

All Things Pertaining to Life and Godliness

2 Peter 1:1–4 (NKJV) — **1** Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, **To those who have obtained like precious faith** with us **by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, **3** as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, **4** by which have been given to us exceedingly **great and precious promises**, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Peter addresses this letter **to any who have obtained a like precious faith**. The Holman Standard Christian Bible says, *“who have obtained a faith of equal privilege with ours”*. Hopefully that statement is true of your life.

A person might ask how one obtains such a faith? The answer is through God’s mercy and grace. God in his righteousness has opened the door of faith to every single person **who desires to enter in.**

Ironside noted: *“Where men are ready to hear, **God can be depended upon to see that they obtain this precious gift of faith. It would be unrighteous in Him to do otherwise.”***

Peter prays in vs. 2 that both **grace and peace** be multiplied to those of faith, through our knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ. This Greek word [epignosis] is used and means having a personal recognition of someone, not just a cognitive recognition, but it incline a **personal acquaintance**. Meaning to have a experiential acquaintance.

- ***Vines notes that epignosis - means having a full, or thorough knowledge, discernment, and recognition.***

It is interesting that when Gabriel informed Mary that she would have a child. She asked how that was possible since she had never known a man. Meaning she had never experienced intimacy with a man. The word [*Genosko*] was used which is in relation to *Epignosis*. This gives us a picture of what Peter was referring to concerning having a knowledge of God.

God’s very desire was for man to intimately know Him.

We are told in the 1st chapter of Romans that God instinctively put the knowledge of Himself into man’s conscience as well as through the evidence through His physical creation. **But man did not desire to retain that knowledge.**

Romans 1:28–31 (NKJV) — 28 And even as they did not **like to retain God in their knowledge**, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; **29** being **filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness**; they are **whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient** to parents, **31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful**;

Here we see that the debauchery of man ultimately resulted out of the fact that he did not desire to have a personal understanding of God. It wasn't that God caused them to turn to evil. He merely turned them over to the sin that was already rooted deep in their hearts.

It says that He gave them over to a debased mind to do the things not fitting. And from that came all the sinful characteristics that is revealed in the evening news day in and day out, **as people continue to walk that path of depravity.**

But here Peter reminds his readers that God offers us something so much better. Instead of living a life of depravity, His divine power has given us ALL THINGS pertaining to life and godliness, **through our knowledge of Jesus.**

- To have a knowledge of God and His Son Jesus, **is to have a relationship with the Father through His Son.**

Don't miss the fact that through that relationship, we have been promised **ALL THINGS** needed to live a life of godliness. A life that is pleasing to the Lord, through our knowledge of Him.

What a stark contrast to the debauchery noted in Romans.

“The power to live a holy life comes through the knowledge of Him who called us. Just as His divine power is the source of holiness, so the knowledge of Him is the channel. To know Him is eternal life (John 17:3) and progress in knowing Him is progress in holiness. The better we get to know Him, the more we become like Him”.

William McDonald

We are told in Vs 4 – that we have been given great and **precious promises by God's** glory and virtue. **And through these promises we are enabled to partake of God's divine nature.** - Giving us the escape route from the corruption that is so prevalent in this fallen world through the sinful lusts.

Concerning these promises:

John Bunyan once said, “The pathway of life is strewn so thickly with the promises of God that it **is impossible to take one step without treading upon one of them.**”

How do we make these promises a reality in our lives so that we can live by that divine nature?
Through the equipping of the Word.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) — 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped **for every good work.**

Now when we come into Salvation, we become a new creation in Christ. We are given a new nature if you will. Now the **sinful nature is still there**, but now we have the Holy Spirit within us, **enabling us to walk according to that new nature.**

This is a **progressive process** that takes place as we surrender to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

We received salvation entirely by faith. It is the gift from God. Not by works or merit but strictly by God's grace and mercy.

But **Romans 8:29** tells us that we have also been predestined to be conformed into the image of Jesus. Not just in heaven, but now, **here in this life**. The normal experience of the believer's life should be a progressive change towards looking more and more like Jesus in our thoughts, speech, and action.

It is God working through us, but it requires our cooperation **as well**. In fact, Peter notes in vs 5 that it takes **diligence on our part**.

Websters 1828 – diligence: constant effort to accomplish what is undertaken; exertion of body or mind without unnecessary delay or sloth.

Peter notes that it takes diligence in applying **7 virtues** to our Christian walk.

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith **virtue**, to virtue **knowledge**, **6** to knowledge **self-control**, to self-control **perseverance**, to perseverance **godliness**, **7** to godliness brotherly **kindness**, and to brotherly kindness **love**.

1. - **Virtue** points primarily to strength and valor. Peter may have had in mind the courage of the martyrs of his day.

The same is required of us today. We may not be facing a persecution as they did, but we must **add to our faith**, a strength and valor in standing for truth in a world filled with deception and hostility against God.

Now virtue would **also include** a life of moral excellence. In diligence we must stand for moral excellence in our lives as we seek to look more and more like Jesus.

2. - We are to supplement our virtue with **knowledge**. In other words, we aren't just to blindly have courage. But that courage is to be backed **or should I say strengthened** by a knowledge of spiritual truth.

- People commit a lot of evil act in the world involving what they would call courage. Such as suicide bombings. But they are demonically inspired acts, without any spiritual truth or knowledge.

How do we gain spiritual truth except by the diligent study of the scriptures and following its precepts. **It doesn't take diligence to merely read the word**. It takes diligence to read and apply to truth of the word to our lives.

- We are also to add to our knowledge – **self-control**. The Christian walk entails a lot of disciplines. A discipline of prayer, of Bible study, of a commitment to loving God and others, and a discipline of obedience in denying the fleshly appetites. In other words – a **discipline of self-control**.

An athlete understands the requirement of discipline in their life. Not only in their work out routine but also in every part of their life.

Knowing this, the Apostle Paul often likened the Christian walk to that of an athlete. Paul understood that being successful in our spiritual maturity required a **diligent application of self-control**. The same as that of an athlete.

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NKJV) — 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

The word used by Paul for **discipline actually means to strike a blow to or bruise his body**. To plummet himself into subjection. Now Paul was not indicating that he physically bruises himself. But he is **painting the picture of a need to beat down the flesh putting** it under subjection.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are to learn to die to the flesh and its demands.

- And to Self-Control, we are to add **Perseverance**. Meaning a patient endurance. In order to finish our race well, **we must run with endurance**. The Lord knows that there is only one way that we can grow in our endurance, that is to learn it through **facing adversity** in our lives. Therefore God allows those trials and tribulations in our lives in order to give us the opportunity to increase our endurance.

The order of these virtues are no coincidence. **Without faith, virtue, spiritual understanding, and self-control.** We would never have the ability to endure. We would be easily crushed, instead of being able to bear up under life's challenges.

- And we are to supplement **godliness to our** perseverance. In other word's we are to live as those who imitate Christ. **Living in the likeness or image of Jesus.**

We are here to be a witness and light in a dark world. Without godliness in our lives, there would be no resemblance to Jesus. **This can only take place in our lives as we surrender to the leading and power of the Holy Spirit. But we must pursue living a life of godliness with diligence.**

- The last 2 virtues listed really go hand in hand. Brotherly Kindness and Love. Brotherly kindness is the Greek word – Philadelphia. Which is a brotherly love and affection. But we are not just to stop at having a brotherly love for one another. We are to go to the extent **of having an Agape love for each other.** That is a sacrificial love that can only come from God. It is a love that is unconditional and enduring.

Do you see the progression in our Christian maturity as we diligently learn **supplement our faith with each of these characteristics of Christ.**

There is no such thing as neutral zone in the Christian life. We are either advancing in our conformity to looking and acting like Jesus or we are drifting away from that path.

That the reason that we need to pursue these things with all diligence. **Because we are prone to wonder off path.** Our natural bent is not having virtue, or growing in our relationship with Christ, or having self-control, endurance, or godliness. And it is certainly not our bent to love anyone other than ourselves.

Therefore it doesn't take much to get off course. We must continue pursuing these things with diligence. Let off the gas before the finish line, if you will. **And we will find ourselves failing to finish well.**

8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

One who is shortsighted is one who lives with only the present in mind. Not for the reality of what is eternal.

How deceitful is the allurement of momentary pleasures in this life. Complacency in our fight against sin will even **cause us to forget what our sin cost Jesus on the Cross**. And we will once again find ourselves seeking to find pleasure in those things for which Jesus suffered so much to save us from. Forgetting that we have been washed clean and purified, **only by His blood**.

10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; **11** for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Peter was not indicating that our salvation was in any way through works. But He is reminding us that **we are live a life honoring the Lord, out of our salvation**. If we remain pursuing these things with all diligence, we will be sure to hear those words “**well done thy good and faithful servant**”.

So I invite you to Consider Peter’s words and set in your heart to intentionally go beyond just being saved, **but diligently pursue a life of spiritual maturity**. A life that honors and represents the Lord in every way. **He himself provides everything we need in order to do so**.

Close in prayer.