

## BALANCED TRUTH 2 Peter 1:5-9

Intro: Balanced truth leads to a balanced Christian life, but truth out of balance leads to heresy.

If we do not keep verses 5-7 in context, we will end up on one of two roads. Neither of these roads is headed in the right direction.

The first road is the road that leads to thinking that man can be saved, become a Christian by his own works, by his own efforts. The natural man is always trying to do something religious to get to heaven. He looks at the seven virtues that are set before us here and says: "If I add these virtues to my life, I will make it to heaven; and when God asks me, why I should be allowed into heaven? I can say that I lived a good life, kept the commandments, and held to the principles of 2 Peter 1:5-7.

Road number two, errs on the side of *laissez-faire*, the side of inaction. This leads one to say: "I cannot say myself, salvation is of the Lord and Him alone. If I seek to add to my faith, then it is justification by works and not grace."

Both of the above roads, justification by works, and antinomianism are wrong, and we are not to take them.

Now, we go back to the need of taking and keeping this passage in context. As we will see, the order is given to us in verses 1-7. The believer is not asked to do anything whatsoever to be saved for he is "*dead in trespasses and sins.*" And "*There is none righteous no not one.*" What is needed for salvation has been done by Christ, and this is what is set before us in the opening verses of the book of 2 Peter. The Gospel proclaims how that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

### I. Vs. 5, ADD TO YOUR FAITH VIRTUE AND KNOWLEDGE

A. "And beside this add to your faith." Peter is here addressing the born again ones, those who have life in Christ. It would do no good to say this to dead people for they are unable to respond. Through the new birth, the Christian has been given "*all things that pertain to life and godliness.*"

1. "Add to your faith." Everything in the life of a Christian goes back to faith. Through faith, grace has been given to us as a gift from God. This is what Ephesians 2:8-9 says. We are to add to what we have; we are to cultivate it.

- a. The farmer adds to the ground of the farm those things that will produce fruit. But he must first have the farm so he can add to it. God has given us the farm and the implements and the seed: the Word of God. We need to have a crop (vs. 3). The farmer diligently works to have a crop.
  - b. When God says: “*Add to your faith,*” He is saying farm\_ Put the seed into the ground of faith, and then start adding.
2. The Faith that is being added to is, “*Like precious faith*” (vs. 1). Guthrie says: “These other virtues are unattainable until the step of faith has been taken”(600). “*Without faith it is impossible to please God.*” No matter what you do, without faith you will fall short. For the Bible says: “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23).
- B. Add Virtue— virtue is the Greek word *arete*. This word speaks of:
1. Moral goodness: virtuous in thought and deed. It is sad that we often fail in the thought category. We live in a heathen, Post Christian society, and sex, ungodliness and robbery are all about us. Yet we are to be virtuous.
  2. Virtue as is seen here is operative excellence. To the Greeks, a virtuous person was a good citizen.
  3. Often the word *arete* means courage. It takes courage to stand for right and do right.
- C. Add Knowledge— this is knowledge that enables a man to make the right decisions: a knowledge of the truth. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is the truth.
1. Knowledge is the ability to distinguish between good and evil (Heb. 5:14). To do this, we must be growing in our knowledge.
  2. As we do the will of God, this knowledge is ours (John 7:17).

## II. VS. 6, ADD TO YOUR FAITH TEMPERANCE, PATIENCE, GODLINESS

- A. Temperance— Temperance means self-control. This means we are to respond according to God’s direction rather than reacting to circumstances. Many times our problem as

Christians is not our actions, but our reactions. Self-control is the ability to get a grip on ourselves.

1. God's Word exhorts us to be temperate, to have self-control (Proverbs 16:22; 25:28).
2. The Greeks used the word *egkrateia*, This is Greek for temperance, to mean as Wuest says: "one who has his sex passions under control" (24). So we have the need of discipline in our lives.

B. Patience— this word means to be endure with steadfastness: Chrysostom *hupomone* "The Queen of all Virtues." This is the ability to endure when the going gets tough. This a virtue that we are all going to need more of in the coming days as America becomes more socialistic and less Christian.

1. Whereas self-control has to do with the pleasures of life. Patience relates to the pressures of life. The person who cannot handle his passions will not be able to handle the pressure.
2. Barclay says of Christian patience: "It is the courageous acceptance of everything that life can do to us and the transmuting of even the worst event into another step on the upward way" (303).
3. This is what Christ did on the cross; He accepted and endured the cross; He despised the shame; and He did so for the joy that was set before Him (Hebrews 12:2).

C. Godliness— to be godly is to have God in your life, and show forth a God-likeness.

1. The child of God is to be like his Father in all that he does (1 Cor. 10:31). This means we are to be God like in dress, music, associations, etc. The godly person is more concerned about pleasing God than pleasing self or being popular.
2. Godliness is to worship God correctly and give Him his due while at the same time serving his fellow man and giving him his due as well.

### III. Vs. 7, ADD TO YOUR FAITH BROTHERLY KINDNESS, CHARITY

A. Brotherly kindness— is derived from two Greek words, *phileo* "to have affection for," and *adelphos* "a brother."

1. We are to love one another with a sincere love; we are not to pretend or put on a show.

2. It is our love for the brethren that gives proof that we have been born again (1 John 4:7-11,16).
- B. Charity– this is Agape love, Divine love, sacrificial love. Love without the expectation of anything in return. We are to love because it is right to do so, because it is Christ like to do so.
1. It means that we are to love the unlovely. D. Martin Lloyd-Jones said: “Try to see souls in the sinners, try to see their need; have within you a great love such as the love of God Himself who ‘maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust’.” This is the kind of love that is to rule our lives as Christians.
  2. This Divine love is the love that God shows toward sinners (Romans 5:5-8).

Conclusion: The balanced, Christian life is one that understands Divine addition. We are to add to our faith, not to become saved, but because we are saved. The spiritual virtues that we add will make us to be fruitful not barren.

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