

## **“Giving All Diligence”**

2 Peter 1:2-11

### **I. INTRODUCTION: I**

1. **2** If you’ve been a Christian for any length of time, you are familiar with our Scripture reading this morning: 2 Pet. 1:2-11

2. Every single one of us should make our own spiritual growth a top priority in our lives!

A. We should read and meditate on this passage often; and ‘self-examine’ (2 Cor. 13:5).

B. Our dear apostle Peter thought what he wrote about our spiritual growth in this passage was something very important, because he deemed it worthy of repetition despite the fact he knew his audience was already thoroughly familiar with what he wrote:

**2 Pet. 1:12-15:** *“For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.”*

3. As a gospel preacher, I would be “negligent” if I failed to remind you of these important things from time to time; let’s re-read the passage before we move on to the meat of our lesson:

**3 2 Pet. 1:2-4:** *“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*

A. These three verses serve as a reminder of the great things God has done for us (explain).

**4 2 Pet. 1:5-9:** *“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”*

B. These five verses serve to remind us of what God expects of us insofar as our spiritual growth is concerned (explain: emp. It’s for our own good!).

**5 2 Pet. 1:10-11:** *“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

C. These two verses serve as a reminder of just how important it is for us to grow spiritually (explain: emp. diligence and its reward! Magnificence of God’s guarantee!).

4. Usually when we study this passage the focus is on the seven Christian graces Peter tells us we must “supply” or “add to your faith”: virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love.

A. But, that’s not the focus today; I’ll leave it to you to study those things on your own.

B. The goal of this lesson is more practical in nature: I want to offer some advice on how to put this passage into practice in your daily life.

- C. I truly believe if we apply ourselves to do these things I suggest (i.e., “be even more diligent to make our call and election sure”) we “will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” and experience that abundant entrance “into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” we so fervently and longingly seek.
5. **6** So, let’s look at seven practical things we can do to “be even more diligent to make our call and elections sure (certain; NASB).”

## II. DISCUSSION:

**We can “be even more diligent to make our call and election sure” by...**

### I. **7** Living with urgency:

A. We need live each day with a sense of urgency. For at least two reasons:

① **Matt. 24:42**: “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.”

② **Lk. 9:25**: “For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?”

B. That being the case, we should live and do the Lord’s work each day as if the world would end SOON! Because it may! Heb. 9:27; Jas. 4:14

**2 Pet. 3:10-11**: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. I I Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

(1) Self:

(a) We need to make sure each day we are prepared and preparing for this day; that’s the only way we can “make your call and election sure”; don’t get caught off guard!

(b) This requires a conscious effort on our part every day (explain).

(2) Others:

(a) We need to strive to reach others with the gospel (Matt. 16:26; example of man stepping off sidewalk into traffic; Henrietta).

(b) This too requires a conscious effort daily (recall class on personal evangelism).

(c) **\*\*** Remember James Rowe’s song *You Never Mentioned Him to Me* (explain; esp. our sphere of influence).

*“When in the better land, before the bar we stand  
How deeply grieved our souls will be  
If any lost one there, should cry in deep despair  
You never mentioned Him to me.”*

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### 2. **8** Be[ing] enthusiastic: (Not wild emotionalism like “holy rollers.”)

A. The Lord condemned the Israelites in the days of the prophet Malachi for a lack of enthusiasm (**Mal. 1:13**: “You also say, ‘Oh, what a weariness!’”; NIV: “...how tiresome it is!”)

B. We have so many reasons to be enthusiastic (explain: What the Lord has done for us and what He promises for us!):

**Eph. 2:12-13:** "...you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

**2 Pet. 1:2-4:** "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

**1 Jn. 2:17:** "And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."

**Phil. 4:4:** "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!"

C. We should live our lives each day with enthusiasm!

- (1) Enthusiasm is infectious and attractive.
- (2) Nobody is attracted to an old sourpuss.
- (3) Alice Longworth Roosevelt (Theodore's daughter) described Calvin Coolidge: "He looks as though he's been weaned on a pickle."
- (4) Not much of anybody will be attracted to the gospel if we go around looking like that!

D. When we come to services we should be enthusiastic!

- (1) We must realize the great privilege and opportunity it is to worship! A "team of wild horses" couldn't keep me away!
- (2) Our enthusiasm, or lack thereof, affects what we personally derive from the worship.
- (3) And, to a large extent, our enthusiasm, or lack thereof, has a huge impact on our brethren (i.e., Can't encourage anyone with the "weaned on a pickle" attitude!).

**Heb. 10:24:** "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works,"

- (4) Our enthusiasm, or lack thereof, also has a huge impact on our visitors:  
"First impressions matter. Experts say we size up new people in somewhere between 30 seconds and two minutes."  
—Elliott Abrams (asst. Secretary of State in Reagan administration)

E. I know we all experience times when we don't feel enthusiastic:

- (1) But it is especially important in such times we need to focus on the great things the Lord has done for us and promises for us so we can regain a measure of enthusiasm.
- (2) **Rom. 12:11-12:** "not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;"

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3. **9** Count[ing] our blessings:

- A. It would do us all well to sit down with pen and paper and make a list of the things we are thankful to the Lord for.
  - (1) At the very least we should make a mental list of these things **OFTEN**!
  - (2) And, always, we should sincerely thank Him for our blessings in prayer.
- B. I'm sure all of you are like me in this regard:

- (1) It's easy to take our blessings for granted (e.g., born in time and place we were born!).
- (2) It would do us all good to go to a place like the Philippines (example of Negritos people) so we could see just how blessed we are!
- C. Counting our blessings helps us learn gratitude: gratitude towards God and gratitude towards other people in our lives is so important.
  - (1) We should let others know we are thankful for them and the things they do for us.  
**Phil. 1:3-4:** *"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,"*
  - (2) But, we especially need to express our thankfulness to God.
    - (a) Counting our blessings regarding God reminds us of our total dependence on God; we need Him, but He doesn't need us!  
**Acts 17:24-25:** *"God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. ...28 for in Him we live and move and have our being,"*
    - (b) So it should be obvious that we should express our thankfulness to Him (**Jas. 1:17:** *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."*).
    - (c) **\*\*** I would encourage you to read David's song of thanksgiving recorded in I Chronicles 16:  
**I Chr. 16:8-13, 34:** *"Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! 9 Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! 10 Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! 11 Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore! 12 Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, 13 O seed of Israel His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! ...34 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."*
    - (d) **\*\*** But, I'm convinced there's even more for us to gain by expressing our thankfulness to Him (Not to satisfy His ego! It's for our own good!):
      - (i) When we express our thankfulness to Him, it helps us focus on "counting our blessings."
      - (ii) And, just as important, a grateful heart is a happy heart; there's just something about expressing our thankfulness that helps us rejoice and feel better about ourselves.  
**Phil. 4:6-7:** *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*
- D. Let us therefore heed the apostle's commands:  
**Col. 4:2:** *"Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;"*  
**I Thess. 5:16-18:** *"Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."*

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**4. 10 Recognizing our faults and weaknesses:**

A. No doubt we are all guilty of sin:

**Rom. 3:23:** “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”

**1 Jn. 1:10:** “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”

B. So, there is no doubt we all need a good dose of humility from time to time:

**1 Cor. 10:12:** “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”

**Gal. 6:3-4:** “For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”

**Rom. 12:3:** “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”

C. \*\* Thus, we all need to address three things in our lives to grow spiritually:

(1) Sin: It should be obvious that if we have sin in our life we need to get rid of it!

- ☛ Confess it to God and pray for forgiveness (1 Jn. 1:9),
- ☛ Pray to God for help to overcome sin (1 Cor. 10:13).
- ☛ We need to see ourselves as God sees us (i.e., We are not as good as we might think we are and we all desperately need Christ for our Savior!)
- ☛ This will help us do two important things:
  - ☑ To not be a hypocrite (A real turn off to those we try to reach w/the gospel.).
  - ☑ It will also help us sympathize with the faults, failings and spiritual needs of others (**Jas. 5:16:** “Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”; **Gal. 6:1:** “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”).

(2) Trigger points: We need to be aware of things, situations, etc. that serve as trigger points (i.e., when we are tempted more than normal to sin).

- ☛ Socrates said, “To know thyself is the beginning of wisdom.”
- ☛ Paul expressed a similar principle in **2 Corinthians 13:5:** “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.”
- ☛ We need to know our trigger points so we can avoid them altogether, or know when they are present so we can take necessary precautions (e.g., Me and my temper when I’m tired.).
- ☛ I suppose you could call it good old “self-control” (2 Pet. 1:6).
- ☛ Whatever we call it, it is a great hindrance to our personal growth as a Christian and our influence for good.

(3) Weaknesses: In this regard I’m not talking about sin, but about our personal weaknesses (e.g., My introverted personality can be a hindrance to my influence.)

- ☛ We need to be brutally honest with ourselves concerning any personal weaknesses that might negatively affect our influence for good.
- ☛ Once identified, we then need to work on them (Phil. 4:13; Eph. 3:20).
- ☛ We may never “overcome” them; but we can manage to be better!

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**5. || Keeping a quiet time:**

- A. Spiritual growth is impossible unless we pray, study the Bible and meditate on it (and the “things of God”).
- B. We all need to set aside some time each day for these activities (30 minutes).
  - (1) Prayer: **1 Thess. 5:17**: “Pray without ceasing.”
  - (2) Bible study: 2 Tim. 2:15; **Psa. 119:11**: “Thy word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.” (ASV); **2 Tim. 3:15**: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”
  - (3) Meditation: **Psa. 1:2**: “But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.”; **Phil. 4:8**: “Finally, brethren, 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 be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”
- C. **\*\*** We carve time out of our lives for a lot of things; essentials (e.g., eating & sleeping) and unessential things (e.g., TV, surf net, video games, recreation); surely, we can carve out a bit of time for things having eternal consequences.
- D. If we really love someone, or a game or a form of recreation, we want to spend some time with it; thus, if we truly love God we should want to spend time alone with Him.
- E. When we carve out this time we must:
  - (1) Make it the top priority of our day!
  - (2) Do it at a time we can concentrate (not when tired, not in a place with distractions).
  - (3) When we don’t feel like doing it is the time when it is most important to do it!

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**6. 12 Visit someone for Christ:**

- A. There are plenty of people that would appreciate a visit (Jas. 1:27; Matt. 25:36, 43; 2 Tim. 1:16-18: Onesiphorus visited Paul in the Roman prison).
  - (1) Sick
  - (2) Elderly
  - (3) Members (esp. ones you don’t know well)
  - (4) Visitors to our services
  - (5) Weak members
  - (6) People totally unrelated to the church at Westside

- B. We all need encouragement; and a personal visit is a very effective way to provide others with encouragement.
- C. I've found over the years that when I visit others, I get as much or more encouragement than the one I visit (Betty Leslie: weekly visit; Hershey bars, Juicy Fruit gum).

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7. **13** Reach[ing] another person (with the gospel): **Mk. 1:17**: “Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”
  - A. One of the most important things we can do is share the gospel with someone else (Matt. 16:26; **Lk. 15:7**: “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”; 1 Cor. 3:9).
  - B. I strongly encourage all of us to follow-up with our personal evangelism class:
    - (1) Make a list of a half dozen people in your “sphere of influence” and share the gospel with them sometime during the next year.
    - (2) Be on the constant look out for opportunities to share the gospel with others.
    - (3) Great things are accomplished one-on-one (e.g., Woman at the well in John 4).
  - C. **\*\*** How? **Acts 8:4**: “...those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”
    - (1) It doesn't have to be a ‘major production’ (Evoke a Bible question and answer it with a Bible answer [bcv]).
    - (2) Pick your six and follow through.
    - (3) Hand out a tract, invite them to services or to a gospel meeting, etc.).
    - (4) Host a Bible class in your home once a month and invite your relatives, friends, co-workers, neighbors to attend (may not get anyone to attend, but it gives you the opportunity to say, “You know what we learned at our monthly Bible study?”).
      - (a) If you need or want help; I'm available anytime and anyplace!
      - (b) You don't have to be a ‘walking Bible’; just need to care about the souls of others.
      - (c) So, don't be afraid to say, “I don't know.” Just say “But I'll find an answer from the Bible.”; then be sure to follow-up promptly.
      - (d) Most people find that problematic; in fact, most will be think more highly of you for it! Plus, by doing so, you are clearly sending the 1 Peter 4:11 message!

### **III. CONCLUSION: 14**

1. Are you “giving all diligence...to make your call and election sure”?
2. We all know we need to grow, and I'm convinced most of us want to grow.
3. Take these 7 practical suggestions, do your best to apply them in your life...you WILL grow!
  - A. Don't expect perfection in their application.
  - B. Just “keep on keeping on”! Just do the best you can!
4. And, you won't be disappointed: “for if you do these things you will never stumble; I I for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 1:10-11