

“Can Dr. Phil Provide All the Help We Really Need?”

2 Peter 1:1-12

(A free transcript of this sermon is available at the Information Desk in the Lobby)

THEME: If you have not heard of Dr. Phil, you have been in a coma for at least 5 years. The majority of Americans have probably seen at least a segment of his popular television show.

Dr. Phil McGraw is a popular clinical psychologist who offers advice in the form of life strategies. He has become a cultural icon.

Even the children’s show, “Sesame Street” has a Muppet called “Dr. Feel” who asks guests to share their feelings.

The Dr. Phil show is one of the better shows on television. Viewers love his no-nonsense advice to become all they’re meant to be.

Is putting Dr. Phil’s words into practice all we really need?

Relying on Dr. Phil to make your life work is like building a house on sand. To get the best help Dr. Phil can give, you need a foundation that Dr. Phil doesn’t provide.

Jesus said, “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.” (Matthew 7:24-25)

According to the Word of God, you can become all you’re meant to be by following the **strategies** explained in 2 Peter 1:1-12.

I. ESTABLISH YOUR IDENTITY (1:1-4)

II. EXERCISE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY (1:5-8)

III. ERASE ANY UNCERTAINTY (1:9-12)

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

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OPENER:

1. Do you have a favorite television talk show? Why is it your favorite?

I. ESTABLISH YOUR IDENTITY (1:1-4)

2. Dr. Phil defines your “authentic” self as all you were created to be. It is the composite of all your skills, talents, and wisdom. He says if you’re not living faithfully to your authentic self, you have a hole in your soul. Do you agree? How would you define your “authentic” self as a Christian?

3. According to the Apostle Peter, how do we receive everything we really need?

4. What does it mean to “participate in the divine nature”? See Genesis 1:26-28; John 1:12.

II. EXERCISE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY (1:5-8)

5. One of Dr. Phil's strategies is "Acknowledge and accept responsibility for your life." He advises people not to play the role of victim; if they choose the right behavior and thoughts they'll get the right consequences. How does this compare with the Apostle Peter's strategy?
6. What is the starting point for taking responsibility so that you can be all you're meant to be? Verses 1, 5.
7. It takes hard work to live properly as a Christian. Which aspect of this hard work described in verses 5-7 would you find most difficult?

III. ERASE ANY UNCERTAINTY (1:9-12)

8. Dr. Phil says, "there is no reality, only perception." Therefore, identify the filters through which you view the world. What are the filters through which a Christian is supposed to view the world and see reality? Also see 2 Corinthians 5:16-17
9. According to the Apostle Peter, what do we need in order to be certain that we are cleansed from past sins?
10. If a person answers the question, "Are you a Christian" by saying "I think so" or "I hope so", how would you help that person to "know so"?