“5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” (2 Peter 1:5-7, KJV).

ADD TO YOUR FAITH

Introduction

Loved ones, in a world of rising costs, we see the need of working to obtain financial security. This lesson deals with a far more important kind of security—spiritual security!

IN OUR TEXT we are told to give all diligence to add seven things to our faith. This means to zealously and earnestly work at it.

Growing to be a strong Christian does not happen overnight. It requires time, patience, and hard work.

Man is a free moral agent, and we are to secure our faith. Many Christians are forever weak and some fall away because they fail to secure their faith by adding these seven graces to their lives.

God's calling and election is done through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). It is our choice to obey initially, and our choice to make firm that calling.

Let's examine these great things which we must add to our faith.

Faith In Jesus Is The Foundation

Faith in God and His Son is the assurance of our hope in Christ and that upon which we build.

“Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

In a world where evolution is accepted and atheists abound, faith that God exists is needed and is a necessity. Faith is the motivation that leads us to do the works of God.

"For we walk by faith not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).

It was said concerning Abraham, “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” (James 2:22).

Our faith should grow: “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth” (2 Thess. 1:3).

Where does one acquire faith? It comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). This is why Bible study is so important to one's growth!

1. We Should Add Virtue To Our Faith!

Virtue, here, refers to the courage to stand up for our faith and what is right.

There is always pressure around us to do like others, so many Christians will NOT stand up for what they believe.

The world may accept homosexuality, drinking, gambling, drugs, fornication, and the like, but the Christian cannot condone such immorality.

The world may say, "Worship any way you please at the church of your choice," but the Christian should have the courage to proclaim the one faith and the one body of the Bible (Eph. 4:4-6).

Here are some people who lacked virtue: “42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42).

The Christian will face trials, persecutions, problems, temptations, and ridicule. Let us never waver from our faith, but have the courage to always do what is right!

2. We Should Add Knowledge To Our Virtue!

Many Christians are not strong for they lack knowledge of God's will. Concerning the children of Israel, God said through the prophet,

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children” (Hosea 4:6).

How can we know right from wrong, truth from error, without knowledge of the Bible? To lack knowledge is to be easily led astray!

The Apostle Peter therefore encourages us: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Peter 2:2).

Again Peter says, "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:18).

To acquire knowledge we must, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).

3. We Should Add Temperance To Our Knowledge!

Temperance is self-control. We need to be constantly in control of our thoughts, tongue, temper, and actions.

Without self-control, one will easily commit sin.

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (James 1:14).

We must control our passions and desires so that we are not drawn away.

"25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:25-27).

God will not remove temptation, but will help us through it. It is our part to bear the temptation, knowing it will never be more than we can handle (1 Cor. 10:13).

Our society is one of instant gratification. Let us learn to control ourselves that we might avoid sin.

4. We Should Add Patience To Our Temperance!

Patience involves more than temperance. It involves endurance and perseverance.

Patience is needed to endure the problems one will face in life. "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:3-4).

Job is a good example of patience (James 5:11).

We do not always know why suffering and afflictions come, but let us never blame God and turn away from Him during those times. He is the only one who can help us through them.

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man” (James 1:13).

God can use adversity for our own good, or to accomplish His purposes. Joseph is a good example (Gen. 45:5-7).

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).

We have to be patience to inherit God's promises (Heb. 6:12).

“7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:7-8).

Since our Creator and sustainer is in control of all things, we ought to be patient because nothing will happen until God is ready for it to happen.

5. We Should Add Godliness To Our Patience!

Godliness is piety and respect for God exhibited in our life.

Every day our society is becoming more godless and immoral.

Right and wrong are NOT determined by society under a given situation, but rather by absolute rules given by God.

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Example: Lying is always wrong!

"10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness” (2 Peter 3:10-11).

6. We Should Add Brotherly Kindness To Our Godliness!

Brotherly kindness is simply loving and being kind to others.

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently” (1 Peter 1:22).

We should feel nearness, like that of a family, for others in Christ. We may not always agree, but our love for each other will keep us agreeable and able to work out our differences.

Love will express itself in kindness as Paul said, “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. 4:32).

Some Christians act so unfriendly that one would think they were weaned on a sour pickle!

To show brotherly kindness, we encourage you to talk to the members, get to know them personally, and be with them socially.

7. We Should Add Charity To Our Brotherly Kindness!

Charity is another word for love. There are different Greek words for love. The word "love" here is the kind that seeks the best for others — agape).

You are to love:

a. “The Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matthew 22:37).

b. “Thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:39).

c. “Your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44).

d. Husbands, “love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).

e. Wives, love your husband and love your children (Titus 2:4).

“12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; 13 forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness” (Colossians 3:12-14).

This kind of love can be learned and will grow, but we must work at it!

Conclusion

“8 For if 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. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:8-11).

In this passage we see the benefits received by adding these graces to our faith. We will not be barren or unfruitful. These graces will keep us from being spiritually blind. We will never fall, and we will enter into heaven.

Salvation is more than just believing and being baptized. We must constantly be growing by adding these things or we will fail and not enter heaven.

Invitation