

## Diligently Seeking and Applying Christians Virtues

Text: 2 Peter 1:1-11

### Introduction:

1. The apostle Peter, in writing to Christians, has given us words of wisdom as to how to live **abundantly** and in the **true knowledge** of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - a. Known as **Christian virtues** – The moral excellence and righteousness; goodness that God wants us to have through the **knowledge** of Him.
2. Peter is telling us today:
  - a. That **Grace** and **peace** is multiplied to us *in the **knowledge** of God and Jesus Christ. (v2)*
  - b. That He has given **us everything** that pertains to **life** and **godliness** through *the true **knowledge** of Him. (v3)*
  - c. That He has also granted to us His **precious promises** *through this **knowledge**. (v4)*
3. The apostle Peter has also told us, as well as those Christians in the first century, that with all diligence:

### I. We Are To Seek And Apply To Our Faith

- A. **Moral excellence (or virtue) (v5)**
  1. Primarily means courage, a grace particularly needed in the hostile world of the period when Peter wrote.
  2. In today's world the Christian needs courage or fortitude, to enable us to profess our faith before men, especially in these times of persecution by the ungodly.
- B. **Knowledge (v5)**
  1. This means to faithfully continue in our studies of God's Word.
  2. The knowledge here means **spiritual discernment** as to what is right and what is wrong **in all things**.
- C. **Self-control (or temperance) (v6)**
  1. The Greek word means *the ability to **take a grip** of one's self – or get a grip on yourself*.
  2. This means to have the mastery over all our evil inclinations and appetites. We are to allow none of them to obtain control over us.
- D. **Perseverance (or patience) (v6)**
  1. In the New Testament, this word carries the thought of *endurance* and *steadfast* continuity in faithful service.
  2. Jesus said, *"By your endurance you will gain your lives."* – **Luke 21:19** – **eternal life awaits for the one who endures until the end.**
  3. *"For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,"* - **Hebrews 3:14** – **patiently enduring as our Lord and Savior did as He went to the cross with the assurance of the joy that was to be his on the other side of the cross.**
  4. The apostle Paul has told us: *"Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary."* –

**Galatians 6:9** – continuing on and persevering and not giving up because of the great promises that God has for us.

E. **Godliness (v6)**

1. This is the quality of honoring one's duties to God, standing in this list even higher than duties to one's fellow man.
2. This conforms to the Savior's great pronouncement that the first and great commandment is to love God, and the second is to love man.  
– **Mark 12:30-31**
3. Important as the love to man assuredly is, it is secondary to the duty of loving God and obeying his commandments.
4. It is amazing that in the culture of the present day, religious duties are reduced in importance to a secondary status, and humanitarian duties have been elevated to the status that really belongs to religious duties. (*A social gospel rather than a spiritual gospel*)

F. **Brotherly kindness (v7)**

1. This is from [*Greek: philadelphia*], founded on the Greek term [*philo*], meaning the love of brothers.
2. In non-Christian context it refers to the natural affection between family members. In Christian contexts, however, it speaks of the tender feelings and loving actions among believers.
3. Jesus spoke of the ties among his followers that were even stronger than biological family relationships (**Luke 18:29-30**) "*And He said to them, Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.*"

G. **Love (v7)**

1. "*This love ([**Greek: agape**]) is the highest type of love; it is more inclusive than [**Greek: philadelphia**], and is the kind of love God has for sinful, unworthy men.*" The heart element which gives brotherly kindness its power and sweetness.
2. Paul began his list of the fruits of the Spirit with love (**Galatians 5:22**); Peter ends his with love. It is like a chain; each link holds fast to its fellow and is a part of the whole.

II. **Knowing That These Qualities Must Be Ours And Increasing (v8)**

A. They will render us successful (not useless). (**v8**)

1. In doing God's will and not our own.
2. In remaining on the narrow path to eternal life.

B. They will produce fruit (**v8**)

1. Our fruits from this newfound knowledge will be self-evident and affect our very lives.
  - a. Our attitude will be different.
  - b. Our total outlook on life will be different.
  - c. Our total outlook on the rest of the world will be different.

2. Our destiny will be different than the rest of the world, who do not name Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- C. Making more certain about our calling as long as we practice what we have learned. (v10)
  1. Continuing to do our new found knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  2. Working out our salvation in fear and trembling – **Philippians 2:12**
- D. They will prevent us from stumbling as long as we practice what we have learned. (v10)
- E. Providing the way into the entrance of the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. (v11)
  1. “*The eternal kingdom*” is the kingdom in its final manifestation, as mentioned in **2 Peter 3:13**
- F. Peter underlines the importance of working hard at spiritual growth.
  1. Although the power comes from God, we must make every effort to avail ourselves of it.
  2. Failure to do so may result in our failure to “*receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom.*”

**Conclusion:**

1. The apostle Peter is exhorting us today to diligently seek and apply to our lives the virtues of Christianity, as shown, in these first few verses of **2 Peter**.
2. Through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are to apply these virtues to our heart as we continue in our walk with our Lord.
3. By so doing we have a great promise that if these are working in our lives and increasing we will never stumble as we continue down that path that leads to eternal life.