Moral skepticism and relativism has contributed to moral anomie in the Western world, thus having catastrophic implications on the organization, its members, and society at large. To overturn moral lapse and depravity it will take Christ-like authentic transformational leadership, motivated by gratitude to God’s grace, to continuously develop his or her character or virtue toward Christ-likeness as well as exhorting others to do the same. As people focus on goodness and godly virtue it should effect powerful waves of influence throughout the organization and environment the organization works within. And, because we live in a fallen world where attempts to deflect the light of Christ is ingrained into the culture of the society, it will require believers to understand the ways in which our culture of individualism and postmodernism can work against or limit Christ-like virtue development. Understanding the social context and location of Second Peter 1:1-11, however, can assist believers in this endeavor. It will help believers understand Peter’s strategy for re-defining philosophies that were ingrained in the first-century pagan culture. Peter also provides a framework for virtue development and emphasizes the role of God’s grace through Christ and the believer’s gratitude response to God in bringing to completion that development. And, as believers possess these qualities they escape worldly corruption that leads to spiritual death brought upon by heretics (seemingly pseudo transformational leaders) who reinforce and deceive others into unbiblical practices. Virtue instead effects biblical practices that have a profound influence on performance, creativity, and collaboration, which are vital for sustaining an organization in dynamic, complex, uncertain, and turbulent environments.
“Everyone is in the process of spiritual formation”\textsuperscript{1}. “Every time you make a choice you are turning the central part of you, the part of you that chooses, into something a little different from what it was before. And taking your life as a whole, with all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thinking either into a heavenly creature or into a hellish creature: either into a creature that is in harmony with God, and with other creatures, and with itself, or else into one that is in a state of war and hatred with God, and with its fellow-creatures, and with itself. To be the one kind of creature is heaven: that is, it is joy and peace and knowledge and power. To be the other means madness, horror, idiocy, rage, impotence, and eternal loneliness. Each of us at each moment is progressing to the one state or the other”\textsuperscript{2}.

C.S. Lewis’ words remind us that a person’s spiritual state does not maintain equilibrium, but instead is continuously defined and refined by the choices a person makes. Thomas Merton writes, “Stagnation and inactivity bring spiritual death”\textsuperscript{3}. Yet, constant self contemplation and continuous focus on our acts leads to anxiety, hopelessness, and despair\textsuperscript{4}. Merton believes we need to learn to be ourselves as God created us, and as such we can live at peace with God, others, and ourselves\textsuperscript{5}. As we look into the annals of humanity’s past one thing is quite evident...it takes only one person to positively or negatively impact the organization, society, nation, and world. Our spiritual being that houses our values, our beliefs, and our worldview determines how, when, where, and why we will influence others. This is an important time in history upon which people need to come to reality of who they are. Inability to be one’s self in God, as Merton believes, only leads us to continuously compare ourselves to others to “see how big we are”\textsuperscript{6}. This, however, only compounds our allusion of ourselves and the world and leads to coveting and greed. There just does not seem no more important time than now to understand who we are, particularly as our world continues along in moral decay, or “moral anomie”, as Emile Durkheim would label. Moral anomie is not just a Western or American issue, although this paper focuses primarily on America. It is instead, according to Rushworth Kidder, President of the Institute of Global Ethics who conducted interviews with several leaders around the world, but is a global issue\textsuperscript{7}. Durkheim found that in “moral anomie”, a state of chaos in which societal

\textsuperscript{1} Mulholland, Robert, \textit{Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation} (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 24.
\textsuperscript{4} Merton, Thomas, 119-120.
\textsuperscript{5} Merton, Thomas, 121-122.
\textsuperscript{6} Merton, Thomas, 122.
norms do not convey shared, clear, and concise expected behavior...if norms are even present all...contributes to non-conformance, according to Robert Merton⁸, and thus people have difficulty with finding their place in society without specific and clear rules to help guide them⁹. The “inner compass” that once seemed to guide most of our society appears to be malfunctioning. The individual’s moral compass is now guided by others who have a variety of different beliefs rather than reliance upon the individual’s own spiritual principles that were once shared and reinforced by others in the society.

Our culture’s reliance upon an “outer” versus “inner” compass manifests itself by the reliance upon our law system. The evolution from use of an “inner” to “outer” moral compass may be rooted in our “guilt culture” that dates back to the Roman Empire that that placed government law above divine law¹⁰. Over the thousands of years of moral evolution teleological (or consequential) ethics became the focus of guiding behavior. This change in focus sacrificed godly virtue ethics...the other side of the coin, which is more important than the former ethic type in maintaining and reversing moral decay. The latter ethic, grounded in virtue, prevents moral decay in that the continuous focus on goodness has the power to overcome vice and create the momentum for continued goodness in the organization. While the former...teleological ethics...is important, there may be too much focus and time spent considering consequences of actions emanating from vice. A focus on virtue, however, particularly as it indwells the person to the extent it has imprinted itself as a character trait is much more effective in producing positive effects, thus little consideration of consequences is needed. The words of the Apostle Paul gives attention to the importance of focus on virtue; he says in Philippians 4:8, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things”.

Aside from virtue ethics playing a role in reversing moral anomie, it also play a specific role in organizations challenged with uncertain, complex, and at times chaotic environments. As alluded to earlier, while codes of ethics do help communicate and guide people as to what is acceptable behavior, codes alone are insufficient for creating “goodness” or virtuousness in the organization whose members must make numerous daily complex decisions¹¹, and whose leaders must create

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¹⁰ Muller, Roland. “Honor and Shame in a Middle Eastern Setting”. Nabataen Culture & Religion. [http://nabataea.net/h&s.html](http://nabataea.net/h&s.html).
environments that are conducive to collaboration, dialogue, and creative thinking. On a more global scale, only commitment to godly virtue can lend a hand to healing the war-torn, hurting, and hungry. In essence, organizations...consisting of numerous different individuals with different personalities, upbringings, experiences, worldviews, etc. who also need to sustain itself into the future need to learn collectively what godly virtue is and how to grow in that godly character.

We can learn of this process in 2 Peter. Second Peter 1:1-11, having a social location characteristic of pluralism and syncretism, produced according to Fornberg a variety of pagan values and practices such as moral skepticism and relativism. Peter describes what virtues are needed to live a godly life and how to grow in virtue so the believer can deflect specific influences of culture and those individuals in opposition to God’s will. Peter, having experienced the power of God’s grace and transformation, in turn becomes an authentic transformational leader. He recites Leviticus 11:44 in 1 Peter 1:11 and calls others to fulfill Moses’ command, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY”. Peter does this in the midst of a social and political culture in opposition to God’s will. Today, we benefit from Peter’s writings as the Christian is challenged to live out a holy life in the midst of dramatic political, social, and cultural change, particularly as all facets of American life (e.g. family and church), but particularly the church fall prey to worldly ways.

Churches that once played a significant role in influencing American leaders no longer appear to be as influential. The light that America’s citizens once gazed at is diminishing. The repercussions are deadly. If care is not taken to awaken our generation to a call to holiness, America will look like Europe where cathedrals are sold for physical fitness, pub and dinner theater, dining, night club, and other religious worship purposes. But, strikingly clear is the message that before our American culture can change, change must first happen within the church’s own walls, and within these walls each of us must take spiritual account of who we are in Christ. We must ask ourselves if we have a biblical fear of God. For without the fear of God, there is no wisdom and true knowledge, and knowledge of God and Jesus is the vital link to godliness, of which keeps us from escaping corruption. Without fear of God and wisdom and knowledge in God the need to change from our sinfulness and subsequent spiritual transformation is not possible. Without wisdom to see that His promises are kept we live a life destitute of any meaning and hope that believers can love one another. What is there then to attain in the human condition if everything is fine...if there is no reason for moving beyond the status quo? Why

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16 NASB Study Bible, Proverbs 1:7.
17 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3.
18 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3, 4.
would a corporate leader want to not “cook” the books? Why would a leader want to ensure the interests and concerns of customers and employees are addressed? Why would the organization leader see the organization as a stakeholder to the well-being of humanity, the local community, and the world? Without a healthy fear of God, acknowledging that by nature we are sinful, and an earnest desire to be Holy as He is, change toward the betterment of this world is not possible.

On the surface, transformation without God may look possible (the many “self-help” books attest to this), however, when we really look at our past efforts we will find that our efforts designed by the self quickly fail. We then become frustrated as we realize that selfishness limits who we can be as a child of God. But, by God’s grace and love through Jesus Christ, He makes known who we are and what we can become through Christ and the Holy Spirit. God is more than a willing servant as He shows us the way to His unfailing truths that He established when he created the world. He is willing to transform our hearts and minds toward his principles that not only lend benefit to the present but also the eternity. How much greater can a strategic plan be than a plan that is developed with eternity in mind?

The other side of this plan...of equal importance...however, is the implementation of this strategic plan. Christian leaders need to consider what type of leader can help bring this plan to fruition. In an analysis of 2 Peter it was found that authentic transformational leadership played a vital part on God’s strategic plan to develop His eternal Kingdom. Peter, the authentic transformational leader, stirred-up by way of reminder was committed to creating environments where goodness could dwell in the hopes that believers would leave a life of worldliness for a kingdom that brings glory and honor to God. Peter tackles problems of heresy (worldly ways) by emphasizing that the Christian walk is not only about desiring to be holy, but “being” holy.

Our nation is fraught with Christians who label their self as a Christian, but do not take the time to focus on “becoming more like Christ”. We have seen too many Christian leaders expounding views upon the world without taking a close look at their own exemplification of the Christian walk. I am not just pointing the fingers to others, but also to myself. Even as I write this I take caution noting there is a fine line between humility and self-righteousness. At the same time we must be aware of our own character and its alignment with God’s will. The Scripture gives much room for discussion of vice, avocation of virtue, and the importance of character development as a state of “being” because in Christ we are a new creature. The entire Biblical account of humanity is a story about sin, redemption, and change, and we would be wise as representatives of the Kingdom of God to know this story well, not only for our sake, but also for the sake of our brothers and sisters in the hope we will not be the reason for another’s stumbling as well as for the sake of preventing others from stumbling into sin. Our example as a Christian could be the difference between people seeing us with authenticity or hypocrisy. It is not underestimated that we do fail as Christians when we sin, but there

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19 NASB Study Bible, 1 Peter 1:16.
20 NASB Study Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:17.
is still the ever small voice telling us to follow His ways, to overcome the world with Christ, and to grow
day by day in Him so that we sin less and less, not merely making the grace given to us a “cheap
grace”, but a gracious gift that we respond to by freely giving our mind, body, and spirit.

I. Thesis

There is a saying that humans cannot fix something they are the cause of. This truth should help
leaders recognize they cannot focus on the right things without God as their source of power.
Organizations and our society can reverse moral anomie when those foreknown by God are conformed
to Christ’s image\textsuperscript{21}…to His character. But change requires a process, and as such it is this paper’s
thesis that the Christian leader wishing to serve as an exemplary model of Christ as a means to
influence others to do as well, which is so vital in authentic transformational leadership, requires
protection from corruption of worldly lust\textsuperscript{22}, of which can only be accomplished through God-guided
proactive self-leadership in continuous spiritual nourishment, growth, and maturity that develops\textsuperscript{23}
when the believer walks in and by the Spirit\textsuperscript{24}. A leader can learn from the example of Peter who
exhibits authentic transformational leadership by “stirring-up” believers through reminder of Old and
New Testament prophecies that will place in the last days (e.g. mockers following their own lusts)\textsuperscript{25}.
The news media today is replete with stories of the impact of leaders who have become corrupted and
have fallen into worldly lust. The only protection against deceit, corruption, and stumbling, according to
Scripture, is having the true knowledge of Jesus Christ and becoming “partakers of the divine nature”
by having virtuous qualities\textsuperscript{26}. Second Peter provides understanding of how being in faith and the true
knowledge of Christ rests in moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness,
brotherly kindness, and love\textsuperscript{27}.

II. The Hope of this Article

This article hopes to open dialogue about the spiritual transformation process needed for authentic
transformational leadership as well as other spiritual leadership stage. There appears to be a
resurgence in the interest of virtue as well as an increased amount of research on different forms of
leadership, particularly spiritual leadership, but I find that these leadership theories seek to describe
only the qualities and behaviors of leaders, but do not focus on the process of becoming a spiritual
leader with the virtuous qualities expounded by different theorists. It takes years and in most cases a

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{21} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, Romans 8:29.
\bibitem{22} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:4.
\bibitem{23} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:5-11.
\bibitem{24} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, Galatians 5:15, 25.
\bibitem{25} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 1825, 2 Peter 3.
\bibitem{26} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:3-11.
\bibitem{27} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:5-7.
\end{thebibliography}
lifetime to develop godly character, and at this point in our history of mankind character or spiritual formation needs more recognition and attention rather than leaving it on the side-line drawing upon it only when a crisis or disaster is immanent or has occurred upon which it may be too late to avoid the disastrous byproduct or consequences of missed opportunities or failure of acting. By discussing the process of spiritual transformation, it is further hoped that dialogue among religions may abound. The goal of this article is to bring attention to the Christian that he or she is a leader, and as such they must be proactive then in attaining knowledge of God and Jesus Christ and further allow their self to “be” molded by God, which further evidences itself in growing toward virtuousness. Always keeping in mind and assessing one’s motivation for doing so...as a grateful response to the grace and new life God has given us through the death and resurrection of Christ, knowing that He has also given everything we need to grow in the image of Christ\textsuperscript{28}. The believer should also have an appropriate fear of God of Whom has determined a day for the ungodly to stand before His throne for judgment\textsuperscript{29}; as Lenhard explains it, judgment is the day of moral reckoning\textsuperscript{30}.

In hopes of creating further dialogue of spiritual formation or transformation and authentic transformational leadership and other forms of spiritual leadership, it is hoped that this article will assist with understanding:

1. The reasons and the case for Peter’s leadership in 2 Peter;
2. The social location of the readers in 2 Peter as a driving force behind the need for the growth in virtuousness, e.g. spiritual transformation;
3. The role of God’s grace and response of gratefulness as the motivator for growth in virtuousness;
4. God’s process for growth in virtue;
5. The American social-cultural barriers that can inhibit growing in virtuousness; and,
6. The implications of 2 Peter and current cultural barriers on authentic transformational leadership.

III. Reasons and the Case for Peter’s Leadership

Peter’s genuine love for Jesus Christ moves Peter to fulfill Christ’s command to “Tend My sheep” by genuinely loving others out of natural affection\textsuperscript{31}. And, as a beneficiary of God’s love Peter became a benefactor of love to others, not only the believer, but also those actively hostile to God...which was considered much more generous than typically considered necessary in the first-century culture\textsuperscript{32}. Peter is thus called to be concerned for the spiritual welfare of others, and as such, he reminds

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:3.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 3:7.
\textsuperscript{30} Charles, J. Daryl, 93.
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, John 21:17.
believers of the words of past prophets so it may “stir-up”\textsuperscript{33} [\textit{diegeiro}, meaning to awaken, arouse, render active, or agitate\textsuperscript{34}], or drive a desire for repentance and change in the believer so he or she will be saved from the assured final judgment to come\textsuperscript{35}. Peter, just as Paul, also having experienced Christ’s revelation of His glory\textsuperscript{36}, explains to those already who have received a “faith of the same kind as ours”\textsuperscript{37} how a growth in godly virtue and holiness prevents corruption in the world driven by lust\textsuperscript{38}. The implication of corruption...of sin...is eternal death, and as such Peter’s unfailing love for Christ’s followers requires him to remind of these consequences in 2 Peter 2. He couples this reminder, however, with the means by which to prevent corruption, by a devotion to growth in holiness and godly virtue as a response of gratitude toward God’s grace.

Peter has the credentials to explain the process necessary for virtuous growth and spiritual transformation in 2 Peter 1:1-7 because he experienced God’s grace, new life, and transformation first hand. Peter felt remorse as he came into awareness of the reality of his sin the moment he remembered that Jesus said he would deny Him three times before the rooster crowed\textsuperscript{39}. Yet, instead of despair as Judas had that led to the taking of his own life, something in Peter allowed him to live on despite his sin. And, because of Jesus’ indescribable love for Peter, Jesus restored Peter by giving him another chance to reaffirm his love and commitment to Jesus by giving Peter the opportunity to live out this love by the command to feed His sheep\textsuperscript{40}. Because Peter experienced sorrow for his sin, divine forgiveness, and a purpose and direction to live out His love for God he came to learn the significance of faith in the life of the Christian and the power God gives the believer to grow in virtue and attain holiness.

Peter has also exhibited in his own behavior (as an outward flow of God’s grace) sacrificial service to His followers by caring deeply about a believer’s spiritual growth. Peter is not only concerned about coming to faith, but also staying in the Truth of God’s grace given through Jesus Christ. And, as such Peter provides a framework for understanding the purpose and a framework for growth in virtue, e.g. spiritual transformation. Overall, Peter is concerned about the ability of the Christian to be sufficient in his or her understanding, knowledge, etc. that he or she will not be swayed into false beliefs, hence worldly beliefs that can corrupt the follower’s faith. The best defense of heresy that can steer the believer from the true course is to be continuously growing toward virtuous character, and in having

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 3:1.
\textsuperscript{34} \textit{NAS with Strong’s Numbers}.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 3:9.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:1.
\textsuperscript{38} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:4.
\textsuperscript{39} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, Mathew 26:69-75.
\textsuperscript{40} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, John 21:15-17.
holiness and virtue the believer’s mind, heart, and spirit is equipped to protect itself from dangerous propositions and beliefs.

Peter understands that virtuous character, as exemplified in 2 Peter 1, is the conductor for producing change, and as character is evident in the person it reverberates and has an effect throughout the Christian world. This effect is felt throughout society; it has led to some people to ask, “Why do Christian’s do what they do?” How the believer makes a decision to act is so revolutionary and contrary to the general views and beliefs of the society that it begs this questioning. For example, in 200 A.D. the emperor and stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius was perplexed by Christians choosing death over not worshiping the Roman emperor or pagan gods worshipped in the region and locality. Virtuous people as well as these early Christians have inspired many others to stop for a moment to contemplate spiritual truths, which in turn sparks the challenging of the person’s assumptions, and thus opened a new spiritual door for that person. Just as one pebble drop forces ripples throughout a pond, so too has Christianity over the past 2000 years effected change in every empire, nation, society, group, and individual. The effects of godly virtue upon others cannot be underestimated, and therefore, for those wishing to extol the virtues of Christ and lead as a model of Christ, they ought to study the process by which this character comes to fruition. Virtuousness is the best strategy for any Christian desiring to bring about positive change in the world through their leadership.

Another reason for making a case for virtuous leadership is simply for the moral reason that leadership “is a process of influencing others; it has a moral dimension that distinguishes it from other types of influence, such as coercion or despotic control.” Northouse, using a deontological view of ethical leadership, states it is a duty of the leader, given their inherent power and authority, the ability to influence, and having an affect on others that leaders need to pay attention to his or her values and ethics. I would also add that the authentic transformational leader is one who also allows others to scrutinize his or her commitment and reflection of virtue. The leader whose character exemplifies humility and is rooted in godly virtue will have no problem with this.

One should also distinguish the difference between secular concepts of authentic transformational leadership, such as that proposed by Bass et al. and authentic transformational leadership supported by Scripture, of which the former will be discussed in greater detail later in this paper. Bass et al’s proposed theory is typical of Confucian and Socratic typologies, whereas Christian authentic transformational leadership is rooted in godly virtue that is God’s grace and worked out not only through individuals as they respond to God’s grace with gratitude, commitment, and obedience to Him.

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43 Northouse, Peter, 317.
but also as the believer interacts with others. As Mulholland states, “as God begins to deal with some of the deep distortions of our being we need others”; Christians are in the virtue development business together. Willard, supporting Mulholland’s thesis also writes,

> “The human self requires rootedness in others. This is primarily an ontological matter—a matter of being what we are. It is about understanding reality in terms of our character. It is not just a moral matter, a matter of what ought to be. And the moral aspect grows out of the ontological.”

Christians need one another in order to grow in Christ-likeness. The authentic transformational leader thus is willing to exhort and encourage others toward growth in virtuousness and is willing to allow others to help him or herself grow in virtuousness as Peter exemplified when he allowed Christ to teach and exhort him to grow in virtue (noting that the person always understands that the source of all virtue or goodness is God and not the self or others). Virtue, however, is not developed in a vacuum, not in an entirely individualistic or collectivistic society where the focus is individual liberty for the former or group conformance for the latter, but is developed as the believer and community of believers focuses on Christ and God’s will. It does not mean that God does not use these cultures to accomplish His plans. As we will see in 2 Peter, some of the social-culture dimensions of the first century did influence his words penned in 2 Peter, but only to the extent the culture influenced believers in the church, which then in turn would need to be re-defined in an effort to align it with God’s truth, particularly when persons influenced by the culture deceived others into sin, thus effecting corruption. What then was the cultural-social location that demanded the exhortation and encouragement of Peter to call others to growth in virtue?

IV. Social Location of 2 Peter that Contributed to the Need for a Growth in Virtue

An exegesis of 2 Peter that considers the writer’s literary-rhetorical style and reader’s social location may refresh the traditional ‘early Catholic’ reading of 2 Peter. It may also lend benefit to Christian leaders in America who desire to keep in the true knowledge of Christ alive and reverse the course of moral anomie amidst a similar pagan and “Gentile” first-century culture where the twin peaks, as Charles calls it, moral relativism, “the void of which the Stoa sought to fill”, and hardened skepticism “regarding the possibility of moral accountability” were played out as a result of Greco-Roman paganism. Peter reminds believers that growing in virtue is necessary; their virtuous lifestyle is proof

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45 Mulholland, Robert, 36.
46 Charles, J. Daryl, 41.
47 Charles, J. Daryl, 82.
48 Charles, J. Daryl, 8.
or evidence that supplies confirmation of the believer’s calling and election. Second Peter essentially states says that “faith without ethical fiber is no real faith at all”... Orthopraxy [correct practice] must manifest itself in every domain of life”; “a return to the moral depravity that characterized the former life in the world”, otherwise would be catastrophic. The only immunization available to defeating heresy is to have the true knowledge of God and Jesus that involves the continuous growth in the new life Jesus Christ has given to the believer, which effects authenticity...alignment in what one believes and lives. As mentioned earlier, growth in virtue or ethos, however, does not grow in a vacuum, but it grows in environments that counter Christian beliefs and practices. As difficult as this may seem the Christian is to overcome these strong social-cultural influences by growing in holiness and virtue.

As well, understanding the social-culture context of the first-century in which virtuousness would have to develop is important to Biblical interpreters today, lest they read something into Scripture that is simply not there. Understanding the context also provides insight into the literary strategy Peter used to influence readers. Specifically, the interpreter should investigate the Judean influence of honor, patronage, kinship, and purity (although as some researchers such as Fornberg suggests was gradually declining around at this time) as well as the Roman-Greco culture that influenced heavily the primarily Gentile community of 2 Peter readers. We will see that Peter used Roman-Greco concepts strategically as a means for ensuring reader understanding of concepts he sought to impart throughout the letter of 2 Peter. Pagan philosophy was not completely void of valuable knowledge however. Just as Paul recognized that there was much the Gentile understood of God’s standards, Peter too finds some Roman and Greek knowledge useful in understanding human nature. Yet, knowledge gained without understanding the source of knowledge...God...is insufficient for understanding how virtue and goodness grow in the believer and how it is able to protect the believer from falling prey to heretical teachings that ultimately leads to destruction or eternal death. Yet, because again this was a pagan culture whose influence was very powerful, speaking within a context the believers would understand, Peter had a strategic advantage and opportunity to redefine and reframe various pagan philosophical influences. For example he reframed concepts of influential

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49 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:10.
50 Charles, J. Daryl, 8, 84.
51 Charles, J. Daryl, 44, 65.
52 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:2, 1822.
54 Charles, J. Daryl, 66.
55 deSilva, David, 18.
56 Charles, J. Daryl, 82.
57 deSilva, David, 18-19.
58 Charles, J. Daryl, 44.
59 NASB Study Bible, Romans 2:14-16,
60 deSilva, David, 19.
philosophers, such as Plutarch, whose *De Sera Numminis Vindicta* mirrors, according to Neyrey, an “Epicurean polemic against divine providence with its denial of afterlife, and by extension, divine judgment”\(^{61}\). “The four pillars [cosmology, freedom, unfulfilled prophecy and injustice] of Plutarchian apologetic fit naturally into the schema of 2 Peter without causing the reader to become overly speculative”\(^{62}\). Peter, in 2 Peter 2:19 argues in response to the moral skeptic that freedom in Christ is nothing short of a new slavery\(^{63}\); and, in 2 Peter 2:9-11 asserts a day of judgment...with emphasis that there is an afterlife that includes in it a day of justice...for the wicked, particularly those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and those who despise authority. Once again, however, the only way a believer can avoid the trappings of the false teacher is to grow virtuously\(^{64}\). As well this virtue would be needed to prevent the Christian from falling into emperor cult worship. With a decline in the Olympian pantheon, the powerful political phenomenon of Roman emperor cult steeped in mystical religion—“through whose initiation a sense of immorality is reaffirmed”\(^{65}\)—was moving across geographical regions, thus potentially influencing heresy in the church. The first-century Church faced many obstacles that flew in the face of the God’s holiness, making it quite a challenge to respond to God’s grace with a gratefulness that led to virtuousness. It is now to the role of grace and gratefulness in both the first-century social-culture and Christianity that we now turn to as Peter uses these socially developed concepts to influence others of the need to respond to God with gratefulness that exhibits total commitment to God in body, mind, and heart.

V. Grace and Gratefulness, the Motivation for Growth in Virtue\(^{66}\)

The concept of grace is the scandal that set the Christian apart from the Jew and Stoic; the Jew may assert that “purity and keeping the law were sufficient for justification” and the Stoic Hellenist may have countered that the love of wisdom—philosophy—and ethical striving were the ultimate in the human experience\(^{67}\). Grace, however, and a mindset of gratitude for the gift of grace typically worked out within hostile social environments, as exhibited in Exhibit 1, is the context within which growth in virtue, moral growth, character formation, or spiritual formation...depending upon how one labels a person’s growth in virtue...develops.

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\(^{61}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 45.
\(^{62}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 45.
\(^{63}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 46.
\(^{64}\) *NASB Study Bible*, 2 Peter 1:5-7.
\(^{65}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 82.
\(^{66}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 155-156.
\(^{67}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 160.
“Now for this very reason”\textsuperscript{68} provides the logical demand for the growth in virtuousness, and having been given the bestowal of a new life, the believer has a logical reason and duty to grow spiritually\textsuperscript{69}. Having been given a new life and the appropriate Christian response to growth in virtue is rooted in gratefulness for God’s grace through Christ that gave the believer a new life. Second Peter exemplifies, according to Hillyer, the “sheer unmerited grace” [meaning 
charis: in Aristotle’s words, “helpfulness toward someone in need, not in return for anything, nor for the advantage of the helper himself, but for that of the person helped” (\textit{Rhetoric} 2.7.1)] of God\textsuperscript{70} and His grace as Peter recontextualizes the story of Lot in Genesis 19:5, 19. The catastrophe that befell Sodom and Gomorrah is “an example or pattern for succeeding generations”, with the pattern of sin (a moral lapse), when “allowed to take root and be justified, leads to moral departure and darkening of one’s heart, which (sooner or later) incurs judgment”\textsuperscript{71}. In this generation we have seen the fallen giant corporations of Enron, Arthur Anderson, and the like. One cannot dismiss the natural consequences of destructive conflict, division, disunity, and even dissolving of the organization when the organization and its leaders have departed from natural and divine moral codes and laws. Yet, even in the midst of darkness, as with Sodom and Gomorrah God has mercy and saves some...those, such as Lot, who have been oppressed\textsuperscript{72} by society’s flagrant opposition of divine moral laws. The receiver of this amazing

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 1:5.  
\textsuperscript{69} Hiebert, D. Edmond, 44.  
\textsuperscript{70} Charles, J. Daryl, 89, 104.  
\textsuperscript{71} Charles, J. Daryl, 89.  
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{NASB Study Bible}, 2 Peter 2:7.
grace responds to God’s grace with a life committed to virtue and holiness that is the very image of God himself. A gift, privilege, and reciprocity pattern was of utmost importance in the first-century. Common to all first-century...Roman, Greco, and Judaic...cultures was the value of generosity and appropriate reciprocity (that effected indebtedness to “gratitude”, and loyalty) between the patron and client (benefactor and beneficiary), broker, friend, or partner regarding grace, favor, gifts, and privileges. Faith, *pistis*, manifested itself in the “dependability” and “trust” of the patron (benefactor) to prove their ability to uphold their promise to give assistance with the beneficiary “keeping the faith” by showing loyalty, gratitude, and commitment to the patron. deSilva writes of grace,

“The fact that one and the same word can be used to speak of a beneficent act and the response to a beneficent act suggests implicitly what many moralists from the Greek and Roman cultures stated explicitly: ‘grace must be met with grace; favor must always give birth to favor; a gift must always be met with gratitude’”; to keep the motive pure the giver gives without limit due to the recipient’s gratefulness or ability to return the favor or gift.

Yet, according to Anaximenes, because everyone was expected to respond with grace, those who did not were regarded as disgraceful. Further, according to Seneca, the “punishment of shame and being hated by all good people would more than make up for the lack of official sanctions.” Thus social sanctions of shame and honor “were important bulwarks for the virtue of gratitude and exerted considerable pressure in this direction.” Seneca thus lauds the person who “requites favors” for his foresight because in a time of need the person will not fail to find aid.

The commitment to respond as grateful recipients is also reinforced throughout the New Testament. God’s grace “would not have been of a different kind than the grace with which they were already familiar; it would have been understood as different only in quality and degree.” The quality of Godly grace, while quite similar to first-century culture, far exceeds that called for by Seneca by providing grace even the ungrateful, differing from first-century culture that extended grace to the ungrateful.

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73 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:15.
74 deSilva, David, 99-106, 114.
75 deSilva, David, 115.
76 deSilva, David, 105.
78 deSilva, David, 111.
79 deSilva, David, 111.
80 deSilva, David, 111.
81 deSilva, David, 112.
82 deSilva, David, 148.
83 deSilva, David, 142.
only if they had resources to provide to the ungrateful after giving to the virtuous. In God’s eyes the virtuous and ungrateful are on an equal playing field. “God’s selection of his enemies as beneficiaries of his most costly gift is one area in which God’s favor truly stands out.” A grateful response to God’s grace “keeps one centered in God’s favor and leads to future benefactions from God.” The beneficiary enjoys friendship with Christ as he or she is obedient to God, whereby the beneficiary also receives assurance that they will be given timely and specific help for themselves and for others. The favors are also extended into life beyond death where believers will receive the “unshakeable kingdom,” where God will protect “the honor of his household by avenging wrongs done to them.” “When the magnitude of God’s generosity is considered, gratitude and its fruits must of necessity fill our speech, attitudes and actions.” Just as, according to Aristotle, what arouse anger and revenge in the benefactor who was insulted by a rejection of grace is also true of the God’s wrath upon those who insult God by rejecting God’s gift of grace to help the person through Jesus Christ. It is for this reason Peter exhorts others to follow a life of holiness and virtue. He desires for others eternal life. God’s character is love, but it cannot be understood apart from justice from whom He proves and exists as an entirely righteous, pure, and infinitely good God free of all evil.

Gratefulness to God’s gift of grace in Christ thus entails, according to 2 Peter, the recipient or believer to loyalty of a life of “holiness” through God’s divine power “through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.” Forever changing the human psychology and soteriology is the death and resurrection of Christ, who obtained for us victory over sin and death, and of whom can no longer be viewed as impersonal and distant. The believer, by the Spirit is drawn and has a need to learn what constitutes a life of holiness. The numerous books written over the last decade calling and bringing reminder to God’s command for virtue and holiness confirms that the Christian

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84 deSilva, David, 129.
85 deSilva, David, 129.
86 deSilva, David, 148.
87 deSilva, David, 148.
88 NASB Study Bible, Ephesians 3:20; Philippians 4:6-7, 19; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Hebrew 4:14-16; 13:5-6; 1 Peter 5:7.
89 deSilva, David, 130-131.
90 NASB Study Bible, 2 Corinthians 1:10-11; Ephesians 6:19; Philippians 1:19; 4:6-7; Colossians 1:3; 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 25; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2; 1 Timothy 2:1; James 5:15-16; 1 John 5:14-16.
91 deSilva, David, 132.
92 NASB Study Bible, Hebrews 12:28.
94 deSilva, David, 132.
95 deSilva, David, 155.
96 deSilva, David, 127.
98 NASB Study Bible, 1 Peter 1:15.
99 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3.
100 Charles, J. Daryl, 133.
church needs to restore their role as a teacher of observing all God’s commands.\(^{101}\) This will still be a challenge to a church that has given in to worldly ways. While vice has always been an issue of a fallen world, Peter Kreeft suggests that new to the church, however, is the redefining of vice as virtue,\(^ {102}\) thus confusing the believer who has not sought or knows the true knowledge of Christ. Kreeft further suggests that only repentance and divine grace can solve our moral depravity problem—of which we can help little.\(^ {103}\) However, he asserts that we can teach others what virtue is.\(^ {104}\) As well, as a society we must get beyond Aristotle’s third reason for seeking knowledge...“for the ability to make things”, essentially because it will help a person or organization obtain power.\(^ {105}\) America’s business mantra “power is knowledge” and the number of patents filed each year exemplify the type of knowledge typical of the American organization. At the same time, however, the modern American organization has forsaken the knowledge that saves...that is a fear of God that leads to wisdom and virtue. Instead, society needs to seek knowledge, as Aristotle asserts, for finding truth and knowledge that serves as the impetus for moral action. Not forgetting that the source of morality is virtue sourced in God and the gift of God’s grace and faith\(^ {106}\) requires a proper response to grace with holiness, it is now time to give greater attention to the spiritual formation process and the exploration of each virtue noted in 2 Peter 1:5-7 in an effort to add to our knowledge of God.

VI. Growth in Virtuousness Process

Charles outlines the Greco philosophical influence of 2 Peter 1:5-7; he states,

“The catalog of virtues itself (1:5-7), meant to outline the contours of Christian ‘life and godliness’ (v. 3), includes several commonly cited features that appear in standard Stoic virtue lists and are adapted to the Christian paraenetic tradition. Although Stoic categories are utilized, they serve a distinctly Christian purpose. The letter’s greeting clarifies and highlights grace, an acute departure from the Stoic understanding of ultimate things. Both Stoic and Christian moral traditions compel moral progress.”\(^ {107}\)

In Christ we are able to overcome the power of sin and become what is godly and holy. Character and virtue is about our state of “being” not just about recognizing what we “ought” to do, but allowing the

\(^{101}\) NASB Study Bible, Mathew 28:20.  
\(^{103}\) Kreeft, Peter, 2.  
\(^{104}\) Kreeft, Peter, 20.  
\(^{105}\) Kreeft, Peter, 21.  
\(^{106}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 131.  
\(^{107}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 85.
“ought” through the Spirit to dwell in us, redefining who we are at our core level. Virtue is “a settled habit of mind that Stephen Evans describes as the “general character traits that provide inner sanctions on our particular motives, intentions, and outward conduct.” Peter reflects Paul theology because they both knew the effects of God’s grace and their focus to obedience to God’s commands and the inherent struggles to be obedient given the power of the flesh. Experiencing the power of the Spirit’s help in defeating sin, Paul and Peter knew that it took focus of the mind toward living in and walking by the Spirit and putting to death the deeds of the flesh; the lack of doing so results in dire consequences, and Peter in understanding this reminded these Christians of prophecy that indicated the rise of false prophets, the second return of Christ, and the judgment of the wicked and righteous. The true test, however, is to ensure our works do not take the lead over grace, but results from grace, lest we succumb to the self-righteous behavior that both Jesus and Paul vehemently rebukes the Pharisees for. Further, Jesus in Mathew 23 expresses with indescribable emotion and spirit the grave outlook for those whose actions do not follow the words of Truth. The hypocritical Pharisee, a leader of the synagogue, is the epitome of the life lacking love, integrity, and authenticity God commands of His people. The Christian leader always reminds their self of the necessity to look where the three fingers point (back to self) for the finger that points to sin in others.

Exhibit 2 reflects Peter’s catalog of virtues noted in 2 Peter 1:5-7 by which each virtue lies within a deeper virtue [as they are not independent], which is formed by the means of divine grace. Having these virtues will render the Christian “neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

108 Herrick, Greg.
109 Herrick, Greg.
110 NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:25.
111 NASB Study Bible, Romans 8:3-13.
112 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 2-5.
113 NASB Study Bible, Mathew 3:7, 23:33.
114 Charles, J. Daryl, 147.
116 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:8.
Exhibit 3, however, distinguishes the difference between virtue development, as outlined in 2 Peter 1:5-7, which assumes divine grace as the means for moral progress, and Stoic philosophy moral development whereby formation assumes human achievement as the means for achieving virtue. Peter, exploiting and baptizing Stoic philosophy with the foundational assumptions: morally right acts depend upon virtue, “virtue is the highest level of human development, the goal to which all things must converge”, “virtues are acquired and not inherent”, and “virtues are cultivated by exercise”, makes this the Christian’s purpose...to commit their being to moral progression in their personal life.

117 Charles, J. Daryl, 110.
118 Charles, J. Daryl, 105.
At the heart of the Christian belief is “sin, guilt, and redemption” of which is missing in pagan beliefs. Also, Peter teaches that each virtue is not worked on separately, in a chronological fashion, but is developed together over time. As the believer becomes obedient through their diligence, and with divine help, virtue is produced. Important to remember in New Testament writings is that the intellectual component of Greek philosophy does not carry over because, according to Sevenster, the Greek “ethical requirements do not issue from a source of transcendent moral authority; rather, they are the fruit of rational education and knowledge, by which one comes to realize the fullness of human nature.” The virtues in the New Testament are not artificial, but are instead the “natural expression of one’s organic union with Christ, the fruit of divine grace.” What does Peter’s catalog of virtues begin with? Diligence.

Applying all diligence...

Because the fundamental ethos that governed relationships between patrons and clients (benefactors and beneficiaries) in the first-century grace must be responded to with grace with as much zeal as...
beneficiary can muster. The believer having grace, the believer is able to reciprocate God’s grace with gratitude and thus apply diligence, with all spoude, or all eagerness and zeal to do what pleases God127. Sluggishness, self-indulgence, neither half-hearted nor selective128 should characterize the believer’s attitude toward responding with a person’s entire heart, mind, and will129 in responding to grace God has given. Responding in such a manner, the believer will “bear the most fruit with the seed God plants within” the believer130 131. It takes a proactive stance of the believer to focus on “living in” and “walking by” the Holy Spirit132, and in doing so the believer produces the fruit of “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness”, and self control133. Grace, thus should effect gratitude, gratitude should effect desire to live and walk in the Spirit, thus leading to producing fruit, which ultimately is seen, as deSilva suggests, in a believer’s speech, attitude, and actions134. The underlying message, however, is focus with a goal to practice that which will help, what Paul calls, win the race135. It is a matter of willing the mind to be obedient to the spirit. The race, however, is not won without faith in God to fulfill His promises.

In your faith supply moral excellence...

If we understand the first-century correctly, “faith” or pistis, again refers to the believer (beneficiary’s) ability to depend on God as his or her benefactor to uphold His promises. If these virtues in 2 Peter 1:5-7 are increasing in the believer, God promises it will render the believer neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of Jesus136. As well, it is promised that the believer will never stumble137. The believer will be able to persevere138 and enter the “eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”139 as long as the believer practices [or poieo: to make, produce, bear, constitute, shoot forth, construct, and form140] these virtues141. The relationship thus between God and the beneficiary or believer relies on faith in which faith drives the believer to act with gratitude to God’s grace and faith that God will uphold His promises. The believer does not distrust that God will not uphold His promises for every prophecy ever given in Scripture has been fulfilled or is yet to come. Faith, uniting the person to Christ142, is the axis by which the old creature is made into a new

128 Hebert, D. Edmond, 44.
129 NASB Study Bible, Romans 12:1.
130 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3-10.
131 deSilva, David, 148.
132 NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:25.
133 NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:22-23.
134 deSilva, David, 155.
135 NASB Study Bible, 1 Corinthians 9:24.
136 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:8.
137 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:1.
138 NASB Study Bible, 1822.
139 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:10-11.
140 NAS with Strong’s Numbers, Crosswalk.com.
141 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:8, 10.
142 NASB Study Bible, 1696.
creature. Having faith, Christ, does not allow the believer to remain still, but pushes the believer to act upon that faith by focusing and cultivating a habit of exercise, according to Aristotle, toward moral excellence, arête. Arête, a noun, indicates that moral excellence is about being something, with this something being the character of Christ. In this case, because the excellence of God is His “glory”, which expresses the excellence of His being, we too are to manifest the excellence of His glory having been called by His own glory and excellence. This excellence depicts itself in deeds; it is virtue in action. Peter, drawing from Aristotle’s philosophy that arête must be cultivated by habit of exercise asserts that believers should also practice “these things”. Once again the believer is to remember that cooperating with God is not a cause of righteousness, but “‘confirms’ or validates the believer’s call and election”.

In your moral excellence, knowledge....

As Vogtle says, “‘Knowledge’ frequently begins or ends pagan ethical lists”. The difference, however, between Christian and pagan knowledge as a virtue is the pagan’s use of knowledge as a goal in itself, whereas the Christianity “strips knowledge of its technical nuance” so it does not become a goal in itself. Knowing Him involves “not philosophical reflection of contemporary ethicists and moral philosophers” and “not the protognostic speculation of pseudo-Christian mystics”. The Stoics believed there was an “organic and invisible link” between knowledge and self-control. Kreeft supports this thesis: though we are not weaker than our ancestors in morality and we are stronger than our ancestors in nature, we are “weaker in the knowledge of goodness”. And, while our ancestors “problem was not living up to their principles”; ours is not having any. Obtaining knowledge is vital for ongoing spiritual formation in virtue. God has provided a lifetime of knowledge in both the Old and New Testament by which the believer can seek to understand the truth and the virtues important to God. Knowledge then is the “the summum bonum of the Christian life”. Peter’s dual literary strategy of ‘knowledge’ and ‘godliness’ throughout 2 Peter bears the burden of proof upon the believer to evidence his faith. Knowledge, as a noun form of gnosis signifies moral wisdom and a deeper understanding of the Christian religion, such as what is

143 NASB Study Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:17.
144 Charles, J. Daryl, 100.
145 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3.
146 NASB Study Bible, 1822.
147 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:10.
148 Charles, J. Daryl, 96.
149 Charles, J. Daryl, 141.
150 Charles, J. Daryl, 141.
151 Charles, J. Daryl, 134.
152 Charles, J. Daryl, 141.
153 Kreeft, Peter, 25.
154 Kreeft, Peter, 25.
155 Charles, J. Daryl, 134.
156 Charles, J. Daryl, 134.
lawful and unlawful for the Christian; knowledge then signifies what is morally right. This knowledge is not secret nor is it necessary for salvation sake alone; it is, however, important in progressing toward other virtues.

And, in your knowledge, self-control....

In the Hellenistic culture self-restraint was a highly regarded virtue, particularly for Socrates and Aristotle, as well as Philo. In Stoic fashion, according to Kelly, self-restraint pertained to the restraint of the senses. Unbridled passion has a “seductive effect on others.” Self-restraint thus is very important to a spiritual leader, and is further a fruit of the Spirit. Kreeft’s describes the role of self-control in our society today: “We control nature [speaking of Naturalism—“the reduction of objective reality to matter, time, space, and motion”], but we cannot control our own control. We control nature, but we cannot or will not control ourselves. Self-control is “out” exactly when nature control is “in”, that is exactly when self-control is most needed.

And, in your self-control, perseverance....

Yet, self-control is so important to perseverance- endurance to both toward the world and God. “To endure temptation [to fall prey to believe heresy], suffering, and hardship requires patience” and trust in God that he does not allow testing beyond what a person can handle. In a world of changing demographics and a variety of different worldviews, it is quite easy for those with little knowledge of God and little aptitude for self-control or perseverance to not fall prey to those wishing to deceive God’s children. The Christian needs to push forward...persevere...in their learning, understanding, and self-control of passions to stay in the true faith.

And in your perseverance, godliness....

Godliness, according to Fornberg, in the Hellenistic culture was evidenced by reverence for the gods, respect for the family, tradition, and social order. In 2 Peter and the Pastorals it underscores “behavior that is worthy of praise”, underscoring a particular way of life.

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157 NAS with Strong’s Numbers.
158 NASB Study Bible, 1822.
159 Charles, J. Daryl, 141.
160 Charles, J. Daryl, 141.
161 Charles, J. Daryl, 142.
162 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 2:10-12, 15-16, 3:3.
163 Charles, J. Daryl, 143.
164 NASB Study Bible, Titus 1:8.
165 NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:3.
166 Charles, J. Daryl, 143.
167 Kreeft, Peter, 23.
168 Charles, J. Daryl, 143.
169 Charles, J. Daryl, 143.
170 Charles, J. Daryl, 144.
And in your godliness, brotherly kindness....

Having been adopted into the household of God, the central family relationship that emerges as prominent in 2 Peter 1:7 is brotherly love, adelphotes. All of the virtues spoken of thus far must include brotherly kindness and affection to family and others in general. Charles suggests, “Indeed, the Christian gospel is nothing if it does not affect one’s relationships. How one relates to God will determine how one relates to others.”

And in your brotherly kindness, love....

Everything the Christian does may be summed up in the greatest cardinal virtue...love. Love for God and others. Love is the climax, “which distinguishes the Christian ethos and without which it would be incomplete." Love is the foundation by which the worthiness of the spiritual gifts and virtues are measured, e.g. tongues, prophecy, faith, generosity, and sacrifice. Love is the full expression of the fulfilling of God’s command to love Him with all of one’s heart, mind, and soul, and as such is the love of neighbors, both friends and foes. It is in love we are patient, kind, bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things, and rejoice with the truth. And, love does not: brag, boast, act arrogantly, contain jealousy, rejoice in unrighteousness, act unbecomingly, seeks one’s own, allow provocation, and does not take into account wrong suffered. While love is bestowed upon the believer by the Spirit it also works in unison with the believer learning to love others out of reverence for God. Love toward others is the evidence of grace in the believer’s life.

Summarizing the catalog of virtues in 2 Peter 1:5-7, Mayor states: “Faith is the gift of God already received; to this must be added (1) moral strength which enables a man to do what he knows to be right; (2) spiritual discernment; (3) self-control by which a man resists temptation; (4) endurance by which he bears up under persecution or adversity; (5) right...behavior toward God [piety]; (6) toward the brethren [brotherly love]; [and] toward all [love]."

171 Charles, J. Daryl, 144.
172 deSilva, David, 213.
173 Charles, J. Daryl, 144.
174 Charles, J. Daryl, 144.
175 NASB Study Bible, 1 Corinthians 13:13.
176 Charles, J. Daryl, 145.
177 NASB Study Bible, 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.
179 NASB Study Bible, Mathew 5:44.
180 NASB Study Bible, 1 Corinthians 13:4,7.
181 NASB Study Bible, 1 Corinthians 13:4-6.
182 NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:22.
183 Charles, J. Daryl, 144.
184 Charles, J. Daryl, 145.
185 Charles, J. Daryl, 146.
Having all of these qualities guarantees benefits to the believer; they “render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”\(^{186}\), nor will the practice of these things ever cause someone to stumble\(^ {187}\) or fall from salvation. “The genuineness of their [the believer’s] profession will be demonstrated as they express these virtues\(^ {188}\). When God elects and calls, it is to obedience and holiness\(^ {189}\), and those fruits confirm their divine source”\(^ {190}\), and as such, they have taken moral responsibility\(^ {191}\) for their life as a new creation. Those who, however, lack these qualities, “is blind or short-sighted”, and has forgotten his purification from his former sins”\(^ {192}\).

VII. Cultural Barriers That Can Act Out Against Virtue Development

Second Peter, chapter 3 emphasizes that like Noah and Lot in 2 Peter 2:5-8 who had to wait for their rescue at the appointed time, so too do believers today must wait, and as the believer waits “they must resist the social forces at work within culture that would undermine faith and morality”\(^ {193}\). The point Peter wishes to reach is that until the Parousia readers need to endure\(^ {194}\) in a hostile social environment to times when skeptics deny moral claims over one’s life and remain loyal to God’s call to ‘holiness and godliness’\(^ {195}, {196}\). Today, the moral skeptic and relativist are at work in full force to deny the necessity of virtue and any forthcoming judgment. As well, there are other elements of our culture that also work against the Christian’s development of virtue, such as individualism and collectivism, moral relativism and postmodernism, and not fully realizing that Christ overcame sin and provided us with the power to change. While these barriers touch only the tip of the iceberg in terms of cultural barriers working against virtue development, it may at the same time lend a starting point for discussion over the forces that impede virtue development. It should be noted that further investigation of the relationship of Hofstede’s national values research, Ingelhardt’s World Survey results, and Hall’s dimensions of culture might add deeper insight on how our culture socially limits the development of virtue, which in turn may impact what we perceive to be authentic transformational leadership. We now turn to a brief discussion of the forces or barriers to virtue development previously mentioned.

*Individualism and collectivism versus godlism*

\(^{186}\) *NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:8.*  
\(^{187}\) *NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:10.*  
\(^{188}\) *NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:6, James 2:18.*  
\(^{189}\) *NASB Study Bible, 1 Peter 1:2, Ephesians 1:3-6.*  
\(^{190}\) *NASB Study Bible, 1822.*  
\(^{191}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 85.  
\(^{192}\) *NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:9.*  
\(^{193}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 94.  
\(^{194}\) *NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 3:12, 15.*  
\(^{195}\) *NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 3:11.*  
\(^{196}\) Charles, J. Daryl, 94.
Exhibit 4 reflects some of the issues of a purely individualistic or collectivistic society without God as well as the appropriate relationship of individualism and collectivism as it center’s its life and focus in Christ.

In “individualistic” societies, such as America, relationships among people and groups are very loose whereby each person is expected to take care of him or her self and their family. In a collectivistic society, such as many Middle Eastern and South American countries...which are socially quite similar to that of the first-century church...people are born into very strong and cohesive “in-groups” whereby the group protects the person in return for “loyalty” to the group. The person in a collectivistic culture sees their self as embedded in the group, not as a separate individual from the group, whereas in the individualistic society an individual perceives one’s self as unique and “set-aside” beings. Problematic in spiritual formation or virtue development within the individualistic culture, however, are the attitudes of self-sufficiency and autonomy, which in turn leaves little need in the eyes of the individualist for virtue development in and through others. Yet, the other side of the coin, regarding a collectivistic culture, significant problems arise when the norms of the groups, if not godly, exert enormous pressure...to include the use of shaming tactics...to bring the individual into

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198 Hofstede, Geert.
200 Robbins, Vernon, 77.
conformance with collective norms, which may or may not reflect godly values and behaviors or to restore honor to the family, typically accomplished in the family of punishment. A good example of the latter is the recent story of a Kurdish girl who was stoned to death in an effort to restore family honor after it was found that the girl had a relationship with a Sunni Muslim.

The missing element, however, in both the individualistic and collectivistic culture is the ability of the individual or group to function as an entity with a purpose to fulfill the will of God. The consequences of not including this missing element are dire. For the individualistic society without God the individual has the liberty to determine what is right and wrong, depending upon the situation. As well, instead of the internal moral compass guided by God, the individual looks to the self and others as the compass bearer. And, for the collectivistic society without God, fascism, socialism, and communism reign. And, even for the former (the individualistic society) whence upon the time chaos rules because there are confusing, unclear, conflicting, and possibly no standard norms of conduct there develops a revolutionary need toward the latter (collectivism) in an effort to restore some sense of equality and equability. The Christian and the Christian community, however, are guided by only one set of standards, God’s Word, who also has at their side the Holy Spirit who guides the individual and community to do God’s will. Robbins gives an example of the appropriate relationship between God and Christ that becomes the norm (obedience to doing God’s will, e.g., holiness) for the Christian life. Jesus, living in the midst of a collectivistic culture is not swayed by group norms, but instead as Robbins suggests, Christ’s actions and life are in alignment with the will of God. Jesus internalized a dyadic relation to God rather than establishing an "individualist" personality free from concern about the opinions of others; His primary "other" was God, Christ’s father. In our individualistic society the Christian focus should not be wanton individual liberty, but should be focused on the will of God.

Our culture does, however, lend itself to identify with the pagan virtues such as courage, temperance, prudence or justice. However, they are problematic in the sense that these virtues are the “extension of a naturalistic ethic and rational reflection”, and as such they “presuppose human autonomy and self-sufficiency”. True virtuous (spiritual) growth, however, cannot be accomplished by human effort alone. The Christian ethic and ethos, according to Stelzenberger, must be “rooted in divine grace and sufficiency in Christ”. Pagan virtues as well have played a role in our economic system of capitalism; it takes courage to effect the entrepreneurial spirit and temperance and prudence to amass wealth. Typically in our society what we have achieved we attribute to our own hard work and talents rather than as a wonderful gift from God. Individualism is not only describable

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202 Robbins, Vernon, 78.
203 Charles, J. Daryl, 111.
204 Charles, J. Daryl, 111.
205 Charles, J. Daryl, 111.
of the Western world, but it is fast spreading across other continents as capitalism makes its inroads (Inglehart).

Capitalism is a blessing, but as Adam Smith once asserted, virtue (the cornerstone of Theory of Moral Sentiments) is the basis for healthy capitalistic economies as noted in his Wealth of Nations206. Capitalism is also enticing to the Christian, particularly when seen in light of the Protestant Ethic. And, when coupled with individualism, which leads to the privatization of religion a challenging force upon the Church becomes powerful. As Kenneth Leech asserts, the “private religion” will not seek to disturb the economic and political order, and as a result the church fits easily and comfortably into the culture of capitalism207. The god they offer is a private god, a wholly inward god. In the context of public enterprise and private religion, spirituality can quickly degenerate into a search for better, perhaps more thrilling and unusual, experiences. So much of the current interest today’s church is that the “God within” has moved in the direction of a narrow and limited understanding of God and of the nature of religion”208. God also takes notice of the deeds and inner spiritual health of the church. God recognized the church in Smyrna and her faithfulness in the midst of tribulation, slander, imprisonment, testing, fear, poverty, and tribulation, and Philadelphia having received encouragement because the church did not deny Christ’s name in the midst of persecution209; both of these churches persevered210. The consequences (“spit” the church out), however, would be catastrophic for the church in Laodicea if they did not repent from being lukewarm211. Self-reliance, autonomy, and commitment to mammon (while forsaking holiness as individuals and as the body of Christ) are detrimental to the spiritual formation of both the Christian and the church as a whole. The church cannot avoid neither the clear warning of Revelation 3:16 nor the simple truth that when one member hurts spiritually all the members of the body hurt spiritually212. Biblical corporate spirituality is costly...it should not allow people to “do their own thing”; in America, however, it is much easier to let one another “do their own thing”213.

Biblical spiritual growth or virtue development, however, as already mentioned, grows when Christ is the center of one’s life and the believer grows in this virtue through and with others. Dietrich Bonhoeffer affirmed the criticalness of Christ at the center one’s life, which required the believer to

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207 Mulholland, Robert, 146.
208 Mulholland, Robert, 147.
210 Mulholland, Robert, 163.
211 NASB Study Bible, Revelation 3:16.
212 NASB Study Bible, 1 Corinthians 12:26.
213 Mulholland, Robert, 147.
meet Him both in the joys and sufferings of one’s life. Bonhoeffer states, “[God] must be recognized at the centre of life, not when we are at the end of our resources; it is his will to be recognized in life, and not only when death comes; in health and vigor, and not only in suffering; in our activities, and not only in sin. The ground for this lies in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.” As noted in the following paragraph virtuousness develops as Christ dwells in us to help us “be there for others.” The benefactor social construction as discussed earlier becomes vital in what Bonhoeffer describes as the goal of the Christian...“being there for others”. In the individualist society, however, where it is common for people to be concerned only with the needs of their self and the immediate family, believers may not be aware of the need to expand beyond the boundaries of the self and family in fulfilling the duties of a benefactor.

Bonhoeffer believed the “divine limit of God is only experienced in the concrete ethical encounter with my neighbor; in responsible experience of the other, the ‘I’ experiences the transcendence of God.” Bonhoeffer, according to Worlfel, believed Christology is about “who” Christ is and about how He “addresses us as both God and humanity.” Bonhoeffer asserts we look at “who” Christ is by looking to Scripture for those answers, and as such we discover

“Christ is Christ not as Christ in himself, but in relation to me. His being Christ is his being pro me. This being pro me is in turn not meant to be understood...as accident; it is meant to be understood as the essence, as the being of the person himself...Christ can never be thought of in his being in himself, but in his relationship to me. That in turn means that Christ can only be conceived of existentially, vis. in the community.”

Thus, the community of believers will have “good leaders” who know their own, and their own know them, and “between them is mutual trust, mutual openness, mutual care, and mutual love.” Individualism cannot understand this type of relational context because they have retreated from the world, and in the church that has in the words of Bonhoeffer “come to age”...having “become conscious of itself and laws that governed its existence”...it has not been able to “separate the message of Christ from religious trappings.” As such, along with God filling only the gaps that filled the holes of knowledge, Bonhoeffer noticed that as “secularism increasingly permeated the lives of

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215 McLaughlin, Matt.
216 McLaughlin, Matt.
217 Hofstede, Geert.
218 McLaughlin, Matt.
219 McLaughlin, Matt.
220 McLaughlin, Matt.
221 Nouwen, Henri, “The Shepherd and the Sheep”, Daily Meditation, April 13, 2007,
222 McLaughlin, Matt.
modern people, this metaphysical God of the gaps was being pushed further away into relevance.”

This movement signaled a retreat into subjectivism as the church responded by seeking to answers to inner questions “ultimate questions” of personal subjective concepts of death, guilt, sin, despair, and anxiety over the “objective work done God in Jesus Christ”, affirming “a God found in weakness, not in strength, a God at the periphery of our existence, not the center.” These factors have prevented the maximal ability of the individualistic culture to truly create the vivacious community whose heart is centered on “being” in Christ and whose work revolves around serving one another.

**Moral relativism and postmodernism and pseudo Christianity**

Moral relativism is as prevalent today as it was in the first-century. The human condition in sin has always strove after fulfilling one’s own desires, regardless if the impact of that desire hurts someone else. Moral relativism it might be said today is a fundamental characteristic of the postmodern mind. Postmodernism has contributed, however, to the disassociation between a person’s thoughts, will, words, and actions. A person can say one thing, but act in a totally different manner, not recognizing that their action contradicted what they said. For example, a teenager would never hurt their parents and then turn around and sneak out of the house at night to attend a party. The individual does not associate their action with what it means to not hurt their parents. They most likely believe that doing this does not impact or affect the parent and thus it is alright to do. By sneaking out, which itself is deceit, also disrespects the role of honoring the parent; it is entirely a selfish act. Regardless of the person’s intention, John the Apostle asserts, “If I do evil, I am the kind of person who does evil; if I do good, I am the kind of person who does good.” “Actions are not impositions on who we are, but are expressions of who we are”; they “come out of our heart and the inner realities it supervises and interacts with.” At the core of our modern society and culture we have lost knowledge and understanding of what it means to “be” a Christian.

Postmodernism and moral relativism is a type of harlot the church must deal with. The Apostle John in the book of Revelation says he sees “two orders of being that shape human existence.” One is called “New Jerusalem” and the other is called “Fallen Babylon”. New Jerusalem is the place where people are nurtured into wholeness in the image of Christ and find fulfillment at the deepest levels of their being. Fallen Babylon is the order of being that is inherently destructive of human wholeness. In John’s day “Fallen Babylon” was where the “values and lifestyles of the Roman Empire” and the life of

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223 McLaughlin, Matt.
224 McLaughlin, Matt.
226 Hurt, Clark.
227 *NASB Study Bible*, 1 John 3:7-10.
228 Willard, Dallas.
229 Mulholland, Robert, 164.
230 Mulholland, Robert, 164.
the church as the New Jerusalem\textsuperscript{231}. Every age of human history has a Harlot who spreads destructive values and dehumanizing social structures and as such each age requires a faithful church that is loyal to God’s New Jerusalem\textsuperscript{232}. Leech writes, “Christian realism...is motivated not by a theology which seeks to baptize a current social order but a theology of dissatisfaction with all current social orders, a theology of the God-inspired future which draws future vision into present reality”\textsuperscript{233}. As Christians live out God’s values, dynamics and structures, they will come into conflict “with the dehumanizing and manipulative structures and dynamics of the fallen order within which we live”\textsuperscript{234}. Rome was tolerant toward Christianity until Christian values and principles interfered with principles of Roman emperor worship\textsuperscript{235}. Yet, the goal is not to find ways to conflict with the world’s culture (political, social, economic, etc.), but to live committed lives to the values and dynamics of the “New Jerusalem\textsuperscript{236}”. This is a spiritual Jerusalem, not a Jerusalem developed by man through its political, social, and economic systems (Jesus said His Kingdom is not of this world). Yet, man still seeks to know who he is. Because postmodernism and moral relativism has removed God from the forefront of our society’s identity, we begin to rely on others...who do not know God...to give us our identity. We begin to rely on the other’s understanding of who we, which turns sour when we get conflicting and inconsistent messages, which is compounded when the other does not know who they are. It leaves the individual very frustrated and brokenhearted, thus seeking and longing after ungodly values in an effort to fill the void of not knowing who they truly are, a lost child of God that needs reconciliation and restoration.

\textit{Focus on doing rather than being}

As mentioned in the introduction, people need to learn how to “be” who they were created to be, not for the means of justifying sin or negative character, but for the purpose of being who God created that person to be before the fall of man. God desires the person to be reconciled and restored to Him. And, as the person falls in love with being who God created them to be they will look more like Christ, and as Merton say, to “be content to be in Him and to do whatever He wills, according to our limitations, judging our acts not in the light of our own illusions, but in the light of His reality which is all around us in the things and people we live with”\textsuperscript{237}. He further writes, “In order to settle down in the quiet of our own being we must learn to be detached from the results of our own activity. We must withdraw ourselves, to some extent, from effects that are beyond our control and be content with the good will and the work that are the quiet expression of our inner life. We must be content to live

\begin{footnotes}
\item Mulholland, Robert, 164.
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\item Mulholland, Robert, 166.
\item Merton, Thomas, 120.
\end{footnotes}
without watching ourselves live, to work without expecting an immediate reward, to love without an instantaneous satisfaction, and to exist without any special recognition.”

We are a culture that values what we do, rather than what we are; as such, people are evaluated on the basis of what they do. For the teenager who works at McDonald’s who does not know who they are in Christ may devalue who they are based on what they do, and as such he or she will work on attaining a vocation that is valued by virtue of what the society determines valuable rather than on the person God wishes he or she to be. By not understanding who one is in Christ the individual lives a very confusing, frustrating, and anxious life always seeking to be recognized by others as valuable. Also, for the person not content to be who they are, as Merton writes, “Spreads a contagion of conflict all around him,” thus spreading an allusion of reality throughout the organization. People then learn to focus on the wrong things, the physical rather than spiritual...the money versus the organization’s purpose and reason for existence. Yet, it is the latter, however, that ultimately touches the spirit of people, thus bringing them together in a united fashion knowing that who they are as a created being can provide the talents, skills, gifts, etc, needed to contribute to the organization’s vision and purpose. I believe that godly purpose and virtue, one that contributes to the lives of others is what sustains the organization in the long term. As well, sustainability requires a foundation of virtue to withstand trials that organizations are sure to face. “Being”, however, can only be understood in terms of its relationship to God and His standards for holiness. In other words, “being” does not dismiss the need to grow in godly virtue, for it is in godly virtue that a person comes closer to being who God desires him or her to be.

Not fully realizing the power God has given us to overcome sin

Peter emphasizes that God has already given everything that pertains to life and godliness. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul asserts that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new...unprecedented, novel, and uncommon creature in which the old things have passed away. In what ways is he or she a new creature? The person in Christ is “born again”, specifically born of the Spirit, not the flesh. The person in Christ thus is filled

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238 Merton, Thomas, 121.
239 Mulholland, Robert, 29.
240 Mulholland, Robert, 29.
241 Merton, Thomas, 121.
242 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3.
243 NAS with Strong’s Numbers.
244 NASB Study Bible, John 3:3.
245 NAS with Strong’s Numbers.
246 NAS with Strong’s Numbers.
247 NASB Study Bible, John 3:6.
with the Spirit, and as such, he or she lives in and walks by the Spirit. Further, as a new creature filled with the Spirit, there must be congruence or alignment between a person’s actions and Christian beliefs. The works are not the starting point, but instead is the reflection of having the Spirit of Christ within the believer. The person in Christ who continuously walks and lives in the Spirit will embody Christ’s virtuous character.

Bonhoeffer understood the relationship between being in Christ and the works that flow from being in Christ. In The Cost of Discipleship Bonhoeffer asserts that “cheap grace” manifested itself when “We Lutherans have gathered like eagles round the carcass of cheap grace, and there we have drunk of the poison which has killed the life of following Christ.” He asserted that the true call to justification requires a call to obedience, and when he or she does so discipleship can be quite costly. Instead of leaving man to his fate, the pastor instead preaches, “Only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes”; Bonhoeffer draws upon Romans 8:9, “However, you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him”. Yet, this transformation can and will take years. Very important, however, to the life called to faith and obedience is a person’s desire and will to persevere. But, even here God’s grace is the source of one’s motivation, desire, and heart to persevere. DeSilva writes that “such righteous conduct is always itself the result of God’s enabling, God making us able even to offer a suitable response to his favor”. Bonhoeffer having realized the power of God’s grace returned to Germany from the United States to boldly speak out against Nazi abuses, eventually costing him his life. His life became an example of just how costly discipleship is.

Social-cultural norms, whether derived from the culture at large or within the confines of the church, either will proactively work with or against the will of God. Most likely, as history indicates, the culture will work against the will of God. Yet, to withstand the pressure of caving into the philosophies of the world, the believer instead leverages the power of God’s grace, knowledge, and character to withstand these pressures. For those who desire to bring the Good News and a viable witness to the culture at large...of which in this day and time many congregants identify with....the believer and in this case the leader, such as Peter engages and seeks to engage believers using the cultural context of the time to redefine what it means to live in and walk by the Spirit. It is here after identifying the role of God’s grace in the development of virtue, the social location within which Peter sought to redefine for

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248 NASB Study Bible, Galatians 5:15.
250 Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, 69.
251 Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, 69.
253 NASB Study Bible, Romans 8:2-4; Philippians 1:11; Hebrews 13:20-21; 2 Peter 1:3-4.
254 deSilva, Robert, 146.
255 McLaughlin, Matt.
believers, and some of the cultural barriers that move against virtue development that we now turn to the discussion over to authentic transformational leadership.

Authentic transformational leadership may be a means to reverse ‘anomie’ in our society at large, in our organizations, and in our churches as it interacts with a very pluralistic culture, as was the case of the social location of Peter’s readers. The social-cultural analysis of 2 Peter influencing the necessity of virtue development and a brief analysis of how the current cultural influences might limit virtue development is now compared to Bernard Bass’ “idealized influence” dimension of transformational leadership.

VIII. Implications for Authentic Transformational Leadership

Intertwined within the following section is the difference between authentic and pseudo transformational leadership and the virtues or philosophies under-girding authentic transformational leadership as presented by Bass et al. versus the Judean-Christian faith within “idealized influence”, two of the four dimensions of transformational leadership, as asserted by Bass.

Idealized influence and inspirational motivation

The authentic Christian transformational leader not only exhibits idealized influence, but they seek to develop it in others, realizing that virtue (sourced in God) is developed in and through others. Burns asks though, at what point does the leader operate at a higher stage of virtue that it influences others to come to the same level? It is a question that needs investigation. Rokeach further suggests that “autonomous cognition usually is not enough to enable persons to break out of their imprisoning value structures,” thus it requires the help of others who exhibit idealized virtue to influence (not necessarily by words alone, but also by action) a follower to a higher level of virtue. Further because, as Bass et al. asserts, both Stoic and Confucian philosophies by which transformational leadership has long affiliated itself with has epitomized idealized influence, an authentic transformational leader would not proclaim his or self as one, but instead is recognized by others as typical of this type of leadership. It appears then that humility in regarding one’s self as an authentic transformational leader is a prominent characteristic of this style of leadership. This was found true of Peter’s leadership in 2 Peter; he did not proclaim himself a leader of virtue. This fact is evident, however, in the life and legacy he left behind. Interesting, however, is that Peter chooses to influence by conveying that he was equal to the reader in that having “received a faith of the same kind as

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258 Bass, Bernard, and Paul Steidlmeier.
ours’\textsuperscript{259}, having been granted the “precious and magnificent promises”, and having been granted to believers everything pertaining to life and godliness\textsuperscript{260} (privileges that go along with being a beneficiary) and as such everyone is on equal footing for becoming “debtors” “not to the flesh, but to the God who delivered them and will deliver them”\textsuperscript{261} \textsuperscript{262}. He makes it known that everyone has an equal opportunity to developing godly virtue. Because every person has the same kind of faith\textsuperscript{263}, each person has received the same divine provisions “irrespective of calling or stature in the faith”, and thus there are no distinctions between apostles or lay persons, “between those possessing spiritual authority and the rest of the church”\textsuperscript{264}. “There are no second class citizens”, according to Green, ‘in God’s kingdom”\textsuperscript{265}. This resonates well with the Greek mind who values equality from a political (“all citizens have the same position and rights”) and legal standpoint (whereby citizens have judicial rights\textsuperscript{266}). As such, according to Aristotle, the law, then, is no respecter of persons\textsuperscript{267}. But equality in terms of everyone having “the same kind of faith”\textsuperscript{268}, believers are also treated with equitability in the amount of divine power given to the believer for the purpose of living a godly life\textsuperscript{269}.

It cannot be emphasized enough that although Western and Eastern philosophy does add value to knowledge and character it is insufficient to provide the necessary power to grow in the image of Christ. The Christian is transformed because he or she serves a living, purpose-filled God who is the source of all virtue and goodness. Whereas the former have nothing to reach beyond than the self for the supply of virtuousness. Thus it becomes impossible to actually attain virtuousness, given that man who has a “fallen” nature naturally lives by fleshly and worldly lusts that can only serve the self. Instead, God through Christ’s death and resurrection provides the power that gives a person the way out of humanity’s predicament of sin. Virtue in the Western and Eastern tradition are thus seen as an end in itself or the ultimate goal, whereas the latter (virtue developed in Christ) is a response of gratitude to a Creator who has saved us from ourselves and death.

Returning to Peter’s stage of virtue or moral development, it should be noted as well that in a sense Peter is at a higher level of virtue, for if one measured him against the greatest virtue of all, love\textsuperscript{270}, Peter’s death for the spiritual well-being of other believers is in complete agreement with Christ’s

\textsuperscript{259} NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:1.
\textsuperscript{260} NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3-4.
\textsuperscript{261} NASB Study Bible, Romans 8:12.
\textsuperscript{262} deSilva, David, 146.
\textsuperscript{263} Charles, J. Daryl, 131.
\textsuperscript{264} Charles, J. Daryl, 131.
\textsuperscript{265} Charles, J. Daryl, 131.
\textsuperscript{266} Charles, J. Daryl, 131.
\textsuperscript{267} Charles, J. Daryl, 131.
\textsuperscript{268} NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:1.
\textsuperscript{269} NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:3.
\textsuperscript{270} NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:7.
maxim “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends”\textsuperscript{271}. For Peter gave his life to ensure that others who once were lost were reconciled to God.

While the source of virtue or values differs from that offered by Burns (e.g. childhood by the social-cultural context and adulthood from social-political processes\textsuperscript{272}), there is some similarity between Peter’s catalog of virtues and Burns highest stage of universal moral development, “justice”, such as equality of human rights and respect for individual dignity. The difference, however, is that godly virtue will go beyond treating others as equals and respecting dignity to giving up one’s life (the ultimate manifestation of the virtue love) for another person, regardless of race, religion, etc. And, to do so for a person hostile to God goes beyond even what the Hellenistic culture deemed virtuous, remembering that generosity was only given to the ungrateful if there remained any left after giving to the virtuous\textsuperscript{273}. While this speaks primarily to physical or tangible gifts, we could apply the same idea of generosity to that not always readily seen, the intangible. Giving generously or sacrificially to others who are hostile to God, those who are ungrateful, or even those who disagree with a leader might be a crucial question in the study of virtue in authentic transformational leadership, as well as other forms of spiritual leadership. Further, characteristic of the truly authentic transformational leader such as Peter, already mentioned, is that he did not seek to become “idolized” (of which the pseudo transformational leader would seek), but instead exhibited “idealized” influence\textsuperscript{274} \textsuperscript{275}...virtue that inspires others to desire virtue. Peter’s virtue by the end of his life...of which could only be accomplished by the work of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and lastly through others...was and continues to be “idealized” among Christians to this day.

Earlier it was mentioned that God develops a person’s virtue in and through others\textsuperscript{276}. Bass et al. also raises the importance of others, using Confucian terms, in the role of developing virtue within the authentic transformational leader\textsuperscript{277}. He states, “But this is no individualistic project – it occurs both within and for a fiduciary community. A person becomes virtuous within a community”\textsuperscript{278}. It is a community that is influenced or under threat by various political, social, and economic forces. The transformational process, however, is not meant only for followers, but also the leader. Burns asserts that leadership is both transforming and transformational in that “both the leader and the led are transformed”; inherent in this assertion then is the leader’s ability to be inspired by the virtue of others, indicating the importance then of humility toward God in authentic transformational

\textsuperscript{271} NASB Study Bible, John 15:13.  
\textsuperscript{272} Burns, James, 34.  
\textsuperscript{273} deSilva, Robert, 129.  
\textsuperscript{274} Bass, Bernard, and Paul Steildlmeier.  
\textsuperscript{275} Howell, Jane, and Bruce Avolio, “The Ethics of Charismatic Leadership: Submission or Liberation?”, Academy of Management Executive, 6(1992), 49-50.  
\textsuperscript{276} Mulholland, Robert, 146.  
\textsuperscript{277} Bass, Bernard, and Paul Steildlmeier.  
\textsuperscript{278} Bass, Bernard, and Paul Steildlmeier.
leadership. Charles asserts that Peter, having “spiritual authority and humility” is helpful to Peter in identifying with his audience even though he is constrained by a prophetic burden. Peter does not appear to provide any written indication that he has already attained fullness of virtue, but seems to indicate that a believer, to include him self, is not perfected but is constantly seeking to be transformed into the image of Christ. This plays out with all diligence (or zeal) and faith to supply moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Growth in virtue is a life-long process that requires long-term focus and others to help us along the journey. And, for those who have these qualities and by which “are increasing” the believer will “neither be useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

In essence the growth in holiness or godly virtue protects the believer from corruption that arises from following the pseudo transformational leader who is filled with “worldly lust,” fleshly desires, and sensuality. This lust produces vices, which according to Stoic philosophy is an indication of psychological sickness (e.g. Zeno’s “sorrow, fear, greed and lust” and see Philo’s “lust, sorrow, greed and fear”). The effect of vice, or those who lack these qualities (or virtues) is blindness and short-sightedness, having forgotten (literally translated as ‘having received forgetfulness’) his purification from his former sins. ‘Having received forgetfulness’ thus is suggestive that the believer has voluntarily accepted his or her deceived and darkened condition. Peter does not dampen the severity of their illness. He uses the similes of a dog returning to their vomit and the pig returning to mud after being washed clean. Unfortunately, for those who returned to their previous life before Christ they become a new tyranny worse than before. Goodness, however, is the only means by which goodness and good results can flow, particularly for the organization the authentic transformational leader is trying to serve.

The empirical research that supports a link between virtue and performance is astounding. As virtue flows through leaders in combination with proactively engaging others to develop these same virtues it will have a rippling or cascading effect through the organization. This “amplifying effect” of virtuousness (e.g. people are inspired, according to Sandage and Hill) and reproduces virtuousness

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279 Charles, J. Daryl, 129.
280 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:5-8.
281 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:8.
282 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:4.
283 Charles, J. Daryl, 116.
284 Charles, J. Daryl, 119.
286 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 1:9.
287 Charles, J. Daryl, 150.
288 Charles, J. Daryl, 150.
289 NASB Study Bible, 2 Peter 2:20-21.
290 Charles, J. Daryl, 150.
291 Charles, J. Daryl, 150.
which in effect becomes contagious according to Fredrickson\textsuperscript{292}. When it does become contagious throughout the organization it has a powerful effect on creativity (according to George), performance, individual good mental and physical health (according to Ryff and Wiener), better decision making (according to Staw), affiliative feelings toward others (according to Haidt), and leads to social capital according to Bolino\textsuperscript{293}. And, according to Cohen et al., at the organizational level it produces “positive emotionality, meaningfulness, and mutual reinforcement in the organization”\textsuperscript{294}. As well virtuousness also has a “buffering effect”, according to Seligman, against dysfunction and illness (could be described at the organizational level by setbacks such as downsizing) through “virtues such as courage, optimism, faith, integrity, forgiveness, and compassion”\textsuperscript{295}. Developing from virtuousness are good relationships, e.g. those relationships where trust, collaboration, creative thinking, dialogue, and mutual respect flourish, which becomes extremely beneficial to the organization that operates in highly complex, changing, and uncertain environments. Virtuousness further “produces positive energy systems, enables growth and vitality, and enhances the potential for extraordinary performance”\textsuperscript{296}. As well, the organization need to accept moral authority; for, according to Wilken, where the people have no regard for moral authority in general, “there can be no social bond, no common life, and no virtue”\textsuperscript{297}. And, without a common social bond there is no innovation, collaboration, and self-organizing/governing systems, of which is a necessity for rapidly changing, uncertain, networked, diverse, and globalized environments\textsuperscript{298}. As such it is important that the virtues or values idealized are integrated throughout the organization’s policies, procedures, processes, and systems\textsuperscript{299}.

A challenge, however, for the authentic transformational leader in American culture is individualism as mentioned earlier. “Rugged individualism” emphasizes the autonomous self-sufficient individual capable of achieving goals all alone. This myth that does not recognize that people inherently need one another and God, and as such effects myopic vision. Furthermore, discounting the need for foresight and discernment the leader becomes ineffective in serving the best interest of others, the organization, the society, and the nation. The leader ends up “serving their narrow, short-run interests alone, rationalizing the consequences in terms of responsibility to themselves, to their families, or to a relatively narrow group”\textsuperscript{300}. The only way out of this pit is through the transformational life giving grace of God who slowly works within and by the leader the character of Christ, which will inevitably leads to


\textsuperscript{293} Caza, Arran, 174.

\textsuperscript{294} Caza, Arran, 174.

\textsuperscript{295} Caza, Arran, 174.

\textsuperscript{296} Caza, Arran, 175.

\textsuperscript{297} Charles, J. Daryl, 139.

\textsuperscript{298} Stagich, Timothy, Collaborative Leadership and Global Transformation, (1stBooks Library, 2001), ix, 51.

\textsuperscript{299} Bass, Bernard, and Paul Steildlmeier.

\textsuperscript{300} Burns, James, 45.
a life that touches the hearts and lives of others. For the heart of Peter and the millions of Christians since then have been changed by way of God’s grace and a response of gratitude, which has created in those individuals virtue and character that has served as “idealized influence” for others around them. God’s grace providing faith, gratitude, and humility through Christ are the foundational virtues by which authentic transformational leaders are able to inspire in others the same virtues. With focus on the character of Christ, obedience and holiness, self-leadership is developed. And, as self-leadership (focused on Christ) spreads it will have an impact on goodness and positive performance throughout organizations, society, and the nation.

VIII. Conclusion

While research does not need to tell us our need for authentic transformational leadership...for we see the impact of the pseudo form all around us. However, given a greater awareness of the changing tide of the environment researchers now have a greater interest in understanding what type of leadership is needed for today and tomorrow’s organization. Research by the Accenture Institute for Strategic Change in partnership with Keilty and Goldsmith and Company found through interviews with top MBA graduates believe that organizations will need to hire leaders who have a capacity for personal leadership; they are those who have a deep self-awareness of who they are and will develop his or her self from the “inside-out” rather than the “outside-in”301. Furthermore, leaders, particularly global leaders, who will need to exhibit ethical behavior302, of which I argue can only come from a virtuous character, will have the ability to create a shared vision303, and have the ability to create collaborative environments that uphold the organization’s vision and purpose304. In essence, the pivoting factor of each one of these leadership abilities is virtue, or character, and as such closer attention to virtue development as a particular task for developing leaders who can lead in complex, uncertain, and dynamic environments will be needed. Second Peter offers some guidance on this process.

In a social-cultural analysis of 2 Peter it was found that Peter not only identifies the catalog of virtues and framework for growing in virtue, but conveys the need for virtue as a means to avoid falling or stumbling into deception by pseudo type leaders. The believer can only avoid deception by pursuing the true knowledge of God, which should be easy to the believer, having been given divine power to follow after God’s will, which leads the believer into the attaining of important virtues, particularly love, identified by Christ as the most important virtue. Virtue development or development in holiness is motivated by a grateful response to God’s grace of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Yet in our focus and efforts, the believer is reminded that “goodness” and “virtue” development is still the work of the

302 Greenberg, Cathy, 45.
303 Greenberg, Cathy, 4.
304 Greenberg, Cathy, 2.
Holy Spirit so that we are not tempted to believe the work accomplished is our own. Further, the fact that Peter continues to inspire others (in terms of “idealized influence”) to a greater level of virtue today, of which incalculable lives have been transformed, confirms that the transforming power an authentic transformational leader whose call to life is total commitment of the mind, body, and soul to loving God. Peter, as a benefactor of God’s grace, therefore requires him (as accustomed in the first-century, according to Danker), to live a life meeting the forbearer’s (Jesus’) reputation for generosity305. Thus, Peter having benefited from God’s virtuousness sets the same type of standard of virtuousness for the Christian community. Resulting then is the outgrowth of leaders or benefactors who help others to become leaders or benefactors as well, thus creating a process for creating “self-leaders”, e.g. those who are guided by God towards godly virtue rather than self-will. As believers (acting as the benefactor) teach other believers virtuousness should characterize the community, organization, and society. In finality, in the words of Bernard Bass and Paul Steidlmeier,

“In leadership, character matters. This is not to deny that evil people can bring about good things or that good people can lead the way to moral ruin. Rather, leadership provides a moral compass and, over the long term, both personal development and the common good are best served by a moral compass that reads true.”306

And, while this paper has only begun to identify the tip of the ice berg on first-century social-cultural context and location that influenced Peter’s writing of 2 Peter, has only touched the tip of the cultural forces at work against virtue development today, and finally has only touched the surface of authentic and its adversary pseudo transformational leadership, it is hoped that this article will contribute to or further develop the role of virtue development in authentic transformational leadership and other forms of leadership recognizing that a leader’s character is developed over time in an through others. An authentic transformational leader does not just mysteriously or miraculously exhibit virtue, but is manifested as a lifelong commitment to responding to God’s grace and love. And, for the leader who desires to see a greater influence of God’s grace in the lives of believers, it is hoped that this article will help leaders bring awareness to others of what virtue is and how they can influence others to grow in their own character. And, as people develop virtue together they will find new found relationships and the growth and extension of those relationships to others. If not for the sake of loving others so they will not fall, then for the sake of sustaining the organization for which so many lives depend upon for their own livelihood the leader will persevere forward in attaining holiness.

305 deSilva, Robert, 130.