

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1: THE CHRISTIAN GRACES

By David Lee Burris

*Make every effort to  
add to your faith*

**GOODNESS;**

TO GOODNESS,

**KNOWLEDGE;**

TO KNOWLEDGE,

**SELF-CONTROL;**

TO SELF-CONTROL,

**PERSEVERANCE;**

TO PERSEVERANCE,

**GODLINESS;**

TO GODLINESS,

**MUTUAL AFFECTION;**

TO MUTUAL AFFECTION,

**LOVE.**

*~ 2 Peter 1:5-7 ~*

# 1 Peter – The True Grace of God

By Wayne Jackson

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When Peter concluded his first epistle, he summarized the basic purpose of the narrative. “I have written unto you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God; stand ye fast therein” (5:12).

The thrust of the book is thus threefold.

1. It contains certain exhortations to godliness.
2. It sets forth the nature of true grace.
3. It urges fidelity to the cause of Christ.

In your margin at the beginning of this book, note: *Purpose of the book — 5:12*. Then list these three points.

As a matter of amplification, let us consider more closely the theme of “true grace,” for it is implied that there might be a false concept of grace.

The word *charis* (grace) is found ten times in 1 Peter (twice rendered “acceptable” — 2:19-20, ASV). Here are the facts regarding this important New Testament concept:

1. Grace is from God as a source (4:10; 5:10). It is an expression of divine benevolence.
2. The outpouring of grace was foretold by the Old Testament prophets as they heralded the coming of the Messiah and His mission (1:10).
3. Grace is not bestowed unconditionally; rather, it is given to those who humble themselves in submission to the will of God (5:5).
4. God’s grace is given in manifold ways — in the larger context of salvation (Eph. 2:8-9); also, in a more restricted sense of a spiritual gift (whether natural or, as with some in the first century, miraculous).

Whereas grace is lovingly bestowed, and certainly men do not merit it, there is, nonetheless, a responsibility connected therewith. One must be a good steward of whatever gift of grace he has received (4:10), and continue to stand fast in the overall favor of God (5:12) — the hint being that one can fall therefrom (see Gal. 5:4; Heb. 12:15).

5. Though grace is constantly being supplied to us now, it will have its consummation in the revelation of Christ at the last day (1:13).

Cross-reference these passages in 1 Peter. They give a rich meaning to the expression “true grace” (5:12).



# Growing In The Knowledge Of Jesus Christ

## 2 Peter 1:5-11

### INTRODUCTION

1. In our previous lesson (“**Precious Gifts From God**”), we noticed that a certain “knowledge” is the source of wonderful blessings...

a. Grace and peace is multiplied “in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” - **2 Pe 1:2**

b. All things that pertain to life and godliness are given “through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” - **2 Pe 1:3**

2. Also noted was how Peter closes his epistle with this admonition:

*“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

- **2 Pe 3:18**

3. This raises several questions...

a. What does it mean to “grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”?

b. How can we be sure that we are growing in this “knowledge”?

c. Why is Peter so concerned that we grow in this “knowledge”?

[In **2 Pe 1:5-11**, we find the answers to these questions, and in this lesson we shall examine this passage closely (read). [First, consider...]

### I. WHAT GROWING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST INVOLVES

#### A. THE DEVELOPMENT OF EIGHT GRACES...

1. These “graces” are listed in **2 Pe 1:5-7**

2. Briefly defined...

a. **Faith** is “conviction, strong assurance”

b. **Virtue** is “moral excellence, goodness”

c. **Knowledge** is “correct insight”

d. **Self-control** is “self-discipline”

e. **Perseverance** is “bearing up under trials”

f. **Godliness** is “godly character out of devotion to God”

g. **Brotherly kindness** is “love toward brethren”

h. **Love** is “active goodwill toward those in need”

3. Notice carefully **2 Pe 1:8**

a. We must “abound” in these eight “graces”

b. Only then can it be said that we are “growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ”

4. Therefore it is more than simply increasing our “intellectual” knowledge of Jesus Christ!

a. Though such knowledge has a place, it is just one of the graces necessary

b. Peter is talking about growing in a **full** and **personal** knowledge of Jesus Christ

1) Which comes by developing the “Christ-like” attributes defined above

2) The more we grow in these “graces”, the more we really “know” Jesus (for He is the perfect personification of these “graces”)

5. That it involves more than intellectual knowledge is also evident from the Greek word used for knowledge in **2 Pe 1:2-3, 8**

a. The word is **epignosis** {**ep-ig’-no-sis**}, meaning “to become thoroughly acquainted with, b. Such knowledge comes only as we **demonstrate** these “Christ-like graces” in our lives

#### B. IN CONJUNCTION WITH EACH OTHER...

1. Notice the word “add” (or “supply”) in **2 Pe 1:5**

a. Before each grace mentioned, the word is implied

b. The word in Greek is **epichoregeo** {ep-ee-khor-ayg-eh'-o}

1) "Originally, to found and support a chorus, to lead a choir, to keep in tune"

2) "Then, to supply or provide"

c. This word therefore suggests the idea of "each grace working in harmony with the others to produce an overall effect"

2. Notice also the preposition "to" (or "in") in **2 Pe 1:5-7**

a. This suggests "each grace is to temper and make perfect the grace that goes before it"

b. To illustrate:

1) "to knowledge (add) self-control" - the grace of self-control enables one to apply properly the knowledge one has

2) "to self-control (add) perseverance" - self-control in turn needs the quality of 3. Thus each grace is necessary!

a. They must all be developed in conjunction with each other

b. We cannot be selective and just pick the ones we like and leave others behind

### **C. WITH DILIGENT EFFORT...**

1. Notice the word "diligence" in **2 Pe 1:5,10**

2. It means "earnestness, zeal, sometimes with haste"

3. To grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ requires much effort

4. We do not "accidentally" or "naturally" develop these graces!

5. If we are not careful, we may be like the teacher in the following illustration:

*In his book Folk Psalms of Faith, Ray Stedman tells a story of a woman who had been a school for only one year was hired instead. She went to the principal and asked why. The principal teacher had not improved.*

[We may have been Christians for a number of years. But unless we continue to grow, we are simply repeating the first year over and over again! Is the effort worth it? In the context of this passage Peter gives **three reasons** why we should "give all diligence" to grow in this knowledge of Jesus Christ...]

## **II. WHY WE SHOULD BE GROWING IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST**

### **A. FAILURE TO GROW RESULTS IN SPIRITUAL MYOPIA AND AMNESIA... (9)**

1. Our religion is "shortsighted" if we are not growing in this knowledge of Jesus - **2 Pe 1:9a**

a. For what is the ultimate objective of being a Christian?

b. To become like Christ! - cf. **Ro 8:29; Co 3:9-11**

c. As we have seen, this is what it really means to grow in the knowledge of Christ

2. Failure to so grow is an indication that we forgot why we were redeemed by the blood of Christ in the first place! - **2 Pe 1:9b**

a. To have our sins forgiven, yes...

b. But then, that we might present ourselves to God and become what He wants us to be - **like His Son!**

### **B. WE WILL NEVER STUMBLE... (10)**

1. This does not mean we will never sin - **2 Pe 1:10; cf. 1 Jn 1:8,10**

2. The word "stumble" in Greek means "to fall into misery, become wretched; cf. the loss of salvation" (**Thayer**)

3. We will never stumble so as to fall short of our ultimate salvation!

4. But this is true **only** if we are "giving all diligence" to grow in the knowledge of Christ and thereby "making our calling and election sure"

### C. AN ENTRANCE INTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM WILL BE ABUNDANTLY SUPPLIED... (11)

1. This “everlasting kingdom” is likely the “heavenly kingdom” referred to by Paul in **2 Ti 4:18**
2. In other words, the ultimate destiny of the redeemed!
3. What is meant by the idea of an “abundant entrance”?
  - a. “You may be able to enter, not as having escaped from a shipwreck, or from fire, but as it were in triumph.” (**Bengel**)
  - b. By possessing the eight graces, we will be able to live victoriously in this life and to joyously anticipate what lies ahead - cf. **2 Ti 4:6-8**

#### CONCLUSION

1. These three reasons should sufficiently motivate us to be diligent in growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ
  2. Give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, by making every effort to add these graces to our lives!
  3. Or have we forgotten that we were purged from our old sins?
    - a. We have, if we are apathetic in our desire to grow in these “graces”!
    - b. If so, we need to repent and pray for forgiveness!
- Are you growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord?

Mark A. Copeland  
Sermons From Second Peter 8

#### GROW IN GRACE

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

— 2 PETER 3:18 NIV

## THE CHRISTIAN GRACES

### "ADD TO YOUR FAITH"

**INTRODUCTION:** God gave to the apostles "all things that pertain to life and godliness" and "exceeding great and precious promises," that through them we "may be partakers of the divine nature." This was God's part. Our part is to give "all diligence" (exert tremendous effort) to "add to [our] faith" seven spiritual characteristics, or "Christian graces," as they are commonly called (2 Peter 1:1-7). But, before we look at the things we are to add to our faith, let us consider the nature of that faith to which we are to add them. In this lesson, we will consider the "faith" to which we are to add these seven characteristics.

#### FAITH ITSELF

A. That without which "it is impossible to please" God (Heb. 11:6).

1. Believing "that He is."
2. Believing "that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."
3. If we really believe these things, we "diligently seek Him."

B. That which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1)

1. Things hoped for (Rom. 8:18-25; 1 Pet. 1:3; Titus 1:2; Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).
2. Things not seen ["We saw thee not...."]

C. That which "comes by hearing...the word of God" (Rom. 10:14-17; 1:16,17)

D. Not mere credulity ["a too great readiness to believe"] (Acts 17:11).

#### ADDING TO THAT FAITH

A. The faith that has nothing added to it is insufficient (Matt. 10:32,33; James 2:14-19; John 12:42,43).

B. The faith that avails is "working faith" (James 2:20-26; Gal. 5:6).

C. "Mere belief" must grow into "trusting obedience" (Eccl. 12:13,14; Acts 10:34,35; Rom. 1:5; 6:16,17; 16:25,26).

### **THAT FAITH IN ACTION**

A. Abel "offered" by faith (Heb. 11:4).

B. Noah "prepared an ark" by faith (Heb. 11:7).

C. Abraham "went out," "sojourned in the land of promise," and "offered up Isaac" by faith (Heb. 11:8-10,17-19).

D. Other O.T. saints added to their faith (Heb. 11:32-40).

E. The apostles believed, and, therefore, spoke (2 Cor. 4:13)

F. First century converts obeyed by faith (Acts 2:38-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-32).

**CONCLUSION:** If your faith has never become trusting obedience, then you are yet an alien sinner, outside the church, and still in your sins. If your faith has ceased to be trusting obedience, you have not been "giving all diligence" to add to it, and yours is not a "working faith."

### **"ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE"**

**INTRODUCTION:** If we would be "partakers of the divine nature," we must not only have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, but we must give diligence ("exert tremendous effort") to add to our faith seven spiritual characteristics, or graces, the first of which is "virtue." But what is "virtue"? While the word "virtue" may sometimes mean "moral excellence," that meaning hardly seems to fit, here. "Virtue" is here distinguished from such characteristics as "godliness," "brotherly kindness" and "charity." But "moral excellence" would doubtless include these characteristics. On the other hand, there are good and sufficient reasons for understanding the word to mean "moral courage." First, the Greek word translated "virtue" is derived from "ares," a military term given by the Greeks, as a personal name, to their god of war, suggesting the concept of courage. Second, the English word, "virtue," was derived from the Latin "virtus," meaning "manhood," which also suggests courage. Third, it seems natural that, in a list of spiritual traits, moral courage would immediately follow faith (1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10-



17). Fourth, moral courage is surely the basic quality of Christian manhood, for, unless one has the courage of his convictions, he will not act on them.

### **DEMANDS FOR VIRTUE**

- A. Fearing God (Matt. 10:28)
- B. Confessing Christ (Matt. 10:32,33)
- C. Withstanding temptation (1 Peter 5:8,9)
- D. Confessing our sins (James 5:16)
- E. Rebuking sin (Luke 17:3)
- F. Giving a reason for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15)
- G. Contending for the faith (Jude 3)
- H. Living godly (2 Tim. 3:12)

### **EXAMPLES OF VIRTUE**

- A. Moses (Heb. 11:24-27)
- B. Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego (Dan. 3:16-18)
- C. Daniel (Dan. 6:1-10)
- D. Stephen (Acts 6:8-12; 7:51-53)
- E. Paul (Acts 20:18-24; 21:10-13)

### **RESULTS OF VIRTUE**

- A. Others will see that we are sincere. Illustration: "Our pottery is sin cere" (i.e., "without wax"--wax melts when it gets hot)
- B. We will be "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10).

**CONCLUSION:** Let us have the courage to do what God would have us to do, regardless of the physical consequences we may face (Phil. 1:27,28).

## "ADD...TO VIRTUE KNOWLEDGE"

**INTRODUCTION:** In order to continue being "partakers of the divine nature," we must not only add virtue to faith, but we must also add knowledge to virtue. This, too, requires "giving all diligence," or putting forth tremendous effort. But what do we mean by "knowledge"? We mean an awareness of facts (Acts 4:13), a comprehension of facts (Eph. 3:1-4,14-19; 5:17), and practical wisdom in applying these facts (Phil. 1:9-11; Col. 1:9,10; 4:5,6).

### IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

- A. Ignorance begets error (Matt. 22:29).
- B. Zeal without knowledge leads to self-righteousness (Rom. 10:1-3).
- C. Israel was destroyed for a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6).

### BENEFITS OF KNOWLEDGE

- A. Conviction of sin (Heb. 4:12; Acts 2:37)
- B. Defense against temptation (Matt. 4:1-10)
- C. Doctrinal stability (2 Tim. 3:16-4:4)
- D. Stronger faith (Rom. 10:17)

### HOW TO ADD KNOWLEDGE

- A. Not simply by learning (2 Tim. 3:7)
- B. A love of the truth (2 Thess. 2:10-12).
- C. A seeking to know the truth (John 8:32; Acts 17:11).
- D. A desire to obey the truth (John 7:14-17)
- E. An investigative spirit - "perspiration not inspiration" (2 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 5:11-14). Tools, such as the following, will be helpful:

1. Cross-references and marginal notes in your current Bible
2. A good study Bible without a denominational slant
3. Word studies (such as Vine's)
4. Bible dictionaries (such as Smith's)
5. Bible commentaries

F. Meditation [mental industry] (Psalm 1:1-3).

**CONCLUSION:** Do you appreciate the importance of knowledge? Do you want the benefits of knowledge? Are you "giving all diligence" to add it?

## "ADD...TO KNOWLEDGE TEMPERANCE"

**INTRODUCTION:** In order to be "partakers of the divine nature," we must add temperance to knowledge. The Greek word means "strength," and refers to the mastery over self, or "self control." It is not merely controlling self, but controlling self as directed by the word of God. It involves both moderation and abstinence, but also involves much more. "The various powers bestowed by God upon man are capable of abuse; the right use demands the controlling power of the will" (Vine's, p. 1137). The demands of righteousness require self-control as the proper response thereto (Acts 24:25). Knowledge is logically prior to self-control, because "the right use" of "the various powers bestowed by God upon man" depends upon our ability "to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:11-14). However, "knowledge puffs up" (1 Cor. 8:1), so self-control must be added.

### THE NEED FOR TEMPERANCE

- A. It is possible, however, for this "controlling power" to be impaired or usurped by:
1. Emotions (anger, fear, hatred, shame, grief, loneliness, worry, etc.)
  2. Social pressure (from family and/or peers)
  3. Habit-forming drugs (tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceuticals, etc.)

4. Desires (food, intimacy, money, job and/or political advancement, etc.)
5. Bad habits involving the tongue (lying, cursing, offending, gossiping)

B. If we are to maintain self-control, therefore, we must strengthen the "power of the will."

1. This is done by determination, or "giving all diligence" (1 Cor. 9:24ff).
2. Each athletic contestant knows that only one person can win each event.
  3. When Paul says, "So run, that ye may obtain," he seems to be implying that we ought to live our lives as if only one person were going to make it to heaven.
  4. Wouldn't this result in a great deal more diligence on the part of every person?

## **THE STRUGGLE FOR TEMPERANCE**

A. It is a struggle between the flesh and the Spirit.

1. The fleshly desires simply cry out for fulfillment; the Spirit tells us how these desires may legitimately be fulfilled (Gal. 5:16-23).
2. The law in our members tells us to do the very thing that the law of God tells us not to do (Rom. 7:7-24).

B. Victory is in Jesus, and in him, alone.

1. We will never master our desires without surrendering to Jesus by doing what the Holy Spirit reveals (Rom. 7:25; 8:1-4)
2. Christ lives in me if, and only if, I am living "by the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20; cf. Jude 3).
3. One must be baptized into Christ, in order to live in Him (Rom. 6:3-6,12-19).

## MANIFESTATIONS OF TEMPERANCE

- A. Are we keeping our emotions and drives in check? (Eph. 4:26; James 1:19,20; Matt. 5:27,28)
- B. Do we put God first in our lives, even before family and friends? (Matt. 10:28,32-39)
- C. Are we keeping even legitimate drug use to a minimum? (1 Tim. 5:23)
- D. Do we love people and use money or vice versa? (1 Tim. 6:10,17-19)
- E. Are we replacing harmful habits with productive ones (1 Cor. 6:12; 16:15)?
- F. Are we careful to fulfill our desires within the parameters of God's will? (1 John 2:15-17; Heb. 13:4; 1 Peter 2:2)
- G. Do we bridle our tongues (James 1:26)? How well we do this is the "acid test" of self-control, because "if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (James 3:2). [An "acid test" is a thorough test to find out the real quality of some person or thing.]

**CONCLUSION:** You cannot hope to "glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19,20) without exercising self-control. Who or what controls you?

## "ADD...TO TEMPERANCE PATIENCE"

**INTRODUCTION:** If we would continue being "partakers of the divine nature, we must add patience to faith, virtue, knowledge and temperance. But what is "patience"? Some seem to think that "patience" simply means "waiting." That this is not true is seen in the translation, "patient waiting" (2 Thess. 3:5). Thus, it is a certain kind of waiting. But what kind of waiting is it? It is a waiting motivated by hope (1 Thess. 1:2,3). The word literally means, "an abiding under" (Vine's, p. 849). It is "the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings" (Thayer, p. 644). Or, as Bill Hall has said, it is "keeping on keeping on!" Virtue, or "moral courage," must precede patience, as it is the proper state of mind regarding potential threats to our faith (James 1:2). Knowledge, especially that "the trying of your faith worketh patience," must precede patience, for without this information, one would be intellectually unprepared for trials (James 1:3). Temperance, or self-control, enables us to give diligence.

## **POTENTIAL THREATS TO OUR FAITH**

- A. Reproaches (1 Peter 4:14-16)
- B. Weariness (Gal. 6:6-9)
- C. Temptation (James 1:12-15)
- D. Tribulation and persecution (Matthew 13:20,21)
- E. Distractions (Luke 8:14)
- F. Overconfidence (1 Cor. 10:12)
- G. Since you already know that "all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12), there is no reason why you should not be prepared for adverse situations ("forewarned is forearmed").

## **THE TWOFOLD ASPECT OF PATIENCE**

- A. It "may be passive"--meaning "endurance," or "active"--meaning "persistence, perseverance" (Vine's, pp. 849-50). 50). It is endurance, when alluding to Satan's attempts to "devour" (1 Peter 5:8,9), and persistence, when referring to "abounding in the work of the Lord" (1st Cor. 15:58).

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PATIENCE (1 Peter 1:13)**

A. "Gird up the loins of your mind." This is mental preparation. But with what are we to gird the loins of our mind? What will help us the most, in our mental preparation? Paul tells us, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth" (Eph. 6:14). This requires at least four things:

1. A love of the truth (2 Thess. 2:10-12)
2. A seeking to know the truth (John 8:32; Acts 17:11)
3. A desire to obey the truth (John 7:14-17)
4. An investigative spirit (2 Tim. 2:15).
5. As apply God's truth to our lives, we are preparing for adversity.

B. "Be sober." This means we must have a calm and collected spirit, which is especially needed in the face of adversity. But to be sober in the face of adversity, we must have the proper attitude toward adversity in the first place (James 1:2,3; 1 Cor. 10:13). This is moral courage.

C. "Hope to the end." This means, having made mental preparation, and having maintained a calm and collected spirit, we are to persist and endure.

D. Patience demands, and results from, the exercise of self-control.

1. If we want to be able to deal with potential threats, we must be in the habit of doing what is right before these threats become real.

2. This means we must have enough self-control to establish a routine that incorporates all of our responsibilities (ex.: football practice). Good habits are as hard to break as bad habits.

**CONCLUSION:** Could the writer of the book of Hebrews have written to us that which he wrote to the saints in Jerusalem (6:8-12)? Would he, by inspiration, have that same confidence in us? Are we "giving all diligence" to add to our temperance patience? If we are not, why are we not?

## "ADD...TO PATIENCE GODLINESS"

**INTRODUCTION:** If we want to continue being "partakers of the divine nature," we must add to our perseverance godliness. The word for "godliness" signifies "that piety, which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him" (Vine's, p. 502). Godliness may be possessed by the unsaved, as well as the saved, for it is the adjective form of this word that Luke uses to describe the unsaved Cornelius as "a devout man" (Acts 10:1,2). Thus, godliness alone will not get one into heaven, though one cannot get into heaven without it.

### NOT MERELY GOOD CONDUCT

A. One's motive for his conduct may be improper (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

B. A mere "form of godliness" is insufficient (2 Tim. 3:5; Mt. 23:14,27,28).

## **AN ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD**

- A. A constant sense of being "before God" (Acts 10:33; 23:1)
- B. A constant sense of being "with God" (Gen. 5:24; 6:9; Micah 6:8).
- C. That attitude which prays, "Be with me, Lord! No other gift or blessing Thou could bestow could with this one compare--A constant sense of Thy abiding presence. Where ever I am, to feel that Thou art near."

## **WILL PRODUCE GOOD CONDUCT**

- A. Conduct, which necessarily glorifies God (1 Cor. 10:31).
- B. Godliness will be manifested in our:
  - 1. Eating (1 Cor. 6:12,13)
  - 2. Dress (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Peter 3:3,4)
  - 3. Service to both God and man (Col. 3:22-24)
  - 4. Dealings with the lost (1 Peter 2:12)
  - 5. Relation to civil government (Rom. 13:1; Titus 3:1)
  - 6. Recreation (1 Tim. 4:7,8; 1 John 2:15-17)
  - 7. Thoughts (Phil. 4:8)

## **WILL BOTH COST AND REWARD**

- A. Persecution (2 Tim. 3:12; Matt. 5:11,12)
- B. Deliverance from temptation (2 Peter 2:9; 1 Cor. 10:13)
- C. When coupled with contentment, "great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6-8)
- D. Life that now is, and that which is to come (1 Tim. 4:7,8; Mark 10:28-30)

**CONCLUSION:** Do you possess that attitude of nearness to God, which displays itself in proper conduct in every aspect of your life? Without such, you cannot continue to be a partaker of the divine nature!



## "ADD...TO GODLINESS BROTHERLY KINDNESS"

**INTRODUCTION:** In order to continue being "partakers of the divine nature," we must also add to our faith "brotherly kindness." The Greek word, *philadelphia*, is also translated "brotherly love" (Rom. 12:10; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1), and "love of the brethren" (1 Peter 1:22). Its verb form is translated "love as brethren" (1 Peter 3:8). This is "the fraternal or family affection the Christian has for his fellow Christians. It is the love that recognizes the difference between the church and the world, between the followers of Christ and of the devil" (James M. Tolle, The Christian Graces, p. 57).

### NOT RESPECTING PERSONS

A. We should not limit acts of kindness to:

1. Those in our own age group
2. Those with our personality type
3. Those with outside interests similar to ours
4. Those with similar economic backgrounds to ours
5. Those with similar educational backgrounds to ours
6. Those with similar religious backgrounds to ours

B. These things are relatively unimportant. Overemphasizing them constitutes respect of persons (James 2:1-9).

### STRESSING SPIRITUAL COMMONALITIES

- A. Common faith (2 Peter 1:1)
- B. Common blessings (Eph. 1:3-14)
- C. Common hope (1 Peter 1:3,4)
- D. Common Benefactor (1 John 3:1)

- E. Common salvation (Jude 3)
- F. Common Savior (Eph. 5:23)
- G. Common love for the Lord (1 Peter 1:8)
- H. Common problems (2 Tim. 3:12)

### **DEMONSTRATING DISCIPLESHIP**

- A. Speaking kindly one to another (Eph. 4:31; Col. 4:6)
- B. Returning good for evil (1 Peter 3:8,9)
- C. Respecting the conscience of others (Rom. 14:13,21; 1 Cor. 8:9,13)
- D. Preferring one another (Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:3,4)
- E. Assisting one another when in need (Rom. 12:13; Gal. 6:2)
- F. Sharing one another's grief (Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:24-26)
- G. Restoring the erring (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19,20)
- H. Following the "golden rule" (Matt. 7:12)

**CONCLUSION:** Do you have this fraternal affection for brethren? Do you demonstrate it in these and similar acts? (See Matt. 25:31-46).

### **"ADD...TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS CHARITY"**

**INTRODUCTION:** The last, but certainly not the least, quality (or grace) to be added by the Christian to his faith, in order to be a partaker of the divine nature, is "charity," or love. Charity is benevolence, though charity will certainly lead one to practice benevolence. The Greek word, used "to describe the attitude of God toward His Son, the human race, generally, and to such as believe on the Lord Jesus, particularly." It is used "to express the essential nature of God." It "is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor...spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered." Rather, it "seeks the welfare of all" (Vine's pp. 702,03).

## **ESSENTIALITY OF LOVE**

- A. Life without love is futile (1 Cor. 13:1-3).
- B. Love has a character all its own (1 Cor. 13:4-7).
- C. Love will never seek anything but the highest good of its fellow men.
  - 1. It does not matter how its fellow men treat it.
  - 2. It does not matter what and who its fellow men are.
  - 3. It does not matter what their attitude is toward it.
  - 4. It will never seek anything but their highest and best good.
  - 5. This can best be seen in God's love for us (Rom. 5:8).
- D. Unlike spiritual gifts, love will never fail (1 Cor. 13:8-12).
- E. Love will outlive faith and hope (1 Cor. 13:13).
  - 1. Faith will eventually become sight (2 Cor. 5:7).
  - 2. Hope will eventually become possession (1 Peter 1:3-5).

## **PROPER OBJECTS OF LOVE**

- A. Love God (Mark 12:29,30)
- B. Love Neighbor (Mark 12:31)
- C. Love Brethren (1 Peter 1:22)
- D. Love Wife (Eph. 5:25,33)
- E. Love Enemy (Matt. 5:43,44)
- F. Love Yourself (Mark 12:31)

## **MANIFESTATIONS OF LOVE**

- A. Love for God (1 John 5:3)
- B. Love for your neighbor (Luke 10:25-37)
- C. Love for your brethren (1 John 3:16-18)
- D. Love for your wife (Eph. 5:28,29)
- E. Love for your enemy (Rom. 12:19-21)
- F. Love for yourself (2 Peter 1:5-11; Rev. 12:11; Matt. 10:39)

**CONCLUSION:** Love is the utmost proof that one knows God (1 John 4:8).  
Do you know God? - *FOREST HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST BIBLE LESSONS OUTLINE*

## The Christian Graces

And beside this, giving diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. And N these things be in you, and. abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and bath forgotten that he was purged from his sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

Many who have been baptized into Christ fall away from serving Jesus. Some become so wrapped up in the cares of this world that they bear no fruit for Christ and have allowed their remembrance of their salvation to fade. Many begin the course without finishing it (contrast to 2 Tim. 4:6-8). Peter wrote the words of the text before us to encourage our perseverance in Christ.

### Man's Part: Giving All Diligence

Earlier Peter declared that God has granted unto us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" through the knowledge of Jesus Christ so that we can become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (1:3-4). God has provided a revelation sufficient to save us from sin. What must we do in response?

Peter said that man's response is "giving all diligence." (Note: The ASV translated "for this very reason" what the KJV translated "and beside this," thus tying the two thoughts of the text together better.) God's part was to provide all things that pertain to life. and godliness; man's part is to "give a diligence. " There is no excuse for indolence in serving the Lord. When a man does not show any diligence, he manifests a lack of appreciation for what God has done for him. The involvement in other affairs choke out the spiritual word in the lives of many Christians. This lack of diligence results in many being barren and unfruitful; many have forgotten their cleansing from sin.

## The Christian Graces

The Christian graces must be built on the foundation of faith. The construction of the language is this: "in your faith supply." Augustine wrote, "Faith is the root and mother of all virtues." Many try to be holy without saving faith; it is a useless effort; only from faith can those spiritual graces spring whose crown is love to all. Faith in the Lord is the fountain from which all virtues flow (cf. Prov. 1:7; 16:6 - the fear of the Lord). Belief in God and concern for standing before him in judgment causes me to live so as to be pleasing to him. Hence, in my faith, I am to add these Christian graces:

1. Virtue. The word "virtue" (arete) refers to "manly courage to stand for one's conviction. " Where this virtue is absent, faith cowers and hides. Where this faith is present, man has the courage to confess Jesus even if it costs his life. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were men who showed virtue in their lives. The apostles demonstrated their manly courage when standing before the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:13-21; 5:29-39,40-41).

2. Knowledge. Faith must rest on the word of God (Rom. 10: 17). Where there is virtue without knowledge, there is blind zeal, the courageous stand for spiritual darkness. Hence, one's faith must rest solidly on the word of God in order that a Christian may walk approvingly before God (Col. 1:9-10).

3. Temperance. The word "temperance" is translated "self-control" in more recent translations. The word refers to that subduing of one's passions to bring them into compliance with God's word. This is what Paul did when he buffeted his body to bring it into subjection to God's word (1 Cor. 9:27). Self-control needs especially to be practiced with reference to the temper, drinking, sexual appetites. Where temperance is absent, there is knowledge without practice. Each of us has witnessed the Christian who could teach the truth but did not bring his life into compliance with the truth he knew. Hence, self-control needs to be supplied by a living faith.

4. Patience. The word patience emphasizes the need for perseverance in service to Christ. The one lacking this virtue is like the stony ground hearers who "have no root, which for a while believe, and in the time of temptation fall away" (Lk. 8:13).

These hearers are like a fire burning dry grass, which blazes for a moment but quickly dies. The good ground hearers "bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk. 8:15). Where patience is absent there will be no endurance of adversity in the service of Christ.

5. Godliness. The word godliness points to a piety and reverence for God, for his demands on our lives. Godliness causes us to give him the praise, honor, and glory which are due him. There is a respect for the things of God where piety or godliness exists. Where godliness is absent, there exists the endurance of adversity without reverence for God and perhaps with a bitterness of spirit.

6. Brotherly kindness. Brotherly kindness prevents that lop-sided interest in spiritual things to the neglect of the needs of brethren. This kind of "spirituality" was shown by the priests and Levite in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37) who walked past the one in need without helping. Brotherly kindness responds to the needs of our fellow Christians (Gal. 6:10; 1 Jn. 3:16). This is shown by helping one to bear his spiritual and physical burdens.

7. Charity (love). Love is not confined to that small circle of Christians; it reaches out to all of mankind, even as the love of God does. Love responds to the needs of all men, but especially to the needs of the saints (Gal. 6:10). Where this virtue is absent there is the monastic view of life which limits Christianity to those who think and act like we do. Love expresses itself not only to its friends but also to its enemies (cf. Matt. 5:44-48).

### **What These Virtues Do**

*Adding these virtues to life contributes these things to the Christian:*

1. **Positively.** (a) "Ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful. " God has so ordained life that fruit will be produced where these virtues exist. Just like a seed planted in moist earth with sunshine will grow into a fruit-bearing plant, so also will a Christian be fruitful where these virtues exist. The fruit he bears will be the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), good works, converts to Christ, etc. Where these things are absent in one's life, -a person needs to take a personal inventory to see if he is adding the Christian graces to his life.

(b) You make "your calling and election sure." The growth in these graces is an assurance of an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom. Where these things are absent, the Christian cannot have the assurance of salvation which Paul had at his death (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8). If I want the confidence which Paul had, I must be "giving all diligence" to add these virtues to my life.

2. **Negatively.** Where these virtues are absent, these results follow: (a) The Christian is spiritually blind, not able to see afar off. Those who are not adding these virtues to their lives can only see temporal things; they cannot look beyond the horizon of today's pleasure to see tomorrow's reward of glory in heaven. They are unlike Jesus who "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12-2). They are unlike Moses who chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:24-25). Those lacking these graces can only see the shame of the cross and the pleasures of sin; they cannot see the "joy" beyond the cross and the short-lived pleasures of sin. They are spiritually near-sighted.

(b) The Christian has forgotten his cleansing from sin. The first love which he had for Christ has waned (Rev. 2:4). There's no remembrance of the joy which one had at his baptism, at the time when Jesus' blood washed away his sins. The cleansing from sin is not viewed as a precious treasure the obtaining of which shall never be forgotten. Instead, it is unimportant to him and the memory of having once possessed it is forgotten.

### **Conclusion**

The closing exhortation of these verses points back to the opening exhortation. In 1 Peter 1:5, the apostle said "giving all diligence" and in 1 Peter 1:11 he again said, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." One's growth in Christ and personal assurance of salvation are directly tied to "giving all diligence."

How much effort are you making to grow in Christ? Will you be a stronger, more knowledgeable, self-controlled, persevering Christian tomorrow than you are today? Our failures are not caused by a lack of divine grace, but a lack of diligence. – *Guardian of Truth Magazine*



# Negligence Versus Diligence

From “The Christian Graces” Classbook by James M. Tolle:

**Looking Beyond.** The life of diligence in the *development of Christian personality* is a life that is cognizant of the brevity of man’s earthly existence. It is a life that is aware of immortality of the soul and the supreme necessity of saving that soul by the grace of God. It is a life that looks beyond the struggles and trials of this earthly life to “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3: 13). In the next verse the apostle exhorts,

**“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give [all] diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight.”**

# BELOVED

**since you look for these things,  
be diligent to be found  
by Him in peace,  
spotless and  
blameless.**

**2 Peter 3:14**

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## **Barnes' Notes on the Bible**

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent - That is, in securing your salvation. **The effect of such hopes and prospects should be to lead us to an earnest inquiry whether we are prepared to dwell in a holy world, and to make us diligent in performing the duties, and patient in bearing the trials of life.**

**He who has such hopes set before him, should seek earnestly that he may be enabled truly to avail himself of them, and should make their attainment the great object of his life. He who is so soon to come to an end of all weary toil, should be willing to labor diligently and faithfully while life lasts. He who is so soon to be relieved from all temptation and trial, should he willing to bear a little longer the sorrows of the present world. What are all these compared with the glory that awaits us? Compare the [1 Corinthians 15:58](#) note; [Romans 8:18](#) note, following; [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#) notes.**

That ye may be found of him in peace - Found by him when he returns in such a state as to secure your eternal peace.

Without spot, and blameless - See the notes at [Ephesians 5:27](#). It should be an object of earnest effort with us to have the last stain of sin and pollution removed from our souls. **A deep feeling that we are soon to stand in the presence of a holy God, our final Judge, cannot but have a happy influence in making us pure.**

