

# ADD, MULTIPLY, INCREASE AND GROW

(No. 1215 – 1/10/22 – Sermon Online Zoom)

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. 2 Peter was written near the end of Peter's life (1:12-15), when he was martyred during the reign of Nero (around A.D. 65)
- B. In light of numerous false prophets, false teachers, and scoffers that were rising up in his day (2 Pet. 2), along with the imminent return of Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3), Peter emphasized the importance of Christian growth, using such words as *add* (1:5-7), *multiply* (1:2), *increase* (1:8), and *grow* (3:18).
- C. Peter also urged the believer to be actively involved in this growth, using expressions such as “make every effort” (2x), “be all the more eager,” “be on your guard”
- D. Read 2 Pet. 1:1-11

## II. THE RESOURCES FOR GROWTH

**2 Pet. 1:1-4:** <sup>1</sup>*Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have **received a faith as precious as ours**:* <sup>2</sup>*Grace and peace be yours in abundance* [“**MULTIPLIED** to you” – KJV] *through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.* <sup>3</sup>***His divine power has given us EVERYTHING WE NEED for life and godliness*** through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup>*Through these **He has given us His very great and precious promises**, so that through them you **may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.***

- A. Faith is a gift received from God (v.1)
  - 1. God gives each one a measure of faith (Rom. 12:3)
  - 2. **Eph. 2:8:** *For it is by grace you have been saved, through **faith**—and **this** [your faith] not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.*
- B. We have a faith just like Peter's and the other apostles (v.1!)
  - 1. NAS: “received a faith of the same kind as ours”
  - 2. “As **precious** as ours” [Gk. *isotimos* = “equal value or honor”; see 1 Pet. 1:7, 19; 2:4-7; 3:4]

3. After the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles in Cornelius' house, Peter told the believers in Jerusalem that "God gave them the **same gift** as He gave us" (Acts 11:17)!
  4. We have the SAME FAITH and ANOINTING that Peter had!
- C. Grace and peace are multiplied as our knowledge of God and Christ increases (v.2 – KJV)
1. **John 17:3:** *Now this is **eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.***
  2. This kind of knowledge signifies being "fully acquainted with" and having "full discernment"
  3. No wonder Paul wanted to know Christ more than anything else in life (**Phil. 3:7-11**):  
*<sup>7</sup>But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup>What is more, **I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. <sup>10</sup>I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, <sup>11</sup>and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.***
- D. God has given us **everything** ("all things" – KJV) we need for life and godliness (v.3)—He's given us the resources!
1. By His divine power (v.3)
  2. Through our knowledge of Him
  3. "Life and godliness"—the order is significant: life first!
  4. "Life" is a general term encompassing our physical, material, emotional and spiritual life
  5. "Godliness" refers more specifically to piety, reverence or holiness, i.e., our spiritual life
  6. When the Lord is our Shepherd, we are not lacking or wanting anything (Ps. 23:1)!

- E. God called us by (through) His own glory and goodness (v.3)
  - 1. Our calling (more about that in v.10) does not depend on us – it is derived from God’s glory and goodness
  - 2. “Goodness” is the Gk. *arete* which literally means “manliness, valor or strength;” it is translated “excellence” in NAS or “virtue” in KJV
- F. Through these (God’s glory and goodness) God also gave us very great and precious promises (v.4)
  - 1. As with our calling, God’s great promises are not dependent on us – they are the result of His valor and excellence!
  - 2. “Promise” [Gk. *epaggelma* = “self-committal; assurance of conferring some good”] – God is “committed” to fulfilling and performing everything He has promised!
- G. Through God’s promises we participate in His divine [“godlike”] nature and escape worldly corruption (v.4)
  - 1. God’s promises are not just to give us cars, jobs, or good health—they are to make us partakers of His holiness so we can share in His divine character and nature!
  - 2. This refers to godly character, not becoming gods – we are to share in/be “partakers of God’s holiness” (Heb. 12:10)
  - 3. “Participate” [Gk. *koinonos* = “share, fellowship, partake”]
  - 4. In his first epistle, Peter taught that the believer has *“been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Pet. 1:23)*
  - 5. John goes on to say that because ***“we are children of God... we shall be like Him”*** and ***“no one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God” (1 John 3:2, 9)***
  - 6. In other words, through God’s seed, the Word, we are born from above with a new nature inherited from God (we have His DNA!) – we are truly “new creations in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:17)!
  - 7. This idea is reinforced by the mention of escaping from the corruption (“moral decay {rottenness and corruption}” - AMP) that is common and prevalent in the fallen world because of ungodly lusts and desires

### III. THE PROCESS OF GROWTH

**2 Pet. 1:5-7:** <sup>5</sup>*For this very reason, **make every effort** to **ADD** to your **faith goodness**; and to goodness, **knowledge**; <sup>6</sup>and to knowledge, **self-control**; and to self-control, **perseverance**; and to perseverance, **godliness**; <sup>7</sup>and to godliness, **brotherly kindness**; and to brotherly kindness, **love**.*

#### A. Because of this, **make every effort** (v.5)

1. Because God has given us everything we need, great and precious promises and abundance of grace, we might expect Peter to say, “Take it easy – you don’t have to do a thing – God has done it all for you!”
2. Instead, he says “make every effort”—not in our own strength—rather through God’s grace and promises [see 1 Cor. 15:10]!
3. The Christian life is characterized in the New Testament as one of striving, pressing, fighting and laboring!
4. **Luke 13:24:** ***Make every effort** [“strive” – KJV] to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.*
5. **Rom. 14:19:** *Let us therefore **make every effort** [“pursue” – NAS] to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.*
6. **Eph. 4:3:** ***Make every effort** to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*
7. **Heb. 4:11:** *Let us, therefore, **make every effort** [“labour” – KJV] to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.*
8. **Heb. 12:14:** ***Make every effort** to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.*
9. **2 Pet. 3:14:** *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, **make every effort** [“be diligent” – KJV] to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with Him.*
10. **Phil. 2:12-13:** <sup>12</sup>*... continue to **work out your salvation** with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup>for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.*
11. God’s grace doesn’t teach us to be lazy – it causes us to be **zealous of good works** (Tit. 2:11-14; Eph. 2:8-10)

## B. Add to...

1. Gk. *epichoregeo* = “furnish besides, fully supply, aid, nourish or contribute unto”
2. MSG: *So, don't lose a minute in **building on what you've been given**, complementing your basic faith with good character, spiritual understanding...*
3. Peter lists **seven spiritual qualities** that the believer has to work hard at nourishing or contributing to his own faith

## C. Add to faith, **goodness** (v.5)

1. Faith is the foundation (Heb. 6:1-2); our real labor & effort are to believe (**John 6:28-29**): <sup>28</sup>*Then they asked Him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”* <sup>29</sup>*Jesus answered, “**The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent.**”*
2. “Goodness” here is the same Gk. *arete* used in v.3 which literally means “manliness, valor or strength;” it is translated “moral excellence” in NAS or “virtue” in KJV
3. We need to cultivate good moral Christian virtue and character as we grow in faith; it takes courage to follow Christ even when doing right isn’t popular!

## D. Add to goodness, **knowledge** (v.5)

1. Peter doesn’t specify what kind of knowledge
2. Proverbs gives numerous exhortations to grow in knowledge, wisdom, insight and understanding; the *beginning* of true knowledge is the fear of God!
3. God says His “people are destroyed from **lack of knowledge**” (Hos. 4:6)
4. We should always seek to learn and acquire new knowledge, especially in the following areas:
  - a) God (John 17:3; Eph. 4:13; Heb. 8:11), **His Word & truth** (Mat. 22:29; John 8:32; 1 Tim. 2:4)
  - b) God’s voice (John 10:4, 14), His will (Col. 1:9), His love (Eph. 3:19; 1 John 4:16), His ways (Ps. 95:10; John 14:4-6, His power (Eph. 1:17-19), Kingdom secrets (Mat. 13:11)
5. Paul frequently asks, “Do you not *know*? (1 Cor. 6, etc.)

“**All** your answers are in My Word!”

- E. Add to knowledge, **self-control** (v.6)
1. “Self-control” [“temperance” – KJV] is the mastery over all our evil inclinations and appetites
  2. We must cultivate self-restraint and **discipline** (*disciples* are disciplined!)
  3. It is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)
- F. Add to self-control, **perseverance** (v.6)
1. “Perseverance” [Gk. *hupomone* = lit. “to stay under;” “endurance, constancy, patience”]
  2. Learning how to remain steadfast and “stick it out” when we are under a burden or stressful trial: “I will not quit!”
- G. Add to perseverance, **godliness** (v.6)
1. As seen in v.3, “godliness” refers to piety, reverence, devotion, or holiness (sanctification is important!)
  2. We should cultivate a personal, internal reverence for God
- H. Add to godliness, **brotherly kindness** (v.7)
1. “Brotherly kindness” [Gk. *philadelphia* = “fraternal affection, love of the brethren”]
  2. Refers specifically to our love for other Christians
  3. See 1 Thess. 3:12; 4:9-10 – “brotherly love... for each other) and for everyone else”
- I. Add to brotherly kindness, **love** (v.7)
1. “Love” [Gk. *agape* = “charity, divine love”]
  2. Refers to a love for all people, not just Christians
  3. God *IS* love (1 Jn. 4:7-21), so the more our lives show agape love, the more we become like our Father!
  4. According to 1 Cor. 13, love is the only true measure of spiritual growth and maturity
  5. The two greatest commandments on which all of the Law and the Prophets hang are commandments of love: Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself [Mat. 22:36-40].

Edison  
failed  
10,000  
times  
before  
inventing  
the light  
bulb!

Abraham  
Lincoln  
lost 4  
different  
elections  
before he  
became  
president  
in 1860

- J. Here is a prayer that helps make all of this “addition” more human and practical:

*Lord, You have given me a **faith** like my father Abraham—a faith that doesn’t waver or weaken in the face of challenges, but keeps growing stronger and stronger, fully persuaded that whatever You have promised, You have the power to fulfil. And God, You have given me a faith just as precious and powerful as the faith You gave the apostle Peter!*

*And to that faith, I add the **virtue and moral excellence** of Noah, Joseph, Moses, and Esther—virtuous men and women of God who feared You and courageously stood against the pressures of the world to compromise what they knew to be right and true.*

*And to that virtue and moral excellence, I add the **knowledge** of Solomon, a man to whom You gave very great wisdom, discernment, insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore—a knowledge and wisdom greater than any other mortal. And I will follow the apostle Paul’s example of relentlessly pursuing the surpassing greatness of intimately knowing Jesus Christ my Lord.*

*And to that knowledge, I add the **self-control** of Paul, who through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, made his body a slave to righteousness and obedience of God’s will, mortifying the deeds of the flesh and growing in the fruit of the Spirit through a disciplined life.*

*And to self-control, I add the **perseverance** of Job, who patiently endured great hardship and suffering as he trusted and hoped in a living Redeemer.*

*To perseverance, I add **godliness**—the **piety and devotion** of the prophets Samuel and Daniel—men who faithfully served their God, and Ruth—a godly woman who was devoted to her family and her God.*

*To godliness, I add **brotherly kindness**—the kind of affection Jonathan showed for his friend, David.*

*Finally, to brotherly kindness, I add the **love** of King David and the apostle John—men who were made great by their great love for God and for people. That is the ultimate goal—love for God and love for people. Lord, I thank you for daily increasing all of these qualities in me—faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. In Jesus’ Name, Amen!*

## IV. THE OUTCOME OF GROWTH

**2 Pet. 1:8-11:** <sup>8</sup>*For if you possess these qualities in **INCREASING** measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.* <sup>9</sup>*But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.* <sup>10</sup>*Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to **make your calling and election sure.** For if you do these things, you will never fall, <sup>11</sup>and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

### A. All these qualities need to keep **increasing** (v.8)

1. Peter doesn't mean to imply that each quality is to be cultivated one at a time; instead, they are all to be cultivated simultaneously
2. Living things grow, so all of these qualities should be ever-increasing in the believer's life
3. This keeps one from being **ineffective** and **unproductive**
  - a) "Ineffective" [Gk. *argos* = "inactive, unemployed, lazy, useless, idle;" "barren" – KJV]
  - b) "Unproductive" ["unfruitful" – KJV]
4. Christians who are barren and unfruitful are in serious jeopardy [see Luke 13:6-9; John 15:1-8]

### B. Anyone not possessing these qualities is nearsighted, blind & forgetful (v.9)

1. "Nearsighted" [lit. "to shut the eyes"]
2. "Blind" [lit. "opaque, smoky (eyes)"]
3. Since it is impossible to be both blind and nearsighted, Peter seems to be saying that such people are blind because they have shut their eyes to the truth
4. He has forgotten or lost sight of the fact that God had cleansed him from his past sins

### C. **Make every effort** to make your calling and election sure (v.10)

1. "Be all the more eager" ["give diligence" – KJV; "be all the more diligent" – NAS]
2. Again, the believer is exhorted to put forth effort!



3. “Calling” [Gk. *klesis* = “an invitation”] – we must RSVP!
    - a) 1 Cor. 1:26-29 – “foolish, weak, lowly, despised...”
    - b) 2 Tim. 1:9 – “holy... by grace”
    - c) Rom. 11:29 – “irrevocable”
    - d) Eph. 1:18 – “hope”
    - e) Phil. 3:14 – “high, upward, heavenward”
    - f) Heb. 3:1 – “heavenly”
  4. “Election” [Gk. *ekloge* = “divine selection; to be chosen (by God)”]
    - a) **Mat. 22:14:** *For many are **invited** [Gk. *kletos* = “called, invited”], but few are **chosen** [Gk. *elektos* = “selected, chosen, elect”].*
    - b) **John 15:16:** *You did not choose Me, but **I chose you** and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.*
    - c) See Rom. 9:8-14
  5. Paraphrase: “By diligent effort, be sure, certain and steadfast in knowing that God has called and chosen you.”
  6. Matthew Henry: “It requires a great deal of diligence and labor to make our calling and election sure; there must be a very close examination of ourselves, a very narrow search and strict enquiry, whether we are thoroughly converted, our minds enlightened, our wills renewed, and our whole souls changed as to the bent and inclination thereof; and to come to a fixed certainty in this requires the utmost diligence, and cannot be attained and kept without divine assistance.”
- D. If you do these things, you will **never fall** (v.10)
1. “These things” could refer to everything listed in vv.5-10
  2. “Fall” [Gk. *ptaio* = “trip, stumble, err, fail”]
  3. Seems to refer to falling from grace, i.e., falling into perdition and thus losing one’s soul and salvation
  4. Note: This is what Peter says about the false teachers and prophets in the next chapter who didn’t continue on the path of holiness: they were “*bringing swift destruction on themselves... [having] escaped the corruption of the world*”

*by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and [were] again entangled in it and overcome... [were] **worse off at the end than they were at the beginning**... [and it] would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command” (2 Pet. 2:1, 20-21)*

- E. We will receive a rich welcome & entrance into the Kingdom of Christ (v.11)
  1. “Welcome” [“entrance” – KJV]
  2. Not everyone will enter the Kingdom of God (Mat. 5:20; 7:13, 21; 18:3; 19:23-24; 23:13; John 3:5; Rev. 21:27)
  3. Those who don’t diligently practice what Peter is teaching in vv.5-10 may fall and not enter the Kingdom!

## V. SUMMARY

- A. God has given every believer all the resources needed for life and godliness—precious faith, abundant grace, and great and precious promises
- B. Nevertheless, we are exhorted to keep on growing and increasing spiritually, making every effort to nourish and add to our faith godly characteristics such as goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love
- C. We are never stationary in the walk of faith—we are either going forward (as Peter exhorted in chapter one of his second epistle), or we end up going backward (like the false prophets and teachers he addressed in chapter two).
- D. Peter assures us that if we keep adding, multiplying, increasing, and growing, we will never fall, we will be fruitful and productive, and we will receive a rich welcome into the Kingdom of God!
- E. Peter frames the beginning and end of his second epistle with two bookends that emphasize the main purpose for his writing:

**2 Pet. 1:2:** *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.*

**2 Pet. 3:18:** *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*