

A Faithful People

Key Verse:
***“According as his
divine power hath
given unto us all
things that pertain
unto life and
godliness, through
the knowledge of
him that hath
called us to glory
and virtue:”***
—II Peter 1:3

Selected Scripture:
II Peter 1:3-15

FAITH IN THE EFFICACY OF

Christ’s sacrifice for our sins is a foundation doctrine upon which New Creatures may develop a character pleasing to God. As we note increasing evidences of divine favor after consecrating our lives to do the Heavenly Father’s will, ‘grace and peace’ should be ‘multiplied’ in our hearts as we progress along the narrow way.—II Pet. 1:1,2

Our Key Verse assures us that through the power of God provision is made for our successful Christian walk and the attainment of a life of holiness.

As an important element in our development as New Creatures, the Heavenly Father has supplied spiritual nourishment in his Word that, if considered wisely, will ultimately result in our partaking of the divine nature and becoming joint-heirs with our Master during his kingdom.

Since this epistle is addressed to Christians, Peter acknowledges that his audience already possesses faith, and he continues by describing seven supplementary attributes that would be necessary to bring the New Creature to completeness.—vss. 5-7

Thus, to our faith there should be added goodness, or

strength of character grounded in righteousness, that will separate us from the world and its spirit. In addition to being truthful in all our dealings, we must overcome the evil tendencies associated with our fallen flesh, such as evil speaking or evil surmising.

We are to add to goodness, knowledge. This grace implies a deeper understanding of God as revealed in his Word. The more we study the Bible, the more his character will be revealed to us and thus we will seek to emulate it.

Self-control is the next element of character mentioned that we must add. We must master our flesh by subduing works, such as anger, malice, hatred, and strife in our hearts. Perseverance is the next quality to be added and implies constancy, or endurance of affliction, in full acquiescence to the divine will.

Godliness as the next addition is virtually self-explanatory. It reflects godlikeness and embodies reverence, and cheerful, loving conformity to the doing of the Heavenly Father's will. It also epitomizes holiness at the highest level. Brotherly kindness also is to be added to the list of graces the Christian must develop. Here is an exhortation that speaks to this trait. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."—Eph. 4:32

The final quality we must add is *agape* love which would prompt us to do good to all as we have opportunity, even our enemies. (Matt. 5:44) Believers who have true faith in God will be obedient to his Word and demonstrate their worthiness to receive the highest possible reward attainable. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:10,11 ■