

The Christian Graces

Introduction:

1. Throughout the Bible numerous great themes are addressed.
2. We are presently studying 13 of these themes.
3. For our twelfth great Bible theme we are concentrating on "the Christian graces" that are revealed in 2 Peter 1:1-11.
4. As we study this text of Scripture let us first consider several . . .

Discussion:

I. INTRODUCTORY MATTERS (vs.1-2)

- A. (vs.1a) Simon Peter was the inspired writer.
 1. He was *"a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ."*
 2. In writing this letter Peter was fulfilling his responsibility to teach the Lord's followers to observe everything that the Lord had taught him (Matthew 28:19-20).
- B. (vs.1b-2) Peter wrote this letter to Christians.
 1. Peter's primary purpose for writing was to encourage Christians to remain faithful to the Lord (3:17).
 2. He placed special emphasis on remembering certain things (1:12-15; 3:1-2).

II. GOD HAS GIVEN CHRISTIANS WHAT WE NEED TO BE *"PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE"* (vs.3-7)

- A. (vs.3) He has given us *"all things that pertain unto life and godliness."*
- B. (vs.4) He has given us *"exceeding great and precious promises."*
- C. (vs.5-7) He has given us characteristics ["the Christian graces"] that we must develop.
 1. Each Christian is to develop these graces with *"all diligence."*
 2. *"Faith"* is the foundation upon which the graces are to be added (Hebrews 11:6).
 3. The graces include:
 - a. *"virtue"*
 - 1) In general, virtue is "moral goodness."
 - 2) In this passage it refers to "courage and the determination to do what is right."
 - b. *"knowledge"*
 - 1) In general, knowledge is "being aware of facts."
 - 2) In this passage it refers to "moral wisdom, such as seen in right living."
 - 3) It enables us to know what is right so we can put it into practice.
 - c. *"temperance"*: self-control, self-discipline
 - d. *"patience"*: endurance, perseverance, steadfastness, the ability to bear up under trials
 - e. *"godliness"*: reverence or respect toward God, piety
 - f. *"brotherly kindness"*: brotherly love, love that Christians cherish for each other as brothers and sisters (Romans 12:10a)
 - g. *"charity [love]"*: a special kind of love that "seeks what is best for other people in all situations" (John 13:34-35).

III. PETER SHOWED WHY DEVELOPING THESE GRACES IS ESSENTIAL (vs.8-11)

- A. (vs.9) Those who fail to develop the graces have:
 1. a vision problem -- they are spiritually blind and shortsighted
 2. a memory problem -- they have forgotten they were purified (2:20-22).
- B. Those who develop the graces with all diligence:
 1. will be fruitful in the knowledge of Christ (vs.8)
 2. will remain faithful (vs.10)
 3. will be blessed with a home in heaven (vs.11).