

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Week 2

Putting Things In Perspective

Grace and Peace

2 Peter 1:1 Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: 2 May **grace and peace** be multiplied to you in the **knowledge of God** and of Jesus our Lord. 3 His **divine power** has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the **divine nature**, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your **faith** with virtue, and **virtue** with knowledge, 6 and **knowledge** with self-control, and **self-control** with steadfastness, and **steadfastness** with godliness, 7 and **godliness** with brotherly affection, and **brotherly affection** with **love**. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being **ineffective** or **unfruitful** in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to **confirm your calling** and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. 11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of: our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This is a lot of instructions:

- Have _____
- Add Virtue
- And _____
- And Self-Control
- And _____
- And Godliness
- And Brotherly Affection
- And _____

How in the world are we supposed to do all of that when we struggle with the first one ... Love?

Grace and Peace

1 Corinthians 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It seems as though it is just a greeting, it's not! (Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 1:3; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:2; 2 John 1:3)

What are all of these authors saying?

Grace

Strong's 5485: χάρις - "favor, disposed to, inclined, favorable towards, leaning towards to share benefit") – properly, grace.

χάρις is preeminently used of the Lord's favor – freely extended to give Himself away to people (because He is "always leaning toward them").

χάρις ("grace") refers to God freely extending Himself (His favor, grace), reaching (inclining) to people because He is disposed to bless (be near) them.

[(χάρις) is sometimes rendered "thanks" but the core-idea is "favor, grace" ("extension towards").]

- Grace / χάρις is something that God does.
- Too many times we feel "we" have to do something to make this work.
- When it is totally in His power, ability, and plan to work "through" you.
- We struggle with love, what makes us think that we can "add" any of the other attributes.

2 Corinthians 6:1 Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

Ephesians 3:7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

- Paul urges us "not to receive the grace of God in vain"
- And he was made a Minister "according to grace"
- We must _____ and _____ in the process for it to be accomplished.

This resting and receiving is not completely _____, we do have a role in the process. And that role is yielding and obedience.

Hebrews 4:11 Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Each of these are either _____ or _____ traits.

- God will **lead** you to **act** a certain way, but you have to **act**.
- The Holy Spirit will highlight an expectation, but we must follow through on it.
- God will not force you to be Virtuous, to increase Knowledge, or develop Self-Control.

His grace is available but we should not take it for _____.

Galatians 2: 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Peace

Romans 14:19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

εἰρήνη eirénē, i-ray'-nay; probably from a primary verb εἶρω eírō (to join); peace (literally or figuratively); by implication, prosperity:—one, peace, quietness, rest, + set at one again.

This peace is a _____ state of rest.

- You're not stressed about the process
- You're not nervous about failure
- You're not fretting about past failures or future trials

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

*Galatians 5: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,** 23 **gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law.*

Does this sound _____!?!?

- Increasing in the fruit of the Spirit situates you in a place where you cannot fail.
- Resting in the “peace” of God is extremely powerful!
- Being at peace with His ability to cause you to grow is essential and effective.
- We need to rest in the confidence that He (God) is well able to do all that He has said He could do.

Ephesians 3: 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

But how does this _____ us for the days we are living in?

In these “Last Days” times will grow increasingly _____.

2 Timothy 3:1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, ...

12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

In these last days God has made a way for us to not only survive ... but to _____!

- Christians around the world who undergo persecution and trials thrive on a daily basis.
- How do they do that?
- Yes, it is because of their character. But where does the character come from?
- Verse 16 and 17 have the answer.

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- We must be _____ on the Word of God daily.
- We must be applying the Word of God Daily to our lives.
- We must then be _____ in the Grace and Peace of God that will carry us through the process of sanctification.
- And then we will be “*be complete, [and] equipped for every good work.*”

**It’s the Spirit of _____, through the Grace and Peace of _____,
applying the Word of _____, to the Man and Woman of _____, that will bring
victory!!**