

BOOK OF 2 PETER
KEYS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH
BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH-PT 2
2 PETER 1:5-12

Introduction

There are enormous **BENEFITS** or **ADVANTAGES** to us **GIVING ALL DILIGENCE TO ADD TO OUR FAITH** the seven precious **QUALITIES** that we saw in *verses 5 through 7*.

It has **NOTHING** to do with us **JUST PERFORMING** some kind of **RELIGIOUS DUTY!**

It has **NOTHING** to do with us **EARNING OUR STANDING** before **GOD** with acts of **RIGHTEOUSNESS!** Because that does **NOT** come from our own **HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS** at all, but rather our **RIGHTEOUSNESS is a SUPPLIED RIGHTEOUSNESS** that comes from **GOD HIMSELF**, through **JESUS CHRIST!** **PETER** calls it the *"righteousness of our God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ."*

So, why do we need to ADD TO OUR FAITH? What are the reasons? Or rather, **what are the BENEFITS or ADVANTAGES of DILIGENTLY ADDING these QUALITIES TO OUR FAITH?**

Let's read our text in *verses 8-12*

- I. **THE BENEFIT OR ADVANTAGE OF FRUIT! (Vs 8)**
- A. *These Qualities Will Keep Our Lives From Being **BARREN!** The word "barren" means "inactive, that is, unemployed; it implies that the person is lazy, useless:" We said adding the qualities found in verses 5-7 to our faith keeps us from being "good for nothing" BELIEVERS.*
- B. *These Qualities Will Keep Our Lives From Being UNFRUITFUL! The word "unfruitful" means "barren of fruit." If we are barren of work, then we will be barren of fruit! Living faith is measured by usefulness and by fruitfulness.*
- Our FAITH needs to be REAL and GROWING!*

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II. **THE BENEFIT OR ADVANTAGE OF FUNCTION! (Vs 9)**

The "these things" is still referring back to verses 5-7.

- A. *A Faith That Is Not Growing Is **Blind And Short-Sighted!** Living for the moment with goals geared to this earthly life.*
- B. *A Faith That Is Not Growing Is **Forgetful.** (vs 9b) Peter warns against forgetfulness of the fact that we have been purged from our old sins.*
1. **The Aim Of Salvation Is Forgotten!**
Not only can this person not see forward to the end of this age, the coming of Jesus Christ, and the coming Judgment Seat of Christ, but he has forgotten the whole point of his conversion and the cross of Christ!
2. **The Assurance Of Salvation Is Forgotten.**
*When we don't grow in our **SPIRITUAL WALK**, it gives Satan an advantage over us.*
- He will keep dragging up the old sins that we were purged from, and He will cause us to doubt our Salvation!*
- a. **Peace Ends.** *(Because we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to bring conviction.)*
- b. **Chastisement Begins.** *(Because we are the Children of God.)*

Now we pick up this morning in verse 10..

III. **THE BENEFIT OR ADVANTAGE OF FIRMNESS! (Vs 10)**

If we **GIVE ALL DILIGENCE** in **ADDING** these **VIRTUES TO OUR FAITH**, we will **GROW** in **ASSURANCE** and **STABILITY!**

- A. **The BENEFIT Of Growing In ASSURANCE! (Vs 10a)**
The subject **PETER** is dealing with in this verse is **CERTAINTY!** He's talking about how we, as **BELIEVERS**, can be **SURE** and **CERTAIN**—(i.e. How we can have **DEEP ASSURANCE** about our **FAITH**.)
And notice that he relates **CERTAINTY**, not just to **KNOWING TRUTH**, but to **PRACTICING TRUTH!**

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"... for if ye do (or practice) these things..."

We KNOW that SALVATION is only BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH! But having and maintaining **ASSURANCE** is never attained by **THINKING**, or **MENTALLY REMEMBERING TRUTH!**

In the New Testament, **ASSURANCE** is always linked to **ACTIONS**. We become **SURE** as we **DO**, as we **OBEY**, and as we **APPLY THE TRUTH** that we already **KNOW**.

Let's look at some verses and note their consistent teaching on this matter! (*1 John 2:3 ; 5-6; 3:14; 18-21*)

More passages could be added, but the point should stand out to us. **GOD loves us too much to allow us to FEEL SAVED when we don't ACT SAVED!**

ASSURANCE is the right of people who WALK IN THE LIGHT, who RENOUNCE THE FLESH, who seek to OBEY JESUS at all costs!

If we will **GIVE ALL DILIGENCE TO ADD TO OUR FAITH** the **SEVEN QUALITIES** we saw in *verses 5-7*, then we will **GROW in GRACE and HOLINESS**, thereby coming to **KNOW** the **JOY** of **HAVING CONFIDENCE** before **GOD!**

The BENEFIT Of Growing In ASSURANCE!

- B. The BENEFIT Of Growing In STABILITY! (Vs 10)**
Understand that here he is **NOT** speaking of **FALLING FROM GRACE** (which is impossible), but **FALLING INTO**

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SIN and OUT OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD!

1 Corinthians 15:58—*"Therefore, my beloved brethren be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."*

THE BENEFIT OF FRUIT! (Not useless or unfruitful)

THE BENEFIT OF FUNCTION! (Not blind or shortsighted)

THE BENEFIT OF FIRMNESS! (Stability and assurance)

IV. THE BENEFIT OR ADVANTAGE OF FINISHING WELL! (Vs 11)

If we **GIVE ALL DILIGENCE** to **ADD** these **QUALITIES** to our **FAITH**, we will find **GOD'S GRACE** to be **ADEQUATE** when our life on this earth fades away.

Let me sum it up this way. In *verse 9*, **PETER** talked about **BELIEVERS** who were **SHORT-SIGHTED** as they lived on this earth. Perhaps there is no greater example of that than right here in *verse 11*.

There is coming a time of *"entrance...into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ..."*

The fact that **PETER** is **NOT** just talking about the initial point of being **BORN AGAIN** is backed up by the fact that the **ENTRANCE** he is describing is still in the **FUTURE**— *"...shall be ministered unto you abundantly..."*

Here is the utter folly of the **SHORT-SIGHTED** man: He is not thinking about the one thing coming at him that is unavoidable and final and decisive—He is leaving this earth by death or the rapture! He has to leave all his earthly treasures and loved ones behind! He then must face **GOD** all by himself! And it will be too late to change anything then! *"Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."*

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Conclusion

For the **BELIEVER** who is **DILIGENT** about adding these things in *verses 5-7* to his life, **PETER** says “*...an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour...*”

Death for **PETER** wasn't **taking off on some unchartered voyage**. It wasn't **drifting off into the great unknown**. **PETER** was sure of where he was going. A point of entry was ready for him. Because he had been **GIVING ALL DILIGENCE** to **ADD TO HIS FAITH**, he had already been embracing the promises about heaven and eternity.

He had been **planning for heaven!** He had been **meditating on heaven!**
He had been **purifying his life in the light of this hope!**
He had already **been setting his affections on things above!**

And we both can and should do the same!

Let me close with some words from Martyn Lloyd-Jones that sums this matter up: *"Abundant entrance. What does it mean? It means something like this. The Christian who has responded to Peter's appeal and who has been giving all diligence to living a full Christian life, does not die full of regrets at his failures and shortcomings. He is rather one who can say with Paul, as he viewed his end, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown. . .'* That is the way the true Christian dies. He has been giving this diligence, he has been living the life, so he does not feel guilty. He does not feel that he has been wasting his time. He does not say, 'If only I could go back, I would do better.' There are no bitter regrets, he is sure of 'the abundant entrance."

And so, **PETER** urges us to **GIVE ALL DILIGENCE** growing in the **VIRTUES** and **GRACES** of the Christian life. There are two ways of viewing this plea. Some will say,
"It costs so much. It seems to take all the time we have. Life is already busy, how much does God expect from me?"

But others will look at those precious and magnificent promises.

They will see the prize and the Blessed Hope that lies before them.

They will sense the reason they were put on this earth, and the reason Jesus came and died.

And they will know that, compared to all that this world could ever offer, **DILIGENCE IN FAITH** and **ADDING THESE VIRTUES** offers **God's greatest reward in this life and in the life to come!**