

Building a Life of Godliness



Add to Your Faith

Receiving Christ as savior is the first step in godliness. Peter now describes how we live in godliness after initial salvation. Living a godly life means ‘doing’ what is godly.

I. Building on Faith 2 Peter 1:5-7

Background: “For this very reason...” refers to 1:3. Peter says, “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.” We are now to get involved and build on what God has given us.

a. Diligence in adding to our faith: The word ‘diligence’ means to ‘make every effort.’ To ‘add to’ is like a chain where each virtue is the daughter of the preceding virtue. We start with faith and end with love!

1. Virtue: This word is better translated ‘goodness’ and means ‘moral excellence.’ Or conforming to the principles of right and wrong from a Biblical perspective.
2. Knowledge: The progressive knowledge of Christ which produces wisdom and discernment and is needed for a virtuous life. *See James 1:5*
3. Self-control: Pursuing what is pure and unblemished and would be acceptable at the throne of God. Peter has in mind the false teachers of *2 Peter 2:12-17*
4. Perseverance: To stand firm in one’s commitment to Jesus over the long haul in the face of persecution and hardship.
5. Godliness: Regulating one’s conduct toward God and men according to the standard of Biblical holiness.
6. Brotherly kindness: Treat all believers as if they were physical kin. *See 1 Peter 1:22*
7. Love: Agape! This is the chief virtue of 1 Cor 13 even greater than faith.

Agape love is a virtue NOT an emotion. It is a virtue of God. The Bible does not teach that we should feel warmly about each other—or even like each other; we are instructed to act (conduct ourselves) lovingly toward one another.

II. Building Security 2 Peter 1:8-9

These verses describe the Christian life as a process.

- a. Abounding in virtue:** Abounding here means ‘increasing measure.’ If these virtues are increasing in you, you’ll be neither ‘ineffective’ [barren] or ‘unproductive’ [unfruitful].
- b. Abounding in knowledge of Christ:** As we grow in (progress) in virtue we grow in our knowledge of Christ.
- c. Decreasing measure:** Peter points out the alternative to abounding in virtue which is living according to our flesh. *[Peter covers this in detail in chapter 2]*

Spiritual blindness: Is forgetting what Christ did for us on the cross. This is a metaphor used throughout the NT of the Pharisees *Matt 15:14; 23:16-24; Luke 6:39; John 9:39-41.*

2 Peter 1:5-11 (NKJV)

Building on Faith

:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, **add to your faith** (1) virtue, to virtue (2) knowledge,

:6 to knowledge (3) self-control, to self-control (4) perseverance, to perseverance (5) godliness,

:7 to godliness (6) brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness (7) love.

Building Security

:8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

:9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

Building for the Future

:10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

:11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

III. Building for the Future

2 Peter 1:10-11

- a. Making your salvation sure! *Be diligent—do these things!*** Peter is saying that the ethical fruits of Christian faith are objectively necessary for the attainment of final salvation. Peter is writing to many who thought that their salvation was firm enough without pursuing any of the virtues.