

## ADDING TO OUR FAITH

### 2 PETER 1.5

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11.6), but faith by itself is not enough. Christians are expected to grow.
2. To grow it is necessary to add virtue to our faith, but what is virtue? Latin VIR meaning “manly.” Greek ARATE: “valor”
3. Strength of character is needed for spiritual progress.

#### I. SPIRITUAL STRENGTH WHICH COMES FROM GOD

- A. Weakness is misunderstood by most, but it is often that which creates dependency on God. (2 Cor. 12.7-10)
  1. Two reactions to weakness are common: Succumb to pressure or rely upon God. (Ps. 11.1-3)
  2. Through faith the weak are made strong. (Heb. 11.32-34)
  3. Experiencing weakness of faith can help us to strengthen those who might give in to weakness. (Luke 22.32)
- B. With God all things are possible. (Matt. 19.26; John 15.5)

#### II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF A VIRTUOUS LIFE

- A. How do we develop spiritual strength? By putting on the whole armor of God. (Eph. 6.10ff)
  1. Every piece put in place by the word. (2 Tim. 3.17)
  2. Practice makes perfect. (Heb. 5.14; 1 Tim.; 4.7,8)
  3. It is often easier to observe than to be told. (Heb. 6.12)
- B. Developing a strong character is necessary for progress.
  1. Honesty. Sometimes the truth can hurt. (Gen. 12.10-20)
  2. Moral uprightness. Refusing to go along. (1 Pet. 4.4)
  3. Faithful endurance. It is easy to give up. (Heb. 10.35,36)
  4. Righteousness. Resistance isn't futile. (James 4.7)

#### III. FEAR IS THE ENEMY OF VIRTUE

- A. Fear has always prevented the faithful to stand up valiantly.
  1. Why did Abram lie about his wife? (Gen. 26.7)
  2. Why did the Israelites fail to enter Canaan? (Num. 14.9)
  3. How many fail to do right because of fear? (John 9.21,22)
  3. Paul was told to speak and not be afraid. (Acts 18.9)
- B. **HEBREWS 13.6:** “*The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?*” (cf. Ps. 31.24)

**CONCLUSION:** The world challenges our faith. We need strength.

## NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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#### MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS :	9:00AM
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP:	9:50AM
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP:	6:00PM
WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS	7:30PM

*Worshipping  
God “in Spirit  
and truth”  
(John 4.23)*

APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2009

### THE WISE SHALL SHINE

How beautiful it is to look up and see the darkness blanketed with the brightness of the starlit sky. The contrast between them is stark. The darkness of the night utterly fails to overcome the shining light. The darker the night the brighter the light emanates from its nighttime backdrop.

In a vision concerning future events an angel expresses this sentiment to Daniel: “*Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever*” (Dan. 12.3). Those who live righteously in a dark world and are active in helping others to do the same are like the bright stars in the night sky.

Jesus uses a similar analogy describing the influence of the faithful in a world of darkness. Lanterns are not put under a basket, but are clearly for the purpose of lighting up a room. The application? As lanterns, Christians are to “*let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*” (Matt. 5.16).

Christians ought to be distinct from the crowd. Without the world seeing us as any different from them, there is no motivation for them to change. However, if we let our light shine, we become a beacon from a lighthouse showing the way to a safe harbor.

With the world in such a state of moral obliquity, those who are lost need us to a living demonstration of hope, faith and love, to show the world, Christ living in us. CLP

## POWER IN THE BLOOD

### COLOSSIANS 1.20

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. Because life is in the blood, to take a life was to shed blood.
  - a) Eating meat with blood was not permitted. (Lev. 17.10-14)
  - b) Atonement by shedding blood. (Lev. 16.14-16; Heb. 9.9)
  - c) The blood of Christ shed for salvation. (Heb. 9.22; 10.11,12)
2. Through the power of the blood of Christ, we enjoy a relationship with God. (Col. 1.13,14,20)

#### I. THROUGH HIS BLOOD IS SPIRITUAL LIFE

- A. **JOHN 6.54:** *“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life”* This demands explanation! (cf. v. 52)
  1. Not literal, but a figurative feasting upon Christ by consuming His word. (John 6.60-63; cf. Matt. 5.6)
  2. Today His flesh and blood are represented by the Lord’s Supper. (Matt. 26.26-29; 1 Cor. 10.16)
- B. Ultimately, spiritual life is offered through the offering of His blood on the cross. (1 Pet. 1.18,19)

#### II. THROUGH HIS BLOOD IS OWNERSHIP

- A. The cost of the church cannot be measured in monetary units, but by the blood of Christ. (Acts 20.28)
  1. Christ did not purchase a building, but the salvation of those who obey the gospel. (1 Pet. 2.5; Heb. 3.6)
  2. Therefore the church belongs to Him. (Col. 1.18)
- B. Belonging to Christ we owe to Him our reverence, obedience, and praise. (1 Cor. 3.23; 6.19,20)

#### III. THROUGH HIS BLOOD IS FELLOWSHIP

- A. Fellowship with God is impossible while one is guilty of sin, for sin is incompatible with God. (2 Cor. 6.14)
  1. Therefore those who claim fellowship while in sin *“lie and do not practice the truth”* (1 John 1.6; cf. Amos 3.3)
  2. However, through the blood of Christ the sin that separates us is cleansed. (1 John 1.7; Rev. 1.5)
- B. Knowing that we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, may we keep ourselves pure. (2 Cor. 7.1; James 1.27)

**CONCLUSION:** His blood is available to all who are willing to come to Him and obey.

## HOW THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS DIFFERENT

Everything about the church of Christ is very simple. It is not the purpose of the church to please vanity or pride with a display of vain things. It is not the purpose of the church to entertain people, or to amuse them when they attend our services. The church of Christ is a simple New Testament body, leading men and women to an understanding of the plain gospel of Christ. It always welcomes those who from the depths of earnest and sincere hearts will reach out to God in simple worship and obedient living and consecrated service in those things that are right and true. (2 Cor. 11:3; Titus 2:11,12).

The arrangement of the church of Christ is very unique. There is no humanly-made creed in the church. Its only rule of faith and practice is the Word of God, and those who believe the Bible and accept its rule of faith and practice make up the church of the Lord. (2 Tim. 3:16,17; 1 Pet. 2:4,5).

There are no ready-made prayers to read or to have read to you. From the depths of earnest hearts and sincere souls people in the church of the Lord express to God their earnest longings for His blessings and for His sustenance in every need. (1 Tim. 2:8).

If men today will proclaim the simple message which was declared by the New Testament church, if they will worship God in the simple sincere way in which that early church worshipped, if they will have the exact organization by which the New Testament church did its work, and if they will serve with the same holy consecration, and if they will present to lost and dying men the same gospel plan of salvation, the same results attained by the church of the Bible will be attained by righteous men today.

We will have exactly the same church, the same hope for heaven, souls will be saved, God will be glorified, the name of Christ will be exalted in the hearts of men and the power of Christ and the unity of His disciples will be realized.

If you want to make "your calling and election sure," if you want to be exactly what God wants you to be, you will appreciate the church of Christ and the stand it is required to take if it pleases God. You will enjoy knowing more and more about the church, and one of the greatest thrills of your life will be realized when you find out really what it is and what it is to stand for.

Whether you realize it or not, you will find as a member of the true church what every sincere and earnest soul is looking for. Won't you obey the Word of God and thereby be added to the church of the Lord today? (Acts 41,47).