter states that Christ left believers a model to follow (2:21) and offers an extended treatment of Christ's virtues and sufferings for the believers' sake (2:21-24). The text of 2 Peter does not refer to Christ as a model. But the virtue list recalls the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter. While it does not refer explicitly to Christ, the catalogue demonstrates familiarity with the description of Christ in 2:21-25. The qualities of self-control, endurance, and piety summarize Christ's behavior as he suffered for believers; these same virtues represent the moral behavior required by believers' knowledge of Christ.⁴⁴ The references to knowledge and the excellence of Christ in 2 Pet 1:5 make the link to Christ more compelling. Both terms depend on familiarity with

⁴⁴ Knock (*Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief, Der Judasbrief*, 243) points out that the virtue list entails an existential more than an intellectual realization about the faith—there is a correlation between Christ's act and believers' lives. Along the same lines Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 72) takes the list not as a strictly logical sequence but as a description of events in the Christian life.

the suffering and death of Christ, the central truth of Christian life.⁴⁵ By claiming that Christ's power has supplied everything necessary for life and piety (1:3), and by affirming that believers share divine nature having fled from the corruption of the world through desire (1:4), the text of 2 Peter has prepared for this conception of the unity of believers with Christ through the practice of Christ's virtue. The catalogue explains what it means to share divine nature in the world; i.e., to participate in Christ's virtue to some extent.

Subsequent exhortations in 1 Peter's discourse reinforce its emphasis on a personal imitation of Christ by focusing on the internal dimension of Christian faith. In 1 Peter's address to women, the discourse commends the "hidden person of the heart in the incorruptibility of a gentle and quiet spirit" (3:4).⁴⁶ A few verses later the text urges believers to "sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready for an answer for everyone who asks an account of the hope in you" (3:15). These references to the "heart" (καρδία) recall 1:22 in which the discourse commands believers to love others "from the heart" (ἐκ καρδίας). Thus even in the command to love, 1 Peter highlights the internal basis of outward behavior. Good conduct in Christ (see 3:16-18) begins with personal commitment to Christ and progresses to outward behavior. The sequence of virtues in 2 Pet 1:5-7 gives concrete expression to this progression and to the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter.

⁴⁵ The suffering of Christ takes away the sin separating believers from God and allows for them to follow Christ through their own lives and innocent suffering. By linking the virtue list to Christ himself, 2 Peter follows this line of thought from 1 Peter. See Achtemeier (*1 Peter*, 199-203) on 1 Pet 2:21-24.

⁴⁶ Goppelt (*Commentary on 1 Peter*, 221) reads "hidden person of the heart" as a description of the whole human being as it is determined from within, i.e., from believing thoughts and desires.

Conclusion

In this section I evaluated the virtue list in general as a reflection of the exhortation of 1 Peter as a whole. The virtue list in 1 Pet 3:8-9 provides a precedent for the use of the list form in 2 Peter. The contents of this list relate to the portrait of Christ in 1 Pet 2:21-24. The sequence of virtues in the catalogue (from internal virtue to virtue expressed in outward behavior) echoes the presentation of 1 Peter 1 which begins with a general description of Christian virtue and ends with the charge to love others. I examined the first few virtues of 2 Pet 1:5-7 as an expression of the first part of 1 Pet 1:22 since both passages share the climactic exhortation to brotherly affection and love based on faith and knowledge of Christ. I also explored the list as a reflection of the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter. The discourse of 1 Peter insists on an internal relationship with Christ as the basis for external Christian behavior. On the strength of these observations I submit that the catalogue of virtues echoes 1 Peter's moral exhortation as a whole.

I can anticipate an obvious objection to my interpretation: the lack of extensive lexical parallels suggests that the catalogue does not arise from 1 Peter. I admit that the list uses different words and takes a different form from those found in 1 Peter, but it shares the substance and concern of 1 Peter for character formation in Christ.⁴⁷ By expressing the consequences of knowledge of Christ in a virtue list, 2 Peter achieves a dramatic direct address of its audience. Perhaps a list of virtues in 2 Peter 1 prepares for the discussion of

⁴⁷ J. de Waal Dryden (*Theology and Ethics in 1 Peter* [WUNT 2.209; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 2006] 193-98) calls character formation the central concern of 1 Peter; the letter insists that conversion defines life. The list of virtues in 2 Pet 1:5-7 likewise aims at the formation of its audience's character based on faith.

certain opponents in 2 Peter 2 who do not share these virtues.⁴⁸ While a complete explanation of the use of the virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7 is beyond the scope of my dissertation, I hope to demonstrate how this seemingly disparate section of 2 Peter's *prooemium* continues the pattern observed in 1:3-4 of echoing material from 1 Peter. Furthermore the catalogue continues the *prooemium*'s concentration on knowledge of Christ by affirming the necessity of action and development through life in Christ. Both 1 and 2 Peter agree that knowledge of Christ must lead to practical imitation of Christ.

4. Growth in the Knowledge of Christ: 2 Pet 1:8

After the rhythmic virtue list the discourse of 2 Peter continues with a long sentence contrasting those who cultivate the virtues of 1:5-7 and those who do not. Believers who pursue these virtues are not useless or fruitless for the knowledge of Christ (1:8). Those who do not pursue virtue are blind and forgetful of their past cleansing from sin (1:9). Second Peter 1:8 makes the connection between the virtue list and knowledge of Christ explicit. Although the discourse has already underscored this theme and related it to Christian conduct (1:3, 5), this final reference to the knowledge of Christ in the *prooemium* represents a development of the concept. Virtue makes believers neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of Christ, i.e., for an eschatological acquaintance with the Lord.

⁴⁸ Harvey & Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 46) hold that these virtues prepare for the polemic in 2 Peter 2; Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 257) and Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 66-71) notice the contrast with false teachers as well. Charles (*Virtue Amidst Vice*, 156) and Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 95) argue that the catalogue of virtues presents Christian faith in the idiom of Greco-Roman culture, demonstrating how God-given faith results in moral behavior by means of the arrangement of virtues. A reading based exclusively on 1 Peter is also possible: the catalogue lists the virtues necessary for the challenge of being a pilgrim in this world.

“These Things Existing and Growing among You”

The pronoun ταῦτα (“these things”), referring to the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7, and the conjunction γάρ prove that 1:8 connects with the virtue list and must be interpreted with the preceding material. The pronoun ὑμῖν (“among you”) represents the second instance of a second person pronoun in the *prooemium*. The first occurred in 1:5 as a description of “your faith” (πίστει ὑμῶν). Its position at the beginning of the virtue catalogue implied the distribution of its meaning throughout 1:5-7, so that each virtue could be called “yours.” Thus its occurrence in 1:8 continues the concentration on the audience’s behavior in Christ. The *prooemium* alternates its focus: in 1:3-4 the first person pronoun (“our”) dominates; in 1:5-8a the second person pronoun (“your”) takes precedence. In 1:8b-11 two instances of “our” in the phrase “our Lord” (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν) encompass two further instances of the second person pronoun. The solidarity expressed by the phrase “our Lord” underscores the concern for the audience’s growth in the knowledge of Christ throughout the *prooemium*.

The participles “existing” (ὑπάρχοντα) and “increasing” (πλεονάζοντα) describe the virtues listed in 1:5-7.⁴⁹ Having virtue and increasing virtue are different things; these two words illustrate the nature of the Christian life as a process of growth in virtue.⁵⁰ Neither term occurs in 1 Peter. The idea of growth in the Christian life, however, appears prominently in 1 Peter. From the beginning of its discourse 1 Peter refers to Christians as “reborn into living hope” through Christ’s resurrection (1:3). They are reborn not from

⁴⁹ Some manuscripts (A Ψ 0247^{vid}. 623. 2464 *pc*) read παρόντα instead of ὑπάρχοντα. While the two hardly diverge in meaning, the fact that ὑπάρχω also occurs in 2:19 and 3:11 and the weight of external evidence favor the reading ὑπάρχοντα. The reading παρόντα probably represents an assimilation to πάρεστιν in 1:9.

⁵⁰ Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 302) marks the distinction between “having” and “abounding.” Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 184) calls the Christian life a process whose result is the state of being useful and fruitful. Ultimately the Christian life leads to eternal life.

corruptible seed but through the living and enduring word of God (1:23). First Peter refers to Christians as “newborn infants” (ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη) who should thirst for rational, sincere milk in order to grow to salvation (2:2). First Peter’s emphasis on the process of growth in the Christian life includes a reference to the increase of specific virtues (see 3:8). The emphasis on growth in 2 Pet 1:8, immediately following the virtue list, echoes this important theme from 1 Peter. It is no coincidence that in both letters the reference to growth (1 Pet 2:2; cf. 1:23; 2 Pet 1:8) occurs after an exhortation to brotherly affection and love based on faith (1 Pet 1:22; 2 Pet 1:7). After disclosing the central concern of the life of faith, 2 Peter follows 1 Peter in calling for growth and progress.

“Make You neither Useless nor Fruitless”

The next section of 2 Pet 1:8 describes the effects of the pursuit of the virtues of 1:5-7 on the audience. The practice of virtue renders believers neither “useless” (ἀργούς) nor “fruitless” (ἀκάρπους) for the knowledge of Christ. In other words the act of cooperating with God’s gifts in Christ (1:3) by progressing in the Christian life of virtue makes them useful and fruitful. It prepares them for a greater knowledge of Christ. This verse uses a figure of speech called litotes—affirming an idea by denying its opposite.⁵¹

I prefer to translate ἀργός “useless” instead of “idle” in 1:8 because the practice of virtue leads to knowledge of Christ.⁵² Virtue prepares believers for a greater knowledge of Christ and so makes them useful for God’s purpose; “idle for the knowledge of Christ” does

⁵¹ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 188) gives this short definition of litotes.

⁵² BDAG, s.v. On the background for ἀργός see *TLNT*, 1. 195-98. Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 197) thinks that believers are made “useful” fellow workers by the pursuit of virtue.

not make as much sense. “Useless” highlights the quality and purpose of Christians who pursue virtue according to God’s will. Although the word ἀργός does not occur in 1 Peter, the letter expresses believers’ purpose in the world: to show forth God’s glory and holiness (1 Pet 1:15-16; 2:12, 13-15; 3:14-16; 4:11, 16). The affirmation of believers’ usefulness in 2 Pet 1:8 recalls this overarching purpose from 1 Peter. Knowledge of Christ leads to the pursuit of virtue (2 Pet 1:3-7) which in turn promotes knowledge of Christ (1:8). By receiving and cooperating with Christ’s powerful gifts (1:3-4), believers are not ineffective; they show a genuine knowledge of Christ to the world. At the same time believers grow in their own knowledge of Christ through the practice of virtue.⁵³ By actualizing their knowledge of Christ—i.e., by imitating his virtues and uniting themselves to him—Christians deepen their attachment to Christ and prove useful for his purposes.

The pursuit of virtue also saves believers from being “fruitless” (ἀκάρπους). Accepting and practicing knowledge of Christ produces benefits for the individual and community. “Fruitful for the knowledge of Christ” intimates advantages for the community, including possibly the attraction of respect and even converts from the outside world. The analysis of ἀργός demonstrates that this notion overlaps with the teaching of 1 Peter. However 1 Peter has more to say about the “fruit” of faith on an individual level: faith produces praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:7). It is possible that fruitfulness for the knowledge of Christ in 2 Pet 1:8 shares this sense of the eschatological fruitfulness of faith and virtue for the individual. A life of virtue in accord with knowledge of Christ leads not only to a deeper understanding of Christ on earth but finally to an

⁵³ Especially in connection with the image of fruitfulness Chaine (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 46) states that practicing virtue leads to spiritual fertility.

eschatological knowledge of him in glory. The first passage in 1 Peter featuring intellectual language against desire (1:13) includes the exhortation to hope completely in the grace brought at the revelation of Christ. Subsequent passages also make a distinction between worldly desires and the soul (2:11) or the will of God (4:2), suggesting the eschatological encounter with Christ. Thus 1 Peter’s treatment of the knowledge of Christ involves an eschatological element. The choice of the image of fruitfulness in 2 Pet 1:8 gives a glimpse of development towards this dimension in the concept of “knowledge of Christ” in 2 Peter’s *prooemium* as well.

The singular verb καθίστησιν (“make”) takes for a subject the neuter plural pronoun ταῦτα modified by the participles ὑπάρχοντα and πλεονάζοντα. Its object—“you”—is not expressed but can be inferred from the context (especially given the pronoun ὑμῖν earlier in 1:8). The verb does not occur in 1 Peter; however, the related verb ἵστημι occurs in the final summative verse of the letter before the closing (5:12). The author has written encouraging and witnessing that this (i.e., the whole letter) is the true grace of God in which the audience must stand (στήτε).⁵⁴ It is possible that this verb in the final summary exhortation of 1 Peter inspired the choice of words in 2 Pet 1:8 in which the main point of the *prooemium* becomes clear: knowledge of Christ pursued in the practice of virtue “establishes” or “makes” believers useful and fruitful in the knowledge of Christ here and hereafter. If it were conscious, this echo would express 2 Peter’s conviction that it is summarizing and advancing the exhortation of 1 Peter: the emphasis on knowledge of Christ and the virtue catalogue gives a practical “how to” guide for the implementation of 1 Peter’s exhortation.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of στήτε as a closing imperative and textual issues, see Elliott, *1 Peter*, 879.

“For the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”

The pursuit of virtue makes believers useful and fruitful “for the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This final occurrence of the knowledge theme in 2 Peter’s *prooemium* develops the content of “knowledge” encountered earlier in 1:2 and 1:3. If knowledge of Christ referred previously to familiarity with the person and meaning of Christ and led to a practical life of faith and virtue, then the recurrence of the theme in 1:8 also includes a foreshadowing of the deeper knowledge attained through virtue and ultimately bestowed on believers eternally (1:11).

The preposition εἰς does not occur in 2 Peter before this verse. Construed with the accusative case εἰς expresses motion “into” or purpose (“for” or “for the purpose of”). The translation “for” captures these meanings in idiomatic English: virtue leads into knowledge of Christ (for the purpose of a deeper union with him). The discourse chooses the preposition εἰς deliberately, since the preposition ἐν occurred with ἐπίγνωσις in 1:2, διὰ occurred with ἐπίγνωσις in 1:3, and the preposition πρὸς occurred with ζωὴ in 1:3. Thus one cannot say that εἰς in 1:8 represents a case of confusion of prepositions or substitution for a missing dative.⁵⁵ The text implies that growth in virtue leads to greater knowledge of Christ. The material following 1:8 confirms this conclusion. The negative statement in 1:9, which parallels the positive statement in 1:8, focuses on the forgetfulness of past forgiveness of sins. The final unit of the *prooemium* (1:10-11) parallels 1:8 by the use of εἰς and states the final significance in growth in the knowledge of Christ: entrance into Christ’s eternal kingdom (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον βασιλείαν).

⁵⁵ Cf. BDF §205-7. The virtue list demonstrates 2 Peter’s familiarity with the use of the dative.

The audience heard the phrase “of our Lord” (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν) in 1:2 in connection with the wish for grace and peace “in the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.” Thus the first and last instances of “knowledge” appear with a reference to Jesus as Lord. The *prooemium* has concentrated on knowledge of the divine Christ (1:1, 3, 4) which leads to the pursuit of virtue (1:5-7). First Peter employed the phrase “our Lord Jesus Christ” in its opening benediction describing God’s action of bringing believers to rebirth through Jesus’ resurrection (1:3). The command in 1 Pet 3:15 to sanctify Christ as “Lord” in the heart gives the motivation for present behavior in the expectation of Christ’s glory. If believers cooperate with Christ’s gifts and express their faith in lives of virtue, they will experience an abundance of grace and peace not only here and now but forever in the kingdom of their Lord (2 Pet 1:2, 11). The first person pronoun “our” (ἡμῶν) expresses the unity of all believers in knowledge and expectation. Whereas the first few verses of 2 Peter employ the first person pronoun (1:1-4), the exhortation in the central portion of the *prooemium* stresses the second person pronoun (1:5-8). The consistent emphasis on Jesus as “our” Lord (1:2, 8, 11) unites author and audience as fellow disciples in the basic sense of the term: fellow students of Jesus the Lord.

Although 1:8 contains the third instance of the name Jesus Christ in 2 Peter it is the first occurrence of the name within the *prooemium* and so holds significance for the *prooemium* as a whole. First, the explicit reference to knowledge of Jesus Christ in 1:8 affirms the purpose of the virtue list in 1:5-7. The catalogue of virtues aims at an increase in

knowledge of Christ in accord with 1:3-4.⁵⁶ This supports my conclusion that the catalogue of virtues refers to and relies on the portrait of Christ and the general tone of the exhortation in 1 Peter. Second, the reference to knowledge of Christ in 1:8 confirms that the reference to knowledge of “the one calling us” in 1:3 refers to Christ. The *prooemium* is a unit with a definite logical progression regarding the exposition of the knowledge of Christ. Therefore the reference in 1:3 makes most sense as a description of Christ. Third, the appearance of the phrase “our Lord Jesus Christ” in 1:8 links this verse with 1:11 where the phrase recurs albeit with an additional title (“Savior”). This represents another indication that 1:8 prepares for the eschatological dimension fully expounded in 1:11 and leads to my eschatological interpretation of “knowledge” in 1:8. Thus the occurrence of the name Jesus Christ focuses the content of the *prooemium* and unites its various segments.

The two previous instances of the term ἐπίγνωσις (1:2, 3) established the knowledge of Christ as a major theme of the salutation and *prooemium* of 2 Peter (1:1-11). The audience receives the wish for grace and peace “in the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord” (1:2). The audience has received everything necessary for life and piety “through the knowledge” of Jesus, the one calling them to his own glory and excellence (1:3). In my exegesis of these verses I interpreted “knowledge of Jesus Christ” as an objective genitive meaning “knowledge about Jesus Christ.” The text of 2 Peter makes a distinction between ἐπίγνωσις in relation to Christ and the simple noun γνώσις which has a more general meaning (1:5-6). I argued that the appearance of the knowledge theme at the beginning of 2 Peter looks back to the “knowledge” language of 1 Peter and prepares for the development of the

⁵⁶ Schrage (*Die “katholischen” Briefe*, 132) contends that practicing the virtue list causes an increase in knowledge of Christ; he marks the interrelationship between knowledge and morality. Vögtle (*Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 152) notes this as well and holds that virtue leads to a deeper understanding of Christ.

theme in the *prooemium* of 2 Peter. First Peter uses “knowledge” language at several points in its discourse in connection with familiarity with Christ and especially in those passages concerning faith’s combat against desire (1:13-14; 2:11; 4:1-2). Second Peter maintains and highlights this concern for effective knowledge of Christ by stressing this theme at the beginning of its discourse and by making knowledge of Christ the basis of its moral exhortation (1:2-3; cf. 1 Pet 1:13-14, 18).

The initial occurrences of ἐπίγνωσις in 2 Peter’s *prooemium* read in light of 1 Peter give some indication of what “knowledge of Christ” entails. Given the revelation of God’s plan in Christ, believers abandon their former ignorance and embrace Christ. Their knowledge of Christ entails conversion and participation in the life of the Christian community. It also dictates moral behavior. Mindful of the sacrifice of Christ, believers model their lives on Christ and look to their future life with him. The virtue list, which echoes the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter as well as the progression of its exhortation from individual to communal virtue, adds to the knowledge theme by disclosing the result of knowledge of Christ and presenting the means to advance in it.⁵⁷ Believers must strive to add virtue and love to their faith in order to arrive at a greater knowledge of Christ as they live in this world (1:5-8).⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épître de Saint Pierre, L’Épître de Saint Jude*, 57) wonder about the circular reasoning in the *prooemium*: is knowledge of Christ the root or goal of virtue? In fact, doing and believing are related. The reciprocity between knowledge and ethics expressed here means that there is no dichotomy between faith and practice. They point to the polemical context of 2 Peter as a possible motive for this progression from faith to virtue. As I have argued, 1 Peter represents a plausible background for this material as well.

⁵⁸ Chaine (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 46) regards the nature of progress as a greater knowledge of Jesus. The knowledge of Jesus is the starting point and crowning point of the Christian life. Harvey & Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 47) stress that knowledge of Christ means coming to be like Jesus. In their view this strand runs

The recurrence of “knowledge” in 1:8, however, develops the theme beyond the understanding of Christ in the present life. “Knowledge of Christ” in 1:8 points forward to the eschatological encounter with Christ. The audience has heard how knowledge of Christ leads to true life and the invitation to flee the world’s corruption through desire and share divine nature (1:3-4). By cooperating with Christ’s gifts and pursuing virtue believers are neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of Christ (1:5-8). The repetition of “knowledge” recalls the prospect of true life present in the first section of the *prooemium*. The claim that knowledge of Christ makes believers both useful and fruitful in the present underscores the true use and fruit of faith: eternal life.⁵⁹

5. Blindness and Forgetfulness of Past Cleansing: 2 Pet 1:9

The discourse of 2 Peter followed the catalogue of virtues (1:5-7) with a positive statement about the pursuit of virtue. If the listed virtues exist and increase among believers, then they will be useful and fruitful for the knowledge of Christ (1:8). The next verse makes the same point in the negative: the one who does not have these virtues is blind and forgetful of the cleansing of past sins (1:9).⁶⁰ Through their parallel structures and contrasting evaluations 1:8 and 1:9 complement each other. Both affirm the connection between present virtue and the knowledge of Christ. In 1:8 this virtue and knowledge points forward to future knowledge of Christ at the eschaton (see 1:10-11). In 1:9 the lack of virtue reflects a

through 1:3-8. This interpretation supports my view that the *prooemium* recapitulates 1 Peter’s portrait of Christ in these virtues.

⁵⁹ Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 72) intuits that full knowledge of Christ belongs to the future. Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 222) notes that earthly knowledge of Christ is not an end in itself.

⁶⁰ Kraftchick (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 100) states that 1:9 reformulates 1:8 in the negative. Perkins (*First and Second Peter, James, and Jude*, 170) calls this the only jarring note in an otherwise positive section.

forgetfulness of past baptism, a theme familiar from 1 Peter (3:21). Such a person has forgotten the knowledge of Christ received in the past (2 Pet 1:2-4). This forgetfulness has consequences for the present and future. Thus 2 Pet 1:9 echoes 1 Peter and contributes another dimension to the *prooemium*'s treatment of "knowledge of Christ."

"The One in Whom These Things are not Present"

The first section of 1:9 represents a negative restatement of the first section of 1:8 with a few major differences. The recurrence of the neuter plural noun ταῦτα ("these things") recalls 1:8; in both verses "these things" refer to the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7. In 1:8 ταῦτα occupied the prominent first position, highlighting the virtue list. In 1:9 ταῦτα appears last in the clause. The relative pronoun ὃς ("the one in whom") occupies the first position. This contrasts with the pronoun ὑμῶν in 1:8. The author credits his audience with the presence and increase of virtue and distances the audience from the "one" who does not practice virtue. Another difference involves the two participles in 1:8 ("existing" and "growing") and the simple verb "are not present" (μὴ παρέστω) in 1:9. The "one" pictured in 1:9 does not have virtue at all and presumably has no interest in growing in virtue. By means of these subtle differences the first section of 1:9 recalls 1:8 but establishes a dichotomy between those who pursue virtue and the one who does not.

"Is so Nearsighted that He is Blind"

Unlike the positive evaluation of those who practice virtue in 1:8—they are "useful" and "fruitful" for the knowledge of Christ—the one who does not pursue virtue in

cooperation with Christ's power "is so nearsighted that he is blind." The phrase τυφλός ἐστὶν μωπάζων presents difficulties for the translator; literally it reads "he is blind being nearsighted." The participle μωπάζων ("being nearsighted") implies closing the eyes or squinting.⁶¹ Some commentators believe that this word implies a deliberate shutting of the eyes and turning away from the knowledge of Christ.⁶² In any case such a person does not grasp the meaning of Christ or its past, present, or future implications.⁶³ A blind person does not have the knowledge of his surroundings which the sighted person enjoys. In the context of 2 Peter blindness implies forgetfulness of past cleansing of sin (1:9) and abandonment of the present pursuit of virtue for growth in the knowledge of Christ here and in the future (1:8, 11). By describing the person who disavows growth in virtue as "blind," the discourse reinforces its description of the knowledge of Christ as the source of true sight. Only by knowing Christ can the believer understand his past and future while growing in virtue in the present. Nothing should be allowed to "blind" believers to Christ who gives everything necessary for life and piety (1:3).

Although neither τυφλός nor μωπάζων occurs in 1 Peter, the use of blindness imagery in 2 Pet 1:9 recalls certain "sight" themes from 1 Peter. In 1:8 believers love and believe in Christ even though they have not seen him and do not see him now. In 2:9 the

⁶¹ BDAG, s.v. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 189) believes these are synonymous words used for rhetorical effect.

⁶² Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 303) wonders whether a decision to shut the eyes is implied. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 73) is more definite: the willful shutting of the eyes to the light parallels the deliberate forgetfulness in the next phrase. Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 215) thinks that the participle suggests the responsibility of the believer who forgets his baptism. Charles (*Virtue Amidst Vice*, 150) concurs that 1:9 describes a voluntary acceptance of a darkened condition.

⁶³ Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 186) regards this focus on the present as exclusive of regard for the past or future.

discourse affirms the identity of Christians as those whom God has called out of darkness into his own light. In 3:4 the letter admonishes Christian women to attain the adornment not of external jewelry but the hidden person of the heart in the incorruptibility of humility and a peaceful spirit which is precious to God. In 3:12 the discourse quotes Ps 33:16 LXX: “The eyes of the Lord are upon the just.” All of these texts demonstrate 1 Peter’s interest in the “sight” of God and believers.⁶⁴ Christians are not limited by physical sight but see the way God sees; he supplies them with light to perceive correctly. According to 1 Peter, believers focus on Christ and live according to what pleases him. When 2 Pet 1:9 describes someone as “blind” who does not cultivate virtue—as a consequence of and in order to grow in the knowledge of Christ (1:3-8)—the discourse echoes the concept of faith’s true sight as described in 1 Peter. Such a person does not see or know Christ and chooses to remain in darkness. The text of 1:8-9 explains how such a person lacks sight (i.e., correct understanding) of his past cleansing of sins, his present calling to virtue, and his future eschatological knowledge of Christ. His blindness is total.

“Forgetting the Cleansing of his Old Sins”

The last part of 1:9 continues the verse’s negative appraisal of the one without virtue: he forgets the cleansing of his old sins. This charge of forgetfulness complements the charge of blindness in the preceding phrase. I will argue that the idea of cleansing of past sins in 1:9

⁶⁴ I take these texts as a general indication of the theme of sight in 1 Peter and so will not examine them more closely. It is worth noting that to some extent 1 Peter reflects the OT’s use of blindness as a metaphor for lack of knowledge of God or conscious rejection of God. See Wolfgang Schrage, “τυφλός κτλ,” *TDNT*, 8. 280-82.

recalls 1 Peter's discussion of baptism and its emphasis on the forgiveness of past sins in Christ.

This section relates to what the audience has already heard. Since a person forgets what he has known or experienced previously the audience cannot hear "forget" without recalling the major theme of the *prooemium*: the knowledge of Christ (1:2, 3, 8). Therefore the cleansing of past sins relates to the audience's knowledge of Christ. This link appears stronger in light of the parallel relationship between 1:8 and 1:9: the former emphasizes growth in knowledge of Christ and the latter portrays its abandonment. The belief that faith in Christ results in the forgiveness of sins represents a major component of the knowledge of Christ. Doubtlessly the *prooemium* envisioned this knowledge in 1:3-4 as part of "everything necessary for life and piety" and Christ's "promises"; it must be understood as a prerequisite for "sharing divine nature." In 1:9 the emphasis on past forgiveness of sins becomes explicit. It appears at this point of the *prooemium* as a further practical elaboration of the knowledge of Christ: a life of faith never loses mindfulness of God's forgiveness through Christ in baptism. The *prooemium* has developed its major theme from a general statement (1:3-4) through a more specific set of exhortations (1:5-7) and now positive and negative consequences (1:8-9). The negative character of the concluding section of 1:9 (blindness, forgetfulness, and the mention of "sin") recalls the negative language in the conclusion of 1:4 ("corruption in the world through desire"). If 1:4 contains an admonition against desire, then 1:9 echoes and amplifies this warning against sin and forgetfulness of mercy. Thus the final part of 1:9 relates to the *prooemium* as a whole and serves as a subtle warning for the

audience not to forget the faith that began at baptism and continues in a life of knowledge of Christ.⁶⁵

The phrase “receiving forgetfulness” (λήθην λαβών) represents an idiom for “forgetting.” It does not appear in 1 Peter. The common verb λαμβάνω occurs only in 1 Pet 4:10 in connection with the gift each one received (ἔλαβεν) from God. In light of these isolated instances of the verb it is possible that the occurrence in 2 Pet 1:9 is meant to echo (albeit sarcastically) the exhortation to use God’s gift in 1 Pet 4:10. Unlike the faithful believer who serves his neighbor by using God’s gift, the person who forgets the past cleansing of sin rejects God’s gift of forgiveness and closes the door to virtue and knowledge of Christ.

The word καθαρισμός (“cleansing”) does not occur in 1 Peter but the related adjective καθαρός occurs in 1:22: “Love each other from a clean (καθαράς) heart.”⁶⁶ The importance of 1 Pet 1:22 for my earlier analysis of 2 Pet 1:5-7 makes this link worth mentioning. By highlighting “cleansing” and relating it to the practice of virtue, 2 Peter reiterates 1 Peter’s insistence on the necessity of a clean heart for brotherly affection and love (1:22). First Peter implies that God cleanses the heart through Christ (1:2, 3-5, 18-19, 23).⁶⁷

The word ἁμαρτία (“sin”) occurs frequently in 1 Peter. In 2:22 the text affirms that Christ did not sin; however, “he carried our sins in his body to the cross” so that “having died

⁶⁵ Although this exegesis does not trace their development, the themes of forgetting and reminding appear prominently in the remainder of 2 Peter (1:12-13, 15; 3:1-2, 5).

⁶⁶ Although a few manuscripts (A B 1852 *pc* *vg*) do not read καθαρὰς I follow the majority (\mathcal{P}^{72} \aleph^* C P Ψ 33. 1739 \aleph t *vg*^{mss} *sy*^h *co*) which does. The alternative reading καρδίας ἀληθινῆς probably arose from misreading the following word (ἀλλήλους). See Metzger, *TCGNT*, 618.

⁶⁷ Goppelt (*Commentary on 1 Peter*, 126) thinks that 1 Pet 1:22 is meant to recall baptism. If so it strengthens the baptismal link between 1 and 2 Peter.

to sins we might live in righteousness” (2:24; see Isa 53:4, 12). In 3:18 the text states that “Christ suffered once for sins (περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν), the just for the unjust, so that he might lead us to God.” The theme of Christ’s suffering continues in 4:1 in which the discourse urges readers to have the same attitude as Christ: the one who suffers in the flesh ceases from sin and human desires (4:1-2). According to 4:8 love covers a multitude of sins (see Prov 10:12). Thus 1 Peter usually discusses sin in the context of the removal of sin effected by Christ’s suffering. In addition to these texts concerning “sin” 1 Peter features other passages dealing with the cleansing of sin. In 1:2 “sprinkling with the blood of Christ” evokes an ethos of sacrificial cleansing.⁶⁸ This theme continues in 1:18-19 in which believers are “redeemed” (ἐλυτρώθητε) by the blood of Christ, a spotless and unblemished lamb. Taken with the baptismal text (3:21), all of these passages underscore the importance of the theme of removal of sin by Christ in 1 Peter. “Cleansing of his old sins” in 2 Pet 1:9 points to the teaching of 1 Peter that Christ cleanses believers of their sins. Since knowledge of Christ in 1 Peter involves an understanding of the redemption from sin wrought by Christ it is no surprise to find a similar content of “knowledge of Christ” emphasized in 2 Pet 1:8-9. Forgetting the cleansing of past sins implies forgetfulness of the role of Christ in cleansing from sin and the initial appropriation of that cleansing (baptism).

Several factors lead to the conclusion that “cleansing from his past sins” in 2 Pet 1:9 represents an allusion to baptism which echoes 1 Pet 3:21. The emphasis on past sins (πάλαι) suggests a definitive break with an old lifestyle.⁶⁹ Since the *prooemium* has described Christ

⁶⁸ Harvey & Towner (*2 Peter & Jude*, 49) think the reference to cleansing here recalls 1 Pet 1:2.

⁶⁹ Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 260) believes that the word *πάλαι* makes certain the reference to baptism; the cleansing is based on sacrificial death of Christ (1 Pet 1:18; 2:24; 3:18). Bauckham

as supplying everything necessary for life, 2 Peter implies that Christ removes sin and introduces believers into a new relationship with God (1:3-4). The language of cleansing in 2 Pet 1:9 (καθαρισμοῦ) echoes the washing language in 1 Pet 3:21 in which baptism (βάπτισμα) appears not as a physical cleansing (οὐ σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥύπου) but as a pledge of a good conscience through the resurrection of Christ. Thus 2 Pet 1:9 affirms what 1 Pet 3:21 explains: baptism is a type of cleansing. Like 1 Pet 3:21 the text of 2 Pet 1:8-9 affirms that past cleansing has present and future implications.⁷⁰ By incorporating “cleansing of his past sins” into the theme of knowledge of Christ in 1:8-9, the *prooemium* portrays this event as the starting point for the present moral demands described in 1:3-11.⁷¹ Knowledge of Christ—including an awareness of the forgiveness of past sins at baptism—requires the pursuit of virtue (1:5-7) and leads to an eschatological encounter with Christ (1:8, 10-11).⁷²

Given 2 Peter’s stress on the knowledge of Christ, it seems strange that 1:9 omits any mention of “conscience” (συνείδησις) in its reference to baptism (see 1 Pet 3:21). A possible explanation involves the purpose of the *prooemium*’s reference to baptism. Unlike 1 Pet 3:21, which offers a more thorough explanation of the meaning of baptism, 2 Pet 1:9 merely makes a quick reference to the primary result of baptism—the cleansing of previous sins. It

(*Jude, 2 Peter*, 189-90) thinks the reference to past sins fits the characterization of baptism as a clean break and new beginning (cf. 1 Pet 1:14, 18). Forgetting the cleansing of past sin might signify a reversion into sin.

⁷⁰ From a grammatical point of view, both verses employ present tense verbs (σώζει, 1 Pet 3:21; καθίστησιν, 2 Pet 1:8; παρέστιν, 1:9). The “pledge to God” (ἐπερώτημα) in 1 Pet 3:21 and the phrase “for the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” in 2 Pet 1:8 look forward.

⁷¹ Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 222) takes “forgetting cleansing of past sins” to mean forgetting the ethical force of baptism. As baptism has ongoing requirements, so (growth in) knowledge of Christ is ongoing.

⁷² Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 74-75) insists on baptism’s future orientation but accuses 2 Peter of “shortening” its significance to a past event. The presence of the eschatological conclusion of the *prooemium* should suffice to answer this charge (1:10-11).

does this in order to strengthen its exhortation to virtue (see 1:5-9). The *prooemium* contrasts the audience (who grow in virtue) with the one who forgets the cleansing of past sins, implying that the cleansing of past sins provides motivation for the audience's avoidance of sin and the pursuit of virtue in the present and future. A quick reference to baptism does not need to explore the symbolism of the rite itself; it is logical to assume that the audience knows this significance already.

Baptism and Knowledge of Christ in 1 and 2 Peter

The allusion to baptism in 2 Pet 1:9 echoes another text in 1 Peter germane to the theme of knowledge of Christ. In 1 Pet 4:1 the discourse urges believers to arm themselves with the same “insight” (ἐννοια) as Christ “because the one who has suffered has ceased from sin.” I suggest that the connection between “knowledge of Christ” and “cleansing of past sins” in 2 Pet 1:8-9 echoes the relationship between “the insight” of Christ and “the one who has suffered has ceased from sin” in 1 Pet 4:1. In both cases the discourses pair baptismal references with a resultant knowledge of Christ and practical behavior in the world. This represents a substantial echo of 1 Peter in the *prooemium* of 2 Peter.

First Peter 4:1 recapitulates 3:18-22 and exhorts the audience based on this preceding material. In 3:18-22 the discourse states the nature of Christ's suffering and its purpose, which is to lead believers to God. By contrasting the death of Christ in the flesh and his life in the spirit, the discourse points to the reality that holds for Christians as well, both in this life and in the time to come. They already possess unity with Christ through baptism (3:21). The reference to Christ's suffering in the flesh in the first part of 4:1 recalls the description of

Christ's suffering for sins in 3:18. But 4:1 introduces the exhortation in 4:2: believers are to spend their earthly lives on the will of God and not on human desires. Christ's suffering for sins applies to believers; they must appropriate it and allow the regeneration of their lives in Christ to operate in practice (1:3, 23; 3:21).⁷³ It is not a coincidence that the discourse of 1 Peter introduces baptism in the midst of this discussion (3:21), between the first reference to Christ's sufferings (3:18) and the exhortation (4:2). The text states that baptism saves (3:21) because baptism represents the believers' entrance into the cleansing from sin accomplished by Christ (see 1:18-19). The "one who has suffered in the flesh" in 4:1 after the example of Christ represents the believer who has entered Christ's suffering and resurrection through baptism.⁷⁴ The aorist tense of the participles "has suffered" (παθόντος, παθών) point to a certain past event. Christian identity begins in baptism and continues in knowledge of Christ, i.e., pursuit of virtue and avoidance of sin (4:1-2; cf. 2 Pet 1:8-9).⁷⁵

This interpretation demonstrates the breadth of the meaning of *ἐννοια* in 4:1. It is the perception that Christ's whole path lies open before the Christian. It is the perspective that sees the self as dead to the present, passing life, but alive for God; like Christ, the believer accepts death.⁷⁶ It is the firm belief that Christ's way leads to vindication, the substance of

⁷³ Witherington (*Letters and Homilies*, 312-13) notes that the reference to baptism's effect—regeneration—is common in the NT (e.g., Rom 6:3-11; Gal 3:27). He claims that the regeneration language in 1 Peter is all ultimately baptismal.

⁷⁴ Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 143-44) writes that 4:1 is a "sentence traditionnelle de la catéchèse: le baptisé, ayant été crucifié avec le Christ, se considère comme mort au péché." This material is not a "wisdom axiom," but a potent reminder of the vocation of every Christian. Feldmeier (*First Letter of Peter*, 212) stresses communion with Christ through shared suffering and cites 2:19; 3:13; 4:13; 5:1. He thinks 2:21 heightens the impact of 4:1.

⁷⁵ The perfect tense verb "ceased" (πέπαυται) in the phrase "ceased from sin" (1 Pet 4:1) illustrates the continuing significance of the past event of baptism.

⁷⁶ Francis W. Beare, *The First Epistle of Peter* (3rd ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1970) 178-79.

the “accounting of hope” to be rendered to anyone who asks (3:15).⁷⁷ But it does not begin with human effort or learning. It is the acceptance of the revelation that Christ’s suffering overcame sin and only by incorporation into Christ can a person overcome sin.⁷⁸ The Christian insight recalls Christ’s suffering and recognizes its soteriological import.⁷⁹ It also recognizes that one’s own identity is based on this grace of God and that it belongs to one’s own identity and vocation as a follower of Christ to endure suffering like he did. This does not contradict earlier statements about the Christian’s vocation to hope and joy; on the contrary, this understanding allows for true hope and joy even in the midst of suffering (see 1:6; 4:13).⁸⁰ This ἔννοια is the culmination of the letter-long attempt to describe the fully functional Christian attitude toward life in the world, especially its ensuing desires (1:14; 2:11; 4:2). It represents a “conversion pattern,” a self-transcendence that opposes sin as the antithesis of God’s will.⁸¹ Aptly described as “Christ’s virtue” (cf. 2 Pet 1:5-7), the ἔννοια of Christ implies a progressive communion and assimilation with the Savior through the conforming power of worldly suffering.⁸² It is also “the same” (i.e., Christ’s) in that it amounts to a rejection of the world and its desires as the true measure of life and serves as a witness to the approaching eschatological reality (cf. 2 Pet 1:4, 8, 10-11).

⁷⁷ Green, *1 Peter*, 136.

⁷⁸ Heinz Giesen, “Christi Leiden—Voraussetzung und Bedingung christlichen Lebens und Heils auch für Verstorbene (1 Pet 4:1-6)” *SNTSU* 25 (2000) 176-218, here 177.

⁷⁹ See Giesen, “Christi Leiden,” 179-80, 191 for this and the following sentence.

⁸⁰ Norbert Brox (*Der Erste Petrusbrief*[EKKNT 21; Zürich: Benziger, 1979] 191) makes this point and calls this insight a response to Christ: the preparation with this ἔννοια is identified with the call to hope and joy.

⁸¹ Donald Senior, *1&2 Peter* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1980) 74.

⁸² Spicq, *Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 143-44.

This evaluation of the importance of ἔννοια for the discourse of 1 Peter demonstrates the similarity of the concept of “knowledge” (ἐπίγνωσις) in the discourse of 2 Peter. Both take Christ as their object and imply a direct personal familiarity with him (1 Pet 4:1; 2 Pet 1:2, 3, 8). Both are associated with the past cleansing of sin and with a new way of seeing the world in Christ (1 Pet 3:21; 4:1; 2 Pet 1:9). Both entail the practice of virtue as the means of affirming identity in Christ in the present (1 Pet 4:2, 8-11; 2 Pet 1:5-7). Both look forward to the appearance of Christ at the end time (1 Pet 4:5, 7; 2 Pet 1:8, 10-11). The interpretation of 1 Pet 4:1 in the context of baptism highlights this point of contact between 1 and 2 Peter. Just as the term ἔννοια (situated in a baptismal context in 1 Pet 4:1) represents the culmination of 1 Peter’s explanation of the Christian understanding of life against sin and desire, so the elaboration of ἐπίγνωσις (situated in a baptismal context in 2 Pet 1:8-9) constitutes the full development of the knowledge theme in 2 Peter’s *prooemium*. All of these observations suggest the conclusion that 2 Peter echoes 1 Peter by emphasizing baptism as an integral part of knowledge of Christ.

The Language of 2 Pet 1:5-9 in Light of 1 Peter

I have argued that 2 Pet 1:5-9 echoes many important themes from 1 Peter, including the description of Christ and a reference to baptism. I have pointed out the instances of lexical similarity between the letters. However, the substantial number of words in 2 Pet 1:5-9 which do not occur in 1 Peter requires some explanation. If 2 Pet 1:3-11 recapitulates 1 Peter, would we not find more vocabulary common to both letters? Not necessarily. If the *prooemium* of 2 Peter represents a brief pragmatic restatement of the major themes of

1 Peter, there is no reason to expect its language to mimic the careful and polished terminology of the longer, more developed 1 Peter. On the contrary, one would expect a more direct and forceful presentation that engages the audience with immediacy and emotional appeal. This is exactly what we find in the phrase “make every effort” (σπουδῆν πάσαν παρεισενέγκαντες, 1:5) and the descriptive terms “useless” (ἀργούς, 1:8), “blind” (τυφλός, 1:9), and “forgetting” (λήθην λαβών, 1:9). While these terms are absent from 1 Peter, they contribute to the emotional impact of 2 Pet 1:3-11 on the audience.

A penchant for practical summary also influences the choice of words—and literary structure—with regard to the virtue list. The catalogue represents an attractive and memorable means of communicating the necessity of Christian growth. It offers an expeditious method of restating the picture of Christ’s virtue as evinced in 1 Peter. Those terms that do not occur in 1 Peter, such as “self-control” (ἐγκράτεια, 1:6), “endurance” (ὑπομονή, 1:6), and “piety” (εὐσέβεια, 1:6-7), are nevertheless familiar from the LXX.⁸³ It is logical that the *prooemium* would insist on the presence and growth of these virtues (ὑπάρχοντα καὶ πλεονάζοντα, 1:8).

The use of “cleansing” (καθαρισμός, 1:9) instead of an explicit reference to baptism (see 1 Pet 3:21) is understandable along these same lines. The *prooemium* does not intend to enter an elaborate explanation of baptism. It means to recall the significance of baptism and employ this “cleansing of past sins” as a motivation for present and future behavior. Those who are clean desire to remain that way.

Without engaging in speculation or straying too far from the purpose of this dissertation, this evaluation of 2 Peter’s *prooemium* as a brief practical summary of the major

⁸³ E.g., each of these terms occurs in 4 Maccabees: ἐγκράτεια, 5:34; ὑπομονή, 1:11; εὐσέβεια, 5:18.

themes of 1 Peter offers some explanation for the divergence in vocabulary between 1 and 2 Peter. One would expect 2 Pet 1:3-11 to employ different language and structures to restate substantial ideas in compact and striking ways.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented an audience-oriented exegesis of 2 Pet 1:5-9 in light of 1 Peter in order to expose the lexical and conceptual links between the letters and to argue for the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter. Second Peter continues to highlight the theme of knowledge of Christ in 1:5-9 by casting this knowledge as the origin and goal of human virtue. Several of the words and phrases in the second part of 2 Peter's *prooemium* also appear in 1 Peter with similar meanings and in passages critical to its exhortation based on knowledge of Christ. I have argued that 1 Peter's portrait of Christ, the sequence of its exhortation to Christian virtue, and its presentation of baptism represent the background taken for granted by the discourse in 2 Pet 1:5-9.

The virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7 demonstrates how all Christian virtue grows out of and leads to an enhanced knowledge of Christ. Two instances of ἐπίγνωσις frame and interpret the catalogue (1:3, 8). The individual virtues recall 1 Peter in various ways, including a parallel concern for faith as the beginning and love as the end of Christian conduct. The virtue list echoes the portrait of Christ's virtue in 1 Peter. The sequence of virtues in 2 Pet 1:5-7, from internal qualities to those visible in a community context, echoes the thrust of the exhortation in 1 Peter 1 which culminates in a call for brotherly affection and love (1:22;

cf. 2 Pet 1:7). Thus the catalogue of virtues discloses the present moral implications of knowledge of Christ.

Second Peter 1:8-9 presents opposite reactions to the virtue list. According to 1:8 the audience (“you”) possess and cultivate the virtues listed in 1:5-7 and so are both useful and fruitful for the knowledge of Christ. I argued that the overtones of “usefulness” and “fruitfulness” in 1 Peter point to a development in the idea of knowledge of Christ. This final occurrence of the term in the *prooemium* recapitulates the preceding instances (1:2, 3) and anticipates the eschatological encounter with Christ described in 1:10-11.

Second Peter 1:9 describes “the one” who does not possess virtue. This person is blind and forgetful of the cleansing of past sins. Both of these themes echo 1 Peter. I argued that the reference to “cleansing of past sins” recalls the reference to baptism in 1 Pet 3:21 and 1 Peter’s insistence on Christ’s role in the cleansing of sins. The association of baptism with the knowledge of Christ in 2 Pet 1:8-9 echoes the association of a certain “insight of Christ” with baptism in 1 Pet 4:1.

These resonances of 1 Peter suggest that 2 Peter deliberately employs concepts and images from 1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and the knowledge of Christ. The audience recognizes in both the virtue list and the reference to baptism the association of Christ and the virtue required of a Christian familiar from 1 Peter. Knowledge of Christ demands present commitment not only to intellectual content but a holy way of life. Second Peter uses this material to legitimize and hone its emphasis on commitment to the Christian life and true knowledge of Christ in the face of temptations and attacks against faith.

The second part of the *prooemium* (1:5-9) advances the theme of knowledge of Christ by spelling out its practical consequences and elaborating its past, present, and future dimensions. In Chapter Four I will offer an exegesis of the final section of the *prooemium*, noting the lexical and conceptual links and suggesting that the eschatological teaching of 1 Peter stands beneath that of 2 Peter in these verses.

Chapter Four

Audience-Oriented Exegesis of 2 Pet 1:10-11 in Light of 1 Peter

1. Introduction

In this chapter I will read 2 Pet 1:10-11 in light of 1 Peter. I will take care to note verbal and conceptual resonances between these verses and the words and themes of 1 Peter. I argued in Chapter Three that 2 Pet 1:5-9 demonstrates how virtue both springs from and leads to knowledge of Christ. This second section of the *prooemium* echoes 1 Peter's presentation of Christ, growth in virtue, and baptism. Second Peter 1:10-11 concludes the *prooemium* with a final exhortation and an elaboration of the future knowledge of Christ which 1:8 insinuated: entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ. Like the two previous sections of the *prooemium*, 2 Pet 1:10-11 suggests a dichotomy between success and failure—between unity with Christ on the one hand and “stumbling” on the other (see 2 Pet 1:4, 8-9).

Unlike the previous sections of the *prooemium*, however, 1:10-11 summarizes and completes themes from earlier in 2 Peter. A number of lexical and conceptual features unite 1:10-11 with 1:3-4 and 1:5-9. As a restatement of 1:5-9, these last verses of the *prooemium* disclose the fullness of knowledge of Christ, the future entrance into his kingdom. I will argue that several key themes from 1 Peter stand behind this section of 2 Peter and appear most clearly here at the *prooemium*'s end. In clarifying its own presentation of the knowledge of Christ and believers' eschatological encounter with Christ, the *prooemium* resonates strongly with 1 Peter. These resonances suggest that 2 Peter deliberately employs

concepts from 1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and knowledge of Christ.

Translation:

(10) Therefore, brothers, be more eager to make firm your call and election; for doing these things you will never stumble. (11) For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

2. Making Firm the Call and Election: 2 Pet 1:10

The exhortation in 1:10 reiterates the previous call for virtue (1:5-8) in new terms evocative of certain expressions from 1 Peter, including the image of firm construction (2:4-8; 5:10) as well as the language of call and election (1:15; 2:4-9; 5:10). The warning against “stumbling” in 2 Pet 1:10b recalls the image of blindness in 1:9 and continues the development of a “journey” image in the *prooemium*. This theme—especially in combination with 1:11—echoes the important metaphor of sojourning from 1 Peter as well (see 1:11, 17; 2:11).

“Therefore, Brothers”

The inferential conjunction $\delta\iota\acute{o}$ (“therefore”) beginning 1:10 demonstrates this verse’s dependence on the previous material.¹ Although the audience has most recently heard a foreboding description of “the one” who does not practice virtue as blind and forgetful of the cleansing of past sins (1:9), in contrast to the pursuit of virtue “among you” (1:8), $\delta\iota\acute{o}$ recalls

¹ BDAG, s.v.; BDF §451(5).

the virtue list in 1:5-7 and 1:3-4 as well.² The concluding exhortation to cooperation with God's action in Christ in 1:10 stands upon all of the *prooemium*'s previous statements and exhortations. The audience hears διό as a recapitulation of 1:3-9.

The occurrence of διό at the beginning of 1:10 marks the third time that a section of the *prooemium* begins with some kind of conjunction: in 1:3 ὡς, in 1:5 the adverbial phrase καὶ αὐτο τοῦτο δέ, in 1:10 διό. This common structural feature strengthens the conceptual links between the sections of the *prooemium*. Both καὶ αὐτο τοῦτο δέ in 1:5 and διό in 1:10 underscore the dependence of what follows on the preceding material. The position of διό in 1:10 indicates that the final sentence of the *prooemium* (1:10-11) recapitulates what has come before.

The function and position of διό in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes its role and placement in 1 Pet 1:13. After the explanation of Christian faith and hope in the *prooemium* of 1 Peter (1:3-12), διό begins 1:13 and marks a transition to exhortation based on the preceding material. The conjunction performs the same function at the conclusion of the *prooemium* in 2 Pet 1:10. Both instances of διό summarize the letters' initial presentation of the significance of Christ and lead to an exhortation to live the faith. Both occur at roughly the same point in the discourse of each letter. The fact that διό appears only once in 1 Peter at such a critical juncture heightens its prominence. The audience hears διό in 2 Pet 1:10 as an echo of its only use in 1 Peter.

The adverb μᾶλλον ("more") serves to reinforce the *prooemium*'s exhortation in light of the contrasting reactions to the pursuit of virtue presented in 1:8-9. Since virtue gives fruit

² Whereas Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 304) perceives only a reference to 1:9, Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 73) holds that διό refers back to 1:3-9. Hiebert ("Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1," 50) sees a connection to "the incentives just cited," which encompasses more than 1:8-9.

(1:8) and lack of virtue leads to forgetfulness of cleansing from sin (1:9), believers must apply even more effort and energy in pursuit of a virtuous life. The audience does not want to prove useless or fruitless or blind and forgetful of the cleansing of past sins.³ The knowledge of Christ urges them to further commitment and perseverance for the completion of their pilgrimage.

The word order in the first section of 1:10 leads to a question of interpretation: does μάλλον belong with διό, in which case it is rendered “rather,” or with the verb σπουδάσατε (“be eager”), in which case it is rendered “more” (as in “be even more eager”)? Some commentators favor a construal of μάλλον with διό because of the intervening vocative noun ἀδελφοί (“brothers”); they argue that this separation from σπουδάσατε indicates that μάλλον does not modify the verb.⁴ The context of the whole *prooemium*, however, favors reading μάλλον with σπουδάσατε. From the beginning the discourse urges the audience to recognize the call and knowledge of Christ, leading to sharing divine nature and cooperative effort in the pursuit of virtue (1:3-7). The presence of virtue makes believers useful and fruitful and enhances their knowledge of Christ (1:8). All of this material exhorts the audience to further effort in the life of faith. The contrast in 1:9 with “the one” who does not possess virtue and so proves blind and forgetful supposedly provides the logical basis for the translation of μάλλον as “rather” or “instead.” But the discourse does not intend a contrast. In 1:8 “among you” (ὑμῖν) indicates that the audience has virtue, whereas 1:9 makes clear that “the one” (ὁ)

³ Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 261) thinks the discourse uses μάλλον because it gives two additional reasons for effort in 1:8-9.

⁴ Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 200) makes this point, arguing that “instead/rather” introduces a conclusion and alternative. Hiebert (“Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1,” 50) favors taking μάλλον as “rather” in contrast to 1:9 but admits the possibility of taking it with the verb.

without virtue does not belong to the audience. Furthermore, the overall thrust of the *prooemium* and the presence of similar language in 1:5 (σπουδήν) demonstrates that 1:10 reiterates and underscores the need for concentration and work in the Christian life. It is likely that the concluding exhortation calls for “more” eagerness without intending a tangential contrast.

Although the address ἀδελφοί (“brothers”) occurs in 1:10 for the first time, the *prooemium* as a whole discloses the nature of the relationship among believers.⁵ The salutation addresses the audience as “those who receive a faith equal in honor to us” (1:1), whereas 1:4 mentions God’s promises given “to us” (ἡμῖν). The discourse has supported the development of this relationship through its careful use of first and second person pronouns. A focus on common faith (ἡμῖν and ἡμᾶς, 1:3-4) gives way to exhortation (ὑμῶν and ὑμῖν, 1:5-8) but returns to an emphasis on solidarity through the use of ἀδελφοί (1:10). Jesus is described as “our God” and “our Lord” throughout (ἡμῶν, 1:1, 2, 8). Thus the address ἀδελφοί does not represent a surprising development for the audience. The faith and its moral requirements unite all believers in a family relationship.

With its subtle allusion to shared faith, “brothers” enhances the character of 1:10 as a summary and conclusion of the preceding material.⁶ But ἀδελφοί echoes the preceding section of the *prooemium* in another important way. In 1:7 the audience heard the

⁵ Literally “brothers,” the plural form ἀδελφοί can be rendered inclusively as “brothers and sisters.” See BDAG, s.v.

⁶ Knoch (*Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief, Der Judasbrief*, 243) claims that the address as “brothers” in faith gives a summary of admonishment to live well in their faith status. Vögtle (*Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 153) thinks that “brothers” signals a concluding admonition, whereas Frankemölle (*1. Petrusbrief, 2. Petrusbrief, Judasbrief*, 93) argues that the address reveals the urgency of the admonition.

penultimate virtue in the virtue list, φιλαδελφία (“brotherly affection”).⁷ That specifically Christian virtue relates to the treatment of fellow believers and prepares for the final virtue in the catalogue, love. These two virtues represent the outward consummation of the inward life of faith. I have argued that they also echo the moral teaching of 1 Peter (φιλαδελφίαν occurs in 1 Pet 1:22). In the context of 2 Pet 1:10, the reference to “brothers” recalls φιλαδελφία and the conclusion of the virtue list in 1:7. The address therefore summarizes the final part of the list and suggests the method for becoming more eager for the faith: cultivation of the virtues listed in 1:5-7.

Although the address ἀδελφοί does not occur in 1 Peter, a consciousness of the “brotherhood” or “fellowship” of believers appears conspicuously (ἀδελφότης, 2:17; 5:9; the only occurrences of this term in the NT). In those passages, believers are urged to love their siblings in faith (2:17) and persevere in the knowledge that the fellowship of believers undergoes similar trials (5:9).⁸ In light of this link and those with 1 Peter’s moral teaching mentioned above, it is possible to read ἀδελφοί in 2 Pet 1:10 as an echo of the group consciousness of believers present in 1 Peter.

“Be More Eager to Make Firm Your Call and Election”

The main verb of 1:10, σπουδάσατε (“be eager”), follows the conjunction and address. Taking the adverb μᾶλλον with σπουδάσατε yields the translation “be more eager.”

⁷ In my exegesis of 1:7 I noted that Aasgaard (“Brotherly Advice,” 253-54) thinks φιλαδελφία forms the climax of the list with ἀγάπη. He notes that this reference prepares for the address in 1:10.

⁸ In his exegesis of 1 Pet 2:17, Elliott (*1 Peter*, 499) notes that this collective term for the believing community belongs with the familial terms (“household” and “family”) employed throughout 1:3–2:10. In his view 1 Peter emphasizes group commitment demonstrated through love.

The common verb σπουδάζω has the basic meaning “make haste” but also implies purposeful effort, as in “apply” or “devote oneself to.”⁹ Scholars offer different explanations for the aorist imperative form in 1:10. Some think the present tense would better fit the context of a continuing effort towards virtue and growth in faith.¹⁰ Others regard the aorist as an appropriate vehicle for the urgency of the request or the decisive character of the choice to pursue virtue, even if the decision must be renewed.¹¹ From a syntactical point of view, the aorist imperative (as opposed to the present imperative) conveys either “the coming about of conduct which contrasts with former conduct,” in which case it is ingressive, or a “commandment in the strict sense,” in which case it is complexive.¹²

What the audience has already heard in the *prooemium* (1:3-9) helps to resolve the issue of tense and interprets the sense of σπουδάσατε in 1:10. The first section of the *prooemium* (1:3-4) implies a previous gift of “everything for life and piety,” including knowledge of Christ, through which the promises “have been given” (δεδώρηται). Christ takes the initiative. Believers receive his gifts and make an appropriate response, becoming sharers of divine nature (1:4). For this reason I treated the aorist subjunctive verb γένησθε in 1:4 as ingressive (“you may become” sharers in divine nature). The exhortation in 1:5—repeated and developed in 1:10—calls in a general way for a deeper commitment to a life of

⁹ Spicq, “σπουδάζω κτλ,” *TLNT*, 3. 276-77.

¹⁰ Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 261) argues that the aorist is wrongly used for the present. Harrington (“Jude and 2 Peter,” 246) expects the present. He (“Jude and 2 Peter,” 249) notes that both 1:10 and 1:11 employ the image of life as way or journey with present and future aspects.

¹¹ Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 73) maintains that the aorist stresses the urgency of the plea to live for God. Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 304) explains the use of the aorist for a decisive but not necessarily one-time event.

¹² BDF §337. Prayers are included among the examples of the complexive aorist.

faith already known. The *prooemium* provides a normative program for the life of faith (1:5-9). Thus the complexive aorist tense of the participle (παρεισενέγκαντες, “bring to bear”) and main verb (ἐπιχορηγήσατε, “supply”) in 1:5 highlights the general nature of the injunction to practice virtue. The verb σπουδάσατε in 1:10 echoes 1:5 and its insistence on human effort in cooperation with God’s gifts.

The verb σπουδάσατε in 1:10 echoes 1:5 in another way as well. The noun σπουδή occurred in 1:5 in the phrase “make every effort” (σπουδὴν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες). The audience recalls the earlier usage of this root as it hears the verb in 1:10. Drawing on the account of the gifts of Christ in 1:3-4, the discourse urges believers to make “every effort” to cultivate virtue at the beginning of the catalogue of virtues (1:5-7). The goal of sharing divine nature deserves any and all exertion on the part of believers. As always, the *prooemium* does not suggest that human effort alone can merit Christ’s favor; it implies that total effort and concentration represents the only appropriate human response to the divine invitation. The position of “make every effort” in 1:5, immediately after the introductory adverbial phrase (“for this very reason”), highlights the importance of human effort to the discourse. The motive for this cooperation involves the knowledge of Christ and its attendant promises and requirements (1:3-4). Believers’ efforts are directed “in faith” toward the cultivation of virtue (1:5-7). The verb σπουδάσατε in 1:10 echoes the usage of σπουδή in 1:5 on all these points. It too comes at the beginning of the exhortation, immediately after the conjunction (διό). Knowledge of Christ (1:8) provides the motive for the urgent appeal for “more” eagerness for growth in faith, expressed in terms of making firm the Christian call and election. The imperative form—along with the adverb and address as “brothers”—

intensifies the charge to devote effort to the life of faith. The repetition of the need for eagerness in 1:10 develops the earlier call for effort insofar as the audience now has a better grasp of the past, present, and future implications of knowledge of Christ and growth in virtue. Believers are mindful of the cleansing of past sins (1:9), cultivate virtue (1:5-8), and look forward to a deeper knowledge of Christ (1:8).

While neither the verb σπουδάζω nor the noun σπουδή appears in 1 Peter, that letter is replete with admonitions to devotion and maximum effort on behalf of the faith. In 1:13 the discourse calls on the audience to hope “completely” (τελείως). This is the only occurrence of this adverb in 1 Peter, and its usage in connection with the first, overarching exhortation of the letter underscores its importance as a general directive: let the hope given by God determine the whole of life. Like 2 Pet 1:10, this exhortation rests on an extended exposition of God’s gifts to believers (1 Pet 1:3-12; cf. 2 Pet 1:3-9). Other passages also indicate 1 Peter’s desire for believers to make a full effort to live their faith. A charge to holiness “in all conduct” (ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ, 1:15) follows the general command for complete hope in 1:13. Believers are to spare no effort in their thinking or conduct in order to respond to God’s gift appropriately. The exhortation to diligence in 2 Pet 1:5 and 1:10 echoes 1 Peter’s initial call for total human effort in 1:13-16 and accords with 1 Peter’s exhortation to effort in general (see 2:1-3, 11-12; 4:7-11).

“*Firm*”¹³

The adjective βεβαίαν (“firm”) follows the verb and precedes the nouns κλήσιν (“call”) and ἐκλογὴν (“election”). However, its construction depends on the infinitive ποιείσθαι which does not occur until the end of 1:10a. Although a smooth translation requires taking βεβαίαν with ποιείσθαι—as in “make firm”—the word order reflects an important interpretive feature for the discourse. Therefore I will consider the verb ποιείσθαι (“to make”) in its place in the Greek text.

Originally βέβαιος denoted physical stability, as in “firm” or “steadfast.”¹⁴ The term acquired a legal meaning of “valid” or “ratified” in regard to contracts or alliances.¹⁵ But the basic sense of “firm” highlights an important resonance with 1 Peter, where the metaphor of building and language of solidity play a central role in the description of believers. References to the foundation of the world (καταβολῆς κόσμου, 1:20) and the building of the ark (κατασκευαζομένης κιβωτοῦ, 3:20) employ language of stability and construction. But one of the most important metaphors in 1 Peter concerns the identity of the audience as “living stones” (λίθοι ζῶντες) coming to Christ the “living stone” (λίθον ζῶντα): “you are

¹³ Between σπουδάσατε and βεβαίαν an extended textual variant occurs which affords different readings of the rest of 1:10a. Some manuscripts (Ⲙ A Ψ 81. 614. (623). 630. 1505. 1852. (2464) *al h vg sy co*) read σπουδάσατε ἵνα διὰ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων βεβαίαν ὑμῶν τὴν κλήσιν καὶ ἐκλογὴν ποιήσθε (“be eager so that through good works you may make firm your call and election”). Alexandrinus (A) reads ὑμῶν before ἔργων and παράκλησιν for κλήσιν. The manuscripts 623 and 2464 read ποιείσθαι for ποιήσθε. The majority of manuscripts (*P*⁷² B C P 1739 20; Ambr) does not read ἵνα . . . ἔργων or ποιήσθε. In light of the variations among the longer readings, the shorter text appears original. See Metzger, *TCGNT*, 631.

¹⁴ Heinrich Schlier (“βέβαιος κτλ,” *TDNT*, 1. 600-602) believes that the original meaning is “firm/steadfast.” Spicq (“βέβαιος κτλ,” *TLNT*, 1. 280-83) describes it as “that on which one can walk,” so “solid” or “firm.”

¹⁵ Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 215) describes it as a juridic term with regard to contracts and alliances; in this context it concerns the fact that baptismal grace gives a guarantee of entrance into Christ’s eternal kingdom.

built into a spiritual house” (οικοδομείσθε οἶκος πνευματικός, 2:4-5). First Peter 2:6-8 explains 2:4 and describes Christ as the “elect, precious cornerstone” (λίθον ἀκρογωνιαῖον ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον, Isa 28:16 LXX), rejected by the builders (Ps 117:22 LXX), who is a stumbling block to those who do not believe (Isa 8:14 LXX). The language of 2:4-5 draws upon OT “stone” texts and communicates the link between Jesus’ own election and honor and that conferred upon believers.¹⁶ The adjective “living” recalls Christ’s resurrection (1:3, 21), the basis for believers’ “living hope” (ἐλπίδα ζώσαν, 1:3). The passive indicative verb οἰκοδομείσθε implies that God builds up and consolidates his people into a single “household” (οἶκος, 2:5; cf. 4:17). A central point of this section (2:4-8) is that “one’s fate . . . is determined by one’s relation to Christ.”¹⁷

Besides this important passage, 1 Peter employs language of stability and construction at the end of its discourse as well. One of the letter’s final statements affirms that God “will himself restore, establish, strengthen, found” (αὐτὸς καταρτίσει, στηρίξει, σθενώσει, θεμελιώσει) believers who suffer (5:10).¹⁸ All of these verbs call to mind the act of physical construction or reinforcement and recall the image of believers as the household of God with God himself as the builder (2:5).¹⁹ Therefore 1 Peter reiterates the previous

¹⁶ For this and the following two sentences, I rely on the exegesis of Elliott, *1 Peter*, 410-15.

¹⁷ Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 163.

¹⁸ Some manuscripts (\mathcal{P}^{72} 81 r t vg^{mss}) do not read σθενώσει; others (A B Ψ 0206^{vid} pc vg) do not read θεμελιώσει. The majority of manuscripts (P [1739^{mg}] 20) reads καταρτίσαι ὑμᾶς before the other verbs; still other manuscripts (614. 630. 1505 *al*) read καταρτίσαι στηρίξει σθενώσει θεμελιώσει. However, it is likely that the verbs’ similar endings caused the omission of one word in different manuscripts, and the instances of these verbs in the optative mood reflect a later correction. See Metzger, *TCGNT*, 627.

¹⁹ Elliott (*1 Peter*, 867) notes this connection, since God is the subject of οἰκοδομείσθε in 2:5 and the verbs in 5:10. He also remarks that this idea of “strengthening” is common to the Petrine tradition in 1 Peter and Luke. The adjective βέβαιος suggests that it is common to 2 Peter as well.

theme and leaves its audience with an image of God building and making secure those who believe in him.

The adjective βέβαιος in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes all of this language of construction and stability in 1 Peter as it applies to believers. The first section of the *prooemium* (1:3-4) makes clear that Christ provides everything for life and piety; i.e., Christ himself represents the foundation enabling believers' cooperation. Christians share divine nature (1:4) and so never labor with only their own strength. Growth in virtue springs from and leads to a greater knowledge of Christ (1:5-8). Rather than forget their past or neglect their future (1:8-9), people of faith strive to make firm their call and election (1:10). Thus 2 Peter's emphasis on human cooperation in making "firm" their call and election does not contradict 1 Peter's emphasis on God as the master builder. On the contrary, 2 Peter accords with 1 Peter's call for a productive life based on God's gifts (1:13-16; 2:1-3; 4:1-2). To extend the metaphor, the word βέβαιος does not imply some new building but the maintenance of an already existing structure. The discourse of 2 Peter exhorts its audience to confirm its Christian identity and unity with Christ through the pursuit of virtue and excellent conduct oriented towards Christ.²⁰ Second Peter turns the building theme into a cogent element of its paraenesis. The singular appearance of βέβαιος in 1:10 creates a thematic parallel with this important image from 1 Peter.

²⁰ With its emphasis on strength or firmness, βέβαιος recalls some of the virtues in the virtue list, especially "excellence" (ἀρετή, 1:5) and "self-control" (ἐγκράτεια, 1:6). Thus, in the ears of the audience, βέβαιος suggests that the means of making firm their call and election is the practice of virtue.

“Your Call and Election”

The discourse urges the audience to make firm “your call and election” (ὁμῶν τὴν κλήσιν καὶ ἐκλογήν). The terms overlap in meaning; both describe a new status bestowed on the audience by Christ.²¹ However, an individual treatment will highlight how each term echoes previous parts of 2 Peter and the discourse of 1 Peter.

The genitive plural pronoun ὁμῶν (“your”) modifies both nouns and forms a link in the ears of the audience to the previous section of the *prooemium*. After the salutation’s initial wish—“may grace and peace abound among you (ὁμῖν)” —the audience heard ὁμῶν in 1:5 in connection with faith, which forms the basis of the virtue catalogue in 1:5-7. Faith manifests the call and election of Christ. This special relationship with Christ mandates the pursuit of virtue, the appropriate response to such a divine gift (1:4-7). These virtues exist and grow among the believers (ὁμῖν) and make them useful and fruitful for the knowledge of Christ (1:8). Thus the elements described as “yours” in the *prooemium* are faith, virtue, and now call and election. Believers enjoy a unique identity which determines their lifestyle. Since the audience also participates in knowledge of “our (ἡμῶν) Lord Jesus Christ” (1:8; cf. 1:3-4), the progression from faith to virtue to call and election represents an elaboration of the knowledge theme as well. Assent to Christ in faith leads to an objective knowledge of Christ (1:3-4). Knowledge demands a genuine external response (1:5-7). This in turn leads to a deeper subjective understanding of Christian identity, a further identification with Christ, and future hope (1:8-10). The progression from internal virtue to external love evident in the

²¹ Some commentators regard “call and election” as a virtual hendiadys. Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 304) takes the phrase as “elective call.” Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 222) sees little theological distinction between “call” and “election” and notes that the terms are interchangeable in the NT. For a list of NT occurrences, see Kelly, *Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, 309. The appearance of both terms in 1 Pet 2:9 proves important for my exegesis.

virtue list (1:5-7) appears on a larger scale in the *prooemium*, since faith leads to virtue and a reinforcement of identity (1:3-10). Knowledge of Christ involves a rich dialectic between gift and response, faith and action, identity and progress.

“Call”

The term κλήσιν (“call”) echoes the participle καλέσαντος in 1:3.²² The audience recalls that Christ calls them; everything necessary for life and piety comes through the knowledge of Christ who calls them to his own glory and excellence. Thus the origin and content of the “call” are clear from earlier material. What was not evident in the admonition to “make every effort” in 1:5 becomes clear in the exhortation in 1:10: by pursuing virtue and the knowledge of Christ, believers make their calling firm. This verse indicates that the pursuit of virtue, described in 1:5-9 as an appropriate response to Christ’s gifts, represents the human cooperation that makes the divine call “firm.” In order to safeguard and preserve what Christ has constructed in them, believers are to progress in the life of faith through the virtues arranged in 1:5-7.²³ Rather than an invitation to relax their efforts, subjective certainty about believers’ identity as Christians reinforces their commitment to Christ and gives hope for a faithful future. The discourse stresses the practical dimension of Christ’s call, so that believers may be neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of Christ (1:8).²⁴

²² Alexandrinus (A) reads παράκλησιν for κλήσιν. However, κλήσιν makes more sense in the context and enjoys the support of many and quality witnesses (*P*⁷² B C P 1739 20; Ambr).

²³ I agree with Knight (*2 Peter and Jude*, 16) when he argues that the exhortation to make their call and election permanent amounts to a call to right behavior as much as to belief and trust.

²⁴ Reicke (*Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude*, 154) takes “confirm call and election” not in a cognitive but in a practical sense. In light of the *prooemium*’s emphasis on knowledge of Christ, however, the audience’s knowledge of their call in Christ plays a role (1:3).

In my exegesis of 1:3, I recounted the “calling” theme in 1 Peter. Although the noun κλήσις does not occur in the letter, the instances of καλέω demonstrate the prominence of God’s call in 1 Peter (1:15; 2:9, 21; 3:9; 5:10). God invites his people to share in his blessings, including the ultimate blessing: eternal glory in Christ (5:10). The reference to “the one who calls us by his own glory” in 2 Pet 1:3 echoes this invitation. If it is reasonable to see 1 Peter’s use of “calling” language as the background for 2 Pet 1:3, the same holds for the reference to Christ’s call in 1:10. Regarding 1 Peter’s emphasis on God as the one who calls, I argued that 2 Peter chooses to emphasize the divinity and power of Christ (1:1, 3) by attributing to him the act of calling. Moreover, the activity of the spirit of Christ in 1 Pet 1:11 leaves open the question of the role of Christ in prophecy and evangelization; i.e., the act of “calling.” This development of the “calling” theme from 1 Peter stands in line with 2 Peter’s interest in the person and significance of Christ and believers’ direct knowledge of him.

Like 2 Peter, 1 Peter connects the divine call with an active human response. The general injunction to “become holy as the one calling (τὸν καλέσαντα) you is holy” (1:15) stands at the head of the moral exhortation of the letter. It is significant that this charge follows the instruction to “hope completely in the grace brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:13). As in 2 Peter, the identity of believers as called to eternal life supports the summons to action. In 1 Pet 2:9, in the midst of the critical passage on the identity of the Christian community, the discourse reveals the purpose of that identity: to proclaim “the wonders” or “the excellence” (τὰς ἀρετάς) of the “one calling” (καλέσαντος) you into his own wonderful light. It is perhaps no coincidence that 2 Peter orders believers to make firm

their call by imitating the excellence (ἀρετήν) of Christ (1:5; see 1:3). Part of Christ’s example (one might say excellence) according to 1 Peter is suffering for doing good (2:21) and returning blessings for mockeries, in light of the prospect of inheriting a blessing (3:9; 5:10). The virtue list in 2 Pet 1:5-7—which I have argued echoes the portrait of Christ in 1 Peter—contains both self-control (ἐγκράτεια) and endurance (ὑπομονή). Thus, while 1 Peter does not explicitly state that believers must make firm their call, both Petrine letters emphasize a human response to a divine call in similar language. The use of κλήσιν in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes the implications for identity and response in the calling theme of 1 Peter.

“Election”

The word ἐκλογή (“election”) does not appear in the material preceding 2 Pet 1:10. However, the related adjective ἐκλεκτός appears four times in the discourse of 1 Peter: in the first sentence of the letter (1:1), and *three times* in the passage on Christian identity (2:4, 6, 9). The salutation introduces the theme of election by naming the addressees as “elect” (ἐκλεκτοῖς, 1:1) and describing their election.²⁵ The first few chapters of 1 Peter work out the implications of being God’s elect people: election has as its purpose the reflection of God’s holiness (1:15-16), love (1:22), and the glorification of God (2:9).²⁶ The three

²⁵ Ellen Juhl Christiansen (“Election as Identity Term in 1 Peter With a View to a Qumran Background,” *SEÅ* 73 [2008] 39-64, here 53-54) regards “foreknowledge of God the Father” as the origin of the addressees’ election, “sanctification of the Spirit” as its means, and “obedience and sprinkling with the blood of Christ” as its cause (1:2). Elliott (*1 Peter*, 446) shares this evaluation.

²⁶ Christiansen (“Election as Identity Term in 1 Peter,” 55-58) discusses the structure of 1 Peter in relation to the proposal of Kendall (“The Literary and Theological Function of 1 Peter 1:3-12,” in *Perspectives on First Peter* [ed. Charles H. Talbert; NABPRSS 9; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986] 103-20). In her view, the *prooemium* (1:3-12) raises questions about being the elect people of God which are answered in the following sections: what it means to be elected people (1:13-2:10); how to act as the elect (2:11-4:11); and

instances of ἐκλεκτός in 2:4-9 demonstrate the importance of election for the identity of the Christian community. The status of Christ as the “elect” cornerstone established by God (2:4, 6) provides for the status of believers as an “elect” people (2:9).²⁷ The use of the related term συνεκλεκτή (“fellow elect,” 5:13) to describe the church from which 1 Peter was sent recalls the description of the addressees as ἐκλεκτοί in the salutation (1:1) and underscores the importance of the election theme for the identity of believers.²⁸ Thus election through Christ represents a dominant theme in 1 Peter.²⁹

The use of the term ἐκλογήν in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes the election motif so prevalent in 1 Peter. Like the discourse of 1 Peter, the *prooemium* of 2 Peter makes clear that Christ’s power, call, and nature allow for the special status of believers (1:3-4). The call to virtue (1:5-7) applies to believers who are set apart by their knowledge of Christ (1:2, 3, 8). Both letters ground the special identity of the faithful on the person of Christ (1 Pet 2:4-5; 2 Pet 1:3-4, 8, 10). At first glance, the command to “make firm” their election (2 Pet 1:10) does not correspond to the declarative tone of 1 Peter, which merely states the exalted status of Christians (1:1; 2:6, 9). However, 1 Peter contains an admonition to growth in the life of faith immediately before the discussion of the election of believers: “Like newborn infants,

how to remain in the election in the future (4:12–5:11). Election represents a major theme of 1 Peter. The Christian community is a continuation not a replacement of Israel.

²⁷ Gerhard Hotze (“Königliche Priesterschaft in Bedrängnis: Zur Ekklesiologie des Ersten Petrusbriefes,” in *Hoffnung in Bedrängnis: Studien zum Ersten Petrusbrief* [ed. Thomas Söding; SBS 216; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 2009] 105-29, here 118-24) notes the dependence of 1 Peter’s ecclesiology on Christology. He believes that the metaphor of Christ as a cornerstone gave rise to the spontaneous chain of biblical passages describing the church.

²⁸ Christiansen (“Election as Identity Term in 1 Peter,” 53) notices this link between the beginning and end of the letter.

²⁹ Elliott (*1 Peter*, 446) remarks “Nowhere in the NT does the theme of election assume the dominating significance that it has in 1 Peter.”

long for pure spiritual milk so that you may grow into salvation” (2:2). Both letters show concern for growth in the Christian life. Second Peter uses the phrase “make firm your election” to show the gravity of the task at hand. Only by cooperating with Christ’s gifts and pursuing concrete virtue can a believer appropriate and preserve his status as elect.

Furthermore, both letters use the election theme as an impetus to moral behavior. Besides the charge to spiritual growth in 2:2, 1 Peter uses the status of believers (2:4-10) as an introduction to a long paraenetic section (2:11–4:11). The introduction to this section (2:11-12) calls on believers to resist fleshly desires that fight against the soul and show forth good behavior among the nations. In a similar vein, 2 Peter links election to the pursuit of virtue through the logical progression of the *prooemium* and the repetition of the pronoun ὑμῶν (1:10), which refers back to the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7. The audience of 2 Peter previously heard the connection between the gifts of Christ and the need to flee the corruption in the world through desire (1:4). Both letters stress the connection between election in Christ and moral behavior in the world. Their identity as Christians makes believers resist fleshly desires and subordinate all other concerns to their life of faith.

Given the overlap in content between κλήσιν and ἐκλογήν, it is not surprising to find them linked in 2 Pet 1:10.³⁰ Both terms describe the divine initiative to bring people to life and piety (1:3) and the fullness of knowledge of Christ (1:8, 11). Divine action requires a human response, a practical assent to Christ’s gift through the cultivation of virtue (1:5-8, 10). Both 1 and 2 Peter describe this same sequence of divine gifts and human response.

³⁰ Hiebert (“Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1,” 51) notes that both nouns appears together with one article, and so are connected; although election precedes call, only once called do believers appreciate their election. Chaine (*Épîtres Catholiques*, 47) thinks the audience is called because they were chosen: “the first step comes from God or rather from Christ (1:3).” Diligence is the proper response to his call.

The presence of both terms in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes the use of “calling” and “elect” language in disparate passages in 1 Peter. But 1 Peter provides a precedent for the use of these two concepts in tandem. In 1 Pet 2:9, believers as an “elect race” (γένος ἐκλεκτόν) announce the excellence (ἀρετάς) of the one calling (καλέσαντος) them out of darkness into his own light. This verse clarifies the relationship between calling and election and indicates the practical consequences of the divine invitation. Through the use of κλήσιν and ἐκλογὴν 2 Pet 1:10 echoes 1 Peter’s foundational statements on Christian identity.

“*Make*”³¹

I have already discussed the translation and significance of the infinitive ποιῆσθαι (“to make”) at the end of 1:10a: “Be eager to make firm your call and election.” But the placement and certain aspects of the verb call for some comment. The emphatic final position in the clause indicates that the audience has some interest in heeding the admonition to make firm their call and election.³² The present tense of the verb indicates the lifelong duration of the audience’s responsibility and effort in response to the divine call and election.³³ The use of the present tense here recalls its use in 1:8-9, in which virtues “existing and growing” (ὑπάρχοντα καὶ πλεονάζοντα) in believers “make” (καθίστησιν) them

³¹ Some manuscripts (Ⲛ A Ψ 81. 614. (623). 630. 1505. 1852. (2464) *al h vg sy co*) read the subjunctive ποιῆσθε instead of the infinitive ποιῆσθαι. The construction with σπουδάζω requires the infinitive; it is probable that the subjunctive reflects the insertion of a ἵνα clause in these manuscripts. The simpler reading with the infinitive (as in *P*⁷² B C P 1739 20; Ambr) is probably original. See Metzger, *TCGNT*, 631.

³² Vögtle, *Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 153; Hiebert, “Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1,” 51. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 74) highlights the significance of the middle voice: “make firm for yourselves.” Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 261) reads this charge to mean that cooperation is necessary.

³³ Vögtle (*Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 153) argues that the present tense indicates the lifelong duration of the effort.

neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of Christ. The one in whom they “are not present” (μὴ πάρεστιν) is blind. Once again the discourse explains how to make the divine call and election permanent by means of verbal links with the preceding material about the practice of virtue. The present pursuit of virtue is the practical and ongoing response to Christ’s gifts and leads to the fullness of knowledge of Christ (1:8, 11).

The verb ποιέω occurs three times in 1 Peter, all in quotes from the LXX: in 2:22 Christ “did not commit sin” (ἐποίησεν, see Isa 53:9); in 3:11-12 the one who loves life should “do (ποιησάτω) good,” for the face of the Lord is against those “doing (ποιοῦντας; see Ps 33:15, 17 LXX) evil.” The use of ποιεῖσθαι in 2 Pet 1:10 underscores this general exhortation for “doing good.” The frequent use of the imperative in 1 Peter indicates the letter’s emphasis on human action in response to God’s initiative.³⁴ Believers are to “conduct” (ἀναστράφητε) the time of their pilgrimage in fear (1:17). First Peter 2:2 appears particularly resonant with the charge to “make firm your call and election” in 2 Pet 1:10. In that verse believers are charged to “long for spiritual milk, so that through it you may grow into salvation.” Thus the discourse reveals the need for concrete growth in the life of faith and implies that human cooperation leads to or “makes firm” God’s gift of salvation. Besides these echoes of the discourse of 1 Peter, the choice of the verb ποιεῖσθαι in 2 Peter 1:10 reflects an emphasis on the practical human conduct expected of believers. It suits the practical and summary character of 2 Peter’s *prooemium*.

³⁴ Elliott (*1 Peter*, 66) counts 34 imperatives in 1 Peter.

“For Doing These Things”

The second part of 1:10 begins with the phrase “for doing these things” (ταῦτα γὰρ ποιῶντες). Each of these words recalls the preceding material in different ways. The conjunction γὰρ indicates a close relationship with 1:10a; what follows will clarify the meaning of “make firm your call and election.”

The pronoun ταῦτα occurs for the third time in the last three verses (1:8-10). As in the previous two instances, it refers here to the list of virtues in 1:5-7. Although it might seem possible to take the plural ταῦτα as referring to 1:10a, as if making firm the call and election were two different things, the conceptual proximity of κλήσιν and ἐκλογὴν preclude this interpretation. Moreover, the audience has heard ταῦτα twice before in the preceding verses, and each time the word recalled the catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7. The appearance of ταῦτα at the beginning of 1:8 strengthens this conclusion. However, as my exegesis of 1:10a has demonstrated, various lexical and conceptual points of contact unite 1:10a with the virtue list. Therefore, taking the list of virtues as the antecedent of ταῦτα does not introduce a logical inconsistency into my interpretation of the *prooemium*. On the contrary, the reference to the virtues in 1:10b strengthens the overall progression of the discourse. Believers make firm their call and election through their pursuit of virtue, by exerting effort to grow in the life of faith (1:5, 10).

The participle ποιῶντες (“doing”) corroborates this line of thought.³⁵ The audience has just heard the infinitive ποιῆσθαι at the end of 1:10a: Christians are to make firm their call and election. By immediately using the same verb in connection with an established

³⁵ Davids (*Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, 188) notes that this marks the first of 3 [p] sounds in short order (ποιῶντες, πταίσητε, ποτε). The repetition makes the phrase memorable to the audience.

reference to the virtues in the pronoun ταῦτα, the discourse explains how to do it: believers “make firm” their call and election by “doing” the virtues. Like the present infinitive in 1:10a, the present participle in 1:10b intimates the durative quality of human cooperation with the divine plan.³⁶ As usual, the charge to active pursuit of virtue in the paraenetic context of the *prooemium* does not belittle the divine initiative or suggest that human achievement alone produces divine reward.³⁷ The choice of such a common and concrete verb shows the practical interest of the *prooemium*.

“You Will Never Stumble”

The final part of 1:10 contains the assurance that, doing these things, “you will never stumble” (οὐ μὴ παύσητέ ποτε). By making firm their call and election through the cultivation of virtue, the audience can be certain that they will not falter on their way to the fullness of the knowledge of Christ (1:8, 11).

The combination of the negative particles οὐ and μὴ with an aorist subjunctive verb “is the most definite form of negation regarding the future.”³⁸ The appearance of the enclitic

³⁶ Hiebert (“Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1,” 51-52) claims that 1:10b refers to the present results of making firm their call and election, while 1:11 refers to future (eschatological) results.

³⁷ Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 75) argues that the idea of God’s working and enabling our work is in decay in 2 Peter. It seems as if human effort can prevent a fall. Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épître de Saint Pierre, L’Épître de Saint Jude*, 60) also notice the lack of emphasis on God’s power as opposed to human ability. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 190) notes that the context—paraenesis against apostasy and a casual acceptance of immorality—justifies the emphasis on human actions.

³⁸ BDF §365.

particle ποτε after the strong negative yields the sense “not ever”; hence my translation “you will never stumble.”³⁹

The verb πταίω means “fall” or “stumble.” Although the verb can take the metaphorical meaning “sin,” the context of 1:10 calls for a more serious interpretation of “stumble.”⁴⁰ By discussing the need to make firm the Christian’s call and election, the context implies that “stumbling” involves a definitive break from that call and election.⁴¹ The choice for an image of falling or stumbling recalls the blindness motif in 1:9, which describes the one who does not cultivate virtue as blind and forgetful of the cleansing of past sin.⁴²

Like much of the preceding imagery and language in 1:10, the prospect of stumbling resonates with material in 1 Peter 2. For those who believe, Christ is the living cornerstone (2:4, 6). But for unbelievers, Christ represents the stone rejected by the builders that becomes a “stone that causes stumbling” (λίθος προσκόμματος) and a “rock that causes a fall” (πέτρα σκανδάλου); the ones who stumble (οἱ προσκόπτουσιν) are not obedient to the word (2:8; see Isa 8:14 LXX). Second Peter’s choice of the verb πταίω instead of

³⁹ Some manuscripts (A Ψ pc h; Ambr) do not read ποτε. Given its size and similarity to the preceding πταίσητέ, it is likely that these manuscripts overlooked the word.

⁴⁰ K. L. Schmidt (“πταίω,” *TDNT*, 6. 883-84) traces the meaning from the root “fall” to “stumble” and then “sin.” The Vulgate translates πταίσητε as *peccabitis*. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 191) regards “stumbling” as the disaster of not reaching final salvation; Hiebert (“Selected Studies from 2 Peter Part 1,” 52) thinks that the aorist tense implies a “final stumble” or disaster.

⁴¹ Schreiner (*1, 2 Peter, Jude*, 305) understands the verb to mean “fall away from God.” Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 74) argues that the phrase means avoiding a disastrous coming to grief, not “never sin” (*contra* Bigg, *Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 261).

⁴² Neyrey (*2 Peter, Jude*, 162) connects this verse with the image of blindness in 1:9. Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épitre de Saint Pierre, L’Épitre de Saint Jude*, 60) consider the metaphor of an obstacle on the way. In the light of the “entrance” in 1:11, this means more than “stumble” or “sin”—it implies that believers could miss Christ’s kingdom.

προσκόπτω might reflect the fact that 1 Peter describes Christ as the stumbling block, whereas 2 Peter has in view the stumbling of sin and falling away from Christ. First Peter treats a lack of faith in Christ as a fall; Second Peter concerns a falling away from previous faith through a lack of consideration or effort.

Nevertheless, both verbs effectively convey the image of stumbling.⁴³ Even if the passages involve different ideas of the nature of the fall, the motif of stumbling in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes the language of the warning in 1 Pet 2:8. The concern of 2 Peter lies with those “believers” who do not apply themselves to the practice and intensification of their faith. Such Christians may think that they are secure and beyond the need for worry or effort, but the discourse of 2 Peter means to alert them that a fall is still possible. Only continuous application to the gifts of Christ and growth in the life of virtue can protect them against temptation and stumbling.

3. Entrance into the Kingdom of Christ: 2 Pet 1:11

The *prooemium* concludes with a positive statement of the goal of the Christian life: entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ. This represents the crown of the unit’s structure and stresses that all of the *prooemium*’s exhortation leads to this practical goal: unity with Christ. Through links with earlier material, 1:11 makes explicit the future aspect of knowledge of Christ and so brings this central theme to its climax.

⁴³ Paul uses both words for “stumble” in Rom 11:11 and 14:21, respectively.

“For in this Way”

The first two words of 1:11 (οὕτως γάρ) link the verse with the preceding material. The adverb οὕτως (“in this way”) describes how believers may attain to the kingdom of Christ; therefore, it refers not only to “doing these things” in 1:10 but to “these things existing and growing among you” in 1:8 and to the whole catalogue of virtues in 1:5-7.⁴⁴ It is fitting that the last verse of the *prooemium* links its exhortation with the ultimate reward. The presence of the conjunction γάρ attests to the tight structure of the *prooemium* as it develops its moral program and persuades the audience to pursue virtue. The instance of γάρ in 1:11 represents its third occurrence in the last four verses (1:8, 10, 11). The audience does not fail to notice the gradual development of the discourse and recognizes its climax in 1:11.

“The Entrance . . . Will be Richly Provided for You”

The Greek text of 1:11 places the subject of the sentence after the verb and its modifiers (πλουσίως ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται ὑμῖν ἡ εἴσοδος), while the long phrase “into the eternal kingdom . . .” occurs after the subject and affords the important final position to “Jesus Christ” and attendant titles. While my English translation rearranges the sentence for clarity, I will take each unit in the order in which it appears.

The adverb “richly” (πλουσίως) modifies the verb “will be provided” (ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται) and so adds a note of sumptuousness: God’s generosity defies measure, and

⁴⁴ Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épître de Saint Pierre, L’Épître de Saint Jude*, 60) state that these words provide more than a link to the preceding verse; they refer to the whole of the paraenesis.

the future prospects of the Christian are splendid indeed.⁴⁵ The concept of wealth has not occurred earlier in the *prooemium*, and the root for wealth (πλου-) does not occur in 1 Peter. But the idea of abundance, which the image of wealth conveniently evokes, appears in 1 Peter, especially in relation to God's abundance. The beginning of 1 Peter's *prooemium* describes God as giving rebirth to believers through the abundance of his mercy (κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος, 1:3).⁴⁶ First Peter also describes the value of Christ. Believers are ransomed by his "precious blood" (τιμίῳ αἵματι, 1:19). Christ represents the "elect, precious" (ἐκλεκτὸν ἔντιμον) living stone (2:4). Thus 1 Peter contains the notion of God's riches expressed in different words. It is possible that the adverb πλουσίως in 2 Pet 1:11 echoes this view of God's abundance and the associated value of Christ found in 1 Peter.

The audience detects another connection with 1 Peter as it hears πλουσίως. In 1 Pet 5:2 the discourse warns presbyters to watch over their flock eagerly and not "for shameful profit" (αἰσχροκερδῶς). The assurance of an entrance into Christ's kingdom provided "richly" echoes this concern for wealth and redirects it toward the true wealth of Christ.

By recalling the priceless value of Christ, the adverb also interprets the previous sections of the *prooemium*. Christians' entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ is richly provided for because Christ himself has provided it. The audience already heard how everything necessary for life and piety comes through Christ (1:3), even to the point of fleeing the world and sharing divine nature (1:4). Likewise they know that pursuing Christ's

⁴⁵ Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 216) mentions sumptuousity and the note of divine generosity. Hillyer (*1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, 169) thinks that the discourse uses many words since words can't describe God's gift; thus these words stress the generosity and splendor of the Christian prospect.

⁴⁶ Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 262) thinks that the adverb finds adequate explanation in the description of the "manifold graces of God" in 1 Pet 4:10. It also recalls the "promises" of 2 Pet 1:4.

own virtue leads to an increase in knowledge of Christ and hope for the future (1:5-8).

Because Christ himself is the source of true wealth and hope, believers have nothing to fear as long as they remain united to him.

The future tense verb ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται (“will be provided”) constitutes a divine passive: entrance into the kingdom of Christ is a divine gift.⁴⁷ God will provide this access through the knowledge of Christ (1:3, 8). The audience heard an imperative active form of this verb (ἐπιχορηγήσατε) in 1:5. The switch to a divine passive form does not indicate discontinuity in the *prooemium*’s argument. As I noted in my exegesis of 1:5, the active form of χορηγέω discloses the task of believers to supply from their own efforts growth in character and virtue in response to their knowledge of Christ. Their efforts build on the foundation of faith (1:5) and the gifts bestowed by Christ (1:3). The use of χορηγέω in 1 Pet 4:11 establishes this notion of human cooperation with the divine initiative: the one who serves should do so with the strength God supplies (χορηγεί). From the beginning, the *prooemium* stresses the action of Christ. As an introduction to the catalogue of virtues in 1:5, the active form of χορηγέω indicates the necessity of human effort to grow in the imitation of Christ.⁴⁸ The appearance of the divine passive ἐπιχορηγηθήσεται in 1:11 merely reiterates the importance of the divine gift for salvation.⁴⁹ The audience hears the repetition of the verb and makes the connection between what they need to supply and what is provided for them. These are two dimensions of the knowledge of Christ.

⁴⁷ Michl, *Katholischen Briefe*, 166. Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épitre de Saint Pierre, L’Épitre de Saint Jude*, 61) agree that the emphasis falls on God’s great gratuitous gift.

⁴⁸ Fornberg (*Early Church*, 96) interprets correctly that the paraenesis emphasizes deeds.

⁴⁹ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 191) takes the verb as an indication of God’s grace providing for believers, so this reference to grace matches the one at the beginning of the *prooemium* in 1:3.

The second person plural dative pronoun ὑμῖν appears for the last time in the *prooemium* in 1:11: the entrance into Christ’s kingdom will be provided “for you.” I have noted the alternation of first and second person pronouns throughout the *prooemium* in order to enhance the solidarity between author and audience. This last instance of ὑμῖν serves to illustrate the development in the *prooemium*’s use of the second person pronoun as well. In 1:2 the salutation contains the wish for grace and peace to abound “among you” (ὑμῖν). In 1:5 the discourse urges the audience to supply virtue to “your” (ὑμῶν) faith. Although the pronoun is not repeated, I argued that its sense is distributed throughout the catalogue of virtues. In 1:8 the discourse explains the benefit of such virtues existing and growing “among you” (ὑμῖν). Second Peter 1:10 features a final urge to make firm “your” (ὑμῶν) call and election. The audience hears the repetition of ὑμῖν in 1:11 as a summary of all the gifts and responsibilities provided by Christ for their own salvation. The *prooemium* has mapped out for their benefit the connection between grace and peace in this world, growth in virtue, their Christian call and election, and the final goal: entrance into the kingdom of Christ. All of these ideas fall under the *prooemium*’s general theme, the knowledge of Christ.

“The Entrance”

Although “the entrance” (ἡ εἴσοδος) cannot be interpreted in isolation from the long descriptive phrase that follows, a few points pertain directly to these words. The definite article specifies the uniqueness of the entry under discussion. Entering Christ’s kingdom is a

momentous future event to which the Christian looks forward.⁵⁰ The noun εἴσοδος carries a spatial meaning in some instances in the LXX (as in “gate” or “door”), but the context of 2 Pet 1:11 favors a meaning of general access rather than a localized point of entry.⁵¹ Believers have access to the kingdom of Christ.

Some commentators have opined that εἴσοδος alludes to the return of a victorious athlete to his home city.⁵² Just as a champion enjoys a rousing public reception after his athletic triumph, the Christian can expect a sumptuous reception into the kingdom of Christ after his triumph over the world and its corruption (see 1:3). To be sure, the *prooemium*'s paraenesis is strengthened by some mention of suitable reward. The entrance into Christ's kingdom provides motivation to pursue virtue and discipline oneself in the present.⁵³

The image of entering Christ's kingdom recalls themes from earlier in the *prooemium*. In 1:9 the audience heard that the one who does not pursue virtue is like a blind man who forgets the cleansing of his past sins. In 1:10 the audience heard the charge to make firm their call and election; if they do so, they will not stumble. The prospect of a successful entrance into Christ's kingdom contrasts with the earlier warnings about blindness

⁵⁰ Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 191) believes the article indicates the Christian's definitive expectation. Some manuscripts (*P*⁷² K 049 *al*) read another instance of ἡ between εἴσοδος and εἰς, further qualifying the “entrance” in the audience's hearing.

⁵¹ E.g., 4 Kings 11:16; Prov 8:3. See Wilhelm Michaelis, “ὄδος κτλ,” *TDNT*, 5. 103-6. He agrees with Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 203) that “entrance” denotes not a specific place of entry but access.

⁵² Vögtle (*Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 154) discusses the return of an Olympic champion. Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 75) describes the practice of breaking the city wall to create a new entrance for the victor's use.

⁵³ Knight (*2 Peter and Jude*, 16) calls the mention of an eschatological reward important amidst temptations. I will argue that the *prooemium* offers other motivation as well.

and stumbling.⁵⁴ Only a sober person intent on cultivating virtue can walk well and appropriate the divine gift of salvation.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the mention of the ultimate goal does not take away from the need for struggle in the present.⁵⁶ The *prooemium* gives an appropriate program for life that leads to the enjoyment of Christ's gift of salvation.

The language of entering in 2 Pet 1:11 resonates with one of the most important themes in 1 Peter. This resonance does not involve Christ's act of entering. First Peter describes Christ as "going" (πορευθείς) to preach to the spirits in prison (3:19) and then "going" (πορευθείς) to the right side of God (3:22). There is no mention of Christ entering heaven or going to the spirits in 2 Peter's *prooemium*. Rather, the connection involves the audience's act of entering Christ's kingdom.⁵⁷ First Peter describes its audience as "sojourners" (παρεπίδημοι, 1:1; 2:11) and "strangers" (παροίκους, 2:11; see 1:17) who must cling to their faith during this life in order to reach the inheritance prepared for them in heaven (ἐν οὐρανοῖς, 1:4). The choice of εἴσοδος in 2 Pet 1:11 picks up this theme of sojourning from 1 Peter. The audience recalls their status as strangers in this world and looks

⁵⁴ Vögtle (*Judasbrief, Der Zweite Petrusbrief*, 154) thinks that this language of entering and wayfaring influences the choice of "stumble" in 1:10.

⁵⁵ Sylva ("Unified Field Picture of Second Peter 1:3-15," 101-7) considers the "entrance" in 1:11 the conclusion to an image of exodus running through the *prooemium*, beginning with "fleeing" the corruption in the world in 1:4.

⁵⁶ Michl (*Katholischen Briefe*, 166) stresses that here only progress in the struggle for virtue is possible; God brings us into the kingdom later. The realization that final success is only possible through divine gift pertains to the knowledge of Christ described in the *prooemium*.

⁵⁷ I.e., the audience's destination, heaven. First Peter makes clear that believers can know Christ's presence even in this life (see 2:4, 25).

forward to their definitive entrance into the kingdom of Christ.⁵⁸ The audience recognizes the affinity between the stated goals of 1 and 2 Peter, and between the moral exhortations each letter prescribes for the attainment of that same goal.⁵⁹ Thus the language of entering in 2 Pet 1:11 suggests that 2 Peter's *prooemium* dialogues with an overarching theme from 1 Peter.

“Into the Eternal Kingdom”

The access richly granted by divine providence is “into the eternal kingdom” (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον βασιλείαν) of Christ. The preposition εἰς echoes the noun εἴσοδος, which the audience has just heard. The preposition also recalls 1:8, in which the discourse maintains that the presence and growth of the virtues of 1:5-7 does not make the audience useless or fruitless “for the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (εἰς τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐπίγνωσιν). The similarity of the prepositional phrases in 1:8 and 1:11 argues for some correlation between “knowledge” of Christ and “entrance into the kingdom” of Christ. The reiteration of the summons to virtue in 1:10 reinforces the connection between knowledge of Christ, virtue, and stability of call and election without stumbling. I have argued that “knowledge of Christ” in 2 Peter's *prooemium* has past, present, and future nuances. The connection between 1:8 and 1:11 illustrates the future fullness of knowledge of Christ: entrance into Christ's eternal kingdom. This future nuance does not stand apart from

⁵⁸ Perhaps alluding to the connection between 1 and 2 Peter in this regard, Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 74) argues that the discourse of 2 Peter here uses many words to excite the weary pilgrim's heart.

⁵⁹ Thus what Green (*Jude & 2 Peter*, 203) says of 2 Peter is applicable to 1 Peter also: the whole epistle concerns inclusion and exclusion. Bigg (*Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, 262) sees the same expectancy for the end of pilgrimage in 2 Peter as in 1 Peter.

the past and present aspects of the knowledge of Christ; on the contrary, the structure of the *prooemium* has traced the past gifts of Christ (1:3) through the present need for virtue (1:5-7) to the hope for the fullness of knowledge of Christ and future entrance into the kingdom (1:8, 11).

The adjective “eternal” (αἰώνιον) evokes some material from earlier in the *prooemium*. In 1:4 the discourse mentions the promises accorded to the audience through the knowledge of Christ and Christ’s own glory and excellence. The same verse contrasts the divine nature with the corruption in the world through desire. The notion of eternity calls to mind the eternity of God and Christ, who make faithful promises that span generations. Eternity also does not admit of corruption—what lasts forever does not break down. This subtle conceptual parallel helps to unify the *prooemium* in the audience’s hearing.

This adjective (αἰώνιον) also echoes material from 1 Peter. In 1:25 the discourse quotes Isa 40:8 LXX and states that the word of God remains “forever” (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα). The doxology in 4:11 looks for the glorification of God through Christ, to whom belong glory and power “for the ages of ages” (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, cf. 5:11). According to 1:20, Christ is known before the foundation of the world. Perhaps 1 Pet 5:10 most closely parallels 2 Pet 1:11 when it states that God calls the audience (“you”) “to his eternal glory in Christ” (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ). Thus First Peter describes Christ and his reign in terms of the language of eternity. The use of αἰώνιον in 2 Pet 1:11 recalls this constant teaching of 1 Peter.

The *prooemium* to this point has not referred to the kingship or kingdom of Christ. But the instance of βασιλείαν (“kingdom”) in 1:11 recalls these themes from 1 Peter. While

1 Pet 2:13 and 2:17 involve respect for human kings, the statement in 3:22 describes the royal authority of Christ: he is at the right hand of God in heaven, with heavenly powers subject to him. In 2:9 the discourse calls the audience a “royal priesthood” (βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα), an allusion to the traditional title for Israel in Exod 19:6 LXX. The royal identity of Christ allows believers to be termed a “royal priesthood,” since they offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ (1 Pet 2:5). Believers are a “royal priesthood” because they belong to Christ and, by implication, to his kingdom. The appearance of βασιλείαν in 2 Pet 1:11 echoes this royal language and recalls the power and authority of Christ affirmed in 1 Peter. It also underscores Christians’ royal identity based on the royalty of their Lord.

But an apparent discrepancy between 1 and 2 Peter emerges in connection with βασιλείαν in 2 Pet 1:11. The concluding verse of 2 Peter’s *prooemium* describes believers’ future meeting with Christ as an entrance into Christ’s kingdom. This language does not appear in 1 Peter.⁶⁰ Instead, 1 Peter describes the “salvation” (σωτηρία) to be revealed in the end time (1:5; see 1:9-10). It mentions the grace brought to believers “at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, 1:13; see 1:7). First Peter also refers to the “revelation of [Christ’s] glory” (ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ, 4:13; see 5:1). Thus 1 Peter’s eschatological language involves the “revelation” of Christ without any mention of believers’ entrance into his kingdom.

A closer examination of 1 Peter overcomes this objection. First Peter uses a variety of images to describe believers and their future encounter with Christ. In addition to the

⁶⁰ Knight (*2 Peter and Jude*, 23) points out the disparity between “salvation of souls” in 1 Pet 1:9 and “entry into the kingdom” in 2 Pet 1:11.

language of Christ's revelation, the discourse also affirms at the outset that believers have an imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance kept for them in heaven (1:4). In a similar vein, the conclusion of the discourse maintains that God has called believers "to his eternal glory in Christ" (εἰς τὴν αἰώνιον αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ, 5:10). Both of these statements envision some future association where believers will enjoy divine intimacy indefinitely. This notion is not incompatible with 1 Peter's other statements about the eschatological revelation of Christ and his glory, or the warnings about impending judgment (see 4:5, 17). While 1 Peter concentrates on the manifestation of Christ in line with its paraenetic strategy—in part, the encouragement of believers to imitate Christ in his sufferings and so share his future glory (see 1:6; 2:2)—there is no huge gap between 1 and 2 Peter regarding future intimacy with Christ.⁶¹

Second Peter has a similar goal but develops different emphases and employs different expressions. Its *prooemium* focuses on the formation of believers in virtue and the knowledge of Christ. This knowledge involves familiarity with the gifts of Christ and his glory (1:3), leads to cooperation with the divine initiative through the cultivation of virtue (1:5-7), and ends with an intimate union with Christ (1:8, 11). This union is expressed as "entrance into the kingdom of Christ" in order to underscore the human element of cooperation and to emphasize the effort and commitment necessary for its realization. The preceding verses prepare the audience for this spatial language through the use of images such as blindness and stumbling (1:9-10). But the connection with 1 Peter, while subtle,

⁶¹ Perhaps this is why Kelly (*Epistles of Peter and of Jude*, 310) affirms that the faithful enter the future kingdom at the parousia, parallel to the exposition of 1 Pet 1:3-9, and that there is much in the suggestion of Boobyer that 2 Peter restates with different expressions and emphases some of the themes of that passage in this paragraph (2 Pet 1:3-11).

exists. The audience hears the phrase “entrance into the eternal kingdom of Christ” as a synthesis of themes from 1 Peter: attribution of royalty to Christ and description of the final destination of believers.

Thus 2 Peter echoes and develops material from 1 Peter through the phrase “eternal kingdom.” This represents the goal for which believers journey and labor, the culmination of their struggle for virtue according to the knowledge of Christ. The prospect of entering Christ’s kingdom at the end of the *prooemium* accords with the goal proposed at its beginning: sharing divine nature (1:4). Without prejudice to the present aspect of sharing divine nature—since the audience has already received the gifts of Christ (1:3)—the future context of 1:11 elaborates the full and final meaning of sharing divine nature and flight from the world’s corruption (1:4).⁶² In terms of the future destination of Christians, “entrance into Christ’s kingdom” represents a restatement of “sharing divine nature.”⁶³ The juxtaposition of these terms demonstrates the flexibility and imagination of the discourse of 2 Peter in its presentation of the Christian life and ultimate goal.

The association of “sharing divine nature” and “entrance into the eternal kingdom” of Christ also uncovers additional echoes from 1 Peter. In 2 Pet 1:3 the audience heard that Christ calls them “by his own glory and excellence” (ἰδίᾳ δόξῃ καὶ ἀρετῇ). I argued that this reference to Christ’s glory also includes a tacit reference to the eschatological glory of Christ to which believers are called. Since “entrance into the eternal kingdom” of Christ recalls

⁶² Green (*Second Epistle General of Peter*, 75) notes the tension between sharing divine nature in the present and the future kingdom. Harink (*1&2 Peter*, 152) thinks these two expressions represent the same goal.

⁶³ Knoch, *Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief, Der Judasbrief*, 244. He calls it a combination of the Hellenistic idea of partaking in divine nature with the biblical/eschatological idea of entering the kingdom. He argues that this formulation is primarily directed to Christology; it represents a developed picture of Christ.

“sharing divine nature,” the audience understands the reference to Christ’s glory in this eschatological sense—the sense in which 1 Peter uses “glory” (δόξα) repeatedly (see 1:11; 4:13). Furthermore, the phrase “having fled the corruption in the world through desire” (ἀποφυγόντες τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς) in 1:4 likewise has a double function in the context of the *prooemium*. In the present, believers are to avoid worldly desires. But a future aspect, solidified through the association with entrance into the kingdom in 1:11, becomes clear: believers will finally and totally flee the world’s corruption as they enter Christ’s kingdom. The audience does not fail to notice the echo between the flight from “corruption” (φθορᾶς, 2 Pet 1:4) and the “imperishable” (ἄφθαρτον) inheritance kept for them in heaven according to 1 Pet 1:4. These echoes illustrate the considerable facility of 2 Peter’s discourse for adopting and adapting material from 1 Peter in the service of its own call to virtue and knowledge of Christ.

“Of Our Lord”

The words “of our Lord” (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν) appear in 1:11 for the third time in 2 Peter. In 1:2 the salutation ends with the wish that grace and peace be multiplied among the audience in the knowledge of God and of Jesus “our Lord.” In 1:8 the presence and growth of the virtues from 1:5-7 makes the audience neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge “of our Lord” Jesus Christ. The presence of these words in 1:11 in connection with the kingdom “of our Lord” makes the resonance between knowledge and final consummation of that knowledge in the kingdom clearer in the audience’s hearing. This appellation helps to unify the *prooemium*. Grace and peace come through knowledge of

Christ, which enables believers to share divine nature and cooperate with the divine initiative by pursuing virtue. Growth in virtue prepares believers for a deeper knowledge of Christ, making their call and election firm. The ultimate knowledge of “our Lord” involves entrance into his kingdom.

The title κύριος occurs eight times in 1 Peter, twice applied unambiguously to Christ. In 3:15 the discourse urges its audience to sanctify Christ as “Lord” (κύριον) in their hearts. The entire phrase “of our Lord” (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν) occurs with reference to God the Father in the opening benediction in 1:3. Although the title “Lord” forms part of the general tradition surrounding Jesus, and therefore it might not seem important that both 1 and 2 Peter employ this title at the beginning of their discourses, one fact argues to the contrary. “Lord” (κυρίου, 1:3) is the only title applied to “Jesus Christ” in the salutation and *prooemium* of 1 Peter (1:1-12). The salutation and *prooemium* of 2 Peter apply several titles to “Jesus Christ,” including “God” (θεοῦ, 1:1), “Savior” (σωτήρος, 1:1, 11), and “Lord” (1:2, 8, 11). The inclusion and repetition of “Lord” in 2 Peter represents both a point of contact with 1 Peter and a point of departure for 2 Peter’s own presentation of Christ. Thus “Lord” illustrates the *prooemium’s modus operandi*: oblique reference to the material of 1 Peter in service of a new exhortation.⁶⁴ Second Peter draws upon material and concepts from 1 Peter and marshals it in support of its own exhortation to greater commitment to Christ. The echoes of 1 Peter imply continuity of content to the audience even as the discourse of 2 Peter emphasizes growth in the knowledge of Christ.

⁶⁴ Thus Ruf (*Heiligen Propheten*, 572) holds that 2 Peter takes up certain features of 1 Peter as far as they serve its goals, but without direct reference to 1 Peter.

The occurrence of the pronoun “our” (ἡμῶν) modifying “Lord” in 1:11 represents the last instance of a personal pronoun in the *prooemium*. The audience has heard first person plural forms seven times, most recently in 1:8 (“our Lord”) but especially in 1:1-4. I have argued that the alternation of first (1:1-4, 8, 11) and second person forms (1:2, 5, 8, 10-11) establishes solidarity and a common pursuit of knowledge of Christ. With the exception of the identification of the author at the beginning of the salutation, every reference to “Jesus” or “Jesus Christ” includes some description involving “our:” “our God and Savior” (1:1), “our Lord” (1:2, 8), “our Lord and Savior” (1:11). By the use of these pronouns the audience intuits the *prooemium*’s point: this exhortation promotes a common faith in Christ.

Interestingly, the pattern in 1 Peter’s *prooemium* is similar. Only two instances of the first person plural pronoun occur, both in 1:3: “our Lord” (κυρίου ἡμῶν) and “given us rebirth” (ἀναγεννήσας ἡμᾶς). There follow seven instances of the second person pronoun in 1:4-12.⁶⁵ First Peter begins with an affirmation of common faith and then concentrates on exhortation. Second Peter’s *prooemium* echoes this development while maintaining emphasis on Christ as “our Lord.”

“Savior”

The title “Savior” (σωτήρ) in 1:11 recalls its earlier appearance in 1:1. The letter began with an address to those who share a faith “equal in honor to us in righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.” As they hear the repetition of this word, the audience recalls how the *prooemium* has described Jesus’ salvation: his divine gift of everything necessary for life and piety through knowledge of him, by his own glory and excellence; the prospect of

⁶⁵ There is a textual question surrounding the appearance of ὑμῶν in 1 Pet 1:9.

divine nature and flight from the world's corruption; the summons to virtue and consequent growth in knowledge of him; reinforcement of call and election in him; and the final provision of entrance into his kingdom. The title "Savior" appears at the beginning and end of the *prooemium* as a summary of its explanation of Christ's gifts and human cooperation therein.

This term (σωτήρ) also represents an important echo of 1 Peter. Although the title does not occur in 1 Peter, the related noun σωτηρία occurs three times in the *prooemium* and once in the body of the letter. In 1:5, believers are kept by faith "for salvation" (εἰς σωτηρίαν) ready to be revealed in the last time. In 1:9-10 Christians receive the end of faith, the "salvation" (σωτηρίαν) of their souls, into which prophets searched. Salvation ranks as a central theme of 1 Peter's *prooemium*. The structure of 1 Pet 1:3-5 suggests that "salvation" parallels two earlier phrases beginning with the preposition εἰς, "into living hope" (εἰς ἐλπίδα ζωσαν) and "for an imperishable, undefiled, and unfading inheritance" (εἰς κληρονομίαν ἄφθαρτον καὶ ἀμίαντον καὶ ἀμάραντον). As the last item of the sentence (1:3-5), salvation receives stress in the audience's hearing. The theme of salvation recurs in 1:10-11, this time as the final item of the entire *prooemium* (taking 1:11-12 as an explanation of the prophets and evangelists who investigated this salvation). Thus 1 Peter's *prooemium* explains the salvation accomplished by God through Christ's resurrection, a salvation now made available to the audience even as they await its future consummation.⁶⁶ Second Peter's *prooemium* shares a similar interest. By employing the term σωτήρ at the beginning and end of the

⁶⁶ Elliott (*1 Peter*, 337) describes the present and future aspects of salvation in 1 Peter; salvation is inaugurated but not yet completed. See 1 Pet 2:2.

prooemium, 2 Peter echoes the use of σωτηρία in 1 Peter and recalls the critical theme of salvation to the audience.

“Jesus Christ”

The repetition of the words “Jesus Christ” serves to recall earlier material. The audience heard this combination in 1:8 in connection with knowledge (ἐπίγνωσιν) of our Lord Jesus Christ. The correspondence of so many terms in 1:11 with 1:8 (εἰς τὴν . . . τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν . . . Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) suggests to the audience a conceptual link between the objects of the respective phrases: knowledge of Christ in 1:8 and the eternal kingdom of Christ in 1:11. The addition of the title “Savior” in 1:11 enhances this subtle development. Knowledge of Christ leads to entrance into his kingdom, the fullness of salvation. The practice of virtue leads not only to a deepening earthly encounter with Christ but to the eschatological knowledge of Christ as well.

Several commentators also note that the words “Jesus Christ” in 1:11 recall their appearance earlier in the letter. The titles associated with “Jesus Christ” in 1:1-2—including “god,” “Savior,” and “Lord”—stress his nature and power. A Christological title ends both 1:2 and 1:11.⁶⁷ The titles in 1:11 also return the focus to the divine power of Christ detailed in 1:3-4.⁶⁸ The “eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” recalls the *prooemium*’s description of Jesus’ divine power, which has given everything necessary for

⁶⁷ Knoch, *Erste und Zweite Petrusbrief, Der Judasbrief*, 244.

⁶⁸ Reese (*2 Peter & Jude*, 137) claims that, like the beginning of 1:3-11, the focus at the end of the unit centers on Christ and his gifts. Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 191) views these titles as consistent with the Christological focus of 1:3-11. Frankemölle (*1. Petrusbrief, 2. Petrusbrief, Judasbrief*, 93) perceives a connection with knowledge of Christ: as the realization of ethics in 1:8 leads more and more to the knowledge of Christ, so the entrance into the kingdom stands as the end in 1:11. The titles “Lord” and “Savior” repeat the presentation of mercy and grace in 1:3-4.

life and piety through knowledge of Jesus (1:3). The elements of 1:11 bespeak the full and definitive flight from worldly corruption and sharing of divine nature (1:4). Thus the *prooemium* ends as it began, by highlighting the power and nature of Christ. The audience realizes that Christ, who invites them to cooperation and growth in knowledge of himself, has the power to offer them salvation in his eternal kingdom.⁶⁹

The combination “Jesus Christ” appears nine times in 1 Peter, including four instances in the first three verses of the letter. In 1:3 the opening benediction praises the Father of “our Lord Jesus Christ” who has given the audience and all believers (“us”) rebirth through the resurrection of “Jesus Christ.” The words also occur in 1:7 and in 1:13, the verse immediately after the *prooemium* which begins 1 Peter’s paraenesis. In both of these cases the name and title appear as part of the phrase “at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (ἐν ἀποκαλύψει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). Each of these verses describe what will accrue to believers at Christ’s revelation: in 1:7 the value of their faith will produce praise, glory, and honor; in 1:13 grace will be theirs, in which they are called to place their hope at the present time. Thus 1 Peter employs the name and title “Jesus Christ” in connection with its account of eschatological reward for faith. The use of these words in a similar capacity in 2 Pet 1:1-11 echoes this strategy.

Furthermore, the other instances of “Jesus Christ” in 1 Peter occur at important points in the text. In 2:5 the text discusses the identity of the audience as a holy priesthood offering

⁶⁹ Fornberg (*Early Church*, 145) argues that since Christ is the focus here, the phrase “kingdom of God” is too vague to represent the specifically Christian nature of the eschatological hope. Fuchs and Reymond (*Deuxième Épître de Saint Pierre, L’Épître de Saint Jude*, 61) view the titles as evidence of developed Christology, from a perspective emphasizing the glory and lordly aspect of Jesus. These opinions contrast with that of Grundmann (*Brief des Judas und der Zweite Brief des Petrus*, 84) that 2 Peter’s Christology lacks any link with Christ’s cross or resurrection. Second Peter takes these realities for granted.

sacrifices to God “through Jesus Christ.” In 3:21 the discourse defines baptism as the pledge to God of a clean conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the doxology in 4:11, the text urges the audience to perform their functions so that God may be glorified in Jesus Christ, to whom belongs glory and strength for the ages of ages. In each of these passages, the occurrence of “Jesus Christ” accentuates the direct link between Christ and an important statement about the audience’s identity in him. Considered as an echo of this trend in 1 Peter, the use of “Jesus Christ” in 2 Pet 1:8 and 1:11 signals an important juncture in the discourse. The material about knowledge of Christ and entrance into his eternal kingdom represent critical points about the audience, appropriately marked by the occurrence of the name and title “Jesus Christ.”

A Note on Ethics and Eschatology in 1 Peter and 2 Pet 1:3-11

By mentioning a future entrance into Christ’s “eternal kingdom” in 1:11, the *prooemium* makes an explicit reference to Christ’s eschatological reign.⁷⁰ Commentators have called 1:10-11, the last subunit of the *prooemium*, the link between faith, ethics, and eschatology for the whole unit.⁷¹ If this is true, it is important to clarify the relationship between ethics based on faith and eschatology in 2 Pet 1:3-11, and to compare this relationship to the treatment of this topic in 1 Peter.

⁷⁰ Gerdmar (*Rethinking*, 186) and Bauckham (*Jude, 2 Peter*, 192) note the eschatological tenor of 1:11 and its resemblance to Dan 7:27.

⁷¹ Donelson (*I & II Peter and Jude*, 222) states that this final call to virtue and eschatological promise completes the theological logic of the section. Knight (*2 Peter and Jude*, 61) holds that 1:10-11 summarizes the link between faith, ethics, and eschatology.

In at least one opinion, 1 and 2 Peter diverge in their treatment of ethics and eschatology. First Peter bases its ethics on the salvation revealed in Christ, whereas 2 Peter presents an ethical exhortation motivated by eschatology.⁷² For 1 Peter, the action of God through Christ in the past—and the prospect of present life in Christ—motivates the series of paraenetic instructions found in the text. Second Peter, on the other hand, points to the future entrance into Christ’s kingdom as the primary motive for growth in virtue. First Peter does present a nuanced eschatology. Since the discourse states that Christ was manifested “at the end of time” (ἐπ’ ἐσχάτου τῶν χρόνων, 1:20), the present time takes on an eschatological character.⁷³ As I have shown, 1 Peter still has in view the future appearance of Christ and final judgment; believers are to hope fully in the grace to be given them at Christ’s revelation (1:13). The text also suggests that God’s actions in Christ in the past and present motivate a certain new behavior.

This present/future tension with regard to eschatology and ethics appears also in 2 Peter. Believers find motivation in the gifts Christ has given to them in the past. The perfect participle δεδωρημένης in 1:3 and the perfect verb δεδώρηται in 1:4 describe past gifts with present implications. Christ’s gifts are conveyed specifically for “life and piety” (πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν, 1:3) in the present and future. Christians pursue virtue and grow in their knowledge of Christ in the present because of his past gifts, as well as for the future hope held out to them (1:11). The depiction of Christ’s future kingdom in 1:11 holds the

⁷² Schrage, *Die “katholischen” Briefe*, 131. The following sentences explain this critique.

⁷³ Ronald Russel (“Eschatology and Ethics in 1 Peter,” *EvQ* 47 [1975] 78-84, here 83) argues that 1 Peter creates an “eschatological now” when the Messiah comes to bring salvation and institute his kingdom, whose foundational principle (and the basis of ethics) is the holiness of God. David C. Parker (“The Eschatology of 1 Peter,” *BTB* 24 [1994] 27-32, here 31) argues that passages about the “revelation of Christ” in 1 Peter express not the wonders of a future glory but the significance of the present possession of Christ.

final place in the *prooemium*, but this promise does not represent the only motivation in view. It is an oversimplification of 2 Peter to dismiss the *prooemium*'s present motivation for ethics. Its tendency to weave past, present, and future echoes 1 Peter.

2 Pet 1:10-11 as a Continuation of the Knowledge Theme

The consideration of 1 and 2 Peter with regard to eschatology yields one more important parallel: both letters maintain that Christian knowledge, directed toward the future encounter with Christ, necessitates present virtue.

I have suggested that the similar phraseology of 1:8 and 1:11 (“for/into the . . . of our Lord . . . Jesus Christ”) leads to a link between knowledge of Christ (1:8) and entrance into the kingdom of Christ (1:11) in the audience’s hearing. These two concepts represent the culmination of their respective subunits within the *prooemium* (1:5-9 and 1:10-11). Other common elements insinuate a connection between these two subunits as well, including the repetition of the verb ἐπιχορηγέω (1:5, 11) and the root σπουδ- (σπουδήν 1:5; σπουδάσατε 1:10). Thus the text proposes some relationship between these ideas.

The text also offers a conceptual link between the knowledge theme and the entrance described in 1:11. The *prooemium* discusses the knowledge of Christ in its past and present dimensions in 1:3-9. The reference to knowledge of Christ in 1:8, although employing present tense verbs, nevertheless carries a note of anticipation: growth in virtue makes believers neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of Christ. If entrance into Christ’s kingdom in 1:11 recalls the earlier instance of knowledge of Christ, then 1:11 supplies a more explicit elaboration of the future aspect of knowledge of Christ, i.e., entrance into his

eternal kingdom. Rather than omitting reference to the knowledge of Christ, 1:10-11 completes the conceptual description of this major theme of the *prooemium* by detailing the form of its final consummation.

The relation of the knowledge theme to the eschatological entrance into Christ's kingdom in 1:11 reveals an echo of 1 Peter. In 1 Pet 1:13, at the beginning of the letter's exhortation, the discourse urges believers to gird the loins of their "understanding" (διανοίας) and hope in the grace to be given them at the revelation of Christ. They need to avoid past desires and focus on holiness of life (1:14-15). Thus 1 Peter associates knowledge in general—and knowledge of the end times in particular—with good conduct. Second Peter has linked knowledge of Christ with sharing divine nature (1:3-4) and growth in concrete virtues (1:5-8). The connection of the knowledge theme and the future eschatological encounter with Christ at the end of the *prooemium* highlights its affinity with 1 Peter. When they enter his kingdom, the audience will possess complete knowledge of Christ, which no one can remove.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented an audience-oriented exegesis of 2 Pet 1:10-11 in light of 1 Peter in order to expose the lexical and conceptual links between the letters and to argue for the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter. This final section of the *prooemium* advances the theme of knowledge of Christ by associating this knowledge with entrance into the kingdom of Christ, the future consummation of the knowledge accorded and required in the past and present. Second Peter 1:10-11 recapitulates and completes the paraenesis in the

previous two sections. At the same time, it echoes 1 Peter on several important points. I have argued that 1 Peter's image of firm construction, the language of call and election, and a future eschatological encounter with Christ represent the background taken for granted by the discourse in 2 Pet 1:10-11.

Second Peter 1:10 reiterates the *prooemium*'s emphasis on human cooperation with the divine initiative by calling on the audience to make a greater effort for growth in virtue in light of the positive and negative consequences disclosed earlier (1:8-9). This exhortation, which finalizes the *prooemium*'s summons to virtue, involves making firm the call and election enjoyed by the audience. Each of these terms (firm, call, and election) echoes material from 1 Peter, especially 1 Peter 2, in which the discourse discusses believers' identity in terms of God's call and election: Christians are "living stones" that are "built up" in Christ.

Second Peter 1:11 concludes the *prooemium* by mentioning believers' eschatological encounter with Christ: the entrance into his eternal kingdom. The language of entrance echoes the pilgrimage theme from 1 Peter. Christians' final destination is intimacy with Christ. The image of the journey's end complements the spatial terms employed earlier in the *prooemium* (blindness, stumble). It also continues the *prooemium*'s interest in underscoring the audience's responsibility for practical effort in the reception of divine gifts. Most importantly, 2 Pet 1:11 completes the *prooemium*'s presentation of knowledge of Christ by using similar lexical constructions to associate entrance into Christ's kingdom with this knowledge (1:3, 8). The titles attributed to Christ in 1:11 (Lord, Savior) demonstrate an affinity with 1 Peter's portrayal of Christ.

These resonances of 1 Peter suggest that 2 Peter deliberately employs concepts and images from 1 Peter in support of its exhortation to growth in virtue and the knowledge of Christ. The audience recognizes descriptions of Christian identity and the image of a pilgrimage through this world as familiar from 1 Peter. Second Peter uses this material to legitimize and hone its emphasis on commitment to the Christian life and true knowledge of Christ in the face of temptations and attacks against faith.

The final part of the *prooemium* (1:10-11) completes the arc of the past, present, and future dimensions of knowledge of Christ. In Chapter Five I will offer a summary of my research on 2 Pet 1:3-11, provide a sketch of the *prooemium* in dialogue with 1 Peter, and offer some conclusions on the positive canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter.

Chapter Five

Summary and Conclusions

1. Purpose

This study contributes to the understanding of the canonical relationship of 1 and 2 Peter by focusing on the linguistic and conceptual echoes of 1 Peter detected in 2 Pet 1:3-11 by the implied audience with knowledge of 1 Peter. Most previous exegeses of 2 Peter discount the possibility that 1 Peter exerts any influence on the text of 2 Peter, despite their shared attribution to Peter and the reference to 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3. Even as studies on 2 Peter emerge more frequently and delve more deeply into the language, theology, and rhetoric of the document, the relationship between 1 and 2 Peter remains a path largely unexplored. I have read the *prooemium* of 2 Peter closely in an attempt to discern the subtle echoes and resonances of words and themes from 1 Peter and argue for the positive influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter.

My exegesis suggests that 2 Peter's *prooemium* deliberately echoes themes and concepts from 1 Peter in order to strengthen its own exhortation to knowledge of Christ and commitment to the content of the Christian faith. The *prooemium*'s echoes of 1 Peter situate 2 Peter in continuity with the teaching of 1 Peter. The audience recognizes material from 1 Peter behind the words and images of 2 Pet 1:3-11. Thus 2 Peter's *prooemium* affirms the apostolic witness of 1 Peter (see 2 Pet 1:12-21; 3:2). However, 2 Pet 1:3-11 does not simply recapitulate the content of 1 Peter in sweeping fashion. The *prooemium* adapts certain themes from 1 Peter in the service of its own agenda: a strong personal exhortation to knowledge of Christ and the ethical behavior such knowledge requires. Second Peter

employs themes from 1 Peter in a brief and pointed overview of the true faith, explained through the concept of “knowledge of Christ” (2 Pet 1:2, 3, 8) in past, present, and future dimensions. Second Peter does this as a prelude to its polemic against false teachers in 2 Peter 2–3. My close reading of 2 Pet 1:3-11 reveals how 2 Peter summarizes and redirects certain themes of 1 Peter in a new way. Thus it discloses a much closer canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter than is generally acknowledged.

2. Method

The implied author of 1 and 2 Peter is the same: “Peter.” I made no attempt to uncover the historical author of 2 Peter or make any other claim about its authorship; rather, I accepted “Peter” as the implied author according to the text itself (2 Pet 1:1). This link with 1 Peter proves important. The implied author of 2 Peter presupposes knowledge of 1 Peter among the audience of 2 Peter, since this author wrote 1 Peter as well (see 2 Pet 3:1). Thus the implied common authorship of both letters introduces a strong connection between 1 and 2 Peter. I attempt to exploit this connection through the use of my audience-oriented exegesis.

The audience-oriented method has proven useful for this study. I have read 2 Pet 1:3-11 closely with an ear to the echoes of 1 Peter in the words and concepts of the text, such as the implied audience with knowledge of 1 Peter would notice. This ideal audience remembers the text of 1 Peter well enough to catch any echoes or conceptual associations from 1 Peter present in 2 Peter. I made no claims as to the historicity or reality of the ideal audience whose perspective I adopted. But I assume that this ideal audience knows 1 Peter.

I take the markedly different character of 2 Peter to indicate a change in the situation at the time of the composition of 2 Peter: a new situation calls forth a new address with new priorities. The implied audience intuits this but does not forget the content of 1 Peter, which forms part of their experience of the faith.

This focus on an “ideal audience” has practical benefits. The difference between any real audience and the ideal audience of my exegesis is one of sensitivity to the text and its echoes. A real audience that becomes very familiar with a text through repetition and study gains sensitivity for these echoes in other texts. Such an audience can notice connections between texts with greater facility. The emphasis on what the audience hears reflects the original nature of 1 and 2 Peter as documents read aloud and heard by a listening audience. Thus my exegesis has a practical result: it highlights the echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Peter that might otherwise be missed. Contemporary real audiences can benefit from this close reading and listening to the text of 2 Pet 1:3-11; by adopting this method they can become more attuned to the echoes and interplay between these related letters.

In other words, any real audience can approach the “ideal audience” of my exegesis through increasing familiarity with the text and conceptual content of 1 Peter. This familiarity allows for a heightened appreciation of the allusions and resonances of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11. I do not argue for phantom echoes that have little or nothing to do with the content of 1 Peter, such as the audience would need a dictionary or concordance to catch. My exegesis points out words and themes that demonstrate a substantial connection between 1 and 2 Peter, best explained by a deliberate use of 1 Peter by 2 Peter as a recapitulation and redirection of certain themes at the beginning of its own paraenesis. While this method—like

all methods—admits of some subjectivism, the echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11 are real and must be recognized for what they are if we are to make an honest exegesis of 2 Peter.

I have adopted a particularly sensitive ear in the interests of a comprehensive study of the *prooemium*. One might even object that it is “hypersensitive”: no audience could catch all of the echoes that I enumerate. But I place no limit on the ability of a sharp mind and ear to hear echoes both loud and faint. Additionally, I mean to point out the conceptual similarity—not just the lexical similarity—between 1 and 2 Peter, and this task requires a willingness to explore even inconspicuous convergences. Besides, most of the echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11 resound clearly. At the beginning of the second letter from “Peter” (see 2 Pet 3:1), and in the substantive introduction to the letter that supports the polemic later in the discourse, these echoes of 1 Peter are hardly random. Second Peter’s *prooemium* summarizes and redirects themes from 1 Peter in the service of its exhortation to virtue and knowledge of Christ.

3. Overview of Research

In Chapter One I presented a brief review of the research on 2 Peter in general and 2 Pet 1:3-11 specifically in order to demonstrate the background and need for my dissertation. The question of authorship—though not crucial for my study—provides an entrance into the comparison of 1 and 2 Peter. In recent times, commentators have set aside the harsh conclusions of Käsemann (who regarded 2 Peter as a failed attempt to defend original Christian eschatology that betrays a postapostolic, “early Catholic” vantage point)

and let the text and theology of 2 Peter speak for itself.¹ An analysis of the vocabulary of 1 and 2 Peter reveals several striking similarities as well as differences, such as the absence of key words from one letter in the other and apparent reformulations of ideas from one to the other. Second Peter's style diverges from 1 Peter's. But the letters demonstrate an intriguing thematic overlap, which invites interpretative exploitation. Boobyer offered a cogent argument for the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter by tracing the thematic arrangement of 2 Pet 1:3-11 (divine initiative, necessity of faith, and final encounter with Christ) as a recapitulation of similar themes in 1 Pet 1:3-9.² He viewed 1 Peter as the substance of the "reminder" in 2 Peter. Besides his important contribution, other interpreters have explored the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. Some have pointed to the existence of a "Petrine school" or the continuation of a common tradition by both letters. Others have focused on the canonical function of 2 Peter, whether as the written finalization of apostolic tradition or as a supplement or complement for 1 Peter. Wall regards 2 Peter as a restatement of 1 Peter. In his view, both letters form a vital whole.³

A consensus has emerged that 1:3-11 forms a distinct introductory unit within 2 Peter. It provides the positive theological basis for the polemical material in the rest of the letter. Rhetorical and epistolary approaches to this unit have both born fruit. Without prejudice to the epistolary function of the section, I use the rhetorical description *prooemium* in order to emphasize the character of these verses as a substantial theological introduction to 2 Peter. Various commentators have explored the Hellenistic tenor of the *prooemium* and have noted

¹ See Käsemann, "Apologia," 169-95.

² See Boobyer, "Indebtedness of 2 Peter to 1 Peter," 34-53.

³ See especially Wall, "The Canonical Function of 2 Peter," 64-81.

its major themes, including the close relationship between faith and ethics and the past, present, and future aspects of believers' relationship with Christ. Second Peter 1:3-11 offers a summary of Christ's actions and the appropriate response of Christians in faith.

This brief account of the research points to the need for my study. The recent interest in the canonical relationship between 1 and 2 Peter calls for a closer reading of these two important letters. The rich *prooemium* of 2 Peter, situated as an introduction to the letter, offers a logical point of departure for such a reading. The audience-oriented method of exegesis, which gauges the implied audience's response to words and themes previously heard, offers an ideal tool with which to explore the subtle relationship between 1 and 2 Peter. By carefully analyzing 2 Pet 1:3-11 for linguistic and conceptual echoes from 1 Peter I highlight previously unnoticed links between the letters and argue for a stronger canonical relationship than has been acknowledged.

In Chapter Two I offered an audience-oriented exegesis of 2 Pet 1:1-4 in order to discern lexical and conceptual echoes of 1 Peter. Since the audience hears the salutation (1:1-2) of the letter before the first section of the *prooemium* (1:3-4), it is necessary to include the letter's first two verses in my exegesis. The structure and vocabulary of 2 Peter's salutation resemble the structure and vocabulary of 1 Peter's salutation. Certain words and concepts in 2 Pet 1:1-2, such as "faith," "righteousness," and "savior," echo the content of 1 Peter and suggest that 2 Peter is familiar with themes from 1 Peter. The exact correspondence of the wish formula in 2 Pet 1:2 with 1 Pet 1:2 supports this conclusion. The addition of "knowledge of Christ" in 2 Pet 1:2, however, indicates that 2 Peter highlights a theme present in 1 Peter at the outset. The broad meaning of the phrase "knowledge of

Christ” can be seen as a summary of the content of 1 Peter, which devotes much effort to the person and example of Christ. This first instance of “knowledge of Christ” in 2 Pet 1:2 also introduces the major theme of the *prooemium* (see 1:3, 8). Thus 2 Peter’s salutation looks backward and forward: backward as a recollection and summary of 1 Peter, and forward as an amplification of certain themes to be treated more fully in the *prooemium*. These amplified themes from 1 Peter include the knowledge and divinity of Christ.

The first section of the *prooemium*, 2 Pet 1:3-4, discusses Christ’s gifts and the means of appropriating these gifts: knowledge of Christ. It also discloses the practical consequences of this knowledge, namely, flight from the corruption in the world and sharing divine nature. I read 2 Pet 1:3-4 as one sentence, the substantive introduction to the *prooemium* that forms the basis of the exhortation in 2 Pet 1:5-11. Several words and themes in 2 Pet 1:3-4 echo 1 Peter. Catchwords such as “divine power,” “life and piety,” and “glory and excellence” echo 1 Peter’s teaching on the person and salvific mission of Christ. The fact that 2 Peter describes Christ rather than God as the one who calls believers does not represent a disjunction between 1 and 2 Peter; rather, it reflects 2 Peter’s interest in the direct role of Christ in God’s overall plan of salvation. The second instance of “knowledge” in 2 Pet 1:3 echoes the ubiquitous theme of mental attachment to Christ in 1 Peter. The concepts of Christ’s “promises” and the prospect of sharing divine life appear in 1 Peter. By contrasting divine nature (achieved through knowledge of Christ) with “corruption” and “desire,” 2 Pet 1:4 gives clear evidence of the influence of 1 Peter, which contrasted Christian life with earthly desire at several points (1:14; 2:11; 4:2). Thus 2 Pet 1:3-4 echoes much of 1 Peter’s

teaching on Christ and develops 1 Peter's teaching on the appropriation of life through knowledge of Christ.

In Chapter Three my audience-oriented exegesis of 2 Pet 1:5-9 uncovered several important resonances with 1 Peter. The sequence of virtues in the catalogue (1:5-7)—from personal, internal virtue to external virtue expressed in relation to others—echoes 1 Peter's exhortation (1:13-16, 22). I argued that the internal virtues echo 1 Peter's portrait of Christ, whereas the external virtues appear prominently in the text of 1 Peter. Second Peter consolidates material from 1 Peter into a striking virtue list in order to explain the practical means of sharing divine nature. Virtue springs from and articulates knowledge of Christ. Faith represents the starting point of the catalogue, just as it appears in 1 Peter's *prooemium*. The audience's previous encounter with Christ's "excellence" (1:3) indicates that Christ's own virtue underlies the list. Piety, brotherly affection, and love (as the climax of all virtue and goal of Christian life) all parallel teaching from 1 Peter (1:13-16, 22; 2:12-13).

The sentence following the catalogue of virtues, 2 Pet 1:8-9, presents a contrast between those who pursue virtue and those who do not. The presence and increase in virtue make the audience neither useless nor fruitless for the knowledge of Christ. The language of purpose echoes 1 Peter's insistence on believers as heralds of the faith in society (1 Pet 2:12, 13-15; 3:14-16; 4:11, 16). The mention of fruitfulness implies both present and future aspects: increase in knowledge of Christ in the world and a final future encounter with Christ (both of which aspects recall the teaching of 1 Peter; see 1:13; 2:11; 4:2). The one who does not pursue virtue forgets the cleansing of past sins. I argued that this refers to the cleansing of sin in baptism, familiar from 1 Peter. Knowledge of Christ includes a mindfulness of

forgiveness and the resultant new perspective on life, an echo of the “insight of Christ” explained in 1 Pet 4:1-2.

In Chapter Four I presented an audience-oriented exegesis of the last section of the *prooemium*, 2 Pet 1:10-11. This concluding sentence summarized earlier parts of the *prooemium* and exhibited echoes of the text of 1 Peter. The introductory words (“therefore, brothers”) recall earlier elements of the exhortation. The repetition of the verb “be eager” expresses the divine gift even as it underscores the need for human cooperation, an idea familiar from 1:5. I argued that the use of the terms “firm,” “call,” and “election” in 2 Pet 1:10 echoes the language of construction and Christian identity in 1 Peter (2:4-9). Second Peter’s emphasis on constant human effort does not contradict its claim that Christ gives everything necessary for life and piety (1:3). The *prooemium*’s warning about the possibility of stumbling also echoes a similar admonition in 1 Peter.

The adverb “richly” and the divine passive verb “will be provided” recall previous statements about the divine initiative and point to the value of Christ’s gifts. The *prooemium*’s repeated interest in the audience, expressed through its use of the second person plural pronoun, relates growth in virtue to the Christian call and election and finally to the ultimate goal: entrance into Christ’s kingdom. All of these steps elaborate the “knowledge of Christ” theme in the *prooemium*. Second Peter’s use of the word “entrance” echoes the journey image from 1 Peter (see 1:1, 17; 2:11) and completes this motif within 1:3-11: an encounter with Christ represents believers’ final destination. I argued that this future entrance constitutes the future aspect of knowledge of Christ, thus completing the *prooemium*’s arc of detailing past, present, and future facets of this knowledge. The

description of Christ's "eternal kingdom" echoes some elements of the presentation of Christ in 1 Peter. This image also develops the earlier statement about sharing divine nature and fleeing worldly corruption: the entrance into Christ's kingdom represents the climactic fulfillment of these actions. The titles added to the name "Jesus Christ" in 2 Pet 1:11 recall earlier titles in the salutation and *prooemium* and unify the pericope. The title "Savior" echoes 1 Peter's emphasis on the salvation available in Christ. In terms of ethics and eschatology, both letters weave past, present, and future nuances of life in Christ. Both also associate knowledge of a future encounter with Christ with ethical behavior in the here and now.

4. Contributions of the Audience-Oriented Exegesis of 2 Pet 1:3-11

My audience-oriented exegesis of 2 Pet 1:3-11 in light of 1 Peter suggests that the first verses of 2 Peter are meant as a recapitulation and redirection of some of the major themes in 1 Peter. By means of lexical and conceptual echoes, 2 Peter recalls to the audience 1 Peter's teaching about Christ and the Christian identity, including the ethical requirements incumbent upon believers. But 2 Peter summarizes these themes in a brief fashion, in service of its overarching goal: defense of the faith against those who would vitiate the truth about Christ by their false teaching (2 Peter 2-3). Second Peter's *prooemium* magnifies certain themes from 1 Peter in the pursuit of this defense of the faith. The ethical requirements of the faith receive emphasis and restatement in the form of a catalogue of virtues. The *prooemium* develops a continuing series of positive and negative alternatives, based on the choice for or against cooperation with the divine initiative: divine nature or worldly

corruption through desire (1:3-4), fruitfulness or forgetfulness of past cleansing of sin (1:8-9), stumbling or entrance into Christ's kingdom (1:10-11). Most importantly, the *prooemium* seizes upon the theme of knowledge of Christ—present in an undeveloped form in 1 Peter (see 1:13; 4:1)—as the key to the Christian life in the past, present, and future. The development of this theme in the *prooemium* looks back to 1 Peter and forward to the polemics in the remainder of 2 Peter.

As the brief but dense theological introduction to 2 Peter, the *prooemium* contains the positive statement of the faith that must be defended against the errors and attacks of the opponents (2 Peter 2). The theme of knowledge of Christ represents a neat summary of correct doctrine underlying the subsequent polemic of 2 Peter. The echoes of 1 Peter in the *prooemium* suggest that 2 Peter regards the former letter as a trustworthy explication of the Christian faith and morality. The polemical situation and required brevity—not to mention the claims of the opponents—doubtlessly influenced the word choice and arrangement of the *prooemium*. But the echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11 indicate a definite relationship between these letters.

The similarity between the two salutations (1 Pet 1:1-2; 2 Pet 1:1-2) locates 2 Peter in the tradition of the earlier letter. The inclusion of the phrase “knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ” at the end of 2 Peter's salutation indicates the intended use of this theme from 1 Peter as an important summative key for the discourse of 2 Peter. Only in correct knowledge of Christ will grace and peace abound among the audience.

The echoes of 1 Peter in the first section of the *prooemium* (2 Pet 1:3-4) recall the gifts of Christ for life and conduct that pleases God. Second Peter emphasizes the divinity

and power of Christ more than 1 Peter, in order to highlight the importance of knowledge of Christ (1:3) for life in the present and future. Nevertheless, 2 Peter recalls 1 Peter's presentation of Christ by means of its allusion to Christ's own "glory and excellence" (1:6-7, 11, 21; 2:9; 4:11). Second Peter also echoes 1 Peter's frequent admonitions against desire as the antithesis of Christian life (1 Pet 1:13; 2:11; 4:1-2), in contrast to its own original formulation of "sharing divine nature." Thus the *prooemium* draws upon words and ideas concerning the identity of Christ and believers' ethical response to Christ found in 1 Peter. Second Peter recapitulates 1 Peter and sharpens its portrayal of desire as destructive of the life of faith.

The echoes of 1 Peter in the second section of the *prooemium* (2 Pet 1:5-9) continue to recall the presentation of Christ in 1 Peter to the ears of the audience. The catalogue of virtues contains several echoes of the description of Christ in 1 Peter (see 2:21-24). Second Peter draws upon 1 Peter for material and structure. The dramatic restatement of 1 Peter's paraenesis in the form of a list of virtues has a personal impact on the audience. It serves to make the knowledge of Christ concrete. Knowledge of Christ does not represent only an abstract belief system; it represents the way of righteousness and a rejection of immoral behavior (see 2 Pet 2:18-22). Believers have a clear path to tread in their imitation of their Lord. Otherwise, they forget the effects of their baptism, the sharing of Christ's own insight and purpose. By means of a few words 2 Peter summarizes these themes from 1 Peter and places them in service of its own exposition of knowledge of Christ and its powerful appeal for obedience to this knowledge.

The echoes of 1 Peter in the third section of the *prooemium* (2 Pet 1:10-11) recall 1 Peter's description of believers as called and elect, a solid building in Christ (2:4-9). Second Peter employs these themes in its exhortation to growth in virtue: only constant effort and vigilance can prevent a disastrous fall from grace. In light of the challenge from false teachers claiming to teach the true faith (2 Peter 2), such a warning is especially apt. Second Peter uses 1 Peter's explanation of Christian identity as a motive for continued progress and a bulwark against attack. The image of entering Christ's kingdom represents a conscious allusion to the completion of 1 Peter's pilgrimage theme: only in the future encounter with Christ are believers at home. This last section draws upon 1 Peter's presentation of Christ's salvation through its climactic use of the title "Savior." It also completes the *prooemium's* development of the theme of knowledge of Christ by disclosing the final consummation of past and present perseverance: future union with Christ. Thus the *prooemium* ends on a note of hope.⁴ The prospect of a future meeting with Christ underscores the stakes in the struggle for true faith and the grand implications of knowledge of Christ.

My exegesis leads to the conclusion that 2 Peter's *prooemium* used 1 Peter's language and imagery concerning Christ and his significance and power as the point of departure for its own paraenesis for believers. The echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11 indicate a deliberate appropriation of 1 Peter's teaching on Christ and a conscious development of some of those themes. Second Peter heightens the focus on Christ's divinity in order to present a more compelling argument for personal faithfulness to Christ's example. Second Peter amplifies 1 Peter's distinction between true faith and life and worldly corruption and desire. The

⁴ Spicq (*Épîtres de Saint Pierre*, 216) notes that the exhortation to knowledge of Jesus Christ terminates with a strong affirmation of hope. This resembles 1 Peter's *prooemium*, which according to Parker ("The Eschatology of 1 Peter," 27) concerns living hope and life.

prooemium offers practical knowledge of Christ as a critical summary of Christian life and as an indispensable shield against those who would deceive believers (2 Peter 2). Especially through the use of the knowledge theme, the *prooemium* prepares for the subsequent parts of 2 Peter's discourse (see 2 Pet 1:16, 20; 2:20; 3:3, 18).

5. Unity and Structure of 2 Pet 1:3-11

My exegesis has also produced a nuanced understanding of the structure and development of 2 Peter's *prooemium*. I have argued that two elements are present in each of the three segments of the unit (1:3-4; 1:5-9; 1:10-11): a reference to knowledge of Christ, and a contrast between positive and negative consequences of the choice for or against cooperation with the divine initiative. The audience hears development in each of these conceptual links. The knowledge of Christ appears first as the past revelation and gift of Christ (1:3-4), through which believers received everything necessary for life and piety. The next section (1:5-9) describes knowledge of Christ as the beginning and end of the present pursuit of virtue, a necessity of the life of faith. Finally, the future entrance into Christ's kingdom represents the consummation of knowledge of Christ (1:10-11).

In each section the audience also hears about two alternatives that follow the choice for or against knowledge of Christ and its requirements. In 1:3-4 the text contrasts sharing divine nature and corruption in the world through desire: only by accepting Christ's gifts can believers find true life. In 1:5-9 the text juxtaposes usefulness and fruitfulness for the knowledge of Christ against blindness and forgetfulness of the cleansing of past sins. In 1:10-11 the discourse opposes stumbling and a climactic entrance into the kingdom of Christ.

These features demonstrate the *prooemium*'s expressly paraenetic character. Its goal involves the presentation of a personal program of holiness centered in the knowledge of Christ, which always leads to life. This is the *prooemium*'s overriding interest, and its pressing need before the discourse proceeds to the polemic against false teachers and misleading "knowledge" (2 Peter 2–3). This hortatory character governs 2 Peter's appropriation and amplification of certain themes from 1 Peter, which 2 Peter concentrates and deploys as part of its introductory statement of background and purpose. The *prooemium* uses these themes to sharpen its insistence on correct knowledge and practice in the face of a new challenge from false teachers.

6. The Different Expressions of 1 and 2 Peter

In the course of my exegesis, I have acknowledged certain differences of language and expression between 2 Pet 1:3-11 and 1 Peter. However, these differences do not prove fatal to my thesis that 2 Peter echoes 1 Peter deliberately. First, several words and themes in 2 Pet 1:3-11 demonstrate a clear affinity with words and themes in 1 Peter. Their appearance at the beginning of 2 Peter hardly represents a coincidence but a conscious arrangement of familiar themes positioned as a point of departure for a new and complementary paraenesis. Second, 2 Peter's choice of different words in some special cases—and the "grand" character of its vocabulary and style in general—admits of several plausible explanations. Differences in vocabulary and rhetoric do not necessarily mean that 2 Peter did not know and use 1 Peter; they may indicate the different epistolary situations and strategies of these two texts. Second Peter's *prooemium* is a brief theological introduction that has no need for a long explanation

of material it takes for granted. The polemical context doubtlessly plays a role, as the discourse seeks to counter the arguments and attacks of the opponents in appropriate language. The paraenesis aims for the greatest possible personal impact; thus a personal confrontation with the knowledge theme demands language and expressions evocative of a personal response. I have mentioned the Hellenistic overtones of the *prooemium*'s language and rhetoric; Hellenistic language in the *prooemium* may best communicate the thrust of the discourse.

Thus my conclusion that 2 Peter adopts and adapts material from 1 Peter is not illogical or contrary to the lexical evidence. On the contrary, it would be illogical to expect 2 Peter to mimic or copy verbatim the language of 1 Peter. Second Peter does not aim simply to retransmit 1 Peter; it seeks to appropriate its teaching and apply it in a new situation against an internal threat to the Christian faith. In light of attacks on the substance of the faith, 2 Peter adopts and develops the theme of knowledge of Christ and its practical implications. An attentive audience, familiar with 1 Peter, would not need exact lexical parallels at every turn to discern the influence of 1 Peter on 2 Peter. The echoes I have described are enough to communicate the theological continuity between these letters. I have pointed out that 2 Peter affirms 1 Peter not just by a direct reference (3:1) or in the name of apostolic authority (1:1; 3:2) but by a conscious theological development. The presence of words and ideas from 1 Peter at the beginning of 2 Peter indicates deliberate echoing of the earlier letter.

7. Conclusions on the Canonical Relationship between 1 and 2 Peter

To summarize, I have argued that 2 Pet 1:3-11 contains lexical and thematic echoes of 1 Peter. These are deliberate, meant to recapitulate and recall ideas from 1 Peter at the beginning of 2 Peter. Second Peter's *prooemium* mentions and develops certain themes from 1 Peter in its own original attempt to urge its audience to growth in the knowledge of Christ against the threat of false teaching and perversion of the truth (2 Peter 2–3). First Peter represents 2 Peter's point of departure and a substantial source of the ideas and images in 2 Pet 1:3-11. Thus any attempt to interpret the beginning of 2 Peter apart from 1 Peter misses the mark. First Peter provides the background for 2 Peter's brief introduction and positive statement of faith to be defended against the opponents' attacks. The fact that 2 Peter highlights and amplifies certain images and themes for its own purposes does not conceal its indebtedness to 1 Peter. Nor is this surprising. The *prooemium* takes on a complex structure, explaining the need for and nature of knowledge of Christ in its past, present, and future dimensions. In line with its paraenetic interest, every section of the *prooemium* confronts the audience with the implications of the choice for or against Christ. These first verses of 2 Peter urge the audience to greater knowledge of Christ through growth in virtue and the expectation of a future entrance into Christ's kingdom.

I have argued that the echoes of 1 Peter in 2 Pet 1:3-11 demonstrate a stronger relationship between 1 and 2 Peter than has been acknowledged. Second Peter is not merely the second letter attributed to Peter, holding a position in the canon immediately after 1 Peter but without any substantive links to the earlier and longer letter. Second Peter 1:3-11 draws

on 1 Peter for material and imagery and employs it in the development of its defining theme: the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

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