

Participating in the Divine Nature

2 Peter 1:1-15

Making Every Effort

What about our growth in God?

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."



2 Peter 1:1-15

- 1-2:** The priesthood of all believers: every one of us has a faith of equal honor and value
- 3-4:** The Son of God took on human nature **so that** we can participate in the divine nature
- 5-7:** A call for full effort for ongoing growth in these qualities
- 8-9:** Goal: avoid being fruitless, stale, and stagnant
Goal: be fruitful, energetic, and life-giving
Being stagnant in Christ is a real possibility
- 10-11:** Fruitfulness is strong evidence for life
It comes through intentional effort based on God's gifts
Avoiding failure is primarily about pursuing growth
- 12-15:** Ongoing growth requires reminders



The Big Idea

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

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

Flying

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

God is not controlled by human weakness and failures

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

"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



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

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

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

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, or One quality for the coming year

Use prayer, the Bible, relationships, time, ...

And even use trouble

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**

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?

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

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

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

“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

The Invitation

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?

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

What will “make every effort to grow in Christ” look like for you today, this month, and this year?

