

Partakers of the Divine Nature #1 (Go To Meeting)

Eduardo Elizondo—July 1, 2023

This is all based on 2-Peter and I'm sure you're all familiar with this passage. This is so important, so deep and *really comes to the whole point our lives and reason for our existence*, to be able to become partakers of the Divine nature. That's the promise. There are so many things that we're going to talk about today.

2 Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained the same precious faith as ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."

This is the introduction to the epistle, but it's really telling us who is speaking, obviously, it is the Apostle Peter, and he calls himself a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ! He served Jesus Christ and he was a sent one by Jesus Christ! He's telling us who he's speaking to: "...to those who have obtained the same precious faith as ours..."—*talking about himself and all the other apostles!*

We have this "...same precious faith..." as those who were walking about there with Jesus Christ. We have "...obtained *the* same precious faith..." *talking to us!* Then Peter goes on to explain how: "...by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."

There's so much in here. It's telling us that it is the righteousness is the only way to obtain this faith, "...by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."

He's declaring Jesus Christ to be God Himself! We know there's God the Father and there's Jesus Christ, and They are both God. That's what Peter is declaring here. He's "...our God and Savior Jesus Christ."

- He was the God of the Old Testament
- He was the One Who spoke with Moses

He was relaying the words of God the Father, because They are one in spirit and purpose! But He is also God, and He is the Savior. That's what it means *the Eternal saves!*

It's amazing, because all of these words are for us. As we read these first verses, before we get to the ones where we're really going to get deep into it, into the words of all these things, what it is to be partakers of the Divine nature and the things that we need to be doing right now. It's just to remind us that these things were written to us. They were to written to you and me personally, and that's how we

need to take this. We have received "...*the same precious faith as ours*..."—*the apostles!*

That's what he's referring to when he says *ours*, to those who are servants and also to those who are apostles of Jesus Christ. Obviously, to be an apostle means *he was sent directly* and they saw Jesus and they were with Him.

This is not only to who Peter is talking to, but how we "...have obtained *the same precious faith by the righteousness of...Jesus Christ*"—by His precious blood, because nothing else would do, except the blood of Him Who was eternal, Who gave up His Divinity to come and live, and not only die for us, but to set an example of life.

We're going to see as we study these things that Jesus Christ is a perfect example of all of this. Then after explaining to whom He's talking, and how it is that "...obtained that same precious faith..." then Peter says:

Verse 2: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

That is so important, because it's not just the knowledge about God, it's not just about what He says, it's the knowledge of *Them!* It's almost contrasting with v 1 because it says: "...in *the* knowledge of God... [referring to God the Father] ...and of Jesus our Lord." In v 1 Peter also called Jesus Christ our Savior, God also, because He was God in the flesh. He is part of the God Family! This all ties together with *being partakers of the Divine nature!*

We know and understand the Plan of God the Father and Jesus Christ. But here were going to get little bit more into the fine details that are here in 2-Peter about this process of becoming partakers of the Divine nature and what we need to be doing right now.

He's telling us that "Grace and peace be multiplied to you..."—*to us*; that's what Peter wishing for us. That the grace and the peace be multiplied to us, in the knowledge of God and of Jesus, our Lord. One way that we can see that grace and peace is *when we know Them!* Also, so that we have grace and peace in the process of getting to know Them! Not only know Them but in the process of getting to know Them. We get great peace, cover and have that favor. We have that favor from God. It's like when the king extended grace to somebody

that presented himself unannounced. That was not allowed under certain kings or Pharaoh.

It's like when God extends that grace; God does that with us. God says *come, I welcome you*: that grace, that favor, that relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ. That peace that we can have knowing that our sins are covered by His blood, by His righteousness. It's not only that He gave His life, but it's His example. That gives us great peace and grace, and that they be multiplied.

This is exponential that they would be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Because when we start to really get to know God, to really get to know God the Father and Jesus Christ in depth and really have a close relationship with Them. We are full of grace, They fill us with grace and peace. These things multiply because as you see things more, it's almost like it expands and it's not linear, it's not 1+1, it become 2 by 4 by 8 by 16, and it just compounds, this grace and this peace.

That's what Peter is wishing for us here, that this grace and peace be multiplied to all us who have obtained that precious faith. All of us having that same precious faith as the apostles.

Verse 3: "**According as His Divine power has given to us all things that pertain to Life and Godliness...**" *This is part of His grace!*

They are the two most important things when we think about it. ***It's all about Life and Godliness!***

What did Jesus say? ***The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are Life!*** Godliness is exactly this transformation that we heard about in the opening prayer. We are being transformed into the very image of Jesus Christ; having the nature of God the Father and Jesus Christ. That's Godliness! That's why God is the very first part of that word *Godliness!*

We're going to talk about it later, because that's one of the things we have to add. It's so interesting because two of them are already here, two of the things that we're going to talk about; becoming part of this Divine nature:

- faith
- Godliness

We already read something about those two things here. His Divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and Godliness. He's given us everything that we need to know about those two things. But how?

"...through the knowledge of Him Who

called us by His own glory and virtue" (v 3). *This is a relationship thing!*

- this is not just knowledge
- this is not just understanding on our own
- this is not about how much we study only

There has to be a purpose! The purpose of study is to really get to know God the Father, to get to know Jesus Christ. That's what it is, through the knowledge of Him. This is talking about God the Father, "**...Who called us by His own glory and virtue.**" (v 3). Jesus said that 'No one come to Me unless the Father calls or draws him/her.'

That's what it is. The One Who called us is God the Father! Then He explains how he called us!, "**...by His own glory and virtue.**"

We were called for His glory; we were called to be sons and daughters in His Kingdom. That's what we were called to be, "**...by His own glory...**" And we were also called by His virtue.

Everything relates to what Peter is talking about. He is explaining a little bit of these things right at the beginning. Because *virtue* is another thing we have to add. We're going to talk about what that is, but in here it says that He called us "**...by His own glory and virtue.**"

That virtue expresses His good will, His desire! His desire has been to call you and me. His desire is that we become His children in His Kingdom. That we become like Jesus Christ. He has called us "**...by His own glory...**" and for His own glory! He has called us that way, because He said that He will glorify Himself in His people!

God said that in the Old Testament with Israel. That's what He said about Pharaoh, that He [God] ***was going to be glorified through Israel and His children!*** That's why He called us "**...by His own glory and virtue.**" *His desire for us to be part of His Family!* It keeps expanding on these things.

Verse 4: "**Through which He has given to us the greatest and most precious promises...**"

Through His own glory and virtue He has given to us "**...the greatest and most precious promises...**" because there is nothing greater than these promises! ***The promise to become God, a son or daughter of God!*** Obviously, not God as the head, as God the Father and Jesus Christ Who will always be superior! They will always have the pre-eminence. But we will be like Them. We will have the same nature. He has given us these promises, these precious promises:

"...that through these you may become

partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is in the world through lust*" (v 4). *That's the process that we're in!*

We are in the process of becoming "...partakers of the Divine nature."

Though we will not have the glory in this body, we will not have the incorruption in this corruptible body, but we can have a certain measure of that, because we have the Holy Spirit. We have to becoming partakers of the Divine nature. That's the process that we're in.

"...**having escaped the corruption** *that is in the world through lust*" (v 4).

That's what God does when He calls us! *He makes us see the corruption that we are living in our own bodies, not just in the world!* But He wants us to escape that.

Through His great and most precious promises, we may become partakers of the Divine nature, but the very first step is to escape "...the corruption *that is in the world through lust*."

Some things are harder to do than others, because God has taken us out of this corruption, this lust. We still have to live in the world, but He doesn't want us to have these things. He doesn't want us to have this corruption through lust, and that's why we're always fighting against that. It's an escape. But He also wants to take that out of us. He wants to change our nature:

- the way that we think
- the way that we operate
- the way that we do things

He wants us to be partakers of the Divine nature, and in order to that we have to do some things, and God is going to tell us what we have to do.

It is amazing, all the things that this encompasses. Peter covers everything! He covers who he's talking to; that is it's us! That we have these precious promises. That we have the same precious faith as the apostles themselves. That is through the righteousness of God that ***all of these things are in the context of knowing God the Father and Jesus Christ!*** That is how we know the things that pertain to Life and Godliness. Basically, our purpose in life is the knowledge of Him. It has to be in the context of relationships. *That's what it has to be!*

All of this is the backdrop for what Peter is going to say next. Yes, there are things that we have to do, because we have to cooperate. But it really is

by the glory of God and His virtue, and through the knowledge of Them both so that we can really become partakers of the Divine nature, and that process has already started.

When God is changing our heart and mind and He's inscribing His laws and commandments in our heart and mind, that part of the Divine nature. That's a Divine thing. That's how They view things, process things and do things, according to Their own laws and commandments, Their own righteousness. Because of all of these things, *because of all of:*

- these promises
- His precious faith
- the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ
- all of the things that He has given us that pertain to life and Godliness

Verse 5: "And for this very reason... [all of these verses that we read] ...also, having applied all diligence besides, **add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, endurance; and to endurance, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love of God**" (vs 5-7).

Verse 8: "For **if these things exist and abound in you**, they will cause you to be neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit **in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" *There it is again!*

That's the purpose! The effort and the fruit is in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ! Jesus Himself said in John 15 ***that He would dwell in us!***

How can He dwell in us if we do not really love Him?

- **IF** we really love Him
- **IF** we really know Him
- **IF** He's dwelling in us, which He is

THEN we're not going to lack effort or fruit if we're doing all these things!

So, we're going to focus our study of this *Partakers of the Divine Nature* on these things that we just read in 2-Peter1:5-7! These are absolutely fundamental to becoming partakers of the Divine nature:

- these are the building blocks of the Divine nature
- these are the building blocks of the things we need to know and do in order to inherit that Divine nature.

But it has to be developed, because our heart and mind is going to be in the spiritual body. The rest of

the body is not. I'm not speaking in physical terms; ***I'm speaking in spiritual terms!***

I just want to give the full picture of what the Apostle Peter is saying here. But now were going to go one-by-one of these things and study them:

- What are these things?
- How do we add one to the other

So that we may not be lacking effort, nor fruit, because sometimes if we we're not ever aware of these things, we may be lacking fruit. Maybe not because of lack of effort, but we're not directed. We don't have a clear path. What are the things that we need to be looking at? Doing directly? or focusing on? Asking God to work these things in us and show us these things.

Sometimes we will lack effort because we can discouraged because we don't know exactly what we're aiming for. That's why these things have to exist and abound in us, so that we don't lack effort and do not lack fruit.

We have to be focused! Diligent! That's why the very first thing that Peter says is to apply all diligence besides. It is hard to be diligent! It is very hard, because diligence implies consistency and effort, and action, *purposeful action from us!* Obviously, this is a cooperation because we are the workmanship of God. We are the product. We're not striving to create anything, God is creating the image of His own Son Jesus Christ in us, but we have to cooperate.

This is what this cooperation looks like: *it starts with diligence!* It starts with that diligence to not let go, to keep going. To have that effort to keep going! To that that diligence to add these things one to and another.

"...add to your faith, virtue..."

It's interesting because Peter is giving faith as the first thing, but as a given! He doesn't say to obtain faith, because he already said that in v 1: **"...to those who have obtained the same precious faith as ours..."**

We have obtained the same faith, so it's a given! That's why we're here and are right now studying these things together. We have obtained the same precious faith as the apostles themselves! We have obtained that faith, and then ***after that faith add virtue!***

Let's study a little bit about faith and what faith really is. That is the foundation. This whole thing of adding one thing to another, as the Apostle

Peter instructs us, it starts with faith. It's built on that foundation of faith.

Faith means ***belief***; it means to ***believe***, to believe ***by doing!*** That how we really show that we believe, by actually taking action! Faith is the very first thing that we have to have. So, before we add the virtue and talk about virtue and what that is, let's talk a little bit about faith and what that is.

We all know what faith is, and we're going to go to the actual definition in Heb. 11—we all know that's where it is—but we first what to see what it says in Hab. 2 and it gives a contrast here:

Habakkuk 2:4: "Behold, his soul is puffed up... [ones who are self-exalted] ...*and* is not upright; **but the just shall live by his faith.**"

So, the wicked one's—that's what it's talking about in the verses before—soul is puffed up and is not upright. "**...but the just shall live by his faith.**"

He's telling us that the faith is something to live by. That's what we have to do. Faith is belief, and if we believe those things, then we're going to do them. That means living. We're going to live those things.

God is writing His commandments and laws in our heart and mind ***so that we may live by them!*** That we may live by that ***faith, belief and conviction!***

Heb. 11—this is very important to remember what faith is, because we're going to add virtue and all the other things. First we have to start with faith, what is faith? What is it that we're adding to. Some of the other things come together with faith. God had already given us that precious faith, as we read, and it's *by the righteousness of Jesus Christ!* It's not our righteousness! They have given us that.

Hebrews 11:1: "Now, **faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things not seen.**"

This is very important because the substance of things hoped for is faith, but they're not here, yet. That's the whole reason that it's faith.

"...and the conviction of things not seen."

- Do you believe these things, though you have not seen them?
- Do you believe in God though you have not seen Him?

He's invisible; we can't see God! We can't see Jesus Christ! ***But we believe in Them through Their***

Word!

- we believe that They have called us
- we believe that They have done all the things that They have done in our life so far and They continue to do

But in order to add to our faith *virtue, knowledge, self control, and all the things*, we have to start with faith and understand that, at the end of the day, there is nothing below faith. It really stands on its own!

If somebody comes and asks you to prove that God exists, you can give all kinds of proof, as far as showing them so that they can see, *but you cannot do that! It's faith, and faith alone!* As far as—for example—the Kingdom of God, we're hoping for the Kingdom of God. The substance is that faith. That's "...the substance of things hoped for..."

It's our belief that the Kingdom of God exists and it will come to the earth. That Jesus Christ will come to the earth to establish the Kingdom of God and later with the New Heavens and the New Earth God the Father will also be in that New Jerusalem.

But the substance of all of that, the substance of the Kingdom of God, we cannot show it to anybody. But we believe it by faith, because we believe what is written. We believe in Who inspired that, and we have "...the conviction of things not seen."

We *know* that God exists! Not only that, we believe not only that He exists, but that He lives in us, He dwells in us through His Holy Spirit, as He promised that He would. That is that "...conviction of things not seen."

In has to be rooted and grounded in the faith, which is *belief*.

Verse 2: "For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report.... [by the one who believed everything] ...By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* Word of God..."

- What is this talking about?
- Why is it plural?

Because there's the spiritual world and the physical world, and we understand that! We understand that because we believe. We cannot see the spiritual realm.

We were talking a little bit about that at the beginning of our meeting, talking about what Satan wants to do and the spirit world. We we're talking about how the spirit world is more real than the physical world.

It says "...the worlds were created by *the* Word of God so that the things... [meaning physical] ...that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible" (v 3)—*meaning spiritual!*

- we know that
- we believe that

But there are people who don't believe that!

There's a lot people who believe that physical came from physical. Why? *Because you can't see spiritual, because you can't prove spiritual! It's a matter of faith! It's a matter of belief!* So, "...the worlds... [even the spiritual world] ...was created by *the* Word of God." *That's what it says!* All the angels were created by the Word of God, the spiritual and physical world. "...so that the things that are seen were made from things that are invisible."

We don't rely on science alone! If we can prove something through science, that's fine, *but our faith is the foundation!* We can prove some things through science. There's evidence for the things that God has made. We know that it says in Romans that all things declare the glory of God:

- His perfection
- His beauty
- His wonderful mind

But we don't believe that because science has shown us how impossible it would be if something in nature was just a little bit off. That's not why we believe. *We believe because God said it, because He wrote it in His Word!*

Those things are wonderful, because they corroborate what we believe, prove what we believe. We already believe it, and that's faith! That's what we have to have. We have to have that full conviction that not only does God exist.

Verse 6: "Now, without faith it is impossible to please God..." *Impossible!*

We cannot be partakers of the Divine nature unless we have faith! That's why we add to our faith virtue, etc. we cannot have anything if we do not have faith:

- we cannot please God
- we cannot believe in God

Because all the things we read in 2-Peter 1:1-4

- they don't work without faith
- they don't work without belief in God
- they don't work without believing in Them

Everything that it's talking about is through Them,

by Them and really aiming at the knowledge of Them. That's the ultimate goal!

“...**without faith it is impossible to please God.** For it is mandatory... [no alternative] ...*for the one who comes to God **to believe that He exists...**” (v 6).*

If it's doubting, that's not going to cut it with God! We have to be absolutely convinced not only that He exists, but also:

“...and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (v 6).

Same word *diligent* that we read in 2-Pet. Having applied all diligence besides. We have to diligently seek Him every day, every day like Daniel who prayed in the morning, the afternoon and at night. It's that diligently seeking God.

If it's to be partakers of the Divine nature we have to know and understand God, and be taught by God and being focused so we don't lack effort or fruit. The very first thing is to remember what we really believe and believe it with all our heart in everything we do. That's life-changing completely. We believe that there is a God watching us—God the Father and Jesus Christ—and we believe that They dwell in us! We believe that They want the best for us.

It's not a mean god, as other religions have painted Him, just watching to see when we 'mess up' just to punish us. That's not the God we serve! He's a God full of love and grace and peace; ***that's the God we serve! That's the faith that we have!***

Not only does He exist, “...and **that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.**” Notice that *it doesn't say*:

- those who seek His Kingdom
- those who seek His glory
- those who seek the wonderful promises that He has for us

Those are amazing, ***but apart from Him there is nothing!*** We have to **seek Him**, *because we love Him apart from anything else!*

Hebrews 12:1: “Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses...”—*talking about all the people that show their faith!*

- they lived by their faith
- they demonstrated their faith through what they did

“...let us lay aside every weight... [some of the biggest weights are *unbelief*] ...and the sin that so easily entraps us...” (v 1)—*because we do sin!*

We're forgiven when we repent, because that grace and covenant with God, but the sin still easily entraps us!

“...and **let us run the race set before us with endurance**” (v 1)—*which is another thing we're going to talk about later, something we're going to have to add along the way, as well!*

Verse 2: “**Having our minds fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of our faith...**”

It all connects, comes back full circle around. It's all about knowing God the Father and Jesus Christ. But in order to know Them we need to have our mind fixed on Jesus, because He “...the Beginner and Finisher of our faith...” How is He the Beginner of our faith? *He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!* Without that there can be no faith. There can be no hope for humanity. God knew that there was that possibility that Satan was going to easily entrap Adam and Eve, and he did!

Jesus the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world is the Beginner of our faith! He's also the Finisher, because Who is the One Who is going to raise us on the last day? Jesus said, ‘I will raise him on the last day.’ The one Who *believes in Me!* Why? *Because that's faith! That is the cornerstone!* That's why faith has to be on the Rock; it has to be on Jesus Christ, because He was that Rock! *His is:*

“...the Beginner and Finisher of our faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God” (v 2).

Another thing that we believe, because it was written. He has sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God. Psa. 110 says, ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies as Your footstool.’ That has not happened, yet; so we believe in the coming Kingdom of God.

- we believe in God the Father
- we believe in Jesus Christ Who is sitting at His right hand
- we believe in all these thing, because that's the very foundation of taking that Divine nature, to be partakers of this Divine nature

Acts 11:22—*talking about Barnabas*: “Now, the report concerning them was heard in the ears of the Church that *was* in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he arrived and saw the grace of God... [He saw the grace that Peter was talking about] ...he rejoiced; and he exhorted *them* all to **cleave to the Lord with**

purpose of heart" (vs 22-23).

That's exactly what we're talking about here. Applying all diligence beside and adding to our faith *virtue, to virtue knowledge*, and all of these things. That's exactly how we "...cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart." *The purpose is:*

- to know Them
- to be with Them
- to become like Them
- to become partakers of this Divine nature

Verse 24: "For he [Barnabas] was a good man, and was **filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith**...."

Meaning faith is something that we can be filled with. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith

"...And a large multitude was added to the Lord" (v 24).

I just wanted to point out here: What have we read about faith? *So many thing! We read that:*

- it is something to live by
- it is the substance of all the things hoped for and the things that are not seen
- they are things that we believe

We don't have to prove through physical means, because, as we read, the physical things were made by spiritual beings. Everything was made by the Word of the Lord, the Word of God.

We've seen all those things, and not we've also see it's something to be filled with! We have to ask God to give us His faith, that He would fill us with His faith. I really recommend the series on faith: *From Faith Unto Faith* by Fred R. Coulter. That's how we add faith. Fred explains that we have the faith from God so that God can add to that. If we have the faith from God then it leads to more faith. God keeps building up that faith through all the things that He does in our lives.

We're going to read about a couple of things that are enemies of the faith. What can really bring down our faith?

Mark 4 is where Jesus was with His disciples and he said:

Mark 4:35: "Now on the same day, when evening came, He said to them, 'Let us go over to the other side.' And after dismissing the multitude, they took Him with *them*, as He was *already* in the ship; and there were many other small ships with Him also. And a violent

windstorm came up, and the waves were crashing into the ship so forcefully that it was rapidly filling up. Now He [Jesus] was at the stern sleeping on a cushion. And they aroused Him, and said to Him, 'Master, don't You care that we are perishing?'" (vs 35-38).

Verse 39: "And after being awakened, He rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Silence! Be still.' And the wind died, and there was a great calm."

This kind of reminds me what we read in 2-Pet. of grace and peace by multiplied to you. He did it in the physical, but He also wants it in the spiritual for us. Great calm; give us that peace and be still!

Verse 40: "And He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? **Why do you not have faith?**'"

That's what it means when we have fear that really not having faith. Fear is one of the enemies of faith.

Verse 41: "**But they were afraid**..."

First, they were afraid of the storm, and then they were afraid of Jesus Himself because:

"...and said to one another in great fear, 'Who then is this, **that even the wind and the sea obey Him?**'" (v 41).

They saw the physical thing! It was amazing! They really didn't have the knowledge, yet, of Who He truly was! So, they were fearful of that wonder and that miracle that happened! If He has the power to do that, imagine what else He has the power to do?

Fear is the enemy of faith! When we're afraid! That's why He says, "...**Why do you not have faith?**...."

That means, Why do you not have *belief*? ***This is belief!*** I don't know exactly what He meant by this, because this is our nature.

- Have faith in what?
- That the storm was going to calm down?
- or that *they* could calm the storm?
- or that Jesus was with them and nothing was going to happen?

I don't know exactly what He meant by this, but He did ask them, "...**Why do you not have faith?**..." "**Why are you so fearful?**...." He was illustrating the point that when you're fearful, you're not having faith!

There are many things, we're just going to read a couple today about these enemies of faith!

Matthew 21:19: “And seeing a fig tree by the road, He [Jesus] came *up* to it, but found nothing on it except leaves only. And He said to it, ‘Let there never again be fruit from you forever.’ And immediately the fig tree dried up. And after seeing *it*, the disciples were amazed, saying, ‘How quickly the fig tree has dried up!’” (vs 19-20).

Verse 21: “Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, **if you have faith and do not doubt**, not only shall you do the *miracle* of the fig tree, but even if you shall say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it shall come to pass.’”

It’s a matter of *faith*, a matter of *belief*! But the enemy is *doubt*, do not doubt! That the #1 tactic of the enemy, *doubt*! That’s the very first thing that he does.

The people who do not believe in God is because they doubt! They doubt there is a God, because they cannot see Him! It’s doubt! That was the first tactic of Satan the devil! He caused doubt in Adam and Eve, ‘Is it true that God told you to not eat of any tree in the garden?’ *always exaggerating and making God look as though He’s mean!* That’s not the truth!

Is it true...?’ *Oh, because God knows that when you eat of that, you will be like God! Your eyes shall be opened and you will decide between good and evil!*’

See, part true, part lies! Their eyes were opened, that’s true, and they did decide between good and evil. Not that they could really actually good and evil and classify those things. That doesn’t make it true, but just decide what we’re going to call good and evil. So, he lies with truth, and he seeded that doubt! Doubt is the enemy of *faith*! So is *fear*!

But when we believe, we have that full conviction that we’re going to be partakers of the Divine nature and when we’re focused, we have our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ. Then this process can begin; we can begin to add to this.

What is it that we’re going to add to this faith, because that’s the very first thing, the faith and not being fearful! Not doubting the words of God! We cannot reword what is written; it is written and those words are *Spirit and they are Life*, they have been inspired by God and what is in that book is the Truth, and everything else is mixed with lies!

It doesn’t matter if it come from scientists! Whatever the Word says, it’s the Truth! The world is going to try to convince us through science of so many things, whatever it may be. ***Science is only***

based on observable facts and physical. It is absolutely limited to the physical!

It’s not grounded in what the Bible actually says, which we know is the Truth and there are no lies in the Bible! There are no lies in the Word of God! Everything is true!

2 Peter 1:5: “...add to your faith, **virtue**...”

What is *virtue*? *The word virtue in the Greek is ‘arate’ meaning: a virtuous course of thought, feeling and action; also moral goodness.*

As we read in v 3: “...through the knowledge of Him Who called us by *His own* glory and virtue.”

It’s that goodness of God! His good desire; it was pleasing to Him to call us! It seemed good to Him to call us. It was His good will! It’s not exactly good will, but it’s this moral goodness, that’s the *virtue*!

Virtue is only mentioned seven times in the Bible. We’re going to read some of them, but before we do that, because even though the virtue is not in Rom. 7, it’s basically what the Apostle Paul is defining. This is what he’s trying to explain the virtue.

Romans 7:18: “Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good. **For the desire to do good is present within me...**”

That’s the virtue, that virtues course of thought, feeling and action, that moral goodness within him; there is that. To decide to do good:

“...but how to work out that which is good, I do not find” (v 18). *He didn’t understand! I want to do what’s right!*

Verse 19: “For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing... [it’s almost like he cannot exercise this virtue] ...but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing.” *That’s what Paul said!*

Verse 21: “Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good... [I have this virtue within me; I want to do what is good, but]: ...evil is present with me.”

So, it’s virtue and human nature! That’s what Paul is explaining here.

Verse 22: “For **I delight in the Law of God** according to the inward man.” *That’s virtue! That is a moral goodness, a virtuous course of thought, feeling and action!*

The world talks about ethics and morals, but

we know that this ethics and morals is virtuous and the desire to good to do what's right, but they don't believe in the Word of God, which is the standard of what to do that is right.

Even us who know, understand and believe what's right, we struggle with this, just like Paul just explained. That's what it says:

Verse 23: "But I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members. O *what a* wretched man I am!... [and so are we, brethren] ...Who shall save me from the body of this death?" (vs 23-24).

God will! At the resurrection He will save us from this body of death! He will change us; we will then be fully partakers of the Divine nature.

Verse 25: "I thank God *for His salvation*... [Paul knew this, too] ...through our Lord Jesus Christ... [the same words that Peter said in 2-Pet.1] ...Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the Law of God with *my* mind... [I have this virtue, this desire to do good] ...but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin"—*because we can't help it! Because we still have the 'law of sin and death' within us!*

Having that realization is the first step, the very first step in overcoming and truly having this virtue.

Prov. 12 is actually one of the places where it mentions the word *virtue*. We will learn a little bit more about *virtue* to this contrast here, because most of the Proverbs are that, they're a contrast between:

- good and evil
- the wicked and the righteous
- the foolish and the wise

Proverbs 12:4: "A woman of virtue *is* a crown to her husband, but she who causes shame *is* like rotteness in his bones."

Meaning that virtue is the opposite of shame. It's the opposite of causing shame. Virtue is doing what is good. A woman of virtue is crown to her husband, because she does good to her husband in so many different areas.

But it's that desire to good! That's why virtue can't be defined in one specific area. Virtue is more general, it's that moral goodness, that virtuous thought! What's important is that she is a crown to her husband. "**...but she who causes shame is like rotteness in his bones.**"

A woman who causes shame to her husband is not virtuous. It's not doing what is good and right!

In Prov. 31 it talks about ***the virtuous woman!***

Proverbs 31:10: "Who can find a virtuous woman? For her value *is* far above rubies."

We will see some of that virtue manifests itself, but it's not just one thing. It's that desire to do good! It's exactly what the Apostle Paul was referring to, that delighting in the Law of God in his heart. We do that all the time; we rejoice in the laws and a commandments of God. We rejoice in the things that God is showing us to do.

We go live our lives and mess up, that's what happens. But we always desire to do good. That's what we have to have to ***add to our faith virtue!*** It's not just believing; it's to have the desire to do good. That desire to have this moral goodness to do what's right before God.

Verse 11: "The heart of her husband trusts safely in her, so that he shall have no lack of gain."

It's trust! Why? Because she is a virtuous woman and do what is right in everything! She is going to do what is right with the finances; "**...so that he shall have no lack of gain.**" She's not going to go and waste her husband's goods. She's not going to go and commit adultery. "**The heart of her husband trusts safely in her...**" *in all aspects!*

- in their marriage
- in their love
- in the finances of the house
- in the things that she does
- in how she devotes her time

Verse 12: "She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." *That's what a virtuous woman does!*

She will do good to her husband "**...all the days of her life.**" She is, like Peter described himself, a servant of Jesus Christ! She will do him good and then it describes some of the things that she does in more specific terms.

Verse 13: "She seeks wool and flax, and works willingly with her hands."

- she doesn't waste time
- she doesn't waste resources
- she helps others

Verse 14: "She is like the merchants' ships; she brings her food from afar." *She looks for the good things and buys them!*

Verse 15: "She also rises while it is still

night, and gives food to her household...”

She is a servant; she gives good to everyone who around her. That’s a virtuous woman and we have to add that to our faith and that virtue. *This is the role of women!* To serve!

Also, a man; we also have to add this virtue to our faith! But it’s expressed in different ways. We have responsibilities that God has given us.

But the virtuous woman, v 15: “She also rises while it is still night, and gives food to her household and a portion to her young maidens.”

They are the helpers, but the virtuous woman gives to them! That is exactly Jesus Christ said, ‘I am the Master, but I am the One Who came serving, so are you to do!’

Verse 16: “She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. She binds her loins with strength and makes her arms strong” (vs 16-17).

It’s everything! This virtuous woman—virtue is not just one thing or in one area of life—the virtuous woman, and man in this case, too, has that moral goodness, that desire to do good, to always serve, to be Christ-like, because Christ always did good.

It says that wherever He went He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and cast out demons. He did all these things because:

- He was full of virtue
- He was full of the Holy Spirit!
- He was able to bring it all out

That’s what He did! That’s why Peter says to add to your faith *virtue!* We have to add that virtue, we have to have that desire to do good.

Prov. 31 is a wonderful chapter for everybody—especially for women—but for everybody; read the rest of it! We all need to understand how that virtue is expressed.

For men, it could be written the same way, like:

He works hard and provides willingly with his hands. Serves and helps others and does all these other things, as well.

Philippians 4:8: “Finally, brethren, whatever *things* are true, whatever *things* are honorable, whatever *things* are just, whatever *things* are pure, whatever *things* are lovely, whatever *things* are of good report; **if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.**”

These things are what the virtues are! The virtuous want to do good, and that’s exactly what these are. Whatever is:

- true
- honorable
- just
- pure
- lovely
- a good report

There’s no end to that list! That’s why He just classified it in the categories of the things.

If we start enumerating the things that are true, or pure, just, lovely or of a good report, **you would never end!** That’s why it’s put in just categories. He goes and just expands from there.

“...**if there be any virtue...**”

Not only these but ***any virtue***, which implies:

- moral goodness
- good thoughts
- good feeling
- good action
- good course of thought

Because you’re thinking on the things that are:

- true
- honorable
- just
- pure
- lovely
- of good report

Those are the things, and virtue, any desire to do good, according to the Word of God!

Not according to our own devices, because there is a way that seems right to a man but the end is the way of death.

According to the Word of God—all of these things--

“...**if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things**” (v 8).

Meditate on them! Add them to your faith! Add the things that are good, true, honorable, just—all of these things—add them to your faith! That’s what we have to do ***with diligence***, remembering what our faith is and ***then adding this virtue to our faith, this desire to do good!***

We will continue with the others in another message (part 2). But just to ‘wet your appetite’ a

little bit, the next thing is *knowledge, add to your virtue **knowledge!***

- Why would it be important to add knowledge?

Because:

- How many people have faith, very strong faith in God?
- How many people have faith in other gods, strong faith and conviction and give their lives for what they believe?
- How many people have virtue, the desire to do good, and they do great sacrifices and do great and amazing things?

*That's virtue! **But:***

- Do they add the other things?
- Do they add knowledge?

The Scripture says, 'they have a zeal for God, **but not according to knowledge!**

- there is a zeal
- there is a lot of faith
- there is a lot of virtue out in the world
- there are a lot of good deeds that people do with the desire to do good

It's in people; maybe not in the majority of people, but there is!

Next time we're going study *knowledge!* Why it's important to add knowledge to our virtue, and continue with self-control, endurance and other things that are talking about the Divine nature in 2-Pet. 1, so that we may be partakers of the Divine nature.

We've seen today what God has called us to. These precious promises and why the Apostle Peter is encouraging us today—to you and me—to have obtained that same precious faith that's Theirs, **to apply all diligence to add to our faith virtue and then to add all the other things** that we will study next time.

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Peter 1:1-8
- 2) Habakkuk 2:4
- 3) Hebrews 11:1-3, 6
- 4) Hebrews 12:1-2
- 5) Acts 11:22-24
- 6) Mark 4:35-41
- 7) Matthew 21:19-21
- 8) 2 Peter 1:5, 3
- 9) Romans 7:18-19, 21-25
- 10) Proverbs 12:4
- 11) Proverbs 31:10-17
- 12) Philippians 4:8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 15
- Psalm 110

Also referenced:

Series: *From Faith Unto Faith* by Fred R. Coulter
{truthofGod.org}

EE:bo
Transcribed:7/12/23

Copyright 2023—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.