

GROWING IN CHARACTER

A Study from 2 Peter 1:3-8

Begin by reading 2 Peter 1:1-9 slowly and prayerfully (several times or aloud).

1. From verses 3 and 4, what are my resources to take on the character of Christ?

2. Verses 5-7 list various character qualities to be *diligently* applied to our faith.

* What is promised to those who seek to grow in character (vs. 8)?

* What warning is given in the next verse to those who are not growing?

GROWTH: Increase toward maturity in Christ.

1. Looking at 2 Peter 3:18, what are the two sides of responsibility in growth?

2. Compare Hebrews 5:14 with Genesis 2:17 & 3:5ff. Is growing *instantly* part of God's plan for us? Explain.

3. What do I see about growing in Ephesians 2:21-22?

4. List the character qualities from 2 Peter 1:5-7, and circle the ones you feel weakest in:

FAITH: belief and surrender with resulting conduct.

1. What does Hebrews 11:3 say about the tangibility of faith and God's working?
2. Read Romans 1:17. What do you observe about faith?
3. Living by faith is *not* easy; what must I do to grow in faith according to Heb. 12:1-2?
4. From Jude 20-21, what do I see about growing in faith? *Explain.*

VIRTUE is moral excellence; purity in thought, feeling and action.

1. What is God's promise in Matthew 5:8 to the pure in heart?
2. Carefully and prayerfully look at 2 Corinthians 7:1. *Why* should I be morally pure?
3. What does Proverbs 22:11 say about purity?
4. What can I do to grow in virtue from Psalm 119:133? *Be specific.*

KNOWLEDGE is both factual and personal regarding God.

1. Isaiah 33:6 tells me that knowledge can do *what* in my walk with the Lord?
2. From Psalm 119:66, what should my attitude be in gaining any knowledge of and about God?
3. How can knowledge help me to grow in love as Philippians 1:9-10 states?
4. What does Philippians 3:8 tell me about "knowledge"? *Explain.*

SELF CONTROL is to keep desires and actions in *restraint*.

1. What is the result of no self control according to Proverbs 25:28?
2. Name two good reasons from 1 Corinthians 9:25,27 for exercising self control:
3. What must I be always aware of in striving for self control (Galatians 5:17)?
4. How can I have victory over self (Matthew 26:41)? *Explain.*

PERSEVERANCE is patient waiting and endurance.

1. What will I lack if I just give up as Luke 8:15 tells me?
2. Colossians 1:11 says what about perseverance?
3. What was David's reason for not giving up in Psalm 27:13?
4. Read Romans 5:3-4. What is God telling us about perseverance here? *Explain.*

GODLINESS is reverence and respect of God, and piety of character.

1. Looking at Titus 2:11-13, what should motivate me to godliness?
2. What else should my motives be according to 2 Peter 3:11-12?
3. By reading 1 Timothy 4:7-8, what can I learn about the character of true godliness?
4. From 2 Corinthians 3:18, what is the goal of godliness? *Explain.*

BROTHERLY LOVE is a sibling type of love for other people.

1. *How do I learn* to love my brother (1Thessalonians 4:9)?
2. Looking at 1 John 5:2, what determines whether or not I can love my brother?
3. 1 Peter 1:22 describes brotherly love in what way to me?
4. What are some practical ways I can love my brother as I look at Hebrews 13:1-3?

LOVE is *unconditional, no-strings-attached* goodness to another in *action*.

1. *How important* is love, based on Matthew 22:37-40? *Why?*
2. From Romans 13:10, what is a characteristic of this true love?
3. What is a result of love in action seen in 1 Peter 4:8?
4. Read and spend time in prayer over Colossians 3:14. How important do I consider love? *Explain why.*

FOR FURTHER STUDY AND MEDITATION:

1. Memorize the 36 verse passages of this study by topic (Growth . . . Love) and prayerfully meditate on them (James 1:25).

2. Do your own study on love based on 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (use cross-references like this study does for each verse of 2 Peter 1:5-7, and think of questions to reflect on the meaning).

Meditate on these things during the coming week, seeing how God's certainty can affect your life!