

# A Practical Study of 2 PETER:

## A Winner's Game Plan

### “What It Takes to Break the Tape”

Key Verse: 1 Peter 5:10

*“But the God of all Grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, shall himself make you complete, shall establish you, shall make you strong, shall ground you as on a foundation.”*

### Study Number Two – “Here’s What You Do” – 2 Peter 1:5-11

A Jewish businessman in Chicago sent his son to Israel for a year to absorb the culture. When the son returned he said “Papa, I had a great time in Israel. By the way, I converted to Christianity.”

“Oy Vey!” said the father. “What have I done?” He took the problem to his best friend. “Ike,” he says, “I sent my son to Israel and he has come home a Christian. What can I do?”

“Funny you should ask” said Ike. “I, too, sent my son to Israel and he also came home a Christian. Perhaps we should go see the Rabbi.” So they went and they explained their problem to

the Rabbi.

“Funny you should ask,” said the Rabbi. “I, too, sent my son to Israel and he came home a Christian. What is happening to our young people?” And so they all prayed, telling the Lord about their sons.

As they finished the prayer, a voice came down from heaven and said “Funny you should ask. I, too, sent my Son to Israel.”

We were talking a little bit about the SERVANT-LEADERSHIP aspect yesterday in our message and I left these notes out. But they were so special, from Oswald Chambers, I’ve included them in today because we’re going to go back to that in the words that we’re going to discover today.

*(My Utmost For His Highest* by Oswald Chambers) Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House. Copyright—Oswald Chambers Publications Association, 1992.

The real test of a saint is not one’s willingness to preach the gospel, but one’s willingness to do something like washing the disciples’ feet—that is, being willing to do those things that seem unimportant in human estimation but count as everything to God. It was Paul’s delight to spend his life for God’s interests in other people, and he did not care what it cost. But before we will serve to ponder our personal and financial concerns—“What if God wants me to go over there? And what about my salary? What is the climate like there? Who will take care of me? A person must consider all these

things? All that is an indication that we have reservations about serving God. [Boy that was convicting!] But the apostle Paul had no conditions or reservations. Paul focused his life on Jesus Christ's idea of a New Testament saint; that is, not one who merely proclaims the gospel, but one who becomes broken bread and poured-out wine in the hands of Jesus Christ for the sake of others.

(February 25)

That's got to set the stage for these verses today. In this particular study we're looking at "What are we supposed to do?" and "Here's What You Do" after you have had an encounter with Jesus Christ.

Our KEY VERSE today will be verse 10 and we will be down there in just a few minutes.

But in order to set the stage, let me just give you some words from the apostle Paul himself about ministry and his relationship to ministry.

When it came time he knew that he was going to be leaving the Ephesian saints for the last time. That he was going to be ultimately arrested and taken on to Rome and executed there, he wanted to say goodbye to these special people in Ephesus. That was his longest ministry. He spent three years there. He established a seminary there for students to come in from various surrounding areas to study the Word and God used him in a great way.

Now listen to what he says to them though:

Acts 20:24-25, 32, 36-38

But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify so solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more....And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified....And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all; and they began to weep aloud and embraced Paul and repeatedly kissed him, grieving especially over the word which he had spoken and that they should see his face no more. And they were accompanying him to the ship.

Peter is just exactly the same way with regard to the whole business of developing close, intimate relationships. The thing you know about Peter is, he's a tough old bird. He has failed on numerous occasions but that has not affected the fact that he wants to finish well. And what you're going to see in these next verses is he is going to finish well.

And in doing so, he wants to talk to us. How are we going to finish well? Well, we've got to overcome all kinds of obstacles along the way. Things that we never even considered would be

obstacles. But God puts them in our lives to develop the intensity of vision and passion that He has for us.

The thing you've got to realize this morning is that Peter knows that his time is short, number one. Secondly, he knows that he is going to be crucified in the city of Rome. That's already knowledge to him. And the Lord has already told him, and you're going to hear that in the study today. That his ground time is going to be brief. His flight has already been scheduled and so he better get it done if he's going to get it done.

So he's living with a short fuse. You don't hear anything about a pity party. You don't hear anything about the saints all praying for him to have the courage to go to the cross. There's nothing about him. It's all about Jesus and focusing on Him. And when he talked to you yesterday morning, he was saying "Look, if you're going to go through this time and be successful and finish your course, everything's got to be in Jesus."

You've got everything you need in Jesus Christ. It's Jesus Christ plus nothing. Now, what we have to learn today is that at the point of salvation, the Spirit of God begins to orchestrate all the circumstances in your life—every one of them, no exception. He has a planned curriculum for your spiritual development, to be as much like Jesus before this time comes. And everything will take on significance every day in what God is doing and building into your life Christlike character.

That's what we have to grapple with this morning. Because like I said yesterday, lots of people think "Oh man! If I can just get this person saved!"

And that's great! "If I can just get them to Jesus Christ and they know the Savior, then everything's going to be fine!"

But what happens when you get older like some of us, we shut down because we've already made the big decision so why not ride it out and make the best of the bad stuff! That's not biblical! That's not theological! It goes completely against God's plan.

God's plan and purpose is to take you from the point of your eternal salvation to the greatest possibility of Christlikeness. Because the more you become like Jesus, the more fruitful you're going to become. And the more lives that are going to be touched and changed for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So what Peter's doing, he's saying "Look, it didn't stop when you became a Christian." Every day contributes to some special things that are going to happen in your life. And you're going to get to see seven life-size pictures this morning of what He wants to do with you. Now just be under conviction of the Spirit and honest before God today as you hear each one of these words. Are these things happening in your life? And if not, you are the one who is responsible for it because you've quenched the Spirit of God and the work that He wants to do in your life.

And every one of us has got to come to grips with that. That's why this meant so much to me. This is why I realized my time is short. But I want to know in my life that these seven words are words that are beginning to happen because Christ is at work in my life. And I am fully cooperating by my obedience and my commitment to Him, and my passion and my love for Him as Savior.

Well what we're going to look at is just the joy of knowing in Jesus Christ we have everything. We talked about it.

We have the POWER.

We have the PERSON.

We have the PROMISES.

We are PARTAKERS of the divine nature.

That's what we got in the bank! That's the stuff that God is going to use by the power of His Spirit NOW to produce what we're going to see in the life of a believer. And most of it's going to have to do with character development.

How are you going to invest all that you have as resources in the Lord Jesus Christ?

You're saying "Anderson, I've never heard this before."

Well let me remind you of Philippians 2:12-13. Paul says:

## Philippians 2:12-13

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who is working in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

It didn't say "work for" it said "work out."

What is the athletic guy do that's going to run a marathon? He's works out every day. He moves and trains for what's getting ready to happen.

Paul likens that to the believer—that we're on a daily workout schedule. I trust you've already begun to fit that discipline into your life while you're here under this kind of a stressful schedule to still not violate the fact that God still wants to meet you here in the morning. And out of that comes the flow of the beautiful day.

Well, one of the things you're going to discover right away is you find your greatest joy in serving others. And the apostle Paul has certainly spelled that out for us.

Well, what's the potential? You've got all those things we looked at yesterday. Ok, there's the POWER.

Now the POTENTIAL is going to be incredible because this is how it's going to happen. This is the process.



It's kind of like the thrill of us in becoming great grandparents is that little Zetty was born with all the equipment. Isn't that the first thing a mother and a daddy does? Looks to see if they got all the little toes and all the little fingers and they come in one beautiful piece. That's the way it is when you become a believer. You're born again by the Spirit of God, into the family of God, and you've got all the equipment. You've got all the things that are natural and you rejoice in that new birth. But God didn't intend for you to stay as a baby. Peter said that: "as newborn babies desire the sincere milk of the word that you may grow thereby." That's 1 Peter 2:2-3.

There's where you begin to grow and develop. We're in the growing process this morning.

Psalm 1 says:

### Psalm 1:3

It's like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season. His leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he does prospers.

And that prosperity is the recognition of the blessing of God as it is orchestrated in your life. As you begin to grow you become more and more aware of it.

You know it's kind of like POWER STEERING in a car. Isn't it? You've got all the equipment, the Lord has provided everything you need, and He wants to take over and to take us

to the destination. But He's provided everything that we're going to need along the way. We will never come back begging to Him.

Lewis Smedes says it this way:

If we do not match our own dreams, what about the dreams God has for us? God's dream for human life came true in Jesus Christ. He is the profile of God's sort of person. Forget now about His eternal deity; concentrate on the human person: working with fierce honesty through a hypocritical culture, with fine compassion through a heartless [religion], risking everything that ordinary people want out of life so He could minister to lost and hurt human beings, freely led by sacrificial love into the most untimely death in human history. What a person! And He is God's image for us. The word is: "Be like Jesus if you want to be God's kind of human being."  
(source unknown)

And I wrote at the bottom of that:

"When all else fails, read the instructions!"

And what we're looking at this morning is a process now. It's one thing to have all the potential because of what Jesus Christ provides in your new birth. But now we're going to get under conviction—every one of us—as we look at the seven words to give evidence of the fact that the Spirit of God is at work in our lives.

Are you ready? Verse 5.

**v. 5 Now for this very reason also, having added on your part every intense effort, provide lavishly in your faith the aforementioned virtue, and in the virtue, knowledge;**

Ok, motivated by DEEP DESIRE to please the Lord, the apostle is saying, “Ok, now you’re in the family. You know all the resources that you have but this is what I am longing for you to do. This is what you should be doing as a believer for the glory of God!”

But look at that very first phrase:

“Now for this very reason”—what reason? You’ve got everything you need in Jesus. You’ve got the POWER, the PERSON, the PROMISES, and the PROTECTION. You’re a PARTAKER of the divine nature.

Because of this, “for this very reason”—then what are we supposed to do?

God has provided generously, “given to us everything”—that was back in verse 3—“pertaining to life and godliness,” through His divine power, through the person of the Lord Jesus, and through His precious and exceeding great promises which have then made us “partakers of the divine or living nature.”

Since we have this, what are we supposed to do?

John 15 was [one of the] last things He said as He was heading toward the Garden of Gethsemane:

John 15:4

Abide in me and I in you, the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

You've got a responsibility now—because of the resources that have been provided for you—not to just sit around and hope it would all happen.

You know, I was reading that book *Right Stuff* back there when we were trying to get in the space program, by Tom Wolf. And he gives this graphic description, which I think is a perfect picture of a lot of Christians who still are little babies in Christ because they feel like they've already done the big thing and they're just going to ride it out to glory. But listen what he says about this. This was so good.

*(The Right Stuff by Tom Wolf)*

Two months after Sputnik I, the Navy tried to launch the first American satellite with a Vanguard rocket. The first nationally televised countdown began. Ten, nine, eight, then all the way down to ignition. A mighty surge of noise and flames. The rocket lifts some six inches. The first stage,

bloated with fuel, explodes and the rest of the rocket sinks into the sand beside the launch pad. It appears too sick to sink, and sink very slowly like a fat old man collapsing into his Barcalounger. The sight is absolutely ludicrous. If one is in the mood for a practical joke, oh Khrushchev had fun with that all right. This picture, the big buildup, the dramatic countdown, followed by the exploding cigar was unforgettable. It became the image of the American space program. The press broke into hideous cackle of national self-loathing with the headline.

(source unknown)

Isn't that awful? But that's the picture if you have a lot of these dramatic guys. I've read so many biographies of athletes who have been put on center stage. And for a little blip, they tell a great story and it's an emotional testimony. But this is way into it.

Rebecca Manley Pippert has written a good book called *Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World* and she says much the same thing.

Too many people have stopped at the door that leads to conversion. The door is so we can go through and get involved in life on the other side. Some see conversion and discipleship as a revolving door that will allow them to stay there. They have come to glorify their experience of the door when it was meant only as an avenue of passage to a new life. In fact, it is not our door experience but our new life that demonstrates whether we have ever been converted.

(source unknown)

William Pennell said: “Let’s paint or get off the ladder.”

It’s time to put your money where your mouth is.

In essence, this is the message that’s got to be communicated effectively to other believers. That it’s not going to stop at the time of ignition. But rather, it’s the beginning of a dramatic lift-off that will orbit you into a life that you have never known and experienced before. And God is going to bless that life.

Elisabeth Elliot tells this story so beautifully:

*(Discipline: The Glad Surrender by Elisabeth Elliot)*

Strive to choose not that which is easiest but that which is the most difficult. Do not deprive your soul of the agility which it needs to mount up to him. Discipline is the whole-hearted yes to the call of God. When I know myself called, summoned, addressed, taken possession of, known and acted upon, I have heard the Master. I put myself gladly, fully and forever at His disposal, and to whatever He says, my answer is yes.

When I was in college, it was the custom when the yearbook came out, to ask one’s friends to autograph it. Usually they wrote a few words in addition to their signature, and when a girl asked for the autograph of a man she especially admired, she secretly hoped for some kind of clue to his feelings toward her in the words he wrote. Jim Elliot [as

you know, died as one of the 5 martyrs in '56 and this is Elisabeth. Listen to what she says] Jim Elliot signed his name in the Wheaton Tower and added only a scripture reference— 2 Timothy 2:4: “A soldier on active service will not let himself become involved in civilian affairs. He must be wholly at the commanding officer’s disposal.”

The message was loud and clear. Any hopes I might have entertained, any feelings Jim himself might have had for me that he had not at that time expressed, must give way before the guiding principle of his life. He was not at liberty to plan his future, being at the disposal of someone else.

Any soldier, any candidate for Christian discipline ought daily to report to his commanding officer for duty. At your service, Lord. What the soldier does for the officer is not in the category of a favor. The officer may ask anything. He disposes of the soldier as he chooses. The very thought strikes horror to the modern mind. Nobody’s going to tell me what to do. Nobody has a right to dispose of me! Salvation is a gift, purely a gift, forever a gift. It is grace and nothing else that obtains it for us. Discipline is not my claim on Christ but the evidence of His claim on me. I do not make Him Lord; I only acknowledge the fact.

(source unknown)

Woo that was strong!

As you know, Elisabeth lost Jim after they got married and served in Ecuador. Came back to the states and married again and her husband now is gone home to be with the Lord because of cancer. But Elisabeth is still trucking on for the

glory of God and blessing the lives of so many.

Now, what are the SEVEN THINGS that God wants to work in? This is going to be a little bit of a Greek study. But I'll try to make it as plain as I can.

The first one is:

1. “the aforementioned virtue”

This is strength and bravery in the domain of morals—when we're talking about virtue.

E. Skylar English says:

Manly courage, the courage whereby as Christians we are able to stand against rebuke and persecution and against all the attractions...

(source unknown)

John Brown says:

It's energy. Energy manifesting itself in the active performance of duty, and in bravely meeting the trials of the Christian life. The Christian has much to do and much to suffer. ...And what his hands find to do, he will find much, he must do with all of his might....Energy, activity, fortitude...[all describe it].

(source unknown)



Are there any biblical illustrations of a lack of virtue? Well we would say Yes!

ABRAHAM when he lied about his wife Sarah being his sister.

There are numerous other illustrations.

MOSES did the same thing when he got angry and struck the rock instead of speaking to it like the Lord had said to do.

PETER himself denied his Lord. And this must seem awfully hard for him to write this as the first word, because of what he did in lying about his relationship to the Lord Jesus at that critical time of trial just a few hours before the cross.

“DEMAS has forsaken me because he loved this present world”—lack of virtue.

JOHN MARK for some reason flicked it in and left the first missionary journey and went back to Jerusalem.

DAVID himself failed at a time when he could have stood with virtue.

So what we're saying in this very first word is not to be a halting, tentative person. Not to be weary in well-doing to the point we surrender and we compromise or to be double-minded and unstable in all of our ways. It is rather a virtue which is exhibited that you can count upon because it's always consistent with the Word.

It is STRONG! It is a word that would describe what Joshua heard from the Lord “Be strong!” after Moses died.

It’s the word that Zerubbabel would hear: “Be strong. Go and rebuild the temple. Take the people back.”

Gaebelein says:

It means moral courage, a courage which refuses the gratification of the old nature...It is an energy by which the heart is master of itself.

(source unknown)

Now, could you find some words? And even these people who have failed that we looked at—words that would describe the fact that they were clamoring after that virtue. Even though they had failed, they are longing to have that be part of their lives. I think you can.

MOSES made the hall of fame, if you’ll remember in Hebrews chapter 11. What does it say about him?

### Hebrews 11:25

choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

He was making right choices. Ready to do what God wanted him to do.

The APOSTLE PAUL is another illustration. He's on the road to Damascus to wipe out Christianity and then he describes it so beautifully as "counting all things as one big loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:8).

DANIEL is another one. Transported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon, he served over 70 years in that foreign land and how God greatly used him. But what's the key? When they came to bring the food, he had conviction about the food. And the text tells us that Daniel "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat" (Daniel 1:8).

Over and over again, when virtue shines, even though in the past you have failed before you became a Christian (or even afterwards) you don't say that's over until it's over. And you ask God to pick up the pieces and to produce within you a virtue that will glorify and honor Him.

William Barclay is one of my favorite Greek commentators. And when he is studying this word he says:

The stoics insisted that in life there must continuously be what they called "*prokope*" which is moral progress. The word "*prokope*" is a word that can be used for the advance of an army toward an objective. In the Christian life there must be this ready moral advance. Moffett quotes as saying that the Christian life must not be an initial spasm followed by a chronic inertia. [Boy I love that!] It is very apt to be just that. It is apt to be a moment of enthusiasm when the wonder of

Christianity is realized and then a failure to work out the Christian life in this continuous progress.

That brings us still another basic idea here. Peter bids his people to bend every energy to do this. That is to say, in the Christian life the supreme effort of man must cooperate with the grace of God. And as Paul said it, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

(source unknown)

There it is. This is an intense program. It is an intense curriculum that God has to produce Christlikeness. And if you’ve missed it and you’ve lost some years, you’ve lost some months, you’ve lost some time because you’ve been living on the terms of your own agenda and what you think pleases Him rather than knowing what the Word of God wants from us. The Lord makes up the years that the canker and the locusts have eaten.

And He can start today and you can honestly write over today’s study “Today is the first day of the rest of my life!” This is the curriculum for the rest of my days here on earth! To go out of here with a full, positive objective that is biblical and is Christlike. And you are motivated with a passion to never defile it the rest of your days. You’re not going to be a person who’s going to throw it in and quit and think it’s too late.

How am I going to do this? Well one of the ways I do it is Philippians 4:8. Every day I am focused on it.

## Philippians 4:8

Finally my brethren, [he says] whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there's any praise in things, think on these things.

The key to all of this is the MIND! Satan has no access to you but by your mind. That's what 2 Corinthians 4:4 says.

## 2 Corinthians 4:4

In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not.

The reason it took you and me so long to come to the Savior is Satan blinded our minds with his objectives and his program.

And now that I begin to see the light, that I recognize that his attack on my mind is not going to let up after I become a Christian! And if I'm failing to fulfil this curriculum, he's clapping his hands in hell because he, once again, has taken a carnal fleshly Christian and kept them that way for the years of their journey here through life so they're not effective in bearing fruit for the glory of God.

A little girl was spending a few days with her grandmother. And while sitting on grandma's lap she said "Grandma, I love

you so much. You're so pretty."

Aged grandma, thin and wrinkled, laughed and replied:  
"That's very sweet of you darling. But I'm not pretty."

The little girl paused thoughtfully and then said "Oh yes you are. You are pretty on the inside."

God wants you and me to be pretty on the inside. Because once He deals with us the stuff inside, then what comes out of your mouth is going to be consistent with that. You don't have to play anymore games. You don't have to act. You don't have to lie or pretend. You are hitting the citadel. This is the beginning.

"Every intense effort" toward virtue. And virtue will only come as you recognize that you have a mind that is selfish and is sinful and can be so covered up blinded by Satan that you never become any of these things.

And so he hits the nerve of the whole thing when he talks with "intense effort." Be those who desire to be virtuous.

Harry Ironside says:

The virtue of which he speaks here is not simply chastity, as some might think, but it is ready and really valor, which is the outstanding virtue of a soldier. And we are called to be soldiers of Christ.

(source unknown)

Let's look at the second one.

“Now for this very reason also, having added on your part every intense effort, provide lavishly in your faith the aforementioned virtue”—we've looked at that number one:

2. “and in the virtue, knowledge.”

Every day becomes an opportunity to get to know Jesus Christ better and better.

Your marriage today, no matter how many years you've been married, the beauty and the oneness and the joy of it is the pursuit of knowledge of the one you married.

That's why Paul would say in Philippians 3:10. When you want to talk about my list of goals:

### Philippians 3:10

That I might know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His likeness.

That's the whole message that Peter's giving us. But he always uses the word “know” or “knowledge.”

Now this is not knowledge intuitive. It is knowledge that comes by experience. Experience provides us the wisdom to

relate to what the scripture teaches us. And because we want to know Jesus **PASSIONATELY** and **WITH INTENSITY**, we take every day an opportunity to know what pleases Him and to understand how we can be obedient because we're reading the Word. You see what I'm saying?

That's why I just keep hammering it home and I will, to my last breath, every day you've got to be in the Book! If you're going to know Him, you've got to read the Book! And let the Spirit of God open the book, open your eyes, so your spirit is enlightened, your mind is dealing with the issue and you're being honest and your life is changing to be conforming to the knowledge that you have of Jesus Christ.

That's all he's saying here. The second thing is the "knowledge." Seek to get to know Him!

He told the Colossians in:

### Colossians 2:3

In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Here the apostle Paul outlines the game plan for progress and for growth.

You want that relationship to marriage? In 1 Peter 3:7 he says;



## 1 Peter 3:7

You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow-heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.

Woo! I can quit there and you're going to be under such conviction you can't even stand it.

Now you understand why your prayers aren't getting out of the rafters guys. If you aren't increasing in your knowledge of the one God has given you. And showing every day that you understand her needs and her as a person better, and you're serving and facilitating to help meet those needs.

That's what you do with Jesus. You've got this wonderful gift of life and we rejoice in it! Yeah but don't shut it down! Don't sit there! Start passionately to pursue the path of virtue which means that you're thinking right so you're going to act right. And then pursue greater knowledge of Christ every opportunity you get.

You're here to understand more about what pleases the Lord.

You know how it happens? The greater the knowledge, the greater the grace. And I love this because if Satan comes along and he nails me with something from the past, I know in my heart that that past has been forgiven and cleansed and washed by the blood of the Lamb.

But here he comes, constantly hammering that past. “Oh! You can never do this because you did that!” And it just goes on and on and on and can be a cycle.

But then you come to something like this and the Lord has forgiven, He’s cleansed, He’s washed it away. And the greater knowledge of Him is the greater grace to take care of whatever the need is. You just rejoice!

Get now behind me Satan! Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world! I’m freed from that. I’ve been set free because I’ve been forgiven by the blood of the Lamb. That’s greater knowledge. When you understand that, you begin to experience the victory that is yours. The peace that comes, the wisdom to make right relationships, the love of Christ, trust, patience—each of those things are new words that come into your vocabulary as you seek greater knowledge of Him.

Verse 6.

**v. 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness;**

“and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness;”

You’re saying “Wow! I’ve never read that verse before.” Or “I’ve never seen it in that way.” Here’s the list. He’s talked to

you, first of all, about the business of:

1. “virtue”

and now

2. “knowledge”

but now

3. “self-control”

What is “self-control”? Really “self-control” to the believer is SPIRIT-CONTROL.

The only way you’re ever going to get a victory over your selfishness is to turn to Him and recognize it and to exercise the self-control that keeps you doing everyday what you need to be doing.

Failure to prepare is preparation for failure.

When you don’t faithfully work out on a daily basis, spiritually, you are exercising a loss of self-control.

Interesting, comfort at this point is that in Galatians 5, when the writer to Galatians—the apostle Paul is saying:

Galatians 5:22, 23

The fruit of the Spirit is love, its joy, its peace, patience, kindness...

He makes the list but he ends it with the word “self-control.”

So long I felt so undisciplined my life, in my earlier Christian days, that I asked God to produce within me that which only the Spirit of God could produce. And I discovered that Paul prayed the same way. And Paul likened it to an **ATHLETIC CONTEST**.

Basically what he says to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, but especially verse 27:

### 1 Corinthians 9:27

I buffet [or I treat] my body roughly and I make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

All he's telling you is that he got in the race to run to win. He got in the race to recognize discipline does produce reward. He got in the race to find the goal and hit the mark that God had for him. And he go into the race at the time when it was toughest, the extra effort to produce the excellent.

So “in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control”—there's one of my favorite words:

4. “perseverance.”

I love that word because that epitomizes the Christian life, if you're talking to somebody who knows the truth.

Do you know what that word is? That's made up of two words.

### *“Hupomeno”*

The word “mona” is “*meno*” it means to remain. “*Hupo*” means under.

How many times have you prayed when you've had a crisis in your life that God would deliver you from the crisis, from the circumstance, and then you'll glorify Him. And you're basically telling Him you don't like the curriculum and you want out and you don't want to go there my friends because you will never, ever learn what He's trying to teach you.

Even though you don't understand it, even though it's blindsided you and it's got you so stirred up and upset, recognize that it was necessary to reveal that to yourself.

Whether it's a marriage relationship, a work relationship, a crisis that comes into your life that's totally unexpected, a health issue—I don't care what it is. So many believers just sit around begging God to free them from the very thing that He, in His sovereignty, has seen as necessary to provide greater Christlikeness!

It's like we're wasting God's time! You see what happens?

Because we have so little knowledge of what He's trying to do, our prayers miss the point because we're trying to escape rather than persevere through it! To remain under in the circumstances, not to be liberated from it, or ever to question what He's trying to say.

Oh man! I love that word so much. When I got to it the other morning and I was working on it I just thought "This is too good to be true!" It's wonderful.

## 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

"Therefore come out from among them and be ye separate" says the Lord. "Touch not the unclean thing and I'll be a father unto you and you shall be my sons and daughters" says the Lord almighty.

William Barclay says:

It is the ability to take a grip on one's self. That's the self-control part of it.

(source unknown)

But you move on from there to this wonderful, wonderful word "perseverance."

What is self-control?

Self-control is allowing the Spirit of God to hold our will in check. And I have said this and I'll say it until the day I die, I

have never seen an undisciplined godly person. You've got to have self-control in order to be a person with this indispensable quality to serve Him.

# 4 then is “perseverance.”

To your “virtue,”

to your “knowledge,”

to your “self-control,”

you had “perseverance.”

You know, the reason that word was so confusing to me, I read so many passages of scripture but I never took the word “perseverance” or *Hupomeno* and put it in its context from the Greek text. I found that word occurred 49 times in the New Testament.

When a word occurs 49 times in the New Testament, you better be paying attention to the fact that word probably is key. In fact, Ray Stedman before he died said:

The key to the Christian life is *Hupomeno*—perseverance.  
(source unknown)

And I'm saying in my later years, Amen brother! Preach it! Preach it! Preach it!

It's that word. Now you don't hear Sunday sermons on perseverance. You don't hear people explaining the fact they're trying to comfort you in your suffering. They're trying to explain the fact that "I can't tell you why God is a God of love and he's let that happen to you." They're sitting around with non-essentials.

It happens so it's part of God's plan for the life. Now let's rejoice in what He's going to do through an impossible situation for His glory and honor and be freed from that stuff!

You say "It sounds so simple."

The reason it's so confusing. The Bible, in its translations, translates this word as "patience." I hate that word.

"You have need of patience" (Hebrews 10:36).

"You have need of"—some other translations will say—"You have need of endurance."

Oh is that ever a joyful word? What does that do to your Christian life? Well, you're just going to have to sit around, twiddle your thumbs until God comes through and does something. And He's going to develop your patience!

That's not what this word says.

Or look, "I don't why it happened but you're just going to have to endure it. Now just buck up, bite your tongue and let it



happen.”

Oh boy, that’s sure a great joy.

That very word that’s translated patience and endurance is *Hupomeno*—translated as perseverance.

Go back to the book of Romans and see He is the God of perseverance who develops us!

Perseverance is struggle. Patience is sitting around and passively waiting.

Perseverance is getting after it and quit feeling sorry for yourself. And as you’re doing it and as you’re being freed from it, you’re beginning to discover a wonderful thing of what God’s doing in your life. That’s what he meant by this word!

And so, when you come to that word endurance, go check your Greek text to be sure that they missed it once again. If they’re using the word patience in your old King James Bible, just say “Ok, I know better than that.” It’s *Hupomeno* and I’m going to be a person who’s characterized by that.

Oh I love that word!

### Romans 8:18

Yet what we have to suffer now is nothing worthy compared to the glory that will be revealed in us later.

There's the word! Now you're liberated to know that today is the first day of the rest of your life and it might be bitter as the dickens! But you're going to triumph in it because you're going to persevere through it because in that God is at work and you don't understand why and how!

And man, you got the joy of the Lord. Do you want to hear the word in the right way?

In Hebrews chapter 12 when he's getting ready to talk to these Christians who are talking about flickin' it in, he says:

### Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with perseverance [not endurance] the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured [persevered] the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

“Run with endurance”—NO—“run with perseverance.”

You know what I love about that? The word “run” is the word *agón*. PERSEVERE the AGONY! Persevere the race! You want to finish.

I always hesitate to use this illustration because everybody said “See, we told you so.”

For years I got caught up in the marathon craze. And I ran in four of them. I was able to finish two of them. In the process of doing that, you never run a marathon to win. You only run one to finish. And there are plenty of opportunities in the 26.3 mile race to wish you could throw it in. And on two of them I had to because of the depletion of fluids, basically, and poor training schedule. But they’ve taught me lessons that I really needed to learn to relate to what God’s trying to do in my life as a believer.

Why am I so passionate at 76 years of age to finish? Because I want to hear “Well done good and faithful servant. You’ve finished the course and like your Savior, you can say ‘Tetelestai! It is finished!’ You’ve fulfilled your assignments to the glory of God.”

That’s why this word, I believe, by the devil has been cloaked with patience and endurance and so much other stuff that confuses us of what the Christian life is all about.

Listen to Romans 15:5! I’m getting a little excited!

### Romans 15:5

Now may God who gives [this is so terrible in the King James]...Now may God who gives this patience and encouragement...

Now may God give you perseverance—*Hupomeno*—and encouragement...

Make progress and give encouragement to others while you're struggling! You're telling them "Hey! It's tough for me too! And I'm right alongside you. We're going to finish together!"

You're going to be joyful! You'll be one of those who'll be able to say:

### 1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...

We've been talking about military illustrations and the first thing I thought about this morning, I started singing that old World War II song. And I'm sorry for you folks that were born earlier than this. There was a great song and the Spirit of God just brought it to my mind. You guys that are grey-heads, you remember?

...Oh there's one motor gone  
We will still carry on  
Comin' in on a wing and a prayer...

(source unknown)

That to me is the Christian life. You may have lost a motor on the way but you haven't quit flying! And you're going to come

on in a wing and a prayer! God is going to bless you because you are one characterized by finishing strong.

The apostle Peter, this is his final, final time. It's the staying power—being willing to stay in there trusting Him.

And then I started singing Bill Gaither's little song:

And then one day, I'll cross the river,  
I'll fight life's final war with pain.  
And then as death gives way to victory,  
I'll see the lights of glory,  
And I'll know He lives.

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow.  
Because He lives, all fear is gone.  
Because I know He holds the future,  
And life is worth the living  
Just because He lives.

(source unknown)

You're not going to fold it. You're going to hold it. And you're going to go through the stress for the glory of God.

Elisabeth Elliot said:

If a task is once begun, never leave it until its done. Be the labor great or small, do it well or not at all.

(source unknown)

5. “and in your perseverance, godliness.”

Don't you love this kind of a study? You know exactly how long you have to listen. And some of you've already gotten worn out in listening and here we are on number five and you know there's seven and so you're getting itchy to get going.

What are you doing here?

To your virtue, you're adding knowledge.

To your knowledge, you're adding self-control.

To your self-control, you're adding perseverance.

But all of that's for a purpose—that you become more and more godly.

You've already had that back in chapter 1, verse 3:

### 2 Peter 1:3

Seeing that His divine power has generously given to us everything pertaining to life and godliness...

How do you grow in godliness? Greater love—greater trust—greater restraint. Learning how to think and to feel and to act toward God. And the result of that's going to come in intimate fellowship.

**v. 7 and in your godliness, brotherly affection, and in your brotherly affection, the divine love.**

Well, I want to end this by pointing out the fact that 6 and 7 are so personal for Peter that he had to wait to the end to have enough courage to talk about it.

If you'll remember in John 21 when they were fishing out there and Christ was standing on the shore, He was already resurrected from the dead. They hadn't caught anything all night and the Lord spoke to them, they didn't recognize Him but He said "Guys, throw the net on the other side of the boat." Remember that? What happened to Peter when he first came to Christ? Threw the net out, on his face there after hearing that message "Depart from me I'm a sinful man, oh Lord." What's he going to do now to him? He takes him out on the shores of the Sea of Galilea.

"Have you caught any fish?"

"No."

You've been fishing all night. These are seven guys that are ex-fishermen that were among the twelve that went fishing and Peter was the guy responsible for it. And while they were fishing they didn't catch anything.

"Throw it on the right side!"

They didn't even recognize His voice. But they did, and by what happened, they recognized who He was because the net was full of 153 fish.

Peter got so excited, you remember, he jumped into the boat. Jumped out of the boat, swam ashore and there they were on the shore. They had bread and fish and ate together. But Christ said to him "Peter, do you love me?" And Peter already—and this is the very first time in his life he ever admitted his inadequacy, by the way. If you want a turning point in Peter's life, here it is right here.

"No, I love you." But the Greek word is *phileō*—I love you with human affection. I have failed you. I have disqualified. I've denied you. I've failed you at the cross. I don't have the kind of love you're talking about.

*Agapē* is the spirit-produced love in the heart of an individual that surrenders his agenda and his rights to become a servant.

So it's a play on words.

The Lord said "Do you *agapē* me?"

He said "I can only *phileō* you."

"Well, feed my sheep."

But then He asks a second time: "Do you *agapē* me?" This is to



get the point home.

Peter comes right back with the same thing: “I *phileō* you.”

Well, finally on the third one. Some people just miss this whole thing in the text.

There’s a big lump in his throat and he’s got to deal with it. And the Lord isn’t going to ask him a third time. But the third time he says “Do you even *phileō* me?”

Oh man. He said “You know all things, I *phileō* you.”

Those two words are right here—six and seven are those words.

Something that marks your life so significantly like that, isn’t it great that the Spirit of God just brings it back? And through the whole study of 1 Peter, it’s been *phileō*, *agapē*, *phileo*, *agapē*.” He’s using the words. And now right in the middle of what it is to be a Christian who’s growing and maturing, he uses both words to wrap it up!

“and to your godliness, brotherly affection”—*philadelphia*—city of brotherly love.

*Phileō*—*adelphos*—love the brother. That’s the first of it.

And then the divine love—there’s the agape and he’s not afraid to use that word anymore because He knew He’s going

from here to the cross. And He's going to give up His life for the cause of Christ.

### Romans 12:9, 10

Let us have no imitation Christian love. Let us have a genuine break with evil and a real devotion to good. Let us have real warm affection for one another, as between brothers, and a willingness to let the other man have the credit.

Love of the brethren and *agapē*. There is 6 and 7.

6. “brotherly affection” and

7. “divine love.”]

There are so many things that I have put in the notes but that'll have to be for another occasion.

One of the things you want to do, and I saw this when I got to the end of the study, when you come to *agapē* love—1 Corinthians 13—the whole chapter's on love isn't it? And verses 4-7 give a description of 15 words that describe this *agape* love.

And you know what the last one is? “Love is persevering all things”—that's #15 in the list and he saved the best for last.

What he's saying is characterizing in those 15 words that

describe *agapē* love in 1 Corinthians 13, is coming back to what he's saying here. And Paul joins the apostle Peter in ending his psalm of love and describing the fact that love itself is a struggle and we together must learn how to persevere through it.

Verse 8.

**v. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they are rendering you neither unemployed nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

“For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, [PRESENT TENSE] they are rendering you neither unemployed nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Those SEVEN THINGS, Peter says, is going to put you in a position of growth and you are going to begin to develop into the believer that you should be.

I got so tickled at Elisabeth Elliot at this point. She says:

You know, when you don't get this going you're going to be filled with cynicism and boredom. If life is nothing more than a meaningless string of minutes threaded on hours, with no comprehension of God's work from beginning to end, the old hillybilly song says it well:

Open the door and the flies come in,  
Shut the door and I'm sweating again.

Life gets tejus, don't it?

(source unknown)

To a lot of you maybe it's like that and you've got to come back and let the Spirit of God take you from this place. And sometime today or on this morning you are dealing with these seven things and saying "Now I understand what I'm supposed to be doing."

**v. 9 For he who is lacking these qualities is so shortsighted that he is blind, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.**

"For he who is lacking these qualities" [VERSE 9—oh it's awful!] "is so shortsighted that he is blind, having forgotten his purification from his former sins."

Oh, you don't want anybody to say that about you! Pride does that in a believer! And when we don't deal with it, this is the result. There's no long-range plan.

We eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die. We choose rather to do this than to do that! We've forgotten Calvary. We've forgotten the Cross. We've forgotten the cleansing from sin.

Ephesians chapter 3...

[Holman commentary says:]

In contrast, you do not have these characteristics [this is from the Holman's Commentary on Ephesians chapter 3] you are spiritually sick. You're suffering from shortsightedness, blindness and forgetfulness. Some who are blind cannot see at all. Some who are shortsighted cannot see in the distance. And someone who has forgotten cannot remember the grace of God in their past. One interpreter points it out like this: In their blindness, shortsightedness and forgetfulness, they no longer understand their past sins, their present disobedience or their future condemnation. (Stott, 62)  
(source unknown)

**v. 10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you are doing these things, you will never stumble.**

“Therefore, brethren,” [and oh do we love to see that word!] “be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you are doing these things, you will never stumble.”

There is the challenge from Peter. Just be sure, by the fact of your intensity/intensive pursuit of these seven words and allowing the Spirit of God to produce them in your life. You will not be unemployed. You will not be unfruitful. And the final promise of today's study is “you indeed will never stumble.”

**v. 11 For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.**

“For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.”

LESSON #1: Peter sees the Christian life as an intense effort on our part, providing lavishly in our faith a number of character traits.

LESSON #2: As you examine yourself in these seven areas, do you feel comfortable with the present condition of your spiritual walk with God?

LESSON #3: We are to be employed and fruitful in seeing that these qualities are increasing in our lives.

LESSON #4: If these qualities are not becoming increasingly manifest in our lives, it's because we are out of fellowship with the Lord.

LESSON #5: We are commanded to be all the more diligent about these things so that we do not stumble.

LESSON #6: As we provide lavishly for these qualities in our lives, so we will be richly provided an entrance into the eternal kingdom.

# STUDY NUMBER TWO – “HERE’S WHAT YOU DO”

## – 2 PETER 1:5-11

### NOTES

v. 5 Now for this very reason also, having added on your part every intense effort, provide lavishly in your faith the aforementioned virtue, and in the virtue, knowledge;

v. 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness;

v. 7 and in your godliness, brotherly affection, and in your brotherly affection, the divine love.

v. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they are rendering you neither unemployed nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

v. 9 For he who is lacking these qualities is so shortsighted that he is blind, having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

v.10 Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you are doing these things, you will never stumble.

v.11 For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

### QUESTIONS:

1. Read 2 Peter 1:5-11 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

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2. What are we to add on our part, according to verse 5?

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3. Outline the seven qualities mentioned in verses 5, 6 & 7.

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4. What do these qualities do for you, according to verse 8?

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5. What is true of those who lack these qualities, according to verse 9?

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6. What are we commanded to do in verse 10?

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7. What is the result of doing these things, according to verse 10?

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8. What will be “provided for you,” according to verse 11?

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9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

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10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

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**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

**LESSON #1:** Peter sees the Christian life as an intense effort on our part, providing lavishly in our faith a number of character traits.

**LESSON #2:** As you examine yourself in these seven areas, do you feel comfortable with the present condition of your spiritual walk with God?

LESSON #3: We are to be employed and fruitful in seeing that these qualities are increasing in our lives.

LESSON #4: If these qualities are not becoming increasingly manifest in our lives, it's because we are out of fellowship with the Lord.

LESSON #5: We are commanded to be all the more diligent about these things so that we do not stumble.

LESSON #6: As we provide lavishly for these qualities in our lives, so we will be richly provided an entrance into the eternal kingdom.