

# Working Out Your Salvation

## The Wonder and Mystery of Sanctification

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February 26, 2017

### Part 8- Being Diligent about His Calling and Choosing You

#### 2 Peter 1:1-11

**1** Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, 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** seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

**4** For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

**5** Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge,

**6** and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness,

**7** and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love.

**8** For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**9** For he who lacks these *qualities* is blind *or* short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins.

**10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

**11** for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

To the Glory of God

Now there has been much written about “paganism” over the years, but a lot of it is just myth. First of all, paganism is *not* the *absence* of religion. Most pagans are *very* religious people. In fact, pagans are far more dedicated to their religious beliefs than most people who would hold themselves out to be Christians in our day. For example, the pagans which inhabited the land of Canaan and Egypt during the days of Moses and Joshua *routinely* sacrificed their own children to appease the false gods so they could have good harvests or to prevent a drought. And in **Leviticus 18:2-5**, we read this:

**2 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'I am the Lord your God.**

**3 'You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes.**

**4 'You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the Lord your God.**

**5 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord.**

So here, in **Leviticus 18**, God began to establish a *difference*; He began to make a *distinction* between the behavior of *His* people and the people who don't know the one, true, and living God, and who worship man-made and false gods. And this *departure* from the daily activities of the deceived masses, who are pagans, and the Call of God to His people to live their lives in *contradistinction* to the way that the people of Egypt and Canaan lived, is called “Holiness”. And that is why **Leviticus** puts forth what is called “The Holiness Code”, or the visible and tangible manifestation of what the Call to Holiness looked like under the “First” or the “Old” Covenant. So, right after God told them *not* to live according to the ways of the pagans, God told His people:

**4 'You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am the Lord your God.**

**5 'So you shall keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord.**

... meaning that, before Jesus came, the Standard of “Right” and “Wrong”, and the Standard of genuine “Morality” was what God

revealed to them in the first five Books of Moses. And, in the verses that followed, in **Leviticus 18**, God, through Moses, began to *delineate* the specific acts that the pagans of both Egypt and Canaan were engaged in that was now forbidden to the Jew. And among them was:

- ✓ Sexual intimacy with blood relatives (Incest) (**Leviticus 18:6-27**)
- ✓ Being intimate with a rival wife (Polygamy) (**Leviticus 18:18**)
- ✓ Being intimate during menstrual cycles (**Leviticus 18:19**)
- ✓ Adultery (**Leviticus 18:20**)
- ✓ Being intimate with animals (Bestiality) (**Leviticus 18:23**)
- ✓ Being intimate with people of the same sex (Homosexuality) (**Leviticus 18:22**)
- ✓ Killing our children (Abortion/Infanticide) (**Leviticus 18:21**)

And then, later on, God revealed to His people very clear and specific Commands concerning how they were to behave concerning their money and their possessions and how to raise their children and how to relate to other people and how to treat their wives and how to conduct business and even how Government should operate. And then look what God said next:

#### **Leviticus 18:24-25**

**24 'Do not defile yourselves by any of these things; for by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled.**

**25 'For the land has become defiled, therefore I have brought its punishment upon it, so the land has spewed out its inhabitants.**

... so, the *reason* that God sent Divine Judgment to Egypt, and the *reason* that God sent Joshua into the land to destroy the people of Canaan was because...

**... by all these the nations which I am casting out before you have become defiled.**

So, it was their sinful behavior that so insulted God and His Glory that *caused* God to destroy these nations. And then God gave His Own people a very solemn Warning:

### **Leviticus 18:26-30**

**26 'But as for you, you are to keep My statutes and My judgments and shall not do any of these abominations, *neither* the native, nor the alien who sojourns among you**

**27 (for the men of the land who have been before you have done all these abominations, and the land has become defiled);**

**28 so that the land will not spew you out, should you defile it, as it has spewed out the nation which has been before you.**

**29 'For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do *so* shall be cut off from among their people.**

**30 'Thus you are to keep My charge, that you do not practice any of the abominable customs which have been practiced before you, so as not to defile yourselves with them; I am the Lord your God.'"**

So, God says here that even though He has called them to be His people, if the Jew begins to behave like the Egyptians and Canaanites, God will do to the Jew what He did to these ancient civilizations and there will be no distinction, no difference, in the way that God sees them and treats them.

**For whoever does any of these abominations, those persons who do *so* shall be cut off from among their people.**

So, if they insist on living as pagans, God will treat them as pagans. But if they wish to be the people of God, then they must *abandon* the "ways" or the "customs" of the pagans and *conform* to the Divine Standard that God graciously revealed to them. And this ongoing and relentless "abandoning" and this "conformity" to God's revealed Standard is called "Holiness".

And from this we rightly conclude that the way people "live their normal daily lives" testifies unmistakably to who they really "are". If people live in accord with the fallen desires of the flesh, they are "pagans". They are conforming to the pattern of these ancient civilizations that God destroyed. And, if they live in conformity to God's revealed Standards, they testify that they have been set free from those carnal lusts by the miracle of the New Birth and are God's people.

Now we see the connection between what we believe and how we live our lives, between Belief and Behavior, between Theology and

Doxology. If we truly believe, if we have been graciously chosen by God and have been sovereignly regenerated by Grace through Faith alone, apart from any and all human works, if we have been granted the gift of faith where we have repented of our sins and trusted in Christ and in His finished Work for Forgiveness and Salvation, then that Belief will radically *transform* what we "think". And the way we think will radically *transform* what we "love", and what we love will radically *transform* what we "choose", and what we choose will radically *transform* "the way we live our daily lives".

Under the infinitely superior New Covenant, "who" and "what" we love dictates how we live our lives. And the miracle of the New Birth causes us to love God and to love the things of God. And it is that "*new love*" that fuels both our "desire/will" and our "ability/power" to act contrary to the impulses of our fallen flesh, and to live *distinct* from the lost unsaved world. And the process whereby we resist the dictates of our unredeemed flesh and live according to God's revealed Stand in both the Old and New Covenants is our progressive Sanctification.

So, how we conduct ourselves in our sexuality and in our finances and how we see all of life and how we raise our children and how we conduct business and how we treat our wives and how we act toward other people, and our disposition to the poor and the weak and the helpless, and even our relationship with Government is the unmistakable, unarguable, undeniable proof of what God has either "done" or "not done" *inside* of us.

"Who we are", as either genuinely "born from above" bond-slaves of Christ or as remaining the fallen sons of Adam, determines *how* we live our lives. And the way we live our lives determines whether we are "pagans" or "God's people".

So, "Paganism" is *not* that we don't have Technology or Science or Medicine or Literature. Paganism is *not* that we are ignorant or illiterate or backwards. Paganism is being a slave to our carnal desires and then obeying them, *gladly*. Paganism is being very cruelly "driven" by our fallen lusts so that we think and believe and behave like the people of ancient Egypt and Canaan. And being God's people is seeing and celebrating Jesus as the fairest of ten thousand to our soul and living our lives to His Glory.

And that means that "Holiness" would be defined like this:

Being gifted with the desire and ability to see Jesus in His magnificent Glory and treasuring what we see to the end that our reasonable response is that we struggle against the lusts of our flesh, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, to be humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of Scripture in our daily lives,  
all to the Glory of God

And this is *exactly* what the Apostle Paul had in mind when he wrote this in **2 Corinthians 3:16-18**:

**16** but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

**17** Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, *there* is liberty.

**18** But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

... and then he went into even *greater* detail when he said this in **2 Corinthians 4:1-6**:

**1** Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart,

**2** but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

**3** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

**4** in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

**5** For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake.

**6** For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

"Salvation", in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, is to be given the distinct privilege and the high honor to have the scales sovereignly removed from our eyes so that we may behold the magnificence of God's Glory in

the Face of Jesus Christ. And God does that by the Life, Death, and Resurrection of His perfectly sinless Son, Jesus Christ.

And then, "Sanctification", in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, is after having been given that gift of "seeing" in Salvation, we are changed, into that same Image, from one realm of Glory to the next, even as by the Lord Himself, Who is that Spirit.

So, all those who truly "see", change. Those who truly "behold", are transformed. Now it isn't their fault, it wasn't their idea, they can't take any credit for it, they didn't originate it. The normal and natural by-product of "beholding" God in His Glory is love, a deep and abiding love for God and a persevering love for the things of God. And the by-product of loving God and all that God is and all that God is doing is seeking to bring Him Glory in the way we live our lives.

So, those whose eyes are open *cannot* continue to live as pagans, who live in the dark and who live according to the dictates of their own hearts, and who worship man-made idols and false gods who cannot see, who cannot hear, who cannot answer prayer, who cannot forgive a single sin, or save a single soul.

And this is the missing ingredient with many in the modern Church- they have never seen God's Glory in the Face of Christ. And so, they remain in their sins. They have never beheld the precious and magnificent Promises of Who God is and what God has done in, by, and through the Lord Christ- and so they play with religious trinkets and they dance around a golden calf. They have never been stunned by the reality of the biblical Gospel- and so they play church and are not changed into His Image.

Worldly, carnal, and shallow preaching by the modern day "pillow prophets" produce nothing but worldly, carnal, and shallow people who want more of the world, who crave more and more carnality, as they sink deeper and deeper into sensual shallowness.

And this is why very few who lay claim to being born again actually begin to engage into the Fellowship of the Church. They dabble with irregular attendance as they limp through this life burdened by habitual carnality. But they never experience the joy and the freedom and the victory of being held accountable to the other members of Christ's Body to live lives that testify they are pursuing Holiness on purpose.

I am sad to report to you that the largest group that today occupies the pews of the modern Church are *not* those who hunger and thirst after Righteousness, it is *not* those who pant after God as the deer pants after the water-brooks, and it is *not* those who wander the streets at night "seeking Him Whom their souls loves". The largest group in the visible, modern church are those who are unbent, unbowed, unbroken, and unchanged, and yet who are convinced they have been born again because at one time in their lives they "walked an aisle", or they "raised their hand", or they "went down front", and they "prayed a prayer".

But they have never once beheld the Glory of God in the Face of Jesu Christ, and so, they are not changed into that same Image. So, the "salvation" they lay claim to does not result in their progressive Holiness. And, as these people come to Church, they demand attention. They want to be the center of all that God is and all that God does, and so they demand to be first and they demand to be praised and they demand to be made much of and they demand to be entertained.

When the Church proclaims a "lesser gospel" that has removed essential elements like the Radical Ruination of Mankind through the Fall, Confession of Sin, Repentance, the Blood Atonement, the Justice of God in damning unrepentant rebels, the Nature of True Conversion, the Beauty of a life of Self-Denial, and the relentless pursuit of Biblical Holiness after Conversion, all we have left is a feel good, bubble gum, happy-happy, shallow, frivolous humanly engineered man-made psychological "morality" that cannot transform a single nature, forgive a single sin, or save a single soul.

And the burden of the church to keep people like that entertained costs them everything. Because once they begin to neglect the fundamental elements of the Biblical Gospel in order to attract large groups of unsaved or lukewarm tares, they can never insert those elements again. So, they continue on this "death spiral" of *minimizing*, or outright *ignoring*, the radical Demands of Jesus on all who will come after Him like:

- ✓ Denying himself
- ✓ Taking up his cross
- ✓ Following Jesus
- ✓ Pursuing Holiness on purpose



These religious "Social Clubs" come up with ever new and innovative activities designed to meet the "felt needs" of people who have never beheld God's Glory. This kind of "church" then becomes "activity-driven", with fun and entertaining programs for every age group, as they continue to grow with masses of unwashed and unconverted people. But the leadership of such a religious organization always has to be careful to repackage the glorious Gospel of God so as not to offend the sensibilities of these weak and effeminate "pew sitters".

Thus, Christ's overcoming Church, the crown jewel of all that Christ did as He screamed in agony on the Cross, willfully and gladly, sets aside the earthshaking Truths of Scripture and the world-changing orthodoxy of 2,000 years of advancement around the world, and they become ashamed of the Old Rugged Cross, they hide their eyes from the plain meaning of the text, and they stop their ears to the Call for saved people to pursue Holiness, and godless materialistic pragmatism becomes the rule of the day.

But I believe with all my heart that God is raising up a people who will not be content with the mess that the American Church has descended into. God has a people who have been called and chosen. They aren't important people, but they're His. They aren't influential people as the world measures influence, but when they cry to Him, the Owner and the Creator of the Universe hears them. Here is a snapshot of their attributes:

## **2 Corinthians 4:8-11**

**8** *we are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing;

**9** persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

**10** always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

**11** For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

The Apostle Peter said these people are:

## **1 Peter 2:9b-10**

**9 ... A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**

**10 for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.**

Now, this is the final Message on Sanctification, and so, Lord willing, next week, we will get back into our "journey" through the **Gospel of Luke**. And the main issue that I have been trying to emphasize in this series is that what we "do" flows out from who we "are". And so, what God has made us to "be" through the miracle of the New Birth is the *catalyst* to *how* we live our lives. And nobody teaches this better than the Apostle Peter.

Now in the Passage in **2 Peter** that Brother Andy read to us, Peter says in verse 1 that he wrote this Epistle,

**... To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours ...**

This means that Peter wrote this Epistle to the people to whom God had given the very *same* faith as He had given to the Apostles. So, what we believe and what we teach and what we trust in and what we hope for and what we suffer through and what we endure and what we cherish and what we look forward to in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is the *same* as the Apostles.

The Christian Church has already been established, and what it means to be a "Christian" has already been received, and it has been written down and explained and it has been verified as being of Divine Origin. So, those of us who are saved today are *not* tasked with the responsibility to receive a "new" Revelation or create "new" Doctrines or formulate "new" Beliefs or create a "new" religion or to even establish another Church.

No, we are to take the *already existing* Body of Divine Truth, and we are to read and study and believe and teach and proclaim and love and obey and defend *that*. We are to take the "once for all handed down to the saints" faith, the already established Christian Faith, and we are to live *into* that Faith and propagate *that* Faith throughout the world.

You see, after the Resurrection of Jesus, God the Holy Spirit moved on the Apostles Peter, Paul, John, and Levi, along with five other men (John Mark, Dr. Luke, James, Jude, and the writer of Hebrews), who were commissioned by the Apostles to pen down 27 divinely inspired Books. And these writings consisted of:

- ✓ Four Gospel Records
- ✓ One Diary of the first 30 years of the Christian Church
- ✓ One Final Revelation of Jesus Christ
- ✓ 21 "Letters" or "Memoirs" of the Apostles and their designees

God then sovereignly moved on the Apostles, through signs and wonders and miracles and various gifts of the Holy Spirit, to give "Divine Credibility" to these 27 new Books which were then added to the already received 39 inerrant writings of the Old Testament, and together the 66 Books that we have now in our Bibles became the "Rule" or the "Measurement" or the "Canon" of Scripture.

These 66 Books are the revealed Word and Will of the one, true, and living God. They are the "Verbum Dei" (the Word of God), and they are the "Vox Dei" (the Voice of God) in the earth. So, if you desire to know the Will of God, read the Bible. And if you desire to hear God speaking audibly, read the Bible out loud.

But, by calling the 66 Books of the Bible the "Canon", or the "Rule" of sacred Scripture, we mean to say that if you want to know how lost people are saved, or how to go to Heaven, or what is "Right" or "Wrong", or how to set up and run the Church, or how to handle money, or raise your children, or what Marriage looks like, or what our disposition is to be to the poor and the weak, or how to be holy, we consult with the Rule or the Measurement that God has given that defines all of that for us. That is what Peter meant when he said:

### **2 Peter 1:3**

**seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.**

Notice that Peter says here that everything we need to live a life that is pleasing to God and everything we need to be godly or holy, God has already given to us, He has "granted" to us through the:

**... true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.**

So, by and through "knowing" God rightly and fully, we will see how to live lives that bring honor to Jesus Christ, and prove without doubt that God has chosen us and brought us out of darkness and into His marvelous Light.

And the only way to know God rightly and fully is to understand what God has chosen to reveal about Himself in the pages of this holy Book. There is no serious or important eternal Truth that has not already been revealed in the Book. And that means that there are only three issues which the visible Church should struggle with:

1. What did God *say*?
2. What did God *mean* by what He said?
3. How can we be *faithfullsubmissive/obedient* to what God said?

Now, among these inspired New Testament writings are 21 "Letters" or "Memoirs" from the Apostles or their designees. Before the Fourth Century, these writings were called "The Memoirs of the Apostles", and since the Fourth Century they are called "Epistles". And once the New Testament Books were added to the 39 Old Testament Books, these 21 "Letters" or "Epistles" became the "*Didactic Books*", or the "Teaching Books", of the Christian Church replacing the first five Books of Moses.

So, these "Memoirs of the Apostles" or these "Teaching Epistles" took Who Jesus is and what Jesus did and what Jesus said while He was on the earth (that were recorded in the four Gospel Records) and they did three things with that information:

1. They expanded/exposited/explained what the Old Testament taught and promised through signs and shadows and types and brought it into its zenith.
2. They expanded/exposited/explained what Jesus' Person in both His full Humanity and His full Deity meant in God's Economy to

bring "praise" to the Glory of His Grace by transforming wicked rebels into lovers of God.

3. They expanded/exposited/explained what Jesus said and did and what that meant in relation to our full Salvation and the Glory of God and the fulfillment of the perfect Righteousness that the Old Testament described.

... and then these 21 Epistles answered the all-important question:

What does it look like for weak and frail sinners to live  
as though they have been redeemed?

... or what it looks like for a New Testament believer to be sanctified or holy? What does it look like to delight yourself in the Lord? What does it look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century for a people to have the collective testimony that their treasure is in Jesus Christ and not in anything that this fallen world has to offer?

So, the Epistles teach us several very important things:

- ✓ How we are to view life in this world (Worldview)
- ✓ How we are to think
- ✓ What we are to believe and trust in
- ✓ What we are to preach and teach
- ✓ How to be forgiven and made Righteous
- ✓ How to live after we are saved (Holiness)
- ✓ What Christ's Church looks like

These New Testament Epistles *fulfilled*, they *perfected* what the Holiness Code of the Old Covenant was, by taking it out of the realm of shadows and symbols and types, and they brought forth the completed fullness of how God's people are to live their lives as rejoicing bond-slaves of the Lord Christ. And what the NT Epistles teach works together so that three things will be true:

- A. God is glorified
- B. Jesus is exalted and treasured
- C. Our Joy is made full

Now look again at what Peter said in verses 2-4:

**2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;**

**3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.**

**4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.**

Now notice here that Peter says that God has provided everything we need for two things:

1. Life
2. Godliness (Holiness)

God, Himself, has provided *everything* we need to not only be saved, but to live lives that are pleasing to God and to escape the corruption of this world that exists in the world by the lust of unconverted Man. And God has provided all of this through two other things:

1. His Divine Power
2. The True Knowledge of Him

And there is only one place in all the Universe where God's Divine Power and the True Knowledge of God are located together, and that is in the 66 Books of the Holy Bible. So, by reading and studying and learning and knowing and loving and obeying the Truth of Scripture, all genuinely redeemed sons and daughters have been granted:

**... His precious and magnificent promises...**

Now these Promises are “**precious**” in that they are rare. They are *not* for everyone. The Promises of God for Good are only to those who have been called and chosen for Salvation. So, Who God said He is and what God has said that He *has* done, and *is* doing right now, and *will do*

in the future in Jesus Christ, are “magnificent” in that they are *better* and *more glorious* than *anything* that this world, and all of the creative things in this world can give.

Now, what is the *value* of these Promises? What is their *purpose*? Just what did Peter say we are to “do” with these “precious and magnificent Promises”?

**... that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature**

Now, as I have stressed throughout this series, Peter doesn't say here that we simply *believe* in the Divine Nature, but that we become *partakers* of the Divine Nature. So, this is more than simply *agreeing* with God that there *is* a Divine Nature. It is more than simply *trusting* that what the Bible says here is true. This is personally *experiencing* the *reality* of actually *possessing* this Divine Nature.

So, Peter says that by and through these precious and magnificent Promises of Who God is and what God has done in Christ, we personally experience the miraculous transformation of having an old nature, that is after the similitude of Adam, removed and replaced with a Nature, that is after the similitude of Jesus Christ. And what is the result of that being true in our lives? Look at what Peter said in verses 5-7:

**5 Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge,**

**6 and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness,**

**7 and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love.**

Now these verses describe how we should live after we are saved. So, this is the measurement of true Holiness. And there are eight things he mentions here:

1. Faith
2. Moral Excellence
3. Knowledge
4. Self-Control
5. Perseverance

6. Godliness
7. Brotherly Kindness
8. Love

And the list begins with Faith and ends with Love. And that agrees with the rest of the New Testament: Confidence in God's Promises is the way we plug into God's Power, and Love (even for our enemies) is the Goal and Sum of Life; the Light of the world that shows others the way into the Kingdom.

And in between Faith and Love are six other qualities we should have. Now Peter did *not* mean that these eight qualities are added to our character in this exact sequence. There is a lot of *overlapping* among these qualities. For example, Love is *already* present in Perseverance according to **1 Corinthians 13:4**.

So, what Peter is saying in verses 5–7 is this: true Christians do not stop pursuing growth in Knowledge and Grace. They go on. They advance. They apply themselves with diligence to *increase* in these things (as verse 8 says). So, Peter calls us to a "holy dissatisfaction" with our present attainments.

Now it is important to understand that the literal translation of verses 5–7 does not say, "add *to* your faith virtue", and so on; it says, "furnish *in* your faith virtue", and so on. And, by saying this, Peter is encouraging us, "Forward! Forward! Forward!"

So, you should understand these three verses like this: "as you have obtained faith in Christ and stand in it, now apply yourself diligently to advance in moral excellence, and as you stand in that, do not be satisfied but press on to increase your knowledge of God's will, and as you stand in that, do not be satisfied but be diligent to enlarge your capacities of self-control and mastery of your passions, and as you stand in that, don't be satisfied but cultivate every form of patience and serenity, and in that let devoutness and piety and sweet love to God flourish, and in that strive to kindle your affection for other believers, and in and through it all grow in love to all men." In other words: Forward! Forward! Press On! Advance!

Now why is this important? Because of the Promise given in verse 8, read that verse with me:



**For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

So, the way to be neither useless nor unfruitful is to first *believe* what Peter taught in verses 1-3, and then to *experience* the miracle of verse 4, and then to *obey* the Commands of verses 5-7. And I would suggest to you that doing all of this, is what Sanctification is all about.

Now after he gives us this amazing Promise in verse 8, Peter warns us in verse 9:

**For he who lacks these *qualities* is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins.**

So, to lack the qualities of verses 5-7 is to *belittle* or *minimize* the great Salvation that God has given to us. And then Peter sums it all up in verses 10-11:

**10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;**

**11 for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.**

So, Sanctification, or pursuing Holiness after Salvation, is what “**makes certain... His calling and choosing you**”. So, the unmistakable proof that we have been called and chosen by God for Salvation is in the *ongoing* and *relentless* pursuit of “**practicing**” these eight qualities listed in verses 5-7. And the Promise of God to us is that if we will, by God’s Grace, pursue this expanded version of Holiness that is detailed here in the New Testament:

**... you will never stumble;**

Now most everybody I talk to, who goes to almost every Church, would love for the last part of verse 11 to come to pass in their lives:

**... the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.**

... and there is a "way", a "method", a "formula" whereby this entrance into the eternal Kingdom of Jesus will be abundantly supplied to you. And it is found at the beginning of verse 11:

**for in this way...**

The "**way**" that Peter mentions here is the "way of belief" in verses 1-3, it is the "way of experience" of verse 4, and it is the "way of obedience" in verses 5-7. This is how an abundant entrance is made for us into God's Kingdom. It is the "way" of Holiness, the "way" of Sanctification.

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.