

## The More Excellent Way- Week 3 Growing in Sanctification

### Perseverance

- steadfastness, constancy, endurance

### Godliness and Mutual Affection

- Right relationship with God and Others

### Love- Agape

- Dominant characteristic of the sanctified life

We are all a work in progress until our last breath. God is working in you, and He will finish what He has started. Remember, your job is to abide, believe and receive everything you need for life and godliness and to follow Jesus.

### 3. Sharpen Your Focus

*9 The person who lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten the cleansing from his past sins. 10 Therefore, brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election, because if you do these things you will never stumble. - 2 Peter 1:9-10 CSB*

We begin with the gift of grace and receive everything we need as we partner with God. We abide with Him and cooperate through obedience as he develops godly characteristics in us, through the fruit of the Spirit. But we also obey what He calls us to do, trusting He will provide the divine power needed for us to do so. We don't want to allow our sins or our own efforts to obscure God's provision of all we need to live godly lives.

*Take a moment to give thanks for all that God has promised to do and to provide, for His power and love and His faithfulness in growing you in holiness and sanctification.*

### WRAP-UP

*Peter teaches us that living a godly life is a partnership between God and believers, where God provides everything needed for holiness through His power, promises, and Spirit while believers respond by abiding in Jesus and growing in spiritual character. Sanctification is a lifelong process marked by faith, self-control, perseverance, love, and obedience as we cooperate with God's work in transforming us into the likeness of Christ.*

### MEMORY VERSE

*3 By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. - 2 Peter 1:3 NLT*

**Challenge** –Start your next best step toward sanctification- abide in Jesus.

### INTRODUCTION

In his letters to the scattered church, Peter warns about dangers from without and dangers from within. In his second letter, he specifically encourages the believers to live a godly life. He explains that holiness and sanctification result from cooperation between us and God. Our godliness is revealed as a process that takes time as we grow in grace and peace through the power of God's Holy Spirit over the course of our Christian journey. We do our part as God does His part and together, we grow in sanctification.

### Ice Breaker

Do you use Amazon Prime to get the fastest possible free delivery? Do you know orders over \$35 are also free, if you are willing to wait a couple of additional days to get them?

### Key Passage

*3 By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. 4 And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires. 5 In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.*

*- 2 Peter 1:3-7 NLT*

### STUDY QUESTIONS

#### 1. Our Partnership with God

*This letter is from Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ. I am writing to you who share the same precious faith we have. This faith was given to you because of the justice and fairness of Jesus Christ, our God and Savior. - 2 Peter 1:1 NLT*

In the introduction to his letter, Peter identifies himself as "Simon Peter". Simon was the name he was given at birth, and Peter is the new name Jesus gave him, which means rock. It seems Peter might have recognized the

struggle he had between living in the old nature and the new life he had in Jesus.

*We are real, ordinary, messy people who are made righteous by a power and authority outside of ourselves. When do you tend to revert to acting more like “the person you used to be”, and when have you recognized yourself living as a new creation in Jesus?*

Peter further identifies himself first as a servant and second as an apostle of Jesus. He also identifies his readers as “the righteous” who received a faith as precious as his own. While it may be tempting to promote our positions of authority, Peter’s apostolic authority flows precisely from his humble and complete submission to Christ’s lordship. It is because he is a slave of Jesus that he was sent as an apostle to the people who he recognizes here as equals (sharing the same faith in Jesus).

*Who are the leaders that you respect most highly? Who are the most humble and approachable Christian leaders in your life? Are the lists the same?*

Depending on your church experience, it may be easy to put church leadership on a pedestal and view them as holier or nearer to God than you are. And although we respect the authority of those people in leadership, God views us with equality, He is “not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34)”. We all have access to the same grace and peace with our Heavenly Father and the same power of His Holy Spirit through our relationship with Jesus. And God partners with each of us in the process of our growing sanctification.

*3 By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. 4 And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires. - 2 Peter 1:3-4 NLT*

*How does verse 3 above shine light on God’s part in our holiness and sanctification, and what does it explain as our part? And because of His great and precious promises, what are we enabled to do (v.4)?*

The word for “share” used in verse 4 is *koinōnos* and it refers to being a partner or companion. God is inviting us to participate as a partner in His divine nature and to run from that which would corrupt or destroy us. Our progress isn’t based on our ability, but on His.

## 2. How We Participate

*5 In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone. - 2 Peter 1:5-7 NLT*

*4 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. - John 15:4 NKJV*

*22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! - Galatians 5:22-23 NLT*

*When we read the words “make every effort” we might assume it is telling us to do more or try harder. But this phrase was translated from three Greek words: *παρεισενέγκαντες* (to contribute ) *πᾶς* (all) *σπουδῆν* (earnestness, diligence, with haste). And how do we contribute all with earnest diligence without delay? In view of what Peter just told us in the previous verses it is “by coming to know him (v. 3)” It is by God’s power that we grow, change and are transformed.*

*We participate with God as we abide and dwell with Jesus and receive His power to live a holy life. According to John 15:4 we can’t bear any fruit unless we abide in Jesus. How would you describe time spent abiding in Jesus? Which of the fruit of the Spirit overlap with Peter’s list of how we are to respond to God’s promises?*

So then, as we abide in Jesus, God produces the fruit of the Spirit in us and producing that fruit is how we partner with God in response to His promises that enable us to live godly lives.

Abiding ->produces the fruit ->that leads us further into holiness.

*Verses 5, 6 and 7 describe characteristics of holiness. Consider the areas in this list and how well they are represented in your own life. In which of these do you find you have made the most progress?*

Moral Excellence (Goodness)

- A life characterized by righteousness, not sin

Knowledge

- Knowledge in who God is and who he is calling you to be

Self-Control

- Exercising delayed gratification, the ability to saying no