

Making Every Effort

What is something you are glad to work hard at?

What is something we work hard at, even though we don't really like it?

What is something we probably should make greater effort for?



What about our growth in God?

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Participating in the Divine Nature 2 Peter 1:1-15

ref.ly/2P1;niv



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2 Peter

Peter: the most prominent disciple of Jesus

Writing near his time of death

He ends his letter: "But **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** To him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

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2 Peter 1:1-15

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:** **of equal honor and value**

² Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

**The priesthood of all believers:
every one of us has a faith of equal honor and value**

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³ His divine power has given us **everything we need for a godly life** through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.
⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may **participate in the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

The Son of God took on human nature so that we can participate in the divine nature

Nature: inherent characteristics of something

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⁵ For this very reason, **make every effort** to add to your **faith goodness**; and to goodness, **knowledge**;
⁶ and to knowledge, **self-control**; and to self-control, **perseverance**; and to perseverance, **godliness**;
⁷ and to godliness, **mutual affection**; and to mutual affection, **love**.

**A call for full effort for ongoing growth in these qualities
 Maybe a logical progression...or not**

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⁸ 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. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

Goal: avoid being fruitless, stale, and stagnant
 Goal: be fruitful, energetic, and life-giving
 Being stagnant in Christ is a real possibility

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¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Fruitfulness is strong evidence for life
 It comes through intentional effort based on God's gifts
 Avoiding failure is primarily about pursuing growth

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¹² So I will **always remind you** of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. ¹³ I think it is right to **refresh your memory** as long as I live in the tent of this body, ¹⁴ because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ¹⁵ And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will **always be able to remember these things.**

Peter's calling: strengthen other believers
Ongoing growth requires reminders

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The Big Idea

We were all made for continuous growth
in Christ
so we will **participate in the divine nature!**

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Errors Peter wants to protect us from

- "We can't do it...we're only human"
 - "His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life"
- "Ordinary Christians can give ordinary effort"
 - You have received "a faith as precious as ours"
- "It is not needed because we are forgiven"
 - "Make every effort to confirm your calling and election"
- "I will work at growing when life is calmer"
 - Peter was anticipating his own torturous death as he wrote these things

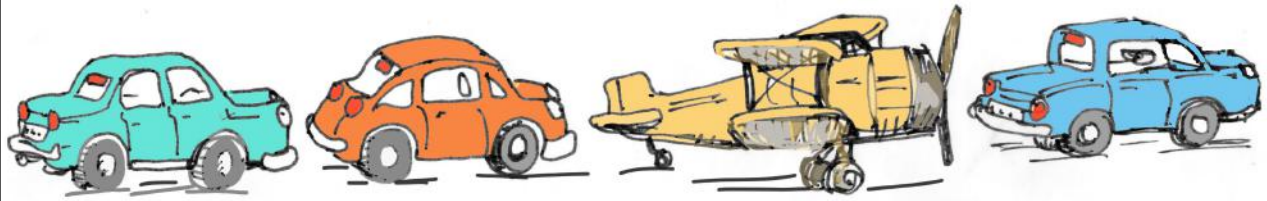
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The nature of a plane means it isn't stuck on the ground in a traffic jam



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By its nature, a plane can fly



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God is not controlled
by human weakness
and failures

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By God's power and
His great promises,
**we can participate in
the divine nature!**

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“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. **They will soar**



on wings like eagles;
they will run and
not grow weary,
they will walk and
not be faint.”

Isaiah 40:31



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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

1. Put to death what isn't like Christ

- "For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you **put to death the misdeeds of the body**, you will live." Romans 8:13
- "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, **let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles**. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us" Hebrews 12:1

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

1. Put to death what isn't like Christ

- **Flee temptation**
 - "when you are tempted, he will also provide **a way out**"
1 Corinthians 10:13
- Cut off the parts of life where sin masters us
 - Make concrete changes in our lives to remove access and exposure to temptations and wrong thinking
- Fill the space with good
- Together with others
 - It takes humility and courage to be accountable

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

1. Put to death what isn't like Christ

- **What do you need to put to death today?**
- If you know the answer,
renew your determination with God's help
Make every effort, using the tools God gives
- If you don't know the answer,
ask the Holy Spirit to help you see
and then pay attention to Him

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

2. Pursue the qualities of Christ

- **"Make every effort to add..."**
 - Faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection, love
 - **Which one of these will you grow in today?**
 - Perhaps:
 - One quality a month for 8 months
 - One quality for the coming year
 - Use prayer, the Bible, relationships, time, ...
 - And even use trouble

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

2. Pursue the qualities of Christ

- **Live responsibly with overflowing goodness**
 - What has God called you to do now?
 - Student, employee, volunteer, parent, son/daughter, sibling, friend, spouse, owner of stuff, having gifts and abilities, ...
 - Make every effort to do it
in a way that honors God and blesses others

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

2. Pursue the qualities of Christ

- **What about the commandments?**
 - Love God and love neighbor
 - Submit to authority, give life and don't take it, not lust, bless people with our honest speech, be less critical, be more generous, don't covet, don't abuse drink or drugs, don't give in to anger...
 - Pray more, gather with God's people, witness, ...

Are you struggling (like me) to grow in these?

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

2. Pursue the qualities of Christ

- We struggle to do these things because we lack faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection, and love
- **Sometimes we focus on changing the symptoms without trying to cure the disease**

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Confession and Repentance

Form 1: Looking back

- Where did I fall?
- Express my grief to God about my failings, claim His forgiveness, and ask for help to change

Form 2: Looking forward

- What does God want to change in me now?
- God isn't expecting us to grow in everything now even though we need to grow in everything

Both forms are good

Form 2 is the stronger path for transformation

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Action Steps

Make every effort to grow in Christ

3. Using the power and promises of God

- **Know** God more
- **Meditate** on God's Word related to areas of needed growth
- **Pray**: praise God for His character; ask for the Spirit's presence and power with this growth; confess failure and receive forgiveness
- **Find a partner** for growth and **work together**
- **Obey each day** as God leads

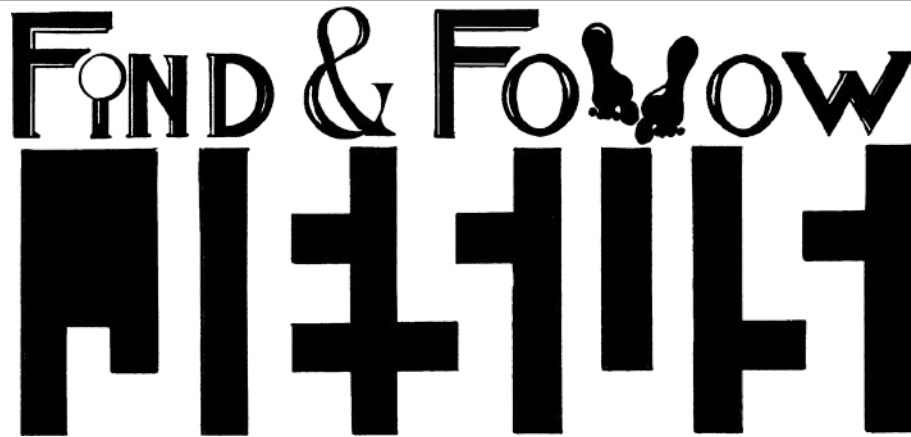
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But **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen. 2 Peter 3:18

"This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "**I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts**. I will be their God, and they will be my people." Jeremiah 31:33

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FIND & FOLLOW



- **Having New Life from God**
- **Growing in relationship with Christ**
- **Growing into godliness**
- **Living on Christ's mission**

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The Big Idea

We were all made for continuous growth
in Christ
so we will **participate in the divine nature!**

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In the heart of every person
is a deep desire **to be good like God**

**Jesus opened the way
for us actually to participate in God's nature!**

The door is open and the resources are here

The invitation:
Will we follow Jesus into the very nature of God?

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With every breath, I long to follow Jesus,
for He has said that He will bring me home.

And day by day I know He will renew me
until I stand with joy before the throne.

home = with God
throne = in God's presence

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