**Add to Your Faith**

*2 Peter 1:5-11*

**Introduction**

1. It is especially helpful at the start of a new year to remind ourselves of our goal, and how we are to reach such.
2. We want to be able to utter the words which the great apostle penned toward the close of his life – **2 Timothy 4:6-8** – He lived his life sacrificially, and did what was necessary to receive that crown.
3. What do we need to work on in 2019 to secure heaven for ourselves?
4. Our Goal
5. Fellowship with the Divine Nature
   1. **2 Peter 1:4** – through the promises we can partake of the divine nature.
      1. In doing so we escape spiritual depravity – “corruption that is in the world through lust”
      2. Only ONE divine nature – i.e. DEITY – **cf. 1 Corinthians 8:4-6** – concerning idols, NO OTHER GOD BUT ONE.
         1. There is nothing we could do to become God. It is impossible.
      3. Then how are we to partake of the divine nature?
         1. Partakers – *koinōnos*; from 2839; a sharer, i.e. associate. (Strong)
            1. “a partner, sharer, in anything” (Strong)
            2. **Cf. 1 Corinthians 10:18** – admonishing those who involve themselves in idolatry by participation through eating in the temple of the idol. (Like those of Israel who ate of the sacrifice shared with those who sacrificed to God, and in so doing worshiped the same God, the Corinthians who ate of the meat offered to idols in the temple shared with those who made the sacrifice in idolatry, thus participated in idolatry.)
         2. **1 John 1:3** – Word of life declared that we might have fellowship with God.
            1. Fellowship – *koinōnia*; from *koinōnos*; partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse. (Strong)
            2. We don’t become God, but we become a PARTNER, or SHARER WITH HIM – **(vv. 5-7)** – IN THE LIGHT.
         3. We are partakers of the divine nature by sharing in common with Him – take on His virtues and characteristics by faith.
   2. Attracted to such participation:
      1. **2 Peter 1:3** – called by glory and virtue.
         1. Knowledge of Him (CHRIST).
         2. Glory and virtue (moral excellence; Sinless – **Hebrews 7:26)** of Christ attract us to Him, and what He offers – **John 1:9, 14; 3:21** – Light, glory, come to the light.
      2. Participate in such through knowledge:
         1. **2 Peter 1:3-4** – life and godliness, partake of divine nature, through “the knowledge of Him.”
            1. Knowledge – *epignōsis*; from 1921; recognition, i.e. (by implication) full discernment, acknowledgement. (Strong)
            2. “a greater participation by the "knower" in the object "known," thus more powerfully influencing him” (VINE)
         2. By PARTICIPATING in the things we know about Christ we escape corruption, and PARTAKE in the divine nature.
6. Entrance into the Everlasting Kingdom
   1. All of this is to the ultimate end of spending eternity in heaven with the divine nature, i.e. God.
   2. **2 Peter 1:10-11** – do the things disclosed by the HS in the gospel of Christ and gain entrance into heaven.
      1. Only those in fellowship with God will be there, hence the need to partake of the divine nature.
      2. **Cf. 2 Peter 3:13** – where righteousness dwells.
   3. It is of utmost importance that we grow in our faith if we wish to see heaven. (**cf. 2 Peter 3:14, 18** – GROW)
7. Add to Your Faith
8. “Add to your faith virtue”
   1. “Add to your faith” – i.e. faith is not one of the things added, but something already had.
      1. We were justified by faith in obedience to the gospel – **Romans 5:1-2**
      2. However, faith without works is dead – **James 2:24, 26**
         1. Context – ROYAL LAW TO OBSERVE – **James 2:8-10**
      3. The very nature of saving faith is that which acts in accordance with God’s will (**cf. Romans 10:17**).
      4. We believe God is, but we also believe He rewards those who seek Him diligently – **Hebrews 11:6**
         1. One of our goals was to partake of the DIVINE NATURE – growing in such is SEEKING HIM.
         2. We do this by participating in these virtues listed – which is the culmination of the knowledge of Him.
      5. Therefore, ADD TO YOUR FAITH.
   2. Add virtue
      1. Virtue – *aretē* – “properly denotes whatever procures pre-eminent estimation for a person or thing; hence, ‘intrinsic eminence, moral goodness, virtue,’” (VINE)
         1. “in its usual meaning moral excellence, virtue” (Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich; 105)
         2. Virtue – behavior showing high moral standards. (New Oxford American Dictionary)
         3. As the list seems to be ascending in order (not that one cannot be had without the other, but that there is a natural growth in the list) it is NOT VIRTUE PERIOD, BUT THE DESIRE TO ACHIEVE SUCH.
      2. **2 Peter 1:3** – called by HIS virtue – we are attracted to such, and wish to participate in it.
      3. THE GOAL OF MORAL EXCELLENCE.
         1. **1 Corinthians 11:1** – desire to be like Christ.
         2. **Ephesians 4:13** – STANDARD IS THE STATURE OF CHRIST.
         3. The Christian is to cultivate the desire to be like Christ – A STANDARD WHICH REQUIRES CONSTANT EFFORT AND GROWTH, NEVER ENDING (**cf. 2 Corinthians 10:12** – contrasted with those who look to themselves as a standard of measurement).
9. “to virtue knowledge”
   1. We may have the desire for moral excellence, but without the knowledge of what that is we can never achieve it.
   2. Knowledge – *gnōsis*; from 1097; knowing (the act), i.e. (by implication) knowledge. (Strong)
      1. NOT THE SAME AS VERSES 2, 3, AND 8.
      2. A more basic knowledge – knowing of information.
   3. **Ephesians 5:17** – we must know what the will of the Lord is.
   4. When we don’t grow in knowledge – **Hebrews 5:12-14** – unable to partake of solid food – remain a babe. (Cannot go on to perfection – **6:1** – without knowing – I.E. CAN’T BECOME MORE LIKE CHRIST.)
      1. **cf. 2 Peter 3:15-16** – those who are untaught are unstable and twist meaty passages to their destruction.
   5. **2 Timothy 2:15** – Must study in order to be able to show ourselves approved. (“study” – KJV)
   6. STUDY IS IMPERITIVE – HOW ARE WE TO SHARE IN THE CHARACTER OF GOD IF WE DON’T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS?
10. “to knowledge self-control”
    1. We may know the facts regarding what God would have for us to be, but without the accompanying self-control we will not be able to execute.
    2. Self-control – *egkrateia* – self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, esp. his sensual appetites). (Strong)
    3. Paul – **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** – analogy of running a race to win it.
       1. Discipline (**v. 27)** – “lit., "to strike under the eye" (from hupopion, "the part of the face below the eye;" hupo, "under," ops, "an eye"), hence, to beat the face black and blue (to give a black eye), is used metaphorically, and translated "buffet" in [1Cr 9:27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/1corinthians/9/27/s_1071027) (AV, "keep under"), of Paul's suppressive treatment of his body, in order to keep himself spiritually fit (RV marg., "bruise")” (VINE)
       2. “bring it into subjection” – *doulagōgeō*; from a presumed compound of 1401 and 71; to be a slave-driver, i.e. to enslave (figuratively, subdue): — bring into subjection. (Strong)
       3. I.E. FIGURATIVELY, PAUL SEVERELY BEATS HIS BODY DOWN SO AS TO SUBDUE IT, MAKING IT HIS SLAVE.
    4. **Galatians 5:17** – We must not do the things we wish, but do what the Spirit teaches.
       1. **Cf. Romans 8:9-14** – those who are spiritually minded put to death the deeds of the body, and live spiritual lives under direction of the HS’s teaching.
          1. **(v. 13)** – Put to death the deeds of the flesh.
       2. **Cf. Colossians 3:5** – Put to death your earthly members.
11. “to self-control perseverance”
    1. This self-control is not supposed to be an isolated instance, but is a constant necessity. Thus, we must add to it the virtue of perseverance.
    2. Perseverance – *hypomonē*; from 5278; cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy. (Strong)
       1. “patience, endurance, fortitude, steadfastness, perseverance…especially as they are shown in the enduring of toil and suffering Luke 21:19; Romans 5:3” (Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich; 854)
          1. **Luke 21:16-19** – SPEAKING OF MATTERS PRECEDING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM – they are not to sway concerning their faith, but endure. (“POSSESS YOUR SOULS” – **cf. Mark 8:35** – by maintaining faith even to a loss of physical life)
             1. **Cf. Matthew 24:11-13** – SAME DISCUSSION CONCERNING DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM – endure in the face of false doctrine and sin – REMAIN FAITHFUL.
             2. **This would be a terrible time for all, and the faithful would need to endure** – **cf. Luke 23:29-31**
          2. **Romans 5:3-4** – That endurance PROVES character. (SELF-CONTROL ONLY ONCE DOES NOT))
       2. One with “perseverance” “under a great siege of trials, bears up, and does not lose heart or courage…[the term] does not mark merely the endurance, . . . but the . . . brave patience with which the Christian contends against the various hindrances, persecutions, and temptations that befall him in his conflict with the inward and outward world” (Trench 198).
       3. “The connotation is brave, manly courage without discouragement or weakening.” (Lenski)
       4. ***“WATCH, STAND FAST IN THE FAITH, BE BRAVE, BE STRONG” (1 Corinthians 16:13).***
12. “to perseverance godliness”
    1. The one who continues to persevere through trials, tribulation, and temptation in doing God’s will naturally develops a deep respect and reverence for God. Such a god-ward mindset further develops the qualities of deity in life.
    2. Godliness – *eusebeia* – “from eu, "well," and sebomai, "to be devout," denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him” (VINE)
       1. As seen with Joseph – **Genesis 39:7-9** – HOW CAN I DO THIS WICKEDNESS AGAINST GOD?
       2. **Cf. Psalm 16:8** – the Lord set before us always.
    3. Godliness is the goal of the gospel – **1 Timothy 3:16** – mystery of godliness. (the effect put for the cause)
       1. It accords with godliness – **1 Timothy 6:3; Titus 1:1** – consistent with godliness, i.e. it contains that which is pleasing to God, and produces godliness.
       2. Obtained through the knowledge of God in the flesh – **2 Peter 1:3**
       3. Such is of great profit – **1 Timothy 4:8** – benefit for life on earth, but especially in reaching the heavenly goal.
    4. Ever mindful of God because of His coming day – **2 Peter 3:10-12, 14** – We know He is coming, and will judge us, thus we are ever mindful of Him seeking to be found by Him in peace.
       1. As one endures they begin to see further the object of their enduring – that great day.
       2. Furthermore, they begin to understand their great need for enduring rather than relenting because of the judgment day.
13. “to godliness brotherly kindness”
    1. The one who develops and grows in godliness will naturally grow closer to those of a like mind. Those who share in service to God, and pious living will GROW CLOSER TO EACH OTHER AS THEY GROW CLOSER TO GOD.
    2. Brotherly kindness – compound of *philos*, affection or kindness, and *adelphos*, brother.
       1. *philadelphia*; from 5361; fraternal affection: — brotherly love (kindness), love of the brethren. (Strong)
       2. City in Asia Minor (Biblical) – “Its name was given to it in honor of Attalus II, because of his loyalty to his elder brother, Eumenes II, king of Lydia.” (ISBE – Philadelphia)
       3. “in the N. T. "the love which Christians cherish for each other as 'brethren'" (Thayer).
    3. **1 Peter 1:22** – Our obedience to the gospel is to a love of the brethren.
       1. **Romans 12:10** – kindly affectionate to each other.
       2. **Hebrews 13:1-3** – brotherly love continues in hospitality, and care for the suffering.
    4. The love we are to have for God cannot exist without love for His children:
       1. **1 John 4:7-11** – to know God is to participate in love.
          1. The value He estimated us with by sending His son should cause us to value each other.
          2. We see each other as those redeemed by that precious blood, and act on it.
       2. **1 John 4:12, 16, 20-21** – We do not see God, but we see God in each other if we are involved in love. Those who hate their brother cannot love God.
    5. This was Jesus’ ultimate commandment to His disciples – **John 13:34-35; 15:12-14**
14. “to brotherly kindness love”
    1. Brotherly love is supposed to come naturally. It is a natural affection that relatives have for each other, in this sense spiritual brethren.
    2. However, there is a love that is even greater which extends to everyone.
    3. Love – *agapē*; “affection, good-will, love, benevolence” (Thayer).
       1. Stronger than “brotherly kindness.” (**cf. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7** – as described here)
       2. Remember our Goal – **2 Peter 1:4** – partake of the divine nature.
          1. **1 John 4:8** – “GOD IS LOVE”
          2. We add this higher love and become even further like God – participate in that which He is ultimately characterized by.
          3. Green perceptively comments, “In friendship (philia) the partners seek mutual solace; in sexual love (eros) mutual satisfaction. In both cases these feelings are aroused because of what the love is. With agapē it is the reverse. God’s agapē is evoked not by what we are, but by what he is. It has its origin in the agent, not in the object. It is not that we are lovable, but that He is love. This agapē might be defined as a deliberate desire for the highest good of the one loved, which shows itself in sacrificial action for that person’s good” (71). (Clinton D. Hamilton, Edited by Mike Willis. Truth Commentaries - 2 Peter and Jude (Kindle Locations 1291-1298). Guardian of Truth Foundation.)
       3. “We have repeatedly defined this word for "love" as being the love of intelligence and full understanding which is always coupled with a strong, corresponding purpose. So God loved the foul world, knowing it fully and set on cleansing it; so we are to love even our enemies, understanding their enmity and set on freeing them from it.” (Lenski; 2 Peter 1:7)
          1. Ultimately a love which looks to fulfill what is needed in another, even if that one is unlovable. (**cf. 1 Thessalonians 3:12** – toward all men)
          2. **Cf. Philippians 1:9-11** – Love of knowledge and discernment – i.e. in assimilation with God’s will – WHAT DOES GOD SAY THAT ONE NEEDS.
    4. This love brings us to completion as God is complete – **Matthew 5:43-48** – perfect as God is perfect.

**Conclusion**

1. Our goal for 2019 and always should be to grow in the Divine nature – **2 Peter 1:3-4** – this is accomplished through the participant knowledge of Christ.
   1. By adding these virtues continually to our faith we are fruitful in the knowledge of Christ, i.e. we become like Him – **2 Peter 1:8**
2. We want to partake in the Divine nature so we can share eternity with Him.
   1. **2 Peter 1:9** – the one who does not add these virtues continually to his faith shows that his eyes aren’t on the goal of heaven, but on what is here and now.
   2. **2 Peter 1:10-11** – the one who grows in the Divine nature by adding these virtues secures a place for himself in heaven.
3. Let us be diligent, and add to our faith.