

Abounding Grace Christian Church

A Study of the Second Epistle of Peter – Part 3

I. Exposition of Chapter One (Continued).

A. Verse 5 – “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,”

1. “...for this very reason...” – For the reasons stated. The fact that we have these promises, we are partakers of the divine nature and have escaped the corruption of the world.
2. “...giving...” - “to bring in alongside, to contribute besides”¹
3. “...diligence...” – means; “to bring every effort to’) to do one’s very best in attempting to do something; to try as hard as possible”²
3. “...add to your faith...” – The word “faith”, as it is used here, is understood as referring to one’s initial faith for salvation. In this passage, Peter is attempting to exhort the believers to continue to grow spiritually after having received Christ. Warren Wiersbe writes:

“Where there is life, there must be growth. The new birth is not the end; it is the beginning. God gives His children all that they need to live godly lives, but His children must apply themselves and be diligent to use the ‘means of grace’ He has provided. *Spiritual growth is not automatic.* It requires cooperation with God and the application of spiritual diligence and discipline. ‘Work out your own salvation ... For it is God which worketh in you’ (Phil. 2:12–13).”³

4. “...virtue...” – This is the same word found in verse 3 where it says God has “...called us by glory and virtue.” Once again, the definition is; “the quality of moral excellence—‘outstanding goodness, virtue.”⁴ This word is also found in I Peter 2:9 (NLT) where it reads: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may proclaim the virtues of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (See also Philippians 4:8).

5. “...knowledge...” – “signifies in general *intelligence, understanding*”⁵ Dr. Bob Utley adds:

“A knowledge (*gnōsis*) of the gospel that leads to Christlikeness is a wonderful thing. The false teachers were advocating a false knowledge that led to debauchery.”⁶

B. Verses 6-7 – “...to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.”

1. “...self-control...” – “the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites.”⁷ This word is also listed in Galatians 5:23 regarding the “fruit of the Spirit.” (cf. Galatians 5:16, 25, and see Proverbs 16:32; 25:28). Kenneth Gangel writes:

“This means to have one’s passions under control. It contrasts sharply with the anarchy and lack of control on the part of the false teachers whom Peter exposed (chap. 2). In an increasingly anarchistic society Christians do well to let the music of self-control be played in their lives.”⁸

- a. Warren Wiersbe adds: “Paul in his letters often compared the Christian to an athlete who must exercise and discipline himself if he ever hopes to win the prize (1 Cor. 9:24–27; Phil. 3:12–16; 1 Tim. 4:7–8).”⁹

2. “...perseverance...” – “capacity to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances—‘endurance, being able to endure”¹⁰

- a. God provides us with the ability to “persevere”.

¹ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 22.

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 662.

³ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 437–438.

⁴ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 743.

⁵ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (New York: Harper & Brothers., 1889), 119.

⁶ Robert James Dr. Utley, *The Gospel according to Peter: Mark and I & II Peter*, vol. Volume 2, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 277.

⁷ Ibid., 167.

⁸ Kenneth O. Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 865–866.

⁹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 438.

¹⁰ Louw and Nida, 307.

“Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,” – Romans 15:5 – New American Standard Version

- b. As we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, we can endure and run the race set before us. (cf. **Hebrews 12:1-2.**) The word “**looking**” in this passage means; “**to keep thinking about, without having one’s attention distracted—‘to think about, to fix one’s attention on.’**”¹¹
- c. “**Perseverance**” is an important ingredient for our Christian lives:
- 1) Because we have an enemy who wants to stop us. **Ephesians 6:12; I Peter 5:8-9.**
 - 2) It’s only through perseverance that we will succeed. Perseverance brings maturity. **James 1:4.**
 - 3) It’s only through perseverance that we will be fruitful for God. **Luke 8:15.**
 - 4) Perseverance is necessary for receiving the promises of God. **Hebrews 10:36.**
 - 5) We are called to “**run our race**” with perseverance. **Hebrews 12:1.**
 - 6) Perseverance is a necessary ingredient when trials come into our lives. **James 1:3. (See also I Peter 1:3-9; 4:12-14.)**

3. “**...to perseverance godliness...**” – The word “**godliness**” means; “**...piety, man’s obligation of reverence toward God.**”¹² The Bible states that godliness is “**...profitable for all things...**” (I Timothy 4:8). The Bible also tells us that we’re to turn away from those who have a form, or appearance of godliness, but deny its power. **II Timothy 3:5.**
4. “**...to godliness brotherly kindness...**” – “**affection for one’s fellow believer in Christ—‘love for one’s fellow believer,’**”¹³ Warren Wiersbe adds:

“Brotherly kindness (*philadelphia* in the Greek) is a virtue that Peter must have acquired the hard way, for the disciples of our Lord often debated and disagreed with one another. If we love Jesus Christ, we must also love the brethren. We should practice an “unfeigned [sincere] love of the brethren” (1 Peter 1:22) and not just pretend that we love them. “Let brotherly love continue” (Heb. 13:1). “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love” (Rom. 12:10). The fact that we love our brothers and sisters in Christ is one evidence that we have been born of God (1 John 5:1–2).”¹⁴

5. “**...and to brotherly kindness love.**” – On the surface, it’s difficult to discern the difference between “**brotherly kindness**” (love) and “**love**” (Greek “*agape*”). Kenneth Gangel offers a possible distinction:

“Whereas brotherly kindness is concern for others’ needs, love (*agapēn*) is desiring the highest good for others. This is the kind of love God exhibits toward sinners (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:9–11).”¹⁵

- a. This kind of love is the command of the New Testament. - **John 13:34-35; Ephesians 5:2.**
- b. This kind of love is part of the Fruit of the Spirit – **Galatians 5:22.**
- c. This kind of love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit – **Romans 5:5.**
- d. This kind of love is greater than faith and hope – **I Corinthians 13:13.**
- e. This kind of love compels us to serve one another – **Galatians 5:13.**
- f. We can “**increase and abound**” in this kind of love – **I Thessalonians 3:12.**

¹¹ Louw and Nida, 353.

¹² Kenneth O. Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 866.

¹³ Louw and Nida, 292.

¹⁴ Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 438–439.

¹⁵ Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, 866.