

SUPPLEMENT YOUR FAITH

Peter's second letter to believers delivers a remarkable declaration about God's multiplied grace: "*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*" (2 Peter 1:3) God provides everything you need for the Christian life. RC Sproul explains, "Salvation is of the Lord from beginning to end. Yes, I must believe. Yes, I must respond. Yes, I must receive Christ. But for me to say yes to any of these things, my heart must first be changed by the sovereign, effectual power of God the Holy Spirit." Soli Deo gloria!

1- FAITHFUL. You receive all this by grace through saving faith in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Peter says it's "*for this very reason*" that you must "*make every effort to supplement your faith.*" Because the purpose of God's grace is to make believers more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. To grow up in everything into Him. To do this, amazingly, Peter commands to add to your faith. People think the things he says to add are what makes a person a Christian, but this is mistaken. What makes you a Christian is being reborn in Christ by the Holy Spirit, adopted as a child of God, made right with God by receiving the righteousness of Christ. All this happens to you when you believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. But this is only the beginning. You are called to His own glory and excellence, to become partakers of the divine nature. This is all about your sanctification, as you bear the fruit of the Spirit.

2- SUPPLEMENT. Verse 5 commands, "*make every effort to supplement your faith.*" Supplement means to add or to supply for. In 2Corinthians 2:9, just as God supplies the seed for the sower, so He "*will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way.*" Colossians 2:19 uses the word for how the body of Christ is supplied, nourished, in order to "*grow with a growth that is from God.*" So even this command to add to your faith extends from the truth that God has already given you "*all things that pertain to life and godliness.*" One doesn't just "believe" something, you also "live it" out, as does not hearers only. You don't just "receive" something, because what God gives brings spiritual growth. Once you have become a Christian, the point is to get beyond baby stage. You must mature. True faith grows, it does not stagnate or deplete; it increases.

3- ADD. Peter echoes other New Testament lists, such as 1Corinthians 13 which also begins with faith and ends with love. *Add to your faith virtue*, which is the godly character and moral qualities of the divine excellence of Christ. *Add knowledge*, divine truth, written down and revealed in the Bible by the Spirit. Not just intellectual information, but practical wisdom and discernment that transforms an ordinary life into a more Christ-like life. *Add self-control*, mastery of self, through the lordship of Christ and indwelling Holy Spirit. With heart and mind and will, trusting and obeying Christ, not the world, the flesh, and the devil. *Add steadfastness*, "perseverance undeterred by difficulty." Coping under pressure by God-given grace. As sufferings produce endurance, character, and hope, by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Add godliness*, as partakers of the divine nature. Not just awareness of God but reverent relationship with Him. Belonging to Him, as His reborn and adopted child. Conscious of His care and spiritual life within. *Add brotherly affection*, the family love experienced by the koinonia community of believers in union with Christ. *Add agape love*, self-sacrificing, doing what is best for the other person. Expressing the fruit of the Spirit, as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. By His power.

4- FRUITFUL. Verse 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.*" It's not what you know but how you grow. Growing, increasing. Not static, but dynamic. Not just having God's grace but increasing in it. And being effective, having an impact, making a difference, improving. God hasn't given you "*all things*" for a godly life for you to fritter it away on selfish pursuits. Knowing His truth results in more transformed lives.

5- FERVENT. Verse 10, "*be all the more diligent*" to be all the more sure about salvation. Don't be *short-sighted*, *having forgotten you were cleansed from your sins*. This word picture speaks of squinting or closed eyes, good as blind, or deliberate shutting, so as to not see. "There are none so blind as those who will not see." Willful ignorance. "For those who lack the will to see, nothing is so mysterious as the obvious." How can professing believers deliberately close their eyes to the demands of discipleship?