Feeding Our Faith

Zanesville, OH | June 9, 2019 | John Pollard | Sermon Notes

**Foundational Scripture:** 2 Pet. 1:1-15

**Intro**:

* A year or two after his first letter to the saints scattered across northeast Asia, Peter here now pens his second letter to these very Christians who were being bombarded with false doctrine and false testimony from false teachers who were greedy for money, self-willed and seeking to advance their physical agendas at any and all costs including the souls of God’s chosen people. It is for this very reason that Peter composes this letter to them. They were, in a very real sense, facing a crisis of faith. Many of them had questions and concerns. Others had severe doubts about the gospel and probably gave in to these false teachings and turned away from Christ. And the truth is we live in a world that was very similar to theirs. Every day we are being assaulted by false gospels, ridiculous claims, shameful shams and men who claim to stand up for the truth but underneath have dark, evil motives. Our faith is put to the test in all these situations and we may think about giving up or going back over to the other side but Peter wanted them to know and he wants us to know that that is not the solution to the problem regardless of how bad it gets. God has given us the tools and the ability to hold on to the truth and strengthen our faith so that when we find ourselves being attacked we can withstand and overcome with His help. The solution is to keep **feeding our faith**.

**The Divine Feast**

1. **Who is at the table? (vv. 1-2)**
   1. The attendees or better said, the invitees, are those who share in this one faith (the gospel; Eph. 4:5; Jude 1:3). They are the saints who have been given a special invitation to come to this feast by Jesus Himself. He makes their attendance at this feast possible because of His death and His resurrection (Eph. 2:4-8).
   2. Jesus died and Jesus rose because every single soul in this room and every single soul outside of this room matters to Him. You mean that much to God and He wants all of us to come and partake of this divine feast. Those who are at this table have access to the riches and abundance of His grace and the peace that surpasses all understanding.

1. **Why come to the table? (vv. 3-4)**
   1. The reason why this feast is so great and why everyone should want to be at the table is because of what God has to offer. He gives us everything pertaining to life and godliness. There is nothing out of the scope of our daily physical or spiritual life in which God is not involved (Eph. 3:20).
   2. What’s more, according to Peter, is that God gives us His precious and magnificent promises so that we can be like Him. We do not serve a God who presses us into some type of subservient relationship where He is off in the distance just going about His own business while we do ours aimlessly and carelessly. He does not leave us to wallow in the mire on our own nor will He leave us to drown in the depths of life’s stormy waters. God is actively involved in our lives and He wants us to be like Him and ultimately to be with Him (Jn. 14:1-3; Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Pet. 3:9, 13).
2. **What is being served at the table? (vv. 5-7)**
   1. With that being said, what’s on the menu? What makes this feast so great and so different than anything else?
      1. **Moral excellence:** My behavior must reflect a change of heart (repentance) in keeping with God’s will (1 Pet. 2:12; 4:3).
      2. **Knowledge:** Do I know what I believe, what I am getting myself into and what I am working towards? Am I involved in God’s word everyday as I should be to learn what I must be doing (1 Pet. 3:15)? God does not want us to have blind faith!
      3. **Self-control:** There is a temptation to become arrogant and self-reliant with knowledge (1 Cor. 8:1) and so on the heels of knowledge is this idea of ensuring we partake of self-control. Self-control is not just to be incorporated with an increase of knowledge but in all areas of our lives (1 Cor. 9:25).
      4. **Perseverance:** This quality, this particular menu item, is quintessential when one talks about being able to withstand the devil’s schemes and getting up when we fall (1 Pet. 4:12-19). Our willingness to eat of this reflects the kind of desire we have for God and the hope of being in Heaven with Him!
      5. **Godliness:** The idea of being like God and being like Jesus is not without emphasis in the scriptures. Embodying this quality increases our faith and it will fill the gaping holes in our lives (1 Tim. 4:8).
      6. **Brotherly kindness:** In speaking of a crises of faith, one of the greatest sources of help is our brethren (1 Pet. 2:22). If we don’t love our brethren then automatically we can expect to fall another 10 levels (1 Jn. 4:8, 20). If brotherly kindness is not a part of who we are then we cannot expect others (outsiders) to join in what we are doing.
      7. **Love:** And of course as the root of all things, love must abound (1 Cor. 13:1-8). Love when present, is that which ties everything together and it brings everyone together (Col. 3:14). We may find ourselves at the brink of giving up or giving in but even an ounce of love can change that outcome.
3. **Refusing to Eat (vv. 8-9)**
   1. Peter advises that those who want to be useful, valuable and successful must feast on these items not once, not twice and not even three times. These qualities must be sought after every single day if we have any hope of getting through crises of faith we face and if we want to get better.
   2. The one who refuses to eat will only bring more harm on himself/herself (blind, short-sighted). But more importantly when we refuse to eat, we insult God and we insult His purpose for creation (Rom. 8:19-24). We essentially spit in His face and say that we don’t care about Jesus and we don’t care about why He came and why He died (Tit. 2:14).
4. **Importance of Partaking of this Feast (vv. 10-15 )**
   1. Peter encourages these saints and us not to fall into such a deplorable situation. Instead, we ought to live in such a way that shows gratitude to God and an attitude that always suggests to God He made the right decision and that He did not waste His time in preparing the plan of salvation. How do we do that?
   2. We must come to the table hungry and ready to eat of the divine feast God has laid out for us. We are VIP’s and we matter to God and He wants us to be with Him but that cannot and will not happen unless we feed our faith with this feast. If we do this and when we do this and as long as we do this, we will not fall from grace and the entrance into Heaven will be abundantly supplied to us.
   3. The urgency of partaking of this feast is emphasized by Peter in saying that he will always be ready to remind them of these things. Why? Because sometimes we forget. Sometimes we are just plain stubborn and sometimes we just don’t want to do anything.
   4. Peter, who was about to die at the hands of godless men himself, knew that the only thing that mattered most in life was trusting in His Lord and holding on to the truth, the absolute truth. And they needed to be prepared to do the same and so should we. We have no excuse for failure and regression. God gives us all things pertaining to life and godliness (Rom. 8:32)!

**Conclusion:** At some point in our lives, those of us who are Christians, we will experience a crisis of faith. We will be bruised, battered and beaten by the enemy and the evil one. Every day there are millions of people celebrating abortion as righteous and proper healthcare. The world supports the notion that homosexuality is a gift from God and it is the truest form of love we have seen. Every day, the Creator of this universe is ridiculed, mocked and denied as a myth, ghost or imaginary figure that cannot save and cannot make a difference whatsoever. We, who stand up for the truth and need to stand up for the truth, we will face strong opposition for our faith, what we believe and what we say. And if our faith isn’t where it needs to be, we will fall, we will collapse and we will succumb to the devil. But friends, we have a solution. There is a fix and God is real! We have a feast that cannot compare to any other, which if we eat from it and put it where it needs to be, we will grow, we will become stronger and we will ultimately see God in Heaven!