

Raising the Sails
Growth Group Discussion
2 Peter 1:5-11

Intro questions

- Have you ever had any experience with sailing? If so, please share about it. If not, what is one pastime you enjoy?
- In what ways do you think that sailing provides a metaphor for our spiritual life?

1. Read 2 Peter 1:5-9, then discuss the following.

- What jumps out at you when you read this passage? Any questions, or general impressions, or things that puzzle you?
- In v. 5, what is “this very reason,” to which Peter alludes?
- How do you feel about Peter’s instruction to “make every effort...”?
- On Sunday, Pastor Josh talked about wrestling with the tension between grace and effort. How do you feel about this tension? Have you wrestled with it? Please share.
- The big idea that Pastor Josh drew from this passage was the following: **In light of the gift we have received, we must continually pursue spiritual growth.**
 - What has it looked like in your journey to pursue spiritual growth? What practices or experiences have most helped you to grow?
 - Now that we’ve looked at the over-arching message of this passage, how does the *sailing* metaphor help us understand what God asks of us, and how he empowers us to do it?
 - How does the pursuit of spiritual growth keep us from becoming “ineffective and unproductive” in our knowledge of Jesus (v. 8)? Or, to frame the question in a positive way, how does spiritual growth enable us to be effective and productive in our knowledge of Jesus?
 - Why do you think our default—absent the pursuit of spiritual growth—is toward being ineffective and unproductive?
 - In v. 9, Peter implies that the key to continually growing is **remembering** how we have been cleansed from our sins. As we call to mind the gospel, how does it empower and motivate spiritual growth?
- The list of qualities that Peter tells us to pursue (vv. 5-7) is below, along with some definitions given in the sermon. Spend some time with these, giving more time to the ones your group feels more drawn to. *Which of these do you have a hard time understanding or practicing? What makes it hard to embrace the quality in question?*
 - Goodness: reflecting the attractive character of Christ
 - Knowledge: the ability to discern God’s will and orient your life around it
 - Self-control: the ability to restrain unhealthy impulses
 - Perseverance: enduring present difficulty, in light of a better future
 - Godliness: reverence, fear of the Lord
 - Mutual affection: intentionally developing affection for other followers of Jesus
 - Love: agape, God-like love
 - Which of these qualities do you feel that you particularly need help with? How can our group help you?

2. Read 2 Peter 1:10-11, then discuss the following.

- What do you think is meant by the terms “calling” and “election?”
- What does Peter mean to “confirm” your calling and election?
- How does this effort keep us from stumbling, and why does that matter?
- Pastor Josh described this principle by saying, **“how we handle spiritual growth will ultimately reveal what path we’re walking.”** Do you think this is an accurate summary of what Peter is saying? Why or why not?
- What motivation do you see in these verses for actively pursuing spiritual growth?

3. Prayer

- Pray for one another to take the action steps that you have shared, and to experience Jesus relationally as you do so.
- Share and pray about whatever other needs and concerns are weighing on your minds.