

TITLE: GIVE ALL DILIGENCE

TEXT: 2 PETER 1:1-11

THESIS: We are promised by God that we will not fall, but will be in Heaven – if we give diligence to grow as Christians.

INTRO: Everyone loves Rocky! In Rocky III, Rocky is defeated by Mr. T but then allowed a rematch. However, he had lost confidence in himself, and it took his wife Adrian to encourage him to step up to the challenge, to give his best (100%), and to accept that if he still fails, then at least he fails with no excuses, having given his all. **In **2 Peter 1**, Peter gives a similar encouragement but with a huge difference. He **guarantees** success if we “give all diligence” to grow as Christians (v. 4,11).

Ch.1 – encouragement to increase in faith (based on knowledge of God/Jesus); the surety/authenticity of this faith, **Ch.2** – Warning of false teachers; **Ch.3** – Encouragement that, regardless of the mockers, God’s promises are sure!

I. BENEFITS OF KNOWLEDGE (v. 1-4):

- A. (v. 1-2) *Grace and peace* – When we know the content of this letter, we can see how Peter here is already touching on the main purpose – showing that *all* grace, peace, etc. comes through the **knowledge** of God and Christ.
- B. (v. 3) *All things for life & godliness* (present benefit)- How? Through the **knowledge** of him who called us. Context? Initially refers to the apostles’ teaching, as well as those w/the miraculous gifts of knowledge & wisdom (**1 Cor 12:8**), which were to confirm the Word not yet written (**Mk 16:20**). Today the incomplete (i.e., Scripture) is complete (**1 Cor 13:8-10**–“*whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away...but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*”)
- C. (v. 4) *Great promises* (future benefit) – he’ll give us several promises throughout the text (1:10-11; ch.3), but we see the “divine nature” of these promises here. This is about an eternal home in Heaven.

As in 1 Peter, he is setting our sights on Heaven, in preparation to deal with the problems we must deal with on Earth (In 1 Peter it was persecution; this time it’s problems from within the church).

II. YOUR CONTRIBUTION (v. 5-10):

- A. (v. 5-7) Giving all diligence (speed, earnestness, eagerness, work; **2 Tim 2:15** – “Study/give diligence to show thyself approved”)
 1. (v. 5) Adding (contributing) to your *faith*...
 - a. Faith is the belief in God that causes obedience.
 - b. Faith is our evidence (**Heb 11:1**). It’s the foundation of who we are.
 - c. Faith is what causes us to become Christians (**Eph 2:8** – For by grace are you saved through faith.”)

But, Peter says it’s not enough to stop here. Add to it!
 2. *Virtue* (moral goodness, purity, praiseworthiness, manliness) -This is a summation of your character; what people see in you.
 3. *Knowledge* – Certainly Peter’s recipients had knowledge – they were Christians! But we must always increase our knowledge (**3:18** – “grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord...”). Keep reading and studying!
 4. (v. 6) *Temperance* -self-control (Thayer: the virtue of one who masters his desires & passions, esp. his sensual appetites)
 5. *Patience* – endurance; this is not just being patient in a traffic jam or with someone who annoys you. This is being patient in suffering (**Jam 5:11** – *behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job...*)
 6. *Godliness* - reverence & piety toward God; being like God. (God’s given us everything for this - v. 3!)
 7. (v. 7) *Brotherly kindness* (“philadelphia”) – love of the brethren. This is phileo love – affection. This requires we get to know one another. This love gives one another the benefit of the doubt. It’s one of the last things Peter mentions. Maybe because it’s one of the hardest things sometimes! Also, because unlike agape love, this love takes time to grow & develop.
 8. *Love* (agape) – concern for others. This love is a choice (**Mt 5:44** – love your enemies; we’re not told to phileo our enemies). So lastly, add love – seek the best interest of everyone.
- B. (v. 8-10) Reason/necessity for giving all diligence
 1. (v. 8) These things being in you, and abounding (increasing) have these results:
 - a. You won’t be barren (inactive, lazy).
 - b. You won’t be unfruitful in your knowledge
 - You can have knowledge and still be unfruitful! There are people in & out of the church who **know**, but don’t grow!
 - Inactivity! Everywhere I go, preachers are dealing with inactive members. Here is a guaranteed way to resolve this spiritual inactivity/laziness...work on these qualities in your life (v. 5-7). **Mt 7:19** – the unfruitful is cast into the fire!
 2. (v. 9) He that lacks these things has very limited vision. He’s even forgotten the central theme of Christianity...forgiveness!
 3. (v. 10) You will not fall – if you give diligence (v. 5) to make your calling and election sure (firm, steadfast) (i.e., if you strive for these qualities), you will never fall! What a promise! What a guarantee!
 - Isn’t it interesting that Christians can be all excited about putting the “**prayer of Jabez**” (**1 Chron 4:9-10**) to the test, in order to get money, but aren’t interested enough in their own souls to put Peter’s words to the test, and guarantee Heaven!

III. GOD’S PROMISE (v. 11):

- A. “For so (“in this way”; by doing these things) an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly...”
- B. The “kingdom” is God’s people, whether on earth as the church, or in Heaven eternally after the Day of Judgment. Here it is clear Peter is speaking of eternity in Heaven, seeing that these recipients are already members of the kingdom/church.
- C. This is one of the promises of v. 4. If you do those things, you are **guaranteed** not to fall, and therefore to be in Heaven!

CONCLUSION: Have you escaped the corruption that’s in the world? Are you spiritually blind, not seeing things afar off? Have you forgotten that you were purged of your sins? Do you care about these qualities this inspired apostle is encouraging you to be diligent in having? Is God’s promise worth it to you? Will you put Him to the test? Give diligence to add these things to your faith!