**Growing in Grace – Knowledge**

*2 Peter 3:18; 1:5-7*

**Introduction**

1. **2 Peter 3:18** – we are commanded to grow in God’s grace.
2. **2 Peter 1:2** – He is seeking to multiply grace to us through the knowledge of Jesus.
   1. Ultimately, that we share in the divine nature **(v. 4).**
   2. This connected with the glory and virtue of Christ that we are called TO **(v. 3).**
   3. Attained through the knowledge of Christ which instructs us in the way of life and godliness **(v. 2).**
   4. Knowledge increased to the bearing of fruit when we supply diligence, and add to our faith the list of virtues **(vv. 5-8).**
3. Virtue – the goal of moral excellence like Christ, and the courage to reach that goal.
4. Knowledge is to be added to virtue.
5. Knowledge – gnōsis
6. knowing (the act), i.e. (by implication) knowledge (STRONG)
7. primarily “a seeking to know, an enquiry, investigation,” denotes, in the NT, “knowledge,” especially of spiritual truth. (VINE)
8. comprehension or intellectual grasp of someth., knowledge (BDAG)
9. moral wisdom, such as is seen in right living (THAYER, in reference to 2 Peter 1:5)
10. NOTE – not merely an intellectual acknowledgment of a fact, but the comprehension/grasping of that fact, and that toward the end of applying it personally in righteous living.
11. Imperative Knowledge
12. Necessary to Achieve the Goal of Virtue
    1. Add to faith virtue – **2 Peter 1:5** – moral excellence; manly courage.
       1. THE GOAL of moral excellence – like Christ **(v. 3**).
       2. THE REQUISITE of many courage to undergo achieving that goal.
       3. Add to virtue knowledge – there is no way to reach the goal of moral excellence without the proper knowledge, comprehension, and grasp of what that exactly is.
    2. **Ephesians 5:17** – command to understand the will of the Lord.
       1. **(vv. 8-10)** – command to walk as children of light – according to God’s will.
       2. **(vv. 15-16)** – command to be constantly looking about to do what God calls us to do.
       3. **(v. 17)** – the way this will all be accomplished – a knowledge of God’s will.
    3. **Colossians 1:9-10** – knowledge of His will, wisdom, and spiritual understanding necessary to walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him.
13. Necessary to Avoid Progression Down the Wrong Path
    1. **1 Timothy 6:20-21** – falsely called knowledge.
       1. What was committed to his trust – the gospel.
       2. Profane – unholy.
       3. Idle – not leading to progression in faith. (Vain)
       4. Contradictions – that which opposes the gospel.
       5. Called knowledge falsely.
    2. **2 Timothy 3:6-7** – learning, but not coming to the knowledge of the truth – false knowledge.
    3. **2 Peter 3:15-18** – growing in true knowledge of God prevents us from falling prey to the false knowledge of false teachers.
       1. Such false knowledge does not result in the life of participation in the Divine nature, but the opposite life of sin and corruption – **2 Peter 2:18-19**
    4. Some think they are growing in the grace of God, when in reality they are growing in the standard of Satan. The progression in the true knowledge of God ensures we are progressing down the right path.
       1. **Matthew 7:21-23** – they were misguided.
14. Necessary to Avoid Destruction
    1. The ascertaining of false knowledge, and/or the failure to appropriate the knowledge of God inevitably leads to destruction.
    2. **Hosea 4:1-10** – The Israelites had taken heed to false prophets, which resulted in sinful behavior in the ignorance of Jehovah’s will, which resulted in destruction from Jehovah.
    3. **Judges 2:10-15** – The ignorance of the generation after that of Joshua was followed by the heavy hand of the Lord.
    4. The failure to grow in knowledge will not supply an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom, but will ensure that one is barred out.
15. Obtaining Knowledge
16. Possess the Proper Motivation
    1. comprehension or intellectual grasp of someth., knowledge (BDAG)
    2. moral wisdom, such as is seen in right living (THAYER, in reference to 2 Peter 1:5)
       1. Coming to such knowledge does not just happen.
       2. It will only happen with the proper motivation – i.e. having the overwhelming desire to live rightly before God.
    3. **Psalm 19:7-11** – a reflection on the law of God, and how effective it is in transforming the soul into what it ought to be, with the corresponding desire for God’s law by the Psalmist.
    4. **Psalm 1:1-2** – the meditation was preceded by the delight.
    5. **Psalm 119:33-40** – we are to have the desire to know God’s will for the sake of doing it and being right with Him. **(v. 38** – WE NEED TO BE DEVOTED TO FEARING GOD IF WE ARE TO INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE)
17. Go to the Proper Source
    1. Since there is false knowledge **(cf. 1 Timothy 6:20)** we must make sure we’re going to the correct source.
    2. **Colossians 2:23** – appearance of wisdom, but self-imposed religion.
    3. **Colossians 2:1-10** – Paul’s concern for them, that they would attain to the riches of the knowledge that is in Christ.
       1. **(vv. 4, 8)** – threatened by persuasive words, philosophy, tradition of men.
       2. **(vv. 5-7, 9-10)** – wishes that they would continue in their faith in Christ, being steadfast by walking in Him, and being rooted and built up in Him IN THE FAITH (gospel) – it is Christ that reveals God fully, not wisdom of men, and in Christ we are complete.
    4. **2 Peter 1:3** – all things pertaining to life and godliness in knowledge of Him.
    5. **2 Timothy 3:15-17** – it is the holy Scriptures that make one wise for salvation.
       1. That salvation is “in Christ Jesus.”
       2. But the salvation is revealed in the scripture.
    6. Christ is called the word – **John 1:1-2, 14**
    7. Christ is revealed in the word (apostolic) – **1 John 1:2-3; 2:24-25**
    8. We become like Christ as we come to the knowledge of Him by faith, and let Him live in us – **Galatians 2:20**
    9. It is not knowledge by itself that we are to add to our virtue, but KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.
18. Be Diligent
    1. The supply of each virtue to our faith requires diligence – **2 Peter 1:5**
    2. This is especially true for the obtaining of knowledge – **2 Timothy 2:15** (“study,” KJV)
       1. spoudazō; from 4710; to use speed, i.e. to make effort, be prompt or earnest (STRONG)
       2. to be especially conscientious in discharging an obligation, be zealous/eager, take pains, make every effort, be conscientious (BDAG)
       3. “‘Diligence’ is the panacea for all diseases of the Christian life. It is the homely virtue that leads to all success. It is a great thing to be convinced of this, that there are no mysteries about the conditions of healthy Christian living, but that precisely the same qualities which lead to victory in any career to which a man sets himself do so in this; that, on the one hand, we shall never fail if in earnest and saving the crumbs of moments, we give ourselves to the work of Christian growth; and that on the other hand, no fine emotions, no select moments of rapture and communion will ever avail to take the place of the dogged perseverance and prosaic hard work which wins in all other fields; and wins, and is the only thing that does win, in this one too. If you want to be a strong Christian—that is to say, a happy man—you must bend your back to the work and ‘give all diligence.’ Nobody goes to heaven in his sleep. No man becomes a vigorous Christian by any other course than ‘giving all diligence.’ It is a very lowly virtue. It is like some of the old wives’ recipes for curing diseases with some familiar herb that grows at every cottage door. People will not have that, but if you bring them some medicine from far away, very rare and costly, and suggest to them some course out of the beaten rut of ordinary, honest living, they will jump at that. Quackery always deals in mysteries and rare things. The great physician cures diseases with simples that grow everywhere. A pennyworth of some familiar root will cure an illness that nothing else will touch. It is a homely virtue, but if in its homeliness we practised it, this Church and our own souls would wear a different face from what it and they do to-day.” (Alexander MacLaren, Expositions of Holy Scripture, 2 Peter 1:5)
    3. **Psalm 63:1, 6**; **119:147-146** – from morning through the night, meditate on God’s word.

**Conclusion**

1. In order for God’s grace to be multiplied to us, i.e. for us to grow in the fellowship with the divine nature by being more like Christ, we must gain a knowledge of God’s word.
2. This knowledge only comes from Christ, and is only obtained through the desire of it to practice it, and the diligence in work to reach it.