

I will not be Negligent to Remind You—Part One

Cornerstone Christian Fellowship

Sunday, August 3, 2014

II Peter 1: 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. 12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. 16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts...

Recently we have been taught a comprehensive and enlightening series on the Book of Malachi, the last book of what we call the Old Testament. Toward the end of this series on Malachi, we saw that God told Israel to *remember the Law of Moses*, and that He was going to *send Elijah, the Prophet before that great and dreadful day of the Lord*. We learned what was intended for Israel in *remembering the Law of Moses* that so much prophecy was wrapped up in the historical details which Moses laid out in the first five books of the Bible, that in actuality, the entire and complete prophetic picture for mankind ó for the whole of Manø Day, as well as the Day of the Lord ó was laid out in quite a bit of detail. In the type/antitype structure of Godø Word, one would really have to understand that which Moses wrote in the historical details of the first five books of the OT in order to be able to understand any of the remaining thirty-four books of the Old Testament. In fact, an individual would have to understand these Books of Moses in order to understand any of the twenty-seven books of what we call the New Testament. Because of the structure God chose to use in His Word (types ó specific historical details pointing to the antitypes ó fulfilled prophetic details), God has told the end from the beginning. We know that! We have seen it time and time again in these past 6 months as we have studied this last book of the OT, having related it to the last book of the NT.

The Nation of Israel was told to *remember*, so that as a nation they would have strong encouragement as to their *future* outcome once all the types laid out in Mosesø historical record reaches their fulfillment in the antitypes during the upcoming 7 years which have been prophesied. These future 7 years will complete the past dispensation at which time Israel will

repent from millennia of rebellious ways, when Gentile world power is brought to its end, and when Israel is finally established as the head of the nations, not the tail. As a nation, they were to *remember the Law of Moses* relative to their final outcome.

It would be good to note that this call to remembrance was not just a call to the nation as a whole. Of necessity, it would be a call to the individual Jews making up the nation as a whole. *Individually*, they were to remember the things that Moses wrote so that *individually* they would be able to participate in the fulfillment of their created purpose as a nation. God has already determined that Israel would be *the head of all the nations* during the coming millennium, and that will not change. But the individual Jew had to meet certain requirements in order to participate in this prophetic fulfillment ó requirements pertaining to personal repentance, belief and obedience. And obviously this command *to remember* was not coming from the mind and heart of Malachi on *his own accord*, but rather through the inspiration of Sovereign God, as He breathed into Malachi the very things that He desired Israel to remember. These are the very things God chose to remind Israel just prior to God going silent for 400 years, if I can say God went *silent*. Certainly, the Holy Spirit would have been at work in them to remind them of God's Word. They were *to remember*, with an ultimate goal in mind ó their remembering had to do with their focusing on that which was God's focus for them, simply so that they, as individuals who have been created in Jacob, could participate in their national purpose as the second *first born son of God*.

But Israel is not the only group of people who are told to remember! There was another group of people brought into existence 2,000 years ago through their being *created in Christ*, who are to be adopted as a third *first born son of God*. At the beginning of Peter's second letter, this group of individuals have also been reminded of certain things. **II Peter 1:12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.** And down a bit further in Peter's second letter, he says: **II Peter 3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of [remember] the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior...** Do you think Peter was serious about reminding us of something? Even at the end of this letter, Peter goes on to tell his readers that Paul also wrote of these things óin all of his epistlesö, the very things to which Peter draws His readers' attention. **II Peter 3: 15 ...as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things...**

Just as we know it was not the Prophet Malachi's own words in calling Israel to remembrance, it was also not Peter's own words in desiring to remind the Church of the things they had already been established in. This desire for us to remember would come right from the very heart of God, our Father. It is He Who wants to remind us of the very things which we already know and are established in! The Father reminds us about the promises that are ours having been created

in Christ through the in-working of the Holy Spirit! Jesus said in **John 16:13** “**However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you...**” Even the very things that the Holy Spirit Himself teaches us are not spoken on His own initiative, but only that which the Father directs Him to teach! And the same thing is said of Jesus! In fact, Jesus says this Himself in no uncertain terms: **John 14:10** “**Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.** The Spirit will not speak on His own initiative; and neither did the Son! Nor was it Peter’s own initiative. It is the Father speaking through the Son, through the Holy Spirit, and through Peter desiring for His Children to know the things that are written in the Word. **John 14:26** “**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.** We are *to remember*, with an ultimate goal in mind ó our remembering had to do with our focusing on that which is God’s focus for us, simply so that we, as individuals who have been created in Christ, can participate in our created purpose as part of the third *first born son of God*.

In all of this we can see that it is our loving, heavenly Father Who teaches us, and then establishes us in the truth, and then reminds us in earnest of the things He so desires us to always be mindful of ó things concerning our future, so that we live today in light of that future. And all of this is so that we as individuals within the Body of Christ can participate in the future promises having to do with the purpose for which we had been created in Christ Jesus in the first place. Just like Israel, we are called to remember these things so as to give us strong encouragement of our end goal. And so we have the reminder once more today: **Hebrews 3:7** **Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts... ..12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, 15 while it is said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”**

It is my heart’s desire for us to hear the heart of our Father in heaven exhorting and encouraging us to hear yet again the very things that we have already been established in? And the reason for this admonition again *today* is found in v. 14: *we have become partakers of Christ IF we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end!* And so once more! We have another day to hold fast to that which we already know. We have another day to hear His voice, to check to make sure our hearts are not hardened. Another day to encourage and exhort one another right here, right now!

We, here at Cornerstone Christian Fellowship, along with those who join our fellowship via Skype or via the internet through the lessons/messages available there, have been established in the truths to which God desires to call our attention through the second letter of Peter. And I felt

that after the thirty-two weeks of our lessons in Malachi, it would be good for us to pause and take a moment to remember the things which we have been established in. And of course the reason for this pause and remembrance is for us to remain steadfast in our focus of future things, so as to live today in the light of the end goal.

The best way to do this is of course to remain within the context of that which Peter wrote, when he felt so strongly about the things which he wanted to remind his readers. As we read in our opening Scriptures, there had been an event in Peter's life some 30 years prior to his writing this letter, that changed his life completely. Peter, James and John were afforded the privilege of *actually having witnessed Christ coming in His kingdom*. **Matthew 16:28** "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." **17:1** Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; **2** and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. **3** And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. **4** Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." **5** While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. **7** But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." **8** When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. **9** Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead." **10** And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" **11** Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. **12** "But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." **13** Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

This event was not a dream, nor was it a vision! Jesus clearly and specifically stated that there would be some who would *see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom* prior to their physical death. Then six days later, on the seventh day, three of the disciples ó Peter, James and John ó were taken into the future to a moment wherein they literally became witnesses of Jesus in His coming kingdom. They beheld His glory. They witnessed Moses and Elijah standing alongside Jesus in His glory. They actually heard the Father make the declaration that this Jesus was "His beloved Son in Whom [He] was well pleased" ö And of course this took place on the 7th day!

Surely so much of what Pastor John has recently taught us floods our minds as we read this passage in Matthew 17! We have learned so much about the activities of Moses and Elijah in the first half of the coming Tribulation, and then their work in the 75 days that follow the completion of the 7 years, leading up to the establishment of Christ's kingdom. And the grand significance of what the three disciples had just been witness to, had not been lost on Peter! His suggestion of building three tabernacles was totally in line with what the three had just seen. Peter's

suggestion was referring to the last of the 7 feasts that outline prophecy for Israel, with this last one being the Feast of Tabernacles ó a feast which, in its fulfillment, will last an entire period of time, i.e., 1,000 years. Peter knew that he had just witnessed a scene within the time period of the coming millennium, and hence his suggestion to build the tabernacles.

This event had so impacted Peter that 30 years later, he would deem it important enough to use as the basis for the introduction of second and last epistle. Peter wanted to impact his readers as he had been impacted. He desired ó through the Holy Spirit ó to remind his readers of the importance of focusing on the future coming Kingdom of Christ as we live in the present. At the beginning of his letter, he encouraged his readers to be diligent in their faith, encouraging them (and by extension us) to be diligent to add specific characteristics to their faith, especially in the light of the “exceedingly great and precious promises”, so that in the end, we would *individually make our calling and election sure*; so that in the end we would have an abundance entrance into the coming kingdom. The way in which Peter described the promises that are ours in Christ depicts the idea that *nothing could be greater!* Nothing could/would exceed that which would be ours if we were but diligent in the prescribed way. And these exceedingly great and precious promises have to do with the realization of our created purpose in the coming kingdom of Jesus Christ. For the Church, of course our purpose realized would have to do with our being found worthy of our high calling ó that to be a part of the Bride of Christ and as such a co-heir with Christ, sharing in His glory! the reality of which Peter, James and John have already been witness to!

So, through the pen of Peter, who wrote not on his own initiative but by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we are told to *make our calling and election sure*. **II Peter 1: 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure...** for the purpose of being able to participate in the exceedingly great and precious promises. Our *calling* and our *election* **do not** have to do with the salvation we presently possess; our calling *and* election do not have to do with our spiritual birth in any way, shape or form! We cannot *make sure* of something for which we only had to believe in order to possess. All things connected to our spiritual birth was done for us through the finished work of Christ on the cross. We only had to accept what Jesus did for us on Calvary through faith. And in *this*, there is no way that we can make anything *sure!* It is already sure; it is already complete! We only had to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and we were saved (Acts. 16: 30, 31).

Rather, our calling and election have to do with the salvation of our souls, which has to do with our becoming part of the Bride of Christ, a co-heir with Him when He comes into His Kingdom! This is what we are to make sure of. A good cross reference to this is found in Matthew chapter twenty-two wherein Jesus gave the parable of the Wedding Feast. Let’s read this parable and see how it relates to Peter’s reminder: **Matthew 22:2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.”’ 5 But they**

made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.

7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.ö

The terms *calling and election* in II Peter and the terms *called and chosen* in Matthew have to do with exactly the same things! In both places ó the word *election* in II Peter and the word *chosen* in this parable in Matthew ó would have been better translated *called-out*. In Peter, it could have been better translated òto make your calling and your calling-out sureö; and in Matthew, it could have been more clearly translated òFor many are called, but few are called-outö. *And it should be noted that in both contexts, the Coming Kingdom is in view.*

The Call

An individual's *calling* has to do with the *purpose of his salvation*, thus only saved people can be called. The *call* placed upon the saved is an *invitation* (just as we saw in this parable) *to participate in the wedding feast in the Coming Kingdom, in a position as a co-heir, a co-ruler with Christ as His Wife in the coming age*. Everyone who has been saved by grace through faith has *the call* on their lives; the unsaved have not been called. In this Parable, the sending of God's servants into the highways depicts the offer of the Kingdom having been withdrawn from Israel (the ones who were not interested when they were invited), and was then extended to the Gentiles, who at the JSOC would be seen as both good and bad ó individuals who through having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ are saved and along with that salvation are invited (or called) to the wedding feast. Then, based upon what they do with their invitation, they would be allowed to attend the feast or not, hence the picture of the one not properly dressed was cast out.

The Calling-Out

The *calling-out*, then, is *the realization* of the call; it is *the fulfillment* of the calling. Called individuals (the saved) have certain prescribed requirements imposed upon them which need to be fulfilled order for them to later be found among the *called-out*. The place where the determination is made as to who is called-out from among the called, and who is not called-out is the JSOC wherein all Christians will be judged according to their works. It is here that judgments and determinations will be meted out, forming the separation between the ones called-out and the ones not called-out.

One of the places wherein Paul wrote of the same things that Peter wrote is in Philippians where Paul speaks of himself: **Philippians 3:13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** At this point in his life and ministry, Paul had not gotten to the place where he knew he had *ōdone itō*. This same idea can be seen in his first letter to the Corinthians (written at the midpoint of his ministry career) where Paul says: **I Corinthians 9:26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty [speaking of the race of faith]. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air [speaking of the fight of faith]: 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified [speaking of the possibility of he himself being disqualified from the prize].** This is in itself a stern warning to us, isn't it? If Paul realized that he himself could still be disqualified, then I am thinking this is a warning to any and all of us! *We still must be careful!*

And yet, finally at the end of Paul's ministry, he knew that he had done what it takes: **II Timothy 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.** You see! Paul *knew* what was required of him to run the race successfully; to fight the good fight of the faith and win:

- Forgetting those things which are behind and
- Reaching forward to those things which are ahead
- Pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

And all of this requires a *knowledge* of God's Word, an understanding of what lies ahead ó all of which needs to be kept ever before us! And hence, Peter will remind his readers over and over again, so that they will remember, even after he is dead and gone! And here we are! discussing the very things about which Peter so desired his readers to remember, nearly 2,000 years later!

We have already seen that the things in which Peter was dealing with in his second epistle were things having to do with the kingdom of Christ. What he was saying was based upon that which he had been witness to. He clearly laid it out the fact that *the exceedingly great and precious promises* have to do with our calling and our being called-out. Peter lays out just how we are to attain these things, as we forget those things which are behind us, and reach for those things which are ahead, pressing toward the goal of our prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Peter says: **II Peter 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 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. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election [Lit., calling-out] 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 [Lit., age-lasting] kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things...

Note vv. 5 and 10 both use the word *diligence/diligent*. This word involves the idea of doing something with a certain intensity to it; something we are to do with speed. We are to quickly endeavor to do these things, and not be slow about it. And we are to keep on doing these things! In v. 5 we are to be quick and intense and intentional about adding specific characteristics to our faith. And the reason for our doing this is supplied for us right there in the text. It is because in doing these things, we would have *an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ*.

So, to our faith, we are to diligently add *virtue*. Adding virtue to our faith portends the idea of living according to a very high standard ó living in a morally excellent way. Of course this would be expected of the one who desires to participate in the coming Kingdom! Living here and now in a morally excellent way would be by laying one's life down in this age, in order to take it up again in the age to come. It is dying to the flesh and walking by the spirit with our intended goal in mind.

And to that life style of virtue, we are to diligently add *knowledge*. Contextually this would be speaking of knowledge within the arena of God's Word, not in the arena of the world. The Greek word for knowledge here is *gnosis* (not yet *epignosis* as that comes a few verses down). Living in a morally excellent (a virtuous) way opens the door (if you will) to a desire to grow in our knowledge of Him Who saved us with a purpose. If we add moral excellence (virtue) to our faith (and continue doing so), then we will want more and more knowledge of God and His Word, so that we can live even more excellently! But if we are not diligent about living morally excellent in our faith, then we will have no desire to know more about God and His Word, as the more knowledge of God a person has, the more uncomfortable he/she is to live immorally! So virtue, or moral excellence *precedes* the gaining of more knowledge of God.

So then to our growing body of knowledge, we are to diligently add *self-control*. Now let's think about this for a minute. The only way we would be able to grow in knowledge is to be in the Word. (And of course, inherent to our growth in the true knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ would be the idea of *accurately handling the Word*. That would really go without saying!) Through being in the Word, we would be being filled with the Holy Spirit, which would automatically allow for the process of metamorphosis ó the inward change that only comes through renewing the mind. Within the scope of this metamorphosis, would be the self-control that is to be added to our knowledge. And the thing that we are to have control over would be the fleshly man, as the spiritual man would have control over the fleshly man. As self-control increases through an ever increasing amount of knowledge of God through His Word, we would be choosing more and more to walk in the spirit and not in the flesh! This would be the metamorphosis. **Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.**

Then to self-control, one would need to diligently add *perseverance*. That means we simply keep on adding virtue to our faith, and knowledge to our virtue, and self-control to our knowledge! In the word *perseverance*, there is a *constancy* implied, a *fortitude*, a *patient endurance*. We are to *remain under* the scope of what we know, be steadfast in that which we have already been taught and are now being reminded of once again *because* of the goal set before us. Perseverance means we do not stop! We keep going. We don't look back! (Remember Lot's wife?).

Then to this perseverance we are to diligently add *godliness*. Peter had already mentioned godliness at the opening of this epistle, even relating it to knowledge: **II Peter 1:3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue**! And again, Paul spoke of this to Timothy: **I Timothy 4:8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.** Godliness has to do with being *reverent*, *devout*, and *pious*. Over time, I think this characteristic has been given a bad rap! Being reverent or devout or pious over the centuries seems to have been depicted in religious leaders through wearing long draping robes with gold trinkets ó crosses on necklaces or rings on their hands that are to be kissed by people who are not quite as devout as the one wearing the ring. To be sure, this is *not* the picture of godliness. Godliness is an inward trait ó a reverent, devout desire to please God in all you do, not caring what others may think of you. And Paul says this trait is not only profitable for this present life, but it is a trait which leads to life which is to come ó life in the coming age.

Then to godliness, we are to diligently add *brotherly kindness*, which is a great fondness one for another. Here, within our group ó within these four walls, we should have utmost fondness one for another; caring for each other in the here and now with a view to the life to come. And then beyond these four walls, we should care for those who study with us far and wide. We should have a desire to help one another as we read in **Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**

Then in this brotherly kindness we are to supply *love*. The Greek word for *love* in this verse is *agape*, which is the unconditional love exemplified by the love that God has for us. We are to extend that type of love to each other. **I Corinthians 13:4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails...** And honestly (truth be known), we *know* when we are *agape-ing* each other, and when we are not! Isn't the display of this type of love the very thing that marks the highest form of dying to the flesh in each of us? It is no wonder then that *agape* would be the ultimate characteristic that we are to diligently add to our faith.

With this in mind, Peter says: **8 For if these things** [virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love] **are yours and abound, you will be**

neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge [epignosis] of our Lord Jesus Christ. ...10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election [Lit., calling-out] 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. 12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things... It is easy to understand why Peter is so adamant about reminding his readers of these things. Peter knew what the coming kingdom *looked like*, as he had been witness to it. The *look* of it had so impacted his life, that 30 years later, he wrote his last epistle about it, by way of reminder. And within his reminder came the prescribed, required characteristics that are necessary for us to *diligently* add to our faith as we grow in the knowledge of Him Who saved us. Herein is the *epignosis*! And as a result of the epignosis, the desired consequence is stated *“you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the epignosis of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* But an abundant entrance is conditional! There is the phrase *“if these things are yours and abounds:*

- *if* a virtuous, a morally-excellent lifestyle is yours and abounds;
- *if* a growing knowledge of God’s Word is yours and abounds;
- *if* self-control is yours and abounds;
- *if* perseverance is yours and abounds (you keep on keeping on *“striving for what lies ahead”*);
- *if* godliness is yours and abounds;
- *if* a fond affection one for another is yours and abounds;
- if agape (unconditional love) is yours and abounds.

Then you will bear fruit in the full and mature knowledge (epignosis) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and will have an abundant entrance into the Coming Kingdom.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

We will continue looking at the things Peter reminds us of next week! I leave you with this thought: **I Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**