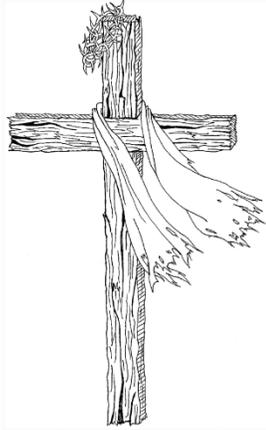


It's Grow Time!



“And now abide faith, hope, love, these three;
but the greatest of these is love.” I Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV)

A Study of II Peter 1:5-7

It's GROW Time!

II Peter 1:5-7

“⁵ And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; ⁶ And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; ⁷ And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.” (KJV)

The Pursuit of Christian Character (*The Christian Graces*)

INTRODUCTION

A business owner wants his business to grow. A farmer wants his crops to grow. A parent wants their child to grow. God wants us to grow! The next few weeks we will study the above passage to discover the areas we should focus on so we can pursue growth to strengthen our character as a Christian.

We will look at each of these values to help us understand what it means to grow in Christian character.

Today we will introduce the course by looking at the passage in context (**II Peter 1:1-11**).

Note the following:

(Vs. 1) Peter is writing to those who are saved about their sanctification, and not to the unsaved about their salvation. Peter does not challenge his readers to work hard to be saved (*his readers are already saved*), but to strive diligently because they are saved.

(Vs. 2) Grace and peace comes through the KNOWLEDGE of God, and of Jesus our Lord. Though “knowledge” is one of the values we pursue as a Christian throughout our life, we cannot even begin the pursuit without knowing God and Jesus.

(Vs. 3) The Christian's efforts are based on the sovereignty of God and the sufficiency of His provisions. Salvation has been accomplished by God, through Christ. God has provided all that is necessary for life and godliness. It is about HIS “*glory and virtue*”.

(Vs. 4) God has given exceeding great and precious promises and by them we can partake of His divine nature! The character qualities we are to pursue are also the character traits of God! Peter is not writing about “*how to*”, he is writing about the kind of person the Christian should strive to become.

(Vs. 5-7) “*give all diligence*”. This means it takes effort! We cannot expect to grow if we neglect these things or give only “*lip service*” to them. As we study each quality, we will see the diligence it will take to pursue them. **NOTE:** Each quality builds upon the next. The word “*add*” gives us a clue that they build upon one another. It begins with “*Faith*” and ends with “*Love*”. This does not mean that we must “*master*” a quality before we can move to the next. If that were the case, we would never be able to grow since no one can reach perfection in any of them. However, we must have some depth and strength in a quality before it is possible to move to the next one. We work on all these areas our entire lives. Often, we must go back and work on the “*first steps*” to strengthen the higher levels we have already reached.

(Vs. 8) This is a major observation: “*For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren (useless) nor unfruitful ...!*” Pursuing these “*Christian Graces*” makes a difference in our lives. They matter!

(Vs 9) This is an equally powerful observation: “*But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*”

(Vs. 10) We must give diligence to make our “*calling and election sure!*” Here is the bottom line: “*if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:*” This, of course, presupposes that it is possible to fall, but by pursuing them and developing them, we will not fall! It is worth the pursuit!

(Vs. 11) Often the “*Kingdom*” refers to the church, however, many times it refers to heaven. Since Peter’s readers were already Christians, thus in the church, they are given a promise to go into the “*everlasting Kingdom*” if they pursue the Christian life.

This will be our “*TRACKING CHART*” for the course. As we finish studying each characteristic, we will write it on the appropriate STEP. (*The First & Last steps are already filled in*).



Introduction

FAITH

II Peter 1:5 "... add to your faith ...". This phrase assumes we already have faith. To GROW we now want to ADD to our faith.

Fill in the blanks (KJV)

Do we have "faith"?

Romans 10:17 "So then _____ cometh by hearing, and hearing by the _____ of God."

What does **John 17:17** tell us about God's Word? _____

According to **John 8:32**, what does the truth do? _____

Many people have "faith", such as Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, etc., but they don't "hear" or listen to God. How does **Matthew 15:9** define their faith? _____

How important is it to have true faith?

Hebrews 11:6 "But without _____ it is _____ to please him: for he that cometh to God must _____ that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that _____ seek him."

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace are ye _____ through _____; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

If the faith we have is not rooted in the truth of God's Word, we do not have true faith. If we want to grow and pursue Christian character, we must have true faith.

What is faith?

Hebrews 11:1 "Now _____ is the _____ of things hoped for, the _____ of things not seen."

Read this same verse in at least three other versions of the Bible. After thinking about it, write this verse in your own words:

FAITH = DOCTRINE **Jude 1:3** "Beloved, when I gave all _____ to write unto you of **the** common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for **the** _____ which was once _____ unto **the** saints."

FAITH = BELIEF **II Corinthians 4:13** "We having the same spirit of _____, according as it is written, I _____, and therefore have I spoken; we also _____, and therefore speak;"

FAITH = TRUST **I Corinthians 2:5** "That your _____ should not _____ in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

VIRTUE

The Greek word translated “*virtue*” in the KJV is ἀρετήν (aretēn) meaning “*Well*”; “*Goodness*”, “*Excellence*”, “*Strong*”, “*Wealth*”.

Think of the woman in **Proverbs 31:10-12** “¹⁰ Who can find a _____ woman? for her price is far above _____. ¹¹ The heart of her husband doth safely _____ in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. ¹² She will do him _____ and not _____ all the days of her life.”

Proverbs 31:29 “Many daughters have done _____, but thou _____ them all.”

Luke 6:19 “And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.” The word “*virtue*” in this verse is: δύναμις (dynamis) power.

Proverbs 12:4 “A _____ woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.” חַיִל (ḥa-yil) (Strength, might, efficiency, wealth, army)

A call to be “*virtuous*”, or to have “*virtue*”, is a call to be strong and to have live an effective life for God. It is God’s call for “*High Moral Excellence*”. He wants us to be “*Good*”!

What is “*Good*”?

Matthew 19:17 “And he said unto him, Why callest thou me _____? There is none _____ but one, that is, _____: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Ill John 1:11 “Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is _____. He that doeth _____ is of _____: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.”

Being “*Good*” is to be like God!

Read **Exodus 34:6-7**. God showed Himself to Moses in this text. List the qualities of God:

John 14:8-9 “⁸ Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the _____, and it sufficeth us. ⁹ Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen _____ hath seen the _____; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”

John 17:21 “That they all may be _____; as thou, Father, art in _____, and I in _____, that _____ also may be one in _____: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

Matthew 5:16 “Let _____ light so shine before men, that they may see your _____ works, and glorify your _____ which is in heaven.”

KNOWLEDGE

If we add virtue (*goodness or high moral excellence*) to our character, we must know as much about it as possible. When we pursue the “*virtue*” or excellencies of God, we have the spirit of mind which exalts the Word of God who saved us. We desire to know Him so we can become more like Him. Therefore, the more we **know**, the more we **grow**!

II Peter 3:18 “But _____ in grace, and in the _____ of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.”

Colossians 3:10 “And have put on the new man, which is renewed in _____ after the image of him that created him:”

Ephesians 3:19 “And to know the love of Christ, which _____, that ye might be _____ with all the _____ of God.”

I Corinthians 2:12 “Now we have received, not the _____ of the world, but the _____ which is of God; that we might _____ the things that are freely given to us of God.”

Romans 12:1-2 “¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, _____, _____ unto God, which is your reasonable service. ² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your _____, that ye may prove what is that _____, and _____, and perfect, _____ of God.”

Note: The knowledge of God is essential to our growth in Christian character and our ability to recognize and avoid those who teach what is false. (**Matthew 7:15**)

Colossians 1:10 “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every _____ work, and _____ in the _____ of God;”

Romans 10:2 “For I bear them record that they have a _____ of God, but not according to _____.”

II Timothy 3:7 “Ever _____, and never able to come to the _____ of the _____.”

Titus 1:16 “They profess that they _____ God; but in _____ they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every _____ work reprobate.”

Proverbs 1:7 “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of _____: but fools _____ wisdom and instruction.”

James 4:17 “Therefore to him that _____ to do _____, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

I John 2:3 “And hereby we do _____ that we _____ him, if we keep his _____.”

READ Hebrews 5:12-14 – How did the writer describe one who has little knowledge?

How did he describe one who has more knowledge?

TEMPERANCE

What is “*Temperance*”?

The Greek word is ἐγκράτειαν (enkrateian) Self-Control

We have heard that we should “*Control our Temper*”.

Daniel Webster defines “*Temperate*” as “*showing moderation or self-restraint*”.

When we want to make steel harder, we *temper* it. Temper is the degree of hardness and elasticity in steel or other metal.

At this stage in our Christian growth and development, we use our faith, virtue, and knowledge to TEMPER ourselves into a strong disciplined character.

I Corinthians 9:25 “And every man that striveth for the _____ is _____ in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.”

The word “*temperate*” in this verse is the same Greek word used in **II Peter 1:6**. The person that strives to be a “*winner*” will “*control themselves*” (or *discipline themselves*) to do what needs to be done to obtain the crown.

I Corinthians 12:24 “For our comely parts have no need: but God hath _____ the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked.”

Συνεκέρασεν (synekerasen) Composed.

We must COMPOSE ourselves. When we are faced with opposition or difficulties, we must keep our COMPOSURE!

Acts 24:25 “And as he reasoned of righteousness, _____, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”

Galatians 5:23 “Meekness, _____: against such there is no law.”

The Greek word translated to “*temperance*” in this verse is the same word in **II Peter 1:6** which means “*self-control*”. There is no law against temperance (or any other “*fruits of the Spirit*” listed in *Galatians 5:22-23*)! What does this mean?

Write in your own words what you think the phrase, “*against such there is no law*” means: (Consult your favorite commentaries or resource):

What scripture could you memorize and quote during difficult times that may help you remember to remain temperate and composed: _____

PATIENCE

What is “*Patience*”?

The Greek word is ὑπομονήν (hypomonēn) Endurance ; Perseverance
Simply put, it means “*Don’t Quit!*”

Perseverance is the frame of mind and character which does what is right even though doing so may produce difficulties, suffering, and sorrows. Perseverance is the commitment to suffer in the short term to experience glory for eternity.

Hebrews 12:1-3 “¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with _____ the race that is set before us, ² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him _____ the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ For consider him that _____ such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

Hebrews 6:12 “That ye be not _____, but followers of them who through _____ and _____ inherit the promises.”

James 5:11 “Behold, we count them happy which _____. Ye have heard of the _____ of Job, and have seen the _____ of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

James 1:12 “Blessed is the man that _____ temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the _____ of life, which the Lord hath _____ to them that love him.”

Matthew 10:22 “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that _____ to the _____ shall be saved.”

Revelation 14:12 “Here is the _____ of the saints: here are they that keep the _____ of God, and the _____ of Jesus.”

II Timothy 4:5 “But watch thou in all things, _____ afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy _____.”

The English Standard Version translates this verse this way: “*As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*”

Each of us has a ministry. God has given us the time, talent, and resources to accomplish that ministry. Sometimes we “*grow weary in well doing*” **II Thessalonians 3:13**. However, we should not quit! We should be patient. We should endure.

What is your ministry?

What are some of ways you can add “*patience*” to your Christian character to “*fulfill your ministry*”?

GODLINESS

What is “*Godliness*”?

The Greek word is εὐσέβειαν (eusebeian) Piety ; Devotion

Webster defines “*Piety*” as “*the quality of being religious or reverent*”.

Webster defines “*Devotion*” as “*love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person, activity, or cause*”.

This expression was the most common word for religion in the pagan culture of Peter’s day. The word for “*godliness*” Peter used, refers to the religion a person practices in day-to-day life. He is not saying paganism is the same as Christianity, but he is pointing out what we should be devoted to. It is the attitude of reverence which seeks to please God in everything we do!

James 1:27 “Pure _____ and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To _____ the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself _____ from the world.”

II Peter 3:11 “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy _____ and _____,”

Titus 2:12 “Teaching us that, denying _____ and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and _____, in this present world;”

II Timothy 3:5 “Having a form of _____, but denying the _____ thereof: from such turn away.”

Jude 1:15 “To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are _____ among them of all their _____ deeds which they have _____ committed, and of all their hard speeches which _____ sinners have spoken against him.”

Ungodly Vs. Godly

I Timothy 6:3-12 ³ If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the _____ which is according to _____; ⁴ He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, ⁵ Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the _____, supposing that gain is _____: from such withdraw thyself. ⁶ But _____ with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸ And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. ⁹ But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some _____ after, they have erred from the _____, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹ But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, _____, faith, love, patience, meekness. ¹² Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast _____ a good _____ before many witnesses.”

What are some of the things we can do to add “*godliness*” to our Christian Character?

BROTHERLY KINDNESS

What is “*Brotherly Kindness*”?

The Greek word is φιλαδελφίαν (philadelphian) brotherly affection

It is the love we should have for one another as fellow-believers. This love, based on a shared relationship with Christ, can be sensed immediately even though two saints may never have met before. This union of believers crosses every barrier, racial, or social. This does not mean that brotherly love is automatic. If it were, Peter would not have found it necessary to command us to pursue it with diligence!

To develop our Christian Character, we must grow in Brotherly Kindness:

I Thessalonians 4: 9 – 10 “⁹ But as touching _____ love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are _____ of God to love one another. ¹⁰ And indeed ye do it toward all the _____ which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, _____, that ye increase more and more;”

Romans 12:10 “Be _____ affectioned one to another with _____ love; in honour preferring one another;”

Ephesians 4:32 “And be ye _____ one to another, _____, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

I Peter 1:22 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the _____, see that ye _____ one another with a pure heart fervently:”

Galatians 5:13 “For, _____, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love _____ one another.”

I John 3:14-17 “¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the _____. He that loveth not his _____ abideth in death. ¹⁵ Whosoever hateth his _____ is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶ Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the _____. ¹⁷ But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his _____ have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

We should strive to be like GOD in His Kindness:

Jonah 4:2 “And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a _____ God, and _____, slow to anger, and of great _____, and repentest thee of the evil.”

Isaiah 54:10 “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my _____ shall not _____ from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”

LOVE

These are Four GREEK WORDS for “Love”. Which one is used in our text? _____

Ἔρως (**Eros**) Intimate ; Sexual Desire - We get our English word “*Erotic*” from this Greek word.

Φιλέω (**Phileo**) Like ; Approve of ; Treat Kindly - This is the love that exists between friends.

στοργή (**Storge**) Natural/Family - Such as the love of a parent towards offspring and vice versa.

ἀγάπην (**Agape**) benevolence; good will; esteem – Love which centers in moral preference.

Agape Love is a “*moral preference*”. In other words, it is a choice made based on moral values. It is not dependent upon if we feel attracted to the person or not. We do not even have to like them. It does not matter if they are related through family ties. It is a choice we make to extend certain qualities to another person because we are morally compelled to do so. Agape love is not prompted by what the other person is or does, but by a love rooted in what God is. It is the love of God which flows through us. While “*Phileo*” love is directed toward fellow believers, “*Agape*” love applies both to believers and to unbelievers.

I Thessalonians 3:12 “And the Lord make you to increase and abound in _____ one toward _____, and toward _____ men, even as we do toward you.”

Study **I Corinthians 13:4-7** and list 15 ways “*agape*” love described:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Agape love is commanded.

John 13: 34 – 35 “³⁴ A new _____ I give unto you, That ye _____ one another; as I have _____ you, that ye also _____ one another. ³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have _____ one to another.”

I Peter 4: 7 – 9 “⁷ But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. ⁸ And above all things have fervent _____ among yourselves: for _____ shall cover the multitude of sins. ⁹ Use hospitality one to another without _____.”

I John 4: 20 – 21 “²⁰ If a man say, I _____ God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that _____ not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he _____ God whom he hath not seen? ²¹ And this _____ have we from him, That he who _____ God _____ his brother also.”

It is a spiritual thing to love with “agape” love. It is beyond our fleshly understanding.

Galatians 5: 13 – 18 ¹³ For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by _____ serve one another. ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt _____ thy neighbour as thyself. ¹⁵ But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. ¹⁶ This I say then, Walk in the _____, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the _____. ¹⁷ For the _____ lusteth against the _____, and the _____ against the _____: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. ¹⁸ But if ye be led of the _____, ye are not under the law.”

Luke 6: 27 – 28 ²⁷ But I say unto you which hear, _____ your _____, do good to them which _____ you, ²⁸ Bless them that _____ you, and pray for them which _____ use you.”

A reward is waiting on us if we develop “agape” love.

I Corinthians 2: 9 “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath _____ for them that _____ him.”

Luke 6:35 “But _____ ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your _____ shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”

CONCLUSION: (How does this passage apply to Christian Growth and why it is important?)

Matthew 25:31-46 ³¹ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: ³² And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: ³³ And he shall set the _____ on his right hand, but the _____ on the left.

³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on his _____ hand, _____, ye _____ of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ³⁵ For I was an _____, and ye gave me meat: I was _____, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: ³⁶ _____, and ye clothed me: I was _____, and ye visited me: I was in _____, and ye came unto me. ³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and _____ thee? or thirsty, and gave thee _____? ³⁸ When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee _____? or naked, and _____ thee? ³⁹ Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and _____ unto thee? ⁴⁰ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my _____, ye have done it unto _____.

⁴¹ Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, _____ from me, ye _____, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: ⁴² For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: ⁴³ I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. ⁴⁴ Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not _____ unto thee? ⁴⁵ Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the _____ of these, ye did it not to _____. ⁴⁶ And these shall go away into everlasting _____: but the righteous into _____ eternal.”

It's Grow Time! II Peter 1:5-7