

ADD TO YOUR FAITH

Construction of Christlike Character – 2 Peter 1:1-11

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WHY SHOULD WE STUDY THIS PASSAGE IN RELATION TO CHRISTLIKENESS?

- False Teachers have crept into the early church...
 - Preaching “libertine” lifestyle - a **libertine** is a person who “behaves without moral _____ or a sense of responsibility, especially in sexual matters.”
 - Encouraging a sensual lifestyle - satisfying the senses at the cost of everything else (2:2, 18)
 - Engaging in _____ (2:13-14)
 - Rejecting all _____ (2:10-12; 3:3)
 - Nourishing ____ through their teaching (2:1-2). Sin, enjoyed without repentance, calls into question salvation and destiny (1:8-11, 2:20-22).
- The answer to the issue: Christian maturity or Christlike Character

THE GRACIOUS AND GIVING GOD HAS _____ YOU, COMMANDED YOU, AND _____ YOU TO CONSTRUCT A GODLY LIFE (2 PETER 1:1-11).

The gracious and giving God has given you gifts to construct a godly life (2 Peter 1:1-4).

GOD HAS GIVEN YOU THE GOOD GIFT OF _____, BECAUSE OF JESUS’S SAVING RIGHTEOUSNESS (V.1).

- Throughout the Old Testament, God’s righteousness is linked with his work of _____, of salvation (Pss 22:31; 31:1; 35:24, 28; 40:10; Isa 42:6; 45:8, 13; 51:5–8; Mic 6:5; 7:9.) Here, Peter uses the term in much the same way, and links God’s righteousness with his saving activity.
- The _____ of God’s saving righteousness is none other than Jesus Christ. And in this verse, Jesus Christ is declared, quite plainly, to be God. He is called “Our God and Savior Jesus Christ.

GOD HAS GIVEN YOU _____ & _____, BECAUSE GOD HAS MADE HIMSELF KNOWN TO YOU THROUGH JESUS (v. 2). ANY LEVEL OF GRACE AND PEACE WE ENJOY IN LIFE AS BELIEVERS COMES TO US MEDIATED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

- Any level of grace and peace we enjoy in life as believers comes to us mediated through Jesus Christ.
- This grace and peace are ours “in the _____ of God and of Jesus our Lord.” Here, Peter refers to two distinct persons. We come to know God and know the Son at conversion, the moment we are born again. *John 17:3 - “This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”*
- If you aren’t experiencing peace in your life right now, why aren’t you? Could it be you aren’t intentionally deepening your knowledge of God and Christ by spending time with them through the Word?

GOD HAS GIVEN YOU _____ YOU NEED FOR CONSTRUCTING A GODLY LIFE, THROUGH GOD'S DIVINE POWER (v.3).

- Life and godliness: Peter likes using pairs of words, with the intent that the ideas be combined into one concept, not left separate. He is referring to _____ living.
- The person/agent behind the gift: The pronoun “His” could be referring back to either God or Jesus. Since Jesus is the closest name to the pronoun it would make sense for Jesus to be that person/agent. Regardless, Jesus is God, and God the Father is God, so we are on safe ground to say that _____ himself is the agent behind the gift.
- Peter also tells us the source of the gift: It is nothing short of the _____ of the agent, God. *The gift comes from the all-encompassing universe-making, star-breathing, atom-holding power of God.*
- Peter tells us the means by which the gift is received: it comes through the _____ of Him who called us. While the word “call” or “calling” may have a couple different nuances depending on the context, it often refers to *God’s call to an individual to salvation, which will result in that person responding positively in faith and repentance, and consequently in conversion.*
 - See Romans 8:30; 2 Peter 1:10; 1 Peter 5:10–11; 1 Corinthians 1:24–29

“Thus the knowledge of Jesus (i.e., coming to understand and acknowledge his significance), which was the basis of the reception of the equally honorable faith, is the means by which he, by his divine power, gives one all that is needed for a godly life.”
Peter H. Davids, The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006), 170.

GOD GIVES US _____ AND VERY GREAT PROMISES, BECAUSE OF CHRIST’S GLORY AND EXCELLENCE (v. 4)

- We have been called “to his own glory and excellence.” Another Petrine pair:

- **Glory:** refers to “Christ’s splendor and _____ as a divine being” (Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude*, vol. 37, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003), 293).
- **Virtue/Excellence:** The proper fulfillment of an object or person’s purpose or essential nature
- We have been called to salvation in order to reflect Christ’s glorious character. This ought to remind us of Rom. 8:29-30.

“When Christ calls people to himself, they perceive the beauty and loveliness of his moral character. His character becomes exceedingly attractive to them, and they trust God for their salvation...Believers will be morally transformed, but the foundation for their transformation is God’s grace.”

- We aren’t told what the promises are; Peter’s purpose isn’t to communicate to us specific promises, but rather to communicate that God himself has made promises to us, and he does so by means of Christ’s glorious character.

The promises of God are statements from Christ about how He will relate to His children. They show us God’s **intentions** for us. They set forth what He wants to do on our behalf. Furthermore, the promises of God show us God’s **disposition** toward us. If He did not care for us, He would not bother to help us.

Anything that God has stated as a **certainty** we can trust as a promise that He will **order** His universe according to that statement. (Jim Berg, *Essential Virtues*, 494-497, 548).

The gifts of God enable you to construct a godly life (v. 4).

*“by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may **become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.**” (2 Peter 1:4, ESV)*

- **“partakers of the divine nature”** — Through these gifts, you will be _____ perfected. Your character will be changed to reflect the character of Jesus. We will become like Jesus when we see him as he is (1 John 3:2); we will finally be conformed to the _____ of God’s Son (Rom. 8:29ff).
- **“Having escaped from the corruption”** — This is in the _____ tense because the preceding phrase is in a tense that communicates a future, unrealized situation - “*you may **become partakers of the divine nature.**”* Christlikeness for the believer is a future, unrealized event. And prior to that future, unrealized event, there is the event of “*escaping the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire*”
 - Corruption is “anything that is perishing because it is part of the _____ world order” (Rom 8:12; Col. 2:22; 1 Cor. 15:42; 2 Peter 2:12, 19).

- Why does corruption exist? “sinful desire.” Corruption exists in our world because of the evil desire of our parents, Adam and Eve, and our own sinful desires. What is corrupting my relationships, your home, your work place? In part, my ____ sinful desires.
- Truth: Corruption in our world can be _____!

God commands you to construct a godly life (2 Peter 1:5-7).

HOW DOES CONSTRUCTION OF A GODLY LIFE—FULL-GROWN MATURITY IN CHRIST—TAKE PLACE?

- **Simultaneously:** all of these virtues develop at the _____ time. You aren’t excused from loving until after you have developed brotherly kindness, etc.
- **Sequentially:** But there is an _____ of maturity.
 - **Example 1:** _____ must come before _____ if love is to “endure all things” (2 Pet. 1:7 with 1 Cor. 13:7).
 - **Example 2:** Self-control must come before *endurance*. A believer “will not endure mistreatment or pressure long if he has not learned first to say no to his own desires and passions.” (Berg, Kindle Locations 240-241).
 - **Illustration:** An _____’s parts are forming *simultaneously* (everything at once) but *sequentially* (brain develops, then heart to support brain and functions, etc.)
- **Sustained, _____ effort:**
 - 5 For this very reason, **make every effort** to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge (ESV)
 - 5 But also for this very reason, **giving all diligence**, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge (NKJV)
 - 5 And beside this, **giving all diligence**, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge (KJV)
 - 5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence**, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge (NASB)

LOOKING AT THE CONSTRUCTION PLANS: WHAT DOES A MATURE CHRISTIAN LIFE LOOK LIKE?

THE PLANS BEGIN WITH THE FOUNDATION OF _____ (v. 1, 5).

Remind yourself again that the foundation of this entire construction project has already been laid without any effort on your part. We show up at the construction site to look at the plans, and we find that God has already done the work in laying the foundation. The cement has been poured! Faith was given to us and then we exercised it the moment we trusted Christ (John 6:44; Matthew 6:13-17; Ephesians 2:8-9).

ADD TO YOUR FAITH, EXCELLENCE...

- a. Excellence is Greek word _____ (v. 3, 5).
- b. Philippians 4:8 - "If there is any *virtue/arete*, think on these things." Demonstrates the term is used in a manner equivalent to secular Greek authors. He is referring to anything that is morally upright.
 - i. At the heart of this word is the idea that the object in question is properly fulfilling its purpose; if it is, it is *arete*.
 1. What makes a knife excellent? Size? Shape? Color? Material? If a knife _____ well, it is an excellent knife.
 2. What makes a soldier excellent? Experience? Battles? Shape of gear? Miles traveled? If a soldier _____ well, he is an excellent soldier.
 - ii. So what makes an excellent human being? What makes a person *arete*?
 - A human being is an excellent human being, if he/she has the highest of moral character. After all, humans were made in the image of God to reflect the character of God to the rest of creation (Gen. 1:26-27).
- c. According to 1 Peter 2:9-10, why are believers a chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation, a people for God's possession? Look for the purpose clause: so that "we may _____ the ***excellencies***" of God.
 - a. That purpose is to proclaim the fact that God is an _____ God. We proclaim that truth verbally, and we proclaim that truth practically, by living out godly character, by looking like Jesus (1 Peter 2:11-12).
 - b. **Add to your faith excellence: "Cultivate a God-mandated _____ to develop and display the character of Jesus Christ."**

ADD TO EXCELLENCE, KNOWLEDGE...

- Knowledge as defined from 2 Peter 1:2, 3, 8.
- The quality of _____ **the person, words, and ways of God through Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18) by faithfully _____ the Word of God.**

ADD TO KNOWLEDGE, SELF-CONTROL...

- Self-control means “to have _____ or dominion over oneself.” Opposite: self-indulgence.
- It is “that strength of soul by which a man takes hold of himself, takes a grip of himself, is in full control and _____ of himself, so that he can restrain every evil desire.” Self-control is getting good at saying “___!” to yourself.
- **Self-control is _____ obeying God’s Word in the power of God’s Spirit, rather than obeying your sinful flesh (Gal 5:16).**
 - If you choose to live moment-by-moment in obedience to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, you _____ fulfill the sinful desires of your flesh (cf. Gal. 5:22-23).

The development process is pretty straightforward. At every crossroad where [you] must decide whether [you] will please [yourself] or please Christ in order to manifest a Christlike quality, [you] must then die to [yourself] (Luke 9:23–24; 1 Corinthians 9:24–27) in order to receive the divine help—the grace—to carry out the right choice (1 Peter 5:5; 2 Corinthians 9:8). If [you have] already failed to do so, [you] must repent of [your] sinful choice. This Spirit-enabled self-denial [then] fuels the discipline of [your] life toward the Christlike excellencies [you seek] to emulate. (Berg, Jim, Essential Virtues (Kindle Locations 1181-1185).

ADD TO SELF-CONTROL, ENDURANCE...

- Endurance is the “ability to remain faithful to God under pressure because your _____ looks continually to God in faith for strength and reward” (Berg, Kindle Locations 1478-1479).
- Endurance is God-sustained _____ under external pressure (James 1:2-4). “There predominates in [this word] the concept of the courageous endurance which manfully defies evil. Unlike patience, it thus has an active content. It includes _____ and energetic resistance to hostile power, though with no assertion [or guarantee] of the success of this resistance” (Berg, Kindle Locations 1447-1450).

ADD TO ENDURANCE, GODLINESS...

- Godliness is a comprehensive term (2 Peter 1:3; 2 Peter 3:11-12).
- Greek word for “*authentic piety or true religion—the kind that that was consistently lived whether in the home, the church, or the marketplace.*”
- NT equivalent = “*the _____ of the Lord,*” that “*awareness of God that evokes reverence for Him, **departure** from evil, and a life lived on His behalf.*”
- Godliness is “*a God-fearing lifestyle that _____ righteousness and opposes evil.*”
- Godliness is “*descriptive of the _____ state of the individual with regard to God—the right state of his mind, of his heart, and of his life—of his thoughts, his affections, and his*

conduct—the right way of thinking, feeling, and acting towards God.” (Scottish preacher John Brown)

- Godliness “*is a _____, personal relationship with God that manifests itself in actions consistent with Who God is and with what He is doing in the earth.*” (Quotations taken from Berg, *Essential Virtues* (Kindle Locations 1777-1785)).
 - Devotion = **arete/excellence + knowledge**
 - Discipline = **self-control + endurance**
 - Godliness = **Devotion + Discipline**
 - Encouragement
 - a. Godliness is fueled by vigorous, Spirit-produced **affection** for Jesus Christ.
 - b. Godliness takes **time** — this will be a lifelong pursuit.
 - c. Godliness takes **intentionality**.
 - d. Pursuing Godliness may feel **awkward** at first.

ADD TO GODLINESS, BROTHERLY KINDNESS...

- a. *φιλαδελφία* or *philadelphia* — “*brotherly affection*”
- b. Shocking word in NT — word reserved only “for _____ relatives” (NT usage — Romans 12:10; Heb. 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Thess. 4:9)
- c. Brotherly Kindness is “**a God-engendered _____ for and _____ to those in the ‘household of faith.’**”
 - “But what do I have in Common with him/her?” (Rev. 5:9; Eph. 4:5-6) — “One _____, one _____, one _____, one God and _____ of all”

Dispositions of brotherly kindness — the _____

Be Devoted—Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor (Rom. 12:10, NASB).

Be others-focused Give preference to **one another** in honor (Rom. 12:10, NASB). Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard **one another** as more important than yourselves (Philippians 2:3 NASB)

Be like-minded, living in harmony—May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with **one another** [or to be like-minded with one another], in accord with Christ Jesus (Rom. 15:5).

Be kind— Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to **one another**, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Eph. 4:31-32).

Be Compassionate— Be... to **one another**, tenderhearted (Eph. 4:32)

Be humble— Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward *one another*, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5)

Duties of brotherly kindness — the _____

Edify others — “So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.” (Romans 14:19, NASB) — See Eph. 4:11-16 - *build them up in Christ - Speaking the truth in love*

Accept others — “Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to/FOR the glory of God.” (Romans 15:7, NASB)

Be patient with others/forbear with others “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,” (Ephesians 4:2, NASB); “bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” (Colossians 3:13, NASB)

Submit to others — “and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” (Ephesians 5:21, NASB)

Caution/reprove others — “And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.” (Romans 15:14, NASB)

Forgive others “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:32, NASB)

Be 100% honest with others — “Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,” (Colossians 3:9, NASB)

Comfort others — “Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thessalonians 4:18, NASB)

Motivate others to Christlike living — “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” (Hebrews 10:24, NASB) Takes time and energy to consider how to motivate others. Takes skill. Takes intentionality, Takes determination.

Confess sins one to another— “Therefore, confess your sins to one another” (James 5:16, NASB)

Pray for others “...and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” (James 5:16, NASB)

Give to others — “Be hospitable to one another without complaint.” (1 Peter 4:9, NASB)

Do not badmouth others — “Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it.” (James 4:11, NASB)

Do not complain about others — “Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.” (James 5:9, NASB)

ADD TO BROTHERLY KINDNESS, LOVE.

- There is no more clear definition of love than the actions described in 1 Corinthians 13:1-7

- The ultimate demonstration of love: God in Christ — Rom. 5:8, Eph. 5:2; 2 Thess 2:16; Rev. 1:5.

God motivates you to construct a godly life (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Benefit #1: Building these qualities is the cure for a stalled out and _____ Christian life.

- **Have you ever felt “stalled out” in your Christian life? Ever felt like you were going nowhere, and you were going there fast?** This idea is what Peter is saying we can avoid, by adding these qualities. He says in verse 8, that building these qualities into your character proves that your faith is not “barren... in the knowledge of God.” It isn’t _____; he uses the word *argos* which means “ineffective.” The idea is that your faith isn’t idle or _____. When you add these qualities, your faith works hard, producing good deeds.

Benefit #2: Adding these virtues is the path to _____ knowing Christ.

- He says in verse 8 that we won’t be “unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Adding these qualities ensures that our knowledge of Jesus Christ will _____; it will produce _____. As we add these qualities to our life, the knowledge we gained of Jesus Christ at our conversion will grow more intimate and deeper. **And if eternal life is knowing God and knowing Jesus, as Christ himself said, than this is a benefit to be valued** (John 17:3).

Benefit #3: Adding these virtues is crucial for wisdom and discernment.

- Peter says in verse 9 that lacking these qualities results in devastating consequences. Individuals who fail to develop these qualities become “shortsighted, even to blindness.” The idea here is they _____ their eyes to what is important. This results in disoriented priorities. Whatever is trivial and temporal, what is up close, or near to the sight, appears really big and important.
- But what is truly important and of eternal value seems very small, distant, almost invisible, and therefore, unimportant.
- Are your priorities in life reflecting the realities of eternity? If they aren’t, why is that? Could it be that you aren’t adding these qualities to your life, that you have forgotten your purpose for existing as a believer?

Benefit #4: Adding these qualities become a basis for assurance of salvation.

- Verse 9, one who doesn’t add these qualities has “forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.” His shortsightedness is directly related to the fact that he has put out of his mind that his sins have been forgiven.

- Verse 10 "be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election" to salvation.
 - **Illustration:** If the alarm going off when you walk out of a store after purchasing something, an individual asks you for a receipt. They are asking you to produce something that demonstrates you own the products that you say are now yours.
 - Peter is doing something similar: "You say you are a believer, that salvation is yours? Then produce these qualities that are evidence you own the salvation you say is yours in Christ."
 - "Lack of spiritual growth is a sign of spiritual death." If you do the math, it looks like this:
 - A Professing Believer + Zero Growth = An Unbeliever.

Benefit #5: Adding these virtues is a Requirement for Stability.

V. 10: "If you practice these things you will never fall". The word fall refers to forsaking the faith, committing apostasy, abandoning Jesus. 2 Peter is written in a context warning about false teachers, deceptive men who themselves have denied the Master who bought them (2:1). This is not referring to a loss of salvation, but to an apostate, one who made a profession of faith, who even produced a manner of fruit, but who eventually rejected Christ, engaging in sin without repentance, and teaching heresies. When someone commits apostasy, they have not lost their salvation; rather they are evidencing that they never had salvation to begin with. Peter is saying that believers evidence their salvation by producing these qualities, and thus, are incapable of apostasy, because they are truly believers.

Benefit #6: Adding these virtues results in Eagerly Anticipating the Return of Jesus.

Remember in verse 5 that the main verb was "add to your faith." When we come verse 11, we see the same word used in an entirely different context. Peter says that if we add these qualities to our faith, then a rich and lavish welcome will be added to us in eternity at our death. If we are faithful to give evidence of our salvation by producing these qualities, then when we see Jesus, that reunion will not be one of shame, or regret, or rebuke. It will be a full and lavish welcome, a welcome fitting for a child of God, fitting a co-heir with King Jesus.

Summary:

Your heavenly Father has enabled you, commanded you, and motivated you to construct a godly live. So "make every effort" to construct a godly life by God's grace.
