**Growing in Grace – Godliness**

*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 – the comprehension and grasp of God’s will for us necessary to achieve the goal of virtue.
5. Self-control – the decisive action to deny the inordinate desires of flesh and submit ourselves to God’s will, practicing the knowledge we have obtained.
6. Perseverance – the constancy of self-control, abiding faithfully under trials and tribulations.
7. To perseverance we are to add godliness.
8. Godliness – *eusebeia*
9. Piety (STRONG)
10. (1) Reverence, respect (2) Piety towards God, godliness (THAYER)
11. awesome respect accorded to God, devoutness, piety, godliness (BDAG)
12. 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)
13. Godliness and Perseverance
    1. Conscience toward God is the reason for perseverance, and such develops godliness – **1 Peter 2:18-19**
    2. Context:
       1. Begotten of God (to living hope) and called to live holy – **1 Peter 1:15-16** – Why? Because He who called you is holy.
       2. Conduct self during stay in fear – **1 Peter 1:17-19** – Why? He judges without partiality, and you were purchased with Christ’s precious blood (do not want to profane it with unholy living).
       3. Live as holy priesthood, offering up acceptable sacrifices to God – **cf. 1 Peter 2:4-10** – Why? We belong to Him and are a creation in Christ for His service.
       4. Abstain from fleshly lusts – **1 Peter 2:11-12** – Why? For the glorification of God.
       5. Submit to every ordinance of man – **1 Peter 2:13, 15** – Why? For the Lord’s sake, it is the will of God.
       6. Be submissive to masters, even the harsh – **1 Peter 2:18-23** – Why? Because of conscience toward God, to this you were called. Like Christ.
          1. NOTE: **Colossians 3:22-24** – As to the Lord, fearing God.
    3. Such perseverance is not a matter of stoicism, but a desire to please God.
14. Godliness Displayed
15. In Godliness is Power
    1. Paul spoke of those who denied the power of godliness – **2 Timothy 3:5**
       1. Form – *morphōsis* – formation, i.e. (by implication), appearance (semblance or (concretely) formula) (STRONG)
          1. (2) form; (2a) the mere form, semblance (THAYER)
          2. “Here (**2 Timothy 3:5**), the mere outward semblance, as distinguished from the essential reality.” (Vincent’s Word Studies)
          3. **(vv. 6-8)** – act as those who possess and value truth – teachers.
       2. Deny its power – **(vv. 1-4)** – who they really are, i.e. not concerned with truth, or living righteously before God.
    2. The power of godliness:
       1. The opposite of **(vv. 1-4)** would be a penitent character, motivated to be transformed.
       2. **Titus 3:3-8** – once worldly, but saved from sinful works, transformed (regenerated) by the gospel (**cf. Romans 12:2**), and carefully attending to good works.
       3. WHEN ONE IS TRULY MINDFUL OF GOD AND SEEKING TO PLEASE HIM – not merely putting up a façade of godliness – HE WILL BE EQUIPPED TO LIVE THE TRANSFORMED LIFE.
16. Godliness Displayed
    1. Those who grow in godliness (not merely an outward form denying its power) will show drastic transformation in their lives, and a distinct set of values from the world.
    2. Morality – **Titus 2:11-14**
       1. **(v. 11)** – grace of God – **(v. 14a)** – Jesus Christ gave Himself for us.
       2. **(v. 12)** – teaches us to not live immoral lives any longer, but to be serious, rightly conducting ourselves, all in an attitude seeking to please God.
          1. Teaching – **(v. 14b)** – from the reason He gave Himself for us. (Redeem, purify, good works)
          2. **(v. 13)** – looking for His return. (**cf. 2 Peter 3:11-13** – conduct self in godliness)
       3. Those redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ live according to the moral standard by which they were called, avoiding profaning the gift of said sacrifice **(cf. 2 Corinthians 6:1; 7:1**).
    3. Attire – **1 Timothy 2:9-10**
       1. Positive – **(v. 9a)** – adorn in modest apparel.
          1. Reason – **(v. 10)** – proper for women professing godliness w/ good works.
       2. Negative – **(v. 9b)** – not with outward emphasis.
       3. Positive – **(v. 9b)** – with propriety and moderation.
          1. Propriety – *aidōs*; bashfulness, i.e. (towards men), modesty. (STRONG)
             1. “it is that ‘shamefastness,’ or pudency, which shrinks from overpassing the limits of womanly reserve and modesty, as well as from the dishonor which would justly attach thereto” (R.C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament)
             2. Concerning the lack of clothing – bashful – leading to a proper coverage of nakedness.
          2. Moderation – *sōphrosynē* – practice of prudence, good judgment, moderation, self-control. (BDAG)
             1. “it is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires, which would hinder the temptation to these from arising, or at all events from arising in such strength as would overbear the checks and barriers which aidos (shamefastness) opposed to it” (Trench Syn. Sec.xx, end).
             2. Concerning what is proper for godly people, and the good judgement to dress appropriately.
       4. **(v. 10)** – the ***“good works”*** are the apparel of the Christian (cf. **Romans 13:14** – clothed with Christ)
       5. The godly individual will wear the type of clothing according to God’s standard which does not take away from the emphasis of God, and living before Him – whether by lack, or excess of clothing.
    4. Contentment – **1 Timothy 6:6-10**
       1. Contrast with **(v. 5)** – supposing godliness as a means of gain. **(cf. 2 Timothy 3:5** – this kind, hypocritical, denying power)
       2. The focus on God and doing what is pleasing to Him prioritized above “gain” or the “desire to be rich.”
       3. **(vv. 7-8)** – true godliness cannot but be paired with contentment.
       4. **(vv. 9-10)** – avoiding this foolishness because of a godward attitude.
       5. **(vv. 11-12)** – pursuit of these spiritual riches – where the contentment comes from.
          1. **(vv. 17-17)** – rich in good works.
    5. Relationships – **Colossians 3:18-4:1**
       1. The section begins with the godward focus – (**vv. 1-4**)
          1. Life hidden with Christ in God.
          2. I.e. your will put away and eclipsed by the will of God and Christ.
       2. Family (Home) **– (vv. 18-21**) – these relationships will only function efficiently and appropriately as each member is seeking to please God. (Consider – disagreements, problems, adversity – act according to what God wants)
       3. Servant/Master (Work, school, etc.) – **(vv. 22-4:1)** – Especially when a boss is evil, or colleagues, work to be pleasing to God.
17. The person who is not truly interested in pleasing God is powerless to live such a transformed life – **2 Timothy 3:5** – denying its power.
18. Growing in Godliness
19. Know the Standard of Godliness
    1. One cannot be mindful of God without knowing Him.
       1. EX: You cannot properly reverence a leader (King, President, Emperor) without having an understanding of their office, and the culture/country in which they rule. (Might do something intending to honor, but it offends instead.)
    2. All things pertaining to godliness given in the knowledge of Christ – **2 Peter 1:3**
       1. ***“divine power”*** – **Romans 1:16** – the avenue of the gospel message.
    3. Mystery of godliness – **1 Timothy 3:16** (connected to the truth – **v. 15**)
       1. Metonymy – effect put for the cause.
       2. The **“mystery”** (the gospel now revealed) effects ***“godliness.”***
    4. Doctrine which accords with godliness – **1 Timothy 6:3**
       1. **(v. 1)** – God’s doctrine.
       2. **1 Timothy 1:10-11** – sound doctrine, the gospel.
       3. **Titus 1:1-3** – truth which accords with godliness, ***“His word.”***
    5. When the standard of God is not the object of one’s focus, then God is not the object of one’s focus.
20. Exercise Yourself Toward Godliness
    1. Paul instructed Timothy to exercise himself toward godliness – **1 Timothy 4:6-11**
       1. ***“good doctrine” (v. 6)*** in contrast to ***“profane and old wives’ fables” (v. 7)***
       2. Exercise – the idea of training.
       3. **(vv. 12-16)** – a picture of such.
    2. One does not become godly by simply knowing the standard of godliness, but by training themselves by the standard, in knowledge and practice.
    3. Diligent study is with the intent to be right with God, and that by applying what is know in His word – **2 Timothy 2:15, 19-26**
       1. **(v. 15)** – rightly dividing to know what God wants.
       2. **(v. 19)** – departing from evil.
       3. **(vv. 20-26)** – sanctified to the work of the Lord, not Satan.

**Conclusion**

1. In order to partake in the divine nature, one must be mindful of the divine nature.
2. In everything we do we must possess a godward attitude, i.e. one which is seeking to please Him.
3. All preceding virtues – virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance – will spring from an attitude seeking to please God, but as they abound, and one perseveres in the practice of such they will ever increase in their godliness.
4. NOTE: None of these virtues are virtuous in the least without their direction coming from God, and their appropriation and application coming from a desire to please God.