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How Do We Enter The Eternal Kingdom

2 Peter 1:1-11

Introduction

1. Do you know someone who is struggling with their faith? Someone who is on the verge of walking away?
2. How do you encourage them? How do you draw them back?
3. In his second letter to the Christians in Asia Minor, Peter had a few things to say.

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4. He began by identifying himself — “Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ . . .”
 - a. Yes, he was one of the men Jesus chose to disciple and send out on His behalf.
 - b. But first, he was a “servant,” literally, a “slave” (*doulos*).
5. He then addressed them as follows . . .

“To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;” (2 Peter 1:1–2, NASB95)
6. From this point, Peter proceeded to write to them of two things in the beginning of his letter:
 - a. What God had given to himself and them as well.
 - b. Their need to grow by developing their new lives in Christ.
7. As we look at the words he wrote almost 2,000 years ago, I would like for each of us to stop and consider what God has given us and what we are doing to grow in our own lives.
8. I say this because I want each of you to know the experience of having our own entrance into our Lord’s eternal kingdom abundantly supplied to us as well.

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I. What Has God Given Us?

A. EVERYTHING WE NEED TO LIVE GODLY LIVES

“seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.” (2 Peter 1:3, NASB95)

1. The most encouraging thing which Peter writes is that God has given us “everything pertaining to life and godliness.”
2. In other words God has given us everything we need to live a godly life.
3. We have no excuse for not living a godly life, because we, as Christians, have already received everything necessary for us to do so.
4. The source of all that is necessary is God’s “divine power.”
5. This power is made available to us “through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence [goodness].”
6. In chapter 2 of Peter’s first letter, he wrote that God “has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9, NASB5).
7. As we noticed two weeks ago in chapter 5, verse 10, of that same letter, he said that God “called you to his eternal glory in Christ” (1 Peter 5:10, NASB95).
8. There is no way that either you or I can stand against the devil and his schemes on our own (Ephesians 6:11).
9. It is only as we stand in the strength of God’s might that we are able to be victorious.
10. Peter say God’s “divine power” is made available through our “true knowledge of Him” (v. 3).
11. In His prayer for the disciples in the upper room, Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3).

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B. HIS PRECIOUS AND MAGNIFICENT PROMISES

“For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.” (2 Peter 1:4, NASB95)

1. It is through these promises that you and I escape “the corruption that is in the world by lust”
 - a. This corruption exists because of “lust,” “sinful desire,” “evil desire.”
 - b. The word translated “lust” or “desire” (*epithymia*) is found 38 times in the New Testament.
 - c. All but three are negative in their usage.
 - 1) Paul told Timothy to “flee youthful lusts” (2 Timothy 2:22).
 - 2) He told Titus that each of us at one point in our lives were “enslaved to various lusts” (Titus 3:3).
 - 3) James wrote that each of us is “tempted when [we] are carried away by [our] own lust” (James 1:14).
 - 4) He added that “when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death” (James 1:15).
 - d. It is through these precious and magnificent promises that you and I are able to escape such an end.
2. It is also through these promises that we “become partakers of the divine nature.”
 - a. Jesus told His disciples, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.” (John 14:23, NASB95)
 - b. In 2 Corinthians 3:18, Paul compared it to our “beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord” and thus “being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18, NASB95).

- c. He told the Christians in Colosse that “Christ in you” is your “hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).
3. What are these “precious and magnificent promises?”
4. Though Peter doesn’t tell us here, we do find some of those promises at the beginning of his first letter:
 - a. The “salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:9).
 - b. It is the fact that God “has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3).
 - c. It is the promise of “an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:4).
 - d. It is the “praise and glory and honor” which will be ours “at the revelation of Jesus Christ” on the last day (1 Peter 1:7).

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II. Our Need To Grow

A. THE VIRTUES IN WHICH WE MUST GROW

1. Because (for this very reason) . . .
 - a. of all that God has done for us to help us live godly lives,
 - b. He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises,
 - c. we are partakers of the divine nature
. . . we have something we must now do.
2. We must develop certain qualities or virtues in our lives.
3. This growth is of utmost importance and deserves our greatest effort.
4. We begin with “faith” (v. 5).
 - a. This is our faithfulness or commitment to God through Jesus Christ.
 - b. This is the foundation of all other qualities in the Christian life.
 - c. It is what separates us from everyone else who is outside of Christ.
 - d. Remember, Jesus said, “unless you believe that I am He, you will die in

your sins” (John 8:24).

- e. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that “without faith it is impossible to please Him [God], for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”
2. To our “faith” we add “virtue” or “goodness” (v. 5).
 - a. This is not what is meant by calling someone “good”.
 - b. It refers to “moral excellence” in our lives.
 - c. Not only do we proclaim the excellencies of God, we seek to emulate them in our own lives.
 3. To our “moral excellence” we add “knowledge” (v. 5).
 - a. Solomon wrote, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:7).
 - b. This knowledge is the wisdom and discernment which we as Christians need to live a virtuous life.
 - c. It includes the knowledge of God’s word, a knowledge which should result in producing His character in our lives.

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4. To our “knowledge” we add “self-control” (v. 6).
 - a. “Self-control” is the opposite of self-indulgence.
 - b. Too many in the world today are controlled by their passions and desires.
 - c. As Christians we work at saying no to our passions and sinful desires.
 - d. We work to develop self-control for the sake of Christ.
5. To our “self-control” we must add “perseverance” (v. 6).
 - a. We work to develop “endurance” in our lives.
 - b. This is endurance in the spiritual battle in which we are engaged on a daily basis, instead of a physical battle or athletic event.
 - c. It is our ability to stand firm in our commitment to Christ in the face of persecution or other hardships.
 - d. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always

abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58, NASB95)

6. To our “perseverance” we must add “godliness” (v. 6).
 - a. Reverence and respect toward God.
 - b. We do not follow the latest fad or fashion, but seek to live tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity (1 Timothy 2:2).
 - c. Paul told Timothy that “godliness is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment” (1 Timothy 6:6).

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7. To our “godliness” we must add “brotherly kindness” (v. 7).
 - a. In his first letter, Peter called upon His readers to practice such love (1 Peter 1:22).

“Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,” (1 Peter 1:22, NASB95)

- b. Paul instructed the Christians in Rome to do the same.

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;” (Romans 12:10, NASB95)

8. To our “brotherly kindness” we must add “love” (v. 7).
 - a. We must keep in mind that love is a virtue, not an emotion.
 - b. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 the apostle Paul tells us what love does, how it acts, not how it feels.
 - c. Love is the chief virtue, even greater than faith and hope (1 Corinthians 13:13).

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B. IF THESE QUALITIES ARE INCREASING, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

“For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 1:8,

NASB95)

1. Peter tells us that if these qualities are ours and are increasing in our lives, we will get a result.
2. You and I will be neither . . .
 - a. Useless
 - 1) Idle
 - 2) Ineffective

“Are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?” (James 2:20, NASB95).

- b. Unfruitful
 - 1) Christian virtues are “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22).
 - 2) By doing good works, we make sure we are not unfruitful (Titus 3:14).

“Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.” (Titus 3:14, NASB95)

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C. IF THESE QUALITIES ARE LACKING, WHAT THEN?

“For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.” (2 Peter 1:9, NASB95)

1. We are “blind”
 - a. Blind to the reality of the unseen world.
 - b. We have no perception of spiritual things.
 - c. We lack spiritual vision.
2. We are “short-sighted” (*myopazon*)
 - a. The word Paul uses here is the word our doctors use for our near-sightedness (*myopia*)
 - b. Peter is saying that we are nearsighted because our focus is on the present and that which brings satisfaction in the here and now.

- c. We are unable to look into the future and see the judgment that awaits all mankind.
3. We are “forgetful”
- a. We have forgotten our purification from our former sins.
 - 1) Do you think Paul forgot Ananias’ words to him prior to his baptism?

“Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.” (Acts 22:16, NASB95)
 - 2) He reminded Titus of the means by which God saved them.

“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,” (Titus 3:5, NASB95)
 - b. “Having forgotten” implies that the effect is lifelong.

Conclusion

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1. What are we to do?
2. Peter tells us:

“Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.” (2 Peter 1:10–11, NASB95)
3. Don’t let God’s calling you to Himself through Christ be for naught.
4. “Be all the more diligent” to keep living your life for Christ.
5. Keep practicing these things — if you do, “you will never stumble” (v. 10b).
4. Ultimately, your “entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you” (v. 11).
5. Where are you at in your Christian walk? Have you started it yet?