

2 Peter 1 (Part 3) :5-11 • Adding to our Faith

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We're going to be picking up our text here. We're in chapter 1, 2 Peter, chapter 1. We're picking it up in verse 5 this morning, but because what we're going to be reading in verse 5 and following is so highly dependent upon what comes before it. We're going to read verses 3 and 4 once again.

Okay. So we'll start at verse 3. 1 Peter 1:3 (correction 2 Peter 1:3). It says, “³His divine power has granted us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge.” Remember what we talked about? That's that experiential knowledge, “of Him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”

Now here's where we're going to pick up where we left off verse 5 and following, we're going to go down to verse 11.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (ESV)

I'm going to have you stop there. Let's pray.

Thank you, Father. Open our hearts. This is your Word. This is your, this whole thing is your domain. The spiritual insight and the understanding that is required to apprehend these things, Lord, is in your hands and we pray that you would

graciously bestow it to us today. To not just lay hold, Lord, of this Word, but also then to know through your spirit, how to apply it. Lord, because this is a very applicable section of scripture and we pray that you'd help us to do just that. For therein lies wisdom and stability. We ask it in Jesus name, amen. Amen.

Well, we established in our last study that all believers, and I assume we're all believers here in this room today. But all believers are, have, a calling upon their lives, and that calling is to be a partaker of the divine nature.

That's really just kind of a fancy way of saying you're called to be Christ-like. You're called to exhibit a Christly attitude and so forth in your walk, ah the character of Christ. But I need to talk for just a moment about what kind of, what that is. Well, not just what it is, but how it's perceived by some people. Because, whenever you say something to people, do you know that it's perceived differently depending on who's listening? I mean, I think you get that. I just got done saying, you are called to a Christ-like life. Now, do you know there are some people who hear that, and they are burdened by it? Some people are like, woo, sweet.

But other Christians hear a statement like that, "You've been called to a Christ-like life," and they, to them it's a burdensome duty. To them they hear God saying, "All right, now that I've saved you, I expect you to keep your nose clean. I expect you to sit up, act smart, and don't sass back."

You know, kind of like, you might hear kind of a very angry, sort of a rigid parent kind of talking to you, you know, "Now that you're saved, you better tow the line." And that's the way some people perceive this, "You've been called to a Christ-like life," but that's not it at all. It is not a heavy burden.

Because, you know, when God saved us, He could have stopped right there with the forgiveness part. He could have just, you know, He could have sent His Son and to die on the cross for our sins, and then said there, okay you're forgiven now go your way. But He didn't stop there. He said, I'll tell you what, now I'm going to, I'm going to make you my child.

You'll be my son or you'll be my daughter, and you'll be very precious in my sight, and as a child, I'm going to give you an inheritance that is normal to a very precious child of the Father. He didn't have to do those things. He could have just said, all right, you're forgiven. Cool.

You, but you are my child. You have an inheritance. And then He didn't even stop there. He said, I am going to take my very heart. I'm going to take my very essence, my very nature, and I'm going to share it with you so that you can be like me. And I'm not, this is not weird theology. We're not going to become gods.

But He does want to share His nature, His goodness, His virtue. He wants to share those things with you and me, and that is incredible, and that's what it means to be a partaker of the divine nature. He didn't have to do it. But He made it all possible, and Peter is expressing that possibility in verse 3 when he says to us that He's "*given us everything we need*" for godliness. I'm kind of quoting it a little bit out of the NIV there because, I used to teach out the NIV and my brain still speaks NIV, even though I teach out the ESV. God has given you everything you need for godliness. That's what Peter is saying when he says He's made you a partaker of the divine nature (1 Peter 1:4). Right?

So, here's the point. Being called as we are to reflect the nature of God is one thing. But, learning to walk out that nature, that is another thing altogether. Okay. And that's a very important thing to distinguish because when we, once we get saved, we, I think we figure out fairly early in our Christian life that this isn't just going to happen automatically.

I got saved and I didn't suddenly just start levitating off the ground and have a halo around my head and all those other things that people, we kind of envision. Holiness just didn't settle upon my every action and word. Which is why Peter says, as we begin to look at this section in verse 5, he says, "*For this reason....*," and I want you to take note of these words, the ESV does a good job. He says, "*For this reason, make every effort...*" and if you don't have this underlined or highlighted in your Bible, you might consider doing it.

He says, "*...make every effort to supplement your faith.*" And that means to add to it, to build on it. Make every effort. Now, I want you to notice that it says that it takes effort. Did you catch that? And that's why I wanted you to highlight or circle it in your Bible because it's going to take effort. And I got to just tell you right now, that there are some Christians who are very uncomfortable with using words like effort and hard work in anything in the context of the Christian life.

Because they just...shutter. They think, well, isn't that legalism? No, this isn't legalism. See the words effort and hard work are only out of place when it comes to salvation. When we're talking about our salvation. There you can't use

effort. You can't use the words, "hard work," because our salvation is a gift from God, right?

He has given it freely, but the Bible makes it clear, that when it comes to growing in the Christian life, when it comes to adding to our faith, there is a need on our part for effort and diligence. In fact, Peter's going to use that word toward the end of this section of scripture, right? But like anything, it's got to have a starting point, and we've already alluded to it, which is why Peter again goes on in verse 5 to say, "*...make every effort to supplement your faith.*"

Did you catch that, "*...make every effort to supplement your faith.*" So you know what you're building on. You know what the starting ground level first floor is to this growth process that, that God wants to see happen in our lives. It begins with faith. Faith is the root of the Christian life. It begins with faith.

I believe that Jesus died for me. I believe that He is my Savior. I believe that I am born again. It starts with faith, right? It begins right there. Do you know how many Christians stay right there? In fact, there are some churches that are so superficial in their approach to God's Word that the people that is sitting in the chairs don't move beyond faith.

They don't add to faith because they're not being encouraged to add to faith. They just keep coming back, going over faith. Hey, we got faith. We got faith. You got faith. Let's have faith. Well, faith is great. It's our foundation, but we got to build on it. We got to go from there. And that's what Peter's saying, "*...make every effort to (add or) supplement your faith,*" right, so that we move forward. It's got to grow and that's why Peter goes on in these verses, and this is really all we're going to take this morning, but he goes on in these verses to outline kind of a plan for growth. Don't you like that? I like it. You got a plan?

My wife, I married a planner. My wife's a planner from the word go. I can say it. She's not in the room right now. She's taking care of her granddaughter. But my wife is a planner. Oh man. And I'm one of those people who's just kind of like, I like just being, doing it off the cuff. And she's like, well, she always, to this day, we've been married 44 years, she still says to me, "Well Paul, what's your plan?" and I don't have one.

But she wants me to be a planner like her and I'm not. I'm glad God has a plan for us though. And here's the plan that Peter kind of lays out in his word. He says, this is the plan for growth, right? So here we go. He's got these seven things he says with, "^{5b}*so supplement our faith (the first one he says) with virtue,*" (and then with) *and virtue with knowledge,* ⁶*and knowledge with self-*

*control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,
7and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.*

And so he lines out these seven areas of Christian growth that you add to your faith. We'll put the list up on the screen here so you can see it here. There they are seven things to add to our faith.

(slide)

7 things to add to our faith

- Virtue
- Knowledge
- Self-control
- Steadfastness
- Godliness
- Brotherly affection
- Love

But before...we're going to look at these briefly. I'm not going to spend a lot of time at all on each of these, but I do need to say something before we do get into them. And I need to tell you this quite candidly, because I read through this whole passage and it's all about adding to your faith, adding these things to your faith, and growing in your faith.

And He lays them all out and says, now do this. But can I just tell you right now, this is a little spoiler alert. He doesn't tell you how. Isn't that fun? He says, here's the plan, but He's not going to tell you how to get there. Now you might say, well, that's a little weird. Oh, actually, it's kind of just like God. I mean it's kind of what I've noticed about God.

He tends to kind of do it that way. He'll often tell us that something is possible, but then He won't tell us how to get it. Isn't that weird? And the reason is, if He gave us a how-to roadmap of how to do various things or have various things, that roadmap would begin to be an end in itself. We would begin to look at that roadmap and follow that roadmap to the exclusion of a personal relationship with God.

Here's the point. God doesn't want us looking for things. He wants us looking for Him, okay? He wants us looking, He wants us looking for Him. He wants us to press in and to run after Him, right? Press in on Him and run after Him. So He's giving you these guidelines, this plan for Christian growth, but He's not going to tell you how to do it.

He's going to say, just come to Me. Just come to Me. Do you get what I'm saying? So much of Christendom has been minimized into a recipe. I don't know if you've ever noticed that. In some churches they preach recipes. There's a recipe for being saved, and it's like, you know, it's you believe and confess and you get baptized and then you're saved and there's the recipe.

And these people hold to their recipes very strongly. It's like ugh, you know, and you miss so much. You miss the point. Frankly, when you stick to these specific recipes, it's like the Bible just says, call upon the name of the Lord and you will be saved (Rom 10:13). Now there are guidelines and there's insights and there's things He's told us and given us to understand these things.

But when we minimize them or bring them down to a recipe, we take out the element of relationship, right? So He doesn't say, first do this, then do this, then do, then I want you, then take a left and then take a right and then take a, and then go straight for a hundred yards and then take a right.

He doesn't do that because He wants you to come to Him. He wants you to know Him. He wants you to seek His face, okay? All right so you'll see on the list here that the first one is virtue. And I, it's interesting, I looked up this word in my Greek lexicon, and it's a fairly broad meaning in the Greek. It can mean anything from moral excellence to spiritual courage, which is kind of a broad sort of a definition.

But you know, I got to thinking about that, moral excellence. We talked about that actually last time. And then spiritual courage over here on the other side. And I thought, wow, if I had to pick a person who seems to kind of embody those things in the Bible. One of my favorite guys is Daniel, I got to tell you, and I think, I feel like Daniel is the example that we're given in the Word of moral excellence.

Moral excellence and spiritual courage. Here's a young man. Just imagine this. You're in your teens and you are taken forcibly from your home into another country to spend the rest of your earthly days in a pagan nation, right? Surrounded by pagan ideas and ideologies and beliefs. And Daniel never flinched in his devotion to the Lord his God and being upright.

And when he was called upon to speak the truth, he spoke it with courage that is just incredibly admirable. And that's what Peter's talking about here when he's encouraging you and me to add to our faith that kind of moral excellence and spiritual courage.

Lord, give me what you did in Daniel. Do that in me, Lord.

Next on our list is knowledge. Notice we'll highlight these as we kind of go along.

(Slide)

7 things to add to our faith

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- **Knowledge**
- Self-control
- Steadfastness
- Godliness
- Brotherly affection
- Love

Knowledge is, this is the Greek word *gnosis*. This is more intellectual knowing, right? Peter says, to add to the moral excellence that you have and the spiritual courage, the knowing, add knowing to this.

Now I think of Solomon, when I think about knowledge. He received a gift from the Lord of knowledge. We're probably not going to get that like Solomon got it. I mean, I seriously doubt it. So, for us, knowledge is going to kind of have to come the old-fashioned way, through hard work and diligence.

And that's what we're talking about. And that's why Peter says, make every effort to add to your virtue, knowing (2 Peter 1:5). And he's talking about knowing the Word of the Lord. Knowing, you know, what the Word has to say. There's no substitute for just studying the Word of God and knowing what it says, right?

I mean, there's a time in your Christian life where you should, it's okay to say to somebody, "Doesn't it say somewhere in the Bible?" But there's a point where you need to know. You need to know for yourself. And it takes effort. And so he says, add to your virtue, this effort of knowing. Get to the place where you know.

The next one here in verse 6 is self-control. This is what you add to knowledge, to knowing. You add self-control.

(Slide)

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And self-control is an interesting word in a very, if you and I say general, in a general way, self-control, you're going to think of somebody who is able to control their passions, like their anger or something like that. Interestingly enough, I found out that the ancient Greeks defined self-control as someone who was not ruled by their sexual passions.

Isn't that interesting? And that's, I think that's probably a good definition, because if you can exercise some kind of control in the area of your sexual passions you can probably exercise it just about anywhere. Because that's probably one of the strongest things, pulls, in our lives. And so, Lord, increase my self-control. I need more self-control. Help me to understand and to exercise and to add it. I want to add it to my knowing.

Next here in verse 6, he says, “...and (to) *self-control with steadfastness.*” Your Bible may say perseverance. And this just refers to the ability to keep on going despite the difficulties, despite the challenges, despite the ruts and potholes and rain and hail and lightning and wind and I'm using these in a metaphoric sort of a thing.

All the things that can come into our lives and kind of dog us along the way. We're talking about persistence. We're talking about endurance. It's a quality I admire probably, in, well, obviously in Jesus, but the apostle Paul. What a guy. What a guy. When I think about this whole idea of steadfastness, he just, he refused to give up.

I mean, they, at one point they dragged him outside the city limits and started throwing stones at him until he was down on the ground and dead. And I believe he was dead. And it tells us that the brothers came and gathered around him and prayed, and Paul got up and he went back into the city.

I would've said, “Where's the Greyhound bus station here? And how much is a ticket?” He went back into the city. That is steadfastness. Sticking with it, persevering. I'm going to do what I'm called to do. Wow!

Lord, give me a steadfast heart.

Still in verse 6, he says, “...*and* (add to steadfast) *steadfastness* (add) *with godliness.*” Godliness.

When we use the word godliness, we're, I want you to think of like looking like your parents, not looking scary necessarily. But in this case, kind of looking like your heavenly Father.

(Slide)

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Most of us display something of the likeness of our parents or some relative or something like that. I got the coolest note here a couple of weeks ago. My mother's cousin follows me on my Facebook page. My mother's 92 years old and so her cousin's got to be pretty close to that same age. Anyway, she sent me a picture of her dad. Her father, who would be my grandfather's brother, my maternal, so my mother's father's brother. You with me? As the world turns.

And she said to me in this note, she said, “You remind me of my dad.” And I looked at it and sure enough I could see it in the eyes. I look like her dad. Isn't that weird? I don't think I ever met the man. I don't remember anyway. He probably was born around, right around 1900. So, and I don't even know where he lived out his life.

But it's kind of funny, we have these biological likenesses to family members. Godliness is like that, except it's not biological, it's spiritual. And when we're talking about godliness, we're talking about having the likeness of your Heavenly Father. We're talking about not just looking like Him. It's like when people look at you and see you and they hear your words, and they see your love and the way you respond to life, it reminds them of God.

That's godliness, and that's something you and I are to add to our faith. So we get to exhibit this new family likeness. I kind of like that, the new family likeness.

And then in verse 7 he says, with, and along with godliness, we're going to add “...*brotherly affection.*”

(Slide)

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This is the Greek word, *philadelphia*. It means brotherly love. Best biblical example I can think of is Jonathan. Do you guys remember Jonathan, the Old Testament son of King Saul? He just, his heart was knit to David. Do you remember that? And don't even think that there was any weird kind of homosexual stuff going on here. If you would even mentioned that to either one of those guys, they'd cut your head off.

They were warriors, and yet the Bible tells us that Jonathan's heart was knit to David as his own soul. He loved him. He loved him like a brother. That's this idea of loving, brotherly loving kindness, brotherly love.

And I'm like, Lord, give me that. I want to have that. Help me to love like Jonathan loved David. With that same sort of brotherly love, brotherly affection.

And then the final trade is the highest of all, he says in “...*brotherly affection with love.*”

(Slide)

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And this is the Greek word *agape*. And you all know that it's the highest form of love because it's an unconditional love. But, most of all, it's the highest form of love because it's God's love.

It's not man. Do not go looking for agape love among people who are unsaved. It is possible for this kind of love to be generated into the heart and life of a believer, but not an unbeliever, because this doesn't come from mankind. This has, finds no origin place, in the heart or soul or mind or whatever of man. It is divine in its, in its beginning. And in that sense, it has no beginning because God has no beginning.

And I and it's not a, it's not a feeling. It's a choice in our lives, right? And you guys all know Paul, the apostle, described this kind of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

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1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (ESV)

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

He said, it's patient. It's the kind of love that, it's always kind to others. It doesn't have envy. It's not boastful. It's not arrogant. It's not rude to people. It doesn't say, I want my way first. Doesn't get irritable. It doesn't act resentfully toward others, nor does it rejoice in things that are wrong. Instead, it rejoices with the truth. It bears all things. It believes all things. It hopes all things, and it endures all things.

And I'll go on to add that it's not the kind of love that you sit around and wait to feel. It's an act of obedience to share the love that He gives, that He knows, and that He communicates to us through His divine nature.

All right, now concerning all of these things that we're looking at here in 2 Peter, all these qualities of growth and what we add to faith that is, is given to us from God's nature.

Peter says, look with me in your Bible in verse 8. If you still have your Bible open, it says, “*For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge (and this, now we're going back to epiginosko, this is the experiential knowledge) of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

And he says, if you're, if these things are growing in your life and they're happening, they're going to keep you from being ineffective and fruitful. And that's the last thing we want to be is ineffective and unfruitful, right? We want to be effective. We want to be fruitful. Can I just tell you, without trying to sound too dramatic, that there are too many believers walking around, I mean, real believers, who are ineffective and unfruitful. There's too many.

And you know, I got to be careful what I say here. I'm editing on the fly. So many times people will say to me, “Oh, well we need to be fruit inspectors.” And what they're saying is they supposed, they're kind of saying, they should inspect other people's fruit. And we like to think that if somebody isn't showing the proper amount of fruit, well, they might just not be saved. I don't think they're saved. And we kind of say it like it's this casual kind of flipping, say, I don't know. I don't know. There's no fruit I can see. I'm not sure they're even saved.

First of all, you can't know. You can't know. Only God, only God knows. But, more than that, Peter is telling us here to do these things, add these things to our faith so that we aren't ineffective, and we aren't unproductive or unfruitful, if you will, in our faith for Jesus Christ.

And the good news is if you have felt like the Lord has been tapping you on the shoulder, that you need to be fruitful. You need to be more fruitful. You need to be more effective in your walk with the Lord. The good news is you can do that. You can change, and the way it changes is, as we've already mentioned, seeking God with all of your heart. Seeking Him through His Word. Pressing in to know Him, to walk with Him to have a relationship with Him.

I had a note from a gal just today, earlier today, and she was asking all these questions about, is it appropriate to pray this way or to say this because I don't, I think that might be impolite when I'm talking to God.

And I was like, I wrote her back quick this morning and I just said, “God isn't so concerned about all of these propriety issues or what's polite. He wants to have a relationship with you. He wants you to jump up in his lap like He's your papa, and you just tell Him what's on your heart and you cry out to Him. And if you

don't get the words just right or they don't come out just the right way, He's not going to go, well, that wasn't polite.”

You know, we get so hung up. We get so hung up on these little nuances of what it means to pray and how I've, the words I have to say, it's like, don't you understand Christians, that He knows your heart and He knows what's there in your heart before the words even come out of your mouth? Don't you know he sees your heart?

You can't hide anything from Him. Don't get tripped up over all these details. Just go and sit on your papa's lap. Tell Him what's on your heart. Cry out to Him. Seek His face. Know Him. Walk in a relationship with Him. That's what He wants most of all.

And that is how these things, these additions to our faith are going to be seen and be realized as we press in on Him because Christianity is not about, Christianity is not a religion, you guys, it's a person. Salvation is not a recipe, it's a person. Jesus said, *“I am the way, ... (I am) the truth, ... (I am) the life”* (John 14:6a). And you know his disciples were always, they wanted to reduce it to a recipe or a plan.

Well, show us the way, show us the way that'll be enough, just show us the way. Jesus said, *“I am the way...”*, *“I am the way...”* You want to grow in your faith? Press in on Jesus. Press in to know Him, to have a relationship, a deeper relationship with Him.

I love how Peter goes on in verse 9 to say, *“... whoever lacks these qualities (and it's all the things we've been talking about here this morning, he says) is so nearsighted that he is blind.”* I know what that's like. If I take off my glasses, I am nearsighted to the point of blindness. Not quite as bad as my wife.

Okay, I got tell to you this. Did you notice Sue got a new pair of glasses? You might want to say how nice they look. She, we went, I finally talked her into going in and getting her eyes checked and it was time for me. So I said, “Listen, I'll make myself an appointment. You go with me.”

And she's like, “Okay.” I mean, she was like totally dragging her feet. She hasn't been to the optometrist in 40 years. Yeah, you're supposed to go every year. Yeah, so 40 years. So anyway, I got my exam done first, and you know, I had a little correction. And the guy let me sit in the room while he's doing Sue, right.

And so he gets Sue out there and he says, “Now cover up your left eye and look with your right eye and tell me what letters you see up there.” And she's, he says, “Read off the letters.”

And I'm looking at the thing and she gets them all wrong. And they're huge letters! Big, huge letters! She reads off completely different letters and I'm like laughing, sitting in the chair. She's blind!

Turns out as she went through her whole exam, she found out that her right eye is just like, horribly nearsighted. And her left eye's been doing all the heavy lifting, to kind of, and, but she's been saying all along, “I can see just fine. I can read that, I can read that sign over there just fine,” and stuff. It was so fun for me to be able to look at her when we left that place. And I said, “Your blind!”

And so, but yeah, so he talks here about being so nearsighted that you're in fact blind and he says, “⁹..., *having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.*” Here's what, here's what a nearsighted Christian is like, okay. Nearsighted means I'm sighted to things that are near.

I can see what is near, close, right? So, as in, in Peter's language here, he's talking about someone who's so focused on the present, what's right here, what's right around me, that I'm completely missing eternity. And as Christians, we're to have a heart toward eternity. We're to have thoughts toward eternity. We're to live toward eternity, right?

But a nearsighted Christian is, has this settled preoccupation with just my immediate needs. It's just what I need today. All I can see is kind of like, what's here right now, right? So, he, Peter says, this nearsighted Christian even comes to the place where they've forgotten that they were cleansed.

They're so fixated on what's going on today. And what he means by that is they're no longer gripped by the immensity of what Jesus did for them on the cross because they're so fixated on what's happening to me right now that I have lost a sense of understanding and appreciating the scale of the sacrifice that Jesus made on my behalf.

It's just kind of, it's out of my sight. And you think, well, who in the world could do that? Well, let me tell you something. Forgetting is easier than you might think. And beginning to take something for granted is easier than you might think. Because when the cost for something is born by someone else, it's just too easy to take it for granted.

Can I say that one more time? When the cost for something is born by someone else it's very easy to, here's an example. Our, one of our kids, I won't say which one. We put 3 of our kids, they're all adults now, but we put 3 of our kids through braces, which is, a fairly expensive sort of thing.

And all the other parents said, "Amen," right? You guys missed that one completely. Anyway, but she was, okay I said she, so you know it's 2 of the 4. Anyway, she was mentioning how as an adult she admitted that she completely missed the importance and the blessing and the privilege that it was to have braces and have her teeth straightened.

And it was all kind of lost on her because, and she told us this, she said, "Because I didn't have any personal cost involved in the process. You guys paid for everything." And so here she is, an adult, looking back and see that's kind of the whole point when something doesn't cost you personally, you tend to kind of you can forget. You can forget the scale or the sacrifice that somebody else had to make.

Now think about that as it relates to our salvation. Is it possible to lose sight of the scale, the immensity, of what Jesus accomplished for us on the cross? Well, yeah, it is. Why? Because he bore all the cost. To you it was a free gift. He bore the whole cost. And that is one of the reasons why, when we observe communion together, the whole purpose is to remember.

And it's very simple. Communion is one of the most simplest of things that we do. It's like, what are we doing? Are we taking communion? Why? Just to remember. Just to go back and think about it. Think about what? The immensity of it. The power of it. I don't want to be nearsighted in my life so that I miss the scope of what the Lord has done for me.

And finally, Peter ends this section in verses 10 and 11, saying, "¹⁰*Therefore, brothers, (and this is where he again talks about effort) be all the more diligent (he says) to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities (these seven things that we talked about, adding to your faith, he says) you will never fall. ¹¹For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*"

Now you got to be careful reading that last verse. Verse 11 might say to, or it might sound to some people, like he's saying, if you do these things, you'll get to heaven. But that's not what he's saying.

What he is saying is that by practicing these qualities of godliness and growth and maturity in our Christian life, first of all, your heart is going to be encouraged. You're going to be encouraged. And you're going to see the progress that you've made in your Christian growth. And do you know that that's fun?

It's fun to see progress. We like seeing progress. And it's fun to see your own Christian life progressing. And then he says, your entrance into heaven will be a joyful one. Now there's an interesting thought. Do you know that not, you ready for this? Not everybody's entrance into heaven is going to be a joyful one.

Not everybody's entrance into heaven is going to be a particularly joyful one. Now that does, I don't, I'm not teaching heresy. In fact, I have a biblical, first of all, you can see right here. Peter says, do these things, grow in your faith and you'll have a joyful entrance. Well, you say, well, what's the opposite of that?

Well, the Apostle Paul kind of described it in his letter in 1 Corinthians. Let me show you. 1 Corinthians, chapter 3. He said:

(Slide)

1Corinthians 3:13-15 (ESV)

each one's work will become manifest, for the Day (meaning the day of the Lord) will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives (and the foundation is Christ), he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself (look at this) will be saved, but only as through fire.

See, not everybody's entrance is going to be a particularly joyful one. Some are going to, we get in by the hair of their chinny-chin-chin, as we like to say. They're saved. You know why they're saved, even though all that they've built on their faith burned up and became nothing?

You say, "Well, why are they even saved?" Because we're not saved by works. We're saved by faith. In the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross, that's what saves you.

But now that you are saved, you have the privilege to build on that salvation, to build on the foundation of Christ, things that will remain. Things that when they are exposed to the glorious fire of God's presence, they will remain because

they're not wood, hay, and stubble. They're precious gems and jewels and gold and silver.

And things that will remain even through the fire. And that's speaking of the things we do for the Lord in the power of the Spirit, obediently walking with him. Those things don't save you, but they will make your entrance into heaven a joyful one. I want my entrance into heaven to be a joyful one. I don't want to slink in the back door and kind of, go off and hide in a corner.

Thanks for getting me. Don't you want to hear, well done, well done? I want to hear that. So let's just not stay right at the place of faith. Let's build on our faith. Let's grow. Let's do what the Lord's called us to do. Let's be effective and fruitful, amen.

Let's stand together.

We're going to end our service with a final worship song, but I'm going to pray. And then after Dan is done, we're going to have some folks up front here just to pray with you. If you have a prayer need this morning, please don't run out the door without getting prayed for. We need to bring things to the throne of grace. Don't walk away burdened. You should walk out of this place unburdened. Lay your burdens at his feet and let him take care of them.

So let's pray. Father, I just, I thank you so much for your Word. 2 Peter has just been such a delightful study so far, and I thank you, Lord, that you've called us to grow in our faith and to build upon our faith with these various elements and characteristics of who you are.

This divine nature that you have so graciously communicated to us that we might walk in it. Father, I'm just so thankful. And I pray, my Father, that we would really take up these things and press in on you and learn and grow and want to know you more and dig into your Word. Father, thank you for the invitation to be a child. To receive an inheritance. To be a partaker of the divine nature. We thank you and praise you in the name of Jesus Christ.