

Standing in the True Grace of God

Peter's Life, Letters and Lord

2 Peter 1:5–11

Read 2 Peter 1:1–11.

1. What is the foundational gift that we have been given by God? (vv. 1b, 5a)

2. In verses 5–7 Peter gives a list of virtues that believers need to add to their faith.
 - a. What are they?

 - b. What is the reason that Peter gives for doing this? (v. 4)

 - c. Why do we have to “add” to our faith? (Phil. 2:12–13; Col. 1:10–11)

3. Read verses 5–7. Commentator Michael Green says that Peter “selected a list of virtues which should be found in a healthy Christian life.”¹ Stop and take inventory of your spiritual health. Which virtue strikes you as the most challenging at this point in your spiritual journey? Why?

4. How would you define goodness?

Why is this a foundational virtue of the Christian life? (Ps. 100:5; Lk. 6:43–45)

5. Peter is concerned that these believers not be seduced by the teachings of false prophets who believed in an extra secret knowledge that they claimed was necessary for salvation. What kind of knowledge does Peter say we need to grow in? (1:8, 3:18; * 1 Cor. 2:1–5; Phil.3:8–10)

6. Self-control is “controlling [your] passions rather than being controlled by them.”² Perseverance is enduring difficult circumstances rather than being overcome by them. To grow in these two virtues, how does our attitude have to be different from the “if it feels good, do it” attitude of the world? (2 Cor. 4:18; Col. 3:1–5)

¹ Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1987), 75.

² Green, 77.

*The  symbol indicates verses for further study.

7. The next two virtues—godliness (or reverence for God) and brotherly kindness—are relational. They relate to how we behave towards God and our neighbor. How are they connected to each other? (1 Jn. 4:19—5:2)

8. What are some concrete ways that you can practice sisterly kindness? (Rom. 12:9–13)

9. What gift has God given us so we are able to grow in all these virtues? (v. 3; Eph. 3:14–19)

10. The list ends with the virtue of love. Read how Paul describes this love in 1 Corinthians 13. Think of a time when you have been able to love in this unconditional way. Write a brief prayer of thanks to Jesus for giving you “his divine power” (v.3) in that situation.

11. What will result as we possess these virtues in increasing measure? (v. 8)

12. Peter says that someone who claims to be a Christian but who is not growing in these virtues is “nearsighted and blind” (v.9). Green says, “such a man is blind because he blinks or willfully closes his eyes to the light.”³ What else has this person done? (v. 9b)

13. How does remembering that Jesus has cleansed us from our past sins motivate us to pursue these virtues? (1 Pet. 1:18–19, 2:24)

14. What are the other two gifts that God has given us? (v. 10)

What is God's purpose for doing this? (Rom. 8:28–30; 1 Pet. 1:1–2, 15)

15. In verses 10–11, Peter is picturing our spiritual lives as a long journey toward a grand destination. How do you think these virtues can prevent us from stumbling and falling on the way?

16. What wonderful things do we have to look forward to? (v. 11; * Heb. 11:10; 12:22–24)

3 Green, 82.