

2 Peter 1:5-7

“Giving all diligence”

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 - I. Intro

Again, we take up chapter 1 verses 5-11 in what is **the reason the Holy Spirit had Peter sit down to write this letter**. In his introduction Peter wrote **the objectives of the Christian life**; revealing to the reader in verse 3 what the two objects of the Christian life are only after he reminded them **what** and **where** their **resources** were to accomplish the objects of:

1. Pertain to **LIFE: To know God**
2. And **GODLINESS: To be transformed into His likeness**

Peter indirectly conveys two power truths:

- A. First, he dispels the lie that by their own efforts they can make themselves Christians or by adding to their life works, they can add to their own goodness and fitness to be in the presence of God.
- B. Second, he corrects the error of “**extreme passivity**” that makes it anti-Christian to exhibit any self-discipline in their Christian life.

It is here that the bulk of Peter’s letter focuses! The reason for this was that **these first century Christians were eager to grow in Christ** while that is good **it made them susceptible to false teachers** who claimed that the Apostles lacked truth that could aide them in their quest for maturity. That is a far cry different then how this letter exhorts believers today. What we realize in Peter’s letter is that our: **Divine wealth is not given to us so that as Christians we can waist away the opportunities to grow and mature the gift of life that God has given us!** We Christians need to consider **the extreme cost that God has given in His Only Begotten Son so that we are now able to accomplish those two objects!** Peter says that it is for the reason that God has already supplied everything necessary to know God and be transformed into His likeness that the Christian needs to be “**Active and alive**” in their faith! The Greek word “add” is

where we get our English word for chorus and was used to describe the person who bore the expense of all the training and maintenance for the chorus. What follows is a ***threefold***

description of the Christian faith that Peter describes as the:

1. ***Character of our faith***: Virtue and knowledge
2. ***Disposition of our faith***: Self-control, perseverance
3. ***Its relationship to others of our faith***: Godliness, brotherly kindness and love

This isn't some mechanical exercise, and it is again the use of the word ADD where we see that our ***diligence*** ought to be a "***perfect balance...a (CHOURS) perfectly fitted voices in concert with each other***"! Peter's take on this section reveals this diligence as it is very "***business like***"

as he gives ***five business attitudes towards our faith***:

1. ***Method of our faith***: "***for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith***"
2. ***Alertness of our faith***: "***add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control***"
3. ***Promptness of our faith***: "***to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness***"
4. ***Boldness of our faith***: "***to godliness brotherly kindness***"
5. ***Persistence of our faith***: "***and to brotherly kindness love***"

Peter mentioned diligence enables the reader of this letter to do ***three things in maturity of their faith***:

- A. ***Define their ambitions***
- B. ***Refine their goals***
- C. ***Realign their efforts***

Furthermore, they help the believer to analyze ***why they are not obtaining their desired results of their faith***. "***What do I lack?***" "***What do I need to put in harmony of my faith?***" Let's now

examine in detail this perfect list:

- ***Character of our faith***: Virtue and knowledge
- ***Disposition of our faith***: Self-control, perseverance
- ***Its relationship to others of our faith***: Godliness, brotherly kindness and love

II. Vs. 5b Balanced faith

Vs. 5b Peter had taken his readers to the “*Bank of Jesus Christ*” and showed them “*every spiritual blessing in heavenly places*” (Eph 1:3) that was necessary for the two objectives of the Christian life. The assumption he makes is, once we have made a withdrawal, we will spend it to purchase these seven aspects of balanced faith! The Greek word “*diligence*” is one that means to: *Make haste, be eager, to do ones best, to exert oneself.* Think of the areas where you “*Make haste, be eager, to do ones best, to exert oneself*” and you will discover that our challenge *isn't that we aren't diligent* but rather that *we aren't diligent with the wealth and resources that God has provided for us to add to our faith!* Of further importance is the realization that every “ADDED” *virtue strengthens and transfigures every other virtue.* *Every addition we make to our character adds to the enrichment of our life and the effectiveness of our witness of the glory of God!*

III. Vs. 6-7 Five business attitudes towards our faith

1. Method of our faith: “for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue”:

To develop one “virtue” is to exercise another as each new grace springs out of another and perfects the other virtue. “*In your faith*”, Peter says, “*supply virtue*” and in your “*virtue supply knowledge*” etc. We exercise our faith in Jesus by yielding to the Holy Spirit’s work in our hearts. The Greek word for “virtue” is NOT JUST “*moral excellence*” but rather the “*moral energy*” that describes the activity of the soul that is manifested in moral excellence. Peter says, “See to it that your faith is an active living faith”! A “manly faith” that is energetic and alive in every way. The Christians faith is “*active*” NOT to get something from God but because it has already received everything from God. There ought NOT be any “passivity” in our faith. We shouldn't

witness in the Christian or the church a “lethargy”. Peter’s exhortation is let your faith be energetic, let it be alive, let it stir up other to good works in Christ Jesus. The Church of Jesus is NOT called to their “Ladyboy recliners” waiting for something or someone to “stir the waters” of our faith. Our faith ought to have been stirred by Jesus! We are to do our part as we give all “diligence” to make certain that our heart adds to our faith virtue!

2. **Alertness of our faith:** “add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control”: The word “knowledge” here is a word that **doesn’t refer** to an **intellectual understanding** but rather a **practical or experiential knowledge** as it is connected to the next virtue “self-control” or temperance. Peter is not speaking of a knowledge that leads to faith as that is what the believer has already been given by faith. Instead, it is insight or alertness of their faith. It is putting our faith into practice not waiting for things to happen but rather but being vigorous to seize the opportunity to put virtue to practice! But notice that this “knowledge” is tempered with “self-control” and the Greek word used is one that describes who yields their life over to their master’s passions instead of their own! One Greek scholar called this virtue as the “trusty dispenser of self-restraint”. Clearly this knowledge was to be practiced in the energy of self-control thus it was harnessed energy like a light bulb instead of lightning. Peter no doubt could have been thinking of this in terms of his own failed past when his passion overcame his temperance. We can all become enslaved to the “tyranny of the urgent” whereby we are overwhelmed by a state of activity that leads us only to more activity! Peter is writing about a spiritual energy that is intelligent, enlightened and controlled to accomplish the purposes and plans for our maturity and spiritual growth.
3. **Promptness of our faith:** “to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness”:

Peter looks directly at inward dispositions having focused our attention to the “*trusty dispenser of self-restraint*” Peter says that we are to blend in a generous dose of “*perseverance*” and the Greek word means “*to remain under*” and is used to describe a person who “remains under” the trials and testing’s in a way that both honors God and furthers their maturity in the faith. It’s the heroic faith that enables the believer to NOT just bear up under trials and testing’s “*to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude1:3) This is not earthly stubbornness that Peter writes of but heavenly submission to the will of God. The idea here is the need for the believer to watch themselves to make certain that our “death” is daily. The flesh lusts against the spirit and spirit against the flesh and it is *perseverance that has its aim godliness* that see the flesh lusts die! This self-discipline enables the believer to “mortify the flesh”. The Christian must not believe the lie of satan that by mere sitting at church that the former lusts will automatically be removed from us. “*His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness*”. God is NOT asking the believer to discipline and control themselves or do something that they are NOT capable of doing but rather to exercise what God has equipped us to do! There is not place in our Christian faith for great professions of faith and promises to our Lord if we don’t care them out in the power and resources that He has given us. And the Goal is our transformation into His likeness, so let’s not grow weary for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not!

4. **Boldness** of our faith: “*to godliness brotherly kindness*”: We now see the relationship of our faith to others. We can quickly see if our relationship with God is right by noting how our relationship is with others. Why our motivation is our maturity to the glory of God our diligence has the further blessing and impact upon those who both share our faith and

those that don't! There is no greater witness the Christian can have than a self-disciplined life that manifests itself in love for others! Think how much damage has been done by the church and Christians who thinking that manifesting "godliness" has been devoid of love! Oh, thank God we have been given the balance and harmony of our faith as so many have rejected the "*crippled chorus of the church*" that isn't the "*harmony of the Holy Spirit*" visible in our love of God and others!

5. Persistence of our faith: "*and to brotherly kindness love*": Finally, Peter says that to this "brotherly kindness" God's "agape" love is to be added, above all. "*Let this love reign in you*", Peter says. Each of these qualities adds and contributes to the others as each possess an importance that influences the others. There is a perfect balance that is lacking in the world of fallen humanity. We can see highly intelligent people cultured but not moral but self-loving! There are those who have great power, but their life spins out of control. There is no life that can be in balance except the Christian life. *It is only in the Christian life that because we start with faith in Him who so loved us that the expectation from God is that we will end up with love.* Without faith we can do nothing but given faith and practicing faith we must inevitably end up with love, for God and for what God loves!