

2 Peter 1:8-11

“Blessed Assurance”

- I. Intro
- II. Vs. 8-10 These things

I. Intro

Peter’s words to the first century church of their resources and objectives of the Christian life was because these first century Christians were eager to grow in Christ that it made them susceptible to false teachers. Peter’s letter causes us to realize that our: Divine wealth is not given to us so that as Christians we can waste away the God given opportunities to grow and mature! Our examination of this letter causes us to understand that God has placed before the believer a “holy expectation” that the Christian will take the resources that have been specifically given us all things that pertain to obtaining the two objectives of: Knowing God and Being transformed into His likeness. The practicality of this passage is apparent as we can measure our maturity by self-examination as we do three things with of our faith:

- A. Define our ambitions
- B. Refine our goals
- C. Realign our efforts

And if we discover discrepancies in our maturity we can better analyze why we are not obtaining the desired results of their faith by asking. “What do I lack?” “What do I need to put in harmony of my faith?” It is from these seven characteristics that we learn what maturity in the believer’s life will look like. I’m most challenged by the Greek word translated “diligence” as it means to: Make haste, be eager, to do ones best, to exert oneself. My challenge isn’t that I’m not diligent but rather that I’m NOT always diligent with the wealth and resources that God has provided for me to add to my faith! Peter has dealt with “What God has given and done for us” he then exhorted in verses 5-7 what God’s expectations were for those who have both the resources and objectives for the Christian life. To put it plainly we are

too: “**To finish out our faith by applying what God has furnished**”! What follows in verses 8-11 is our response and it all culminates in verse 10 which is the hinge in which this whole letter opens and closes! “***Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble.***”

II. Vs. 8-10 These things

Vs. 8 A careful examination of these verse reveals the **three-time repeated phrase** “***these things***” (verse 8, 9 and verse 10). Before we go further in our interpretation of this section we need to determine what “**these things**” that Peter is writing of are as he says that by them we can **evaluate three things about our Christian life:**

1. Vs. 8 “**IF**” ***they are ours and abound we will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*** Simply put we will be maturing in our faith growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus.
2. Vs. 9 “**IF**” ***we lack these things we are shortsighted even to being blind and have forgotten that we were cleansed form our old sins.*** The lack of “**these things**” indicate that we **can only see what is in front of us** and **the conditioning is worsening and may even result in our blindness.** It also **seems that this blindness is spiritual in nature as it affects our mind as we become unaware that our spiritual sate was changed by the blood of Jesus!**
3. Vs. 10 Finally Peter writes a second time to the Christian to be “**even more diligent**” and links this with “***doing these things***”. This Peter said is the antidote or vaccine to the “***spiritual short sidedness***” that may lead to blindness as he says that “**doing these things**” will keep us from stumbling or falling away from our faith.

It is clear by verse 10 and the use of the word “all diligence” that the “these things” that Peter writes about are the very seven characteristics of their faith that they were to “add to” in all diligence and more diligence. The question at hand this morning is: *What does Peter mean to convey to his readers with this exhortation?* At face value it would seem to be contradictory to the doctrine of grace. Some suggest that this is Peter’s “God helps those who help themselves”. These folks says that Peter’s “diligent addition” is proof that by “doing these things” that you can become a “GOOD Christian”. The problem with this position is that it would go against the entire teaching of the Bible and the sacrifice of Jesus would be unnecessary. Peter is NOT here exhorting the Christian to “make their calling and election sure” in an eternal sense for two specific reason:

- A. It is something that the readers of this letter are completely incapable of doing!
- B. The certainty of our calling and election is above our pay grade and is from God’s view and action and not ours. Peter had already said as much in verse 1 when he said he was writing to those “*Who obtained like precious faith*”. Our faith is **NOT something** that **we created, generated** nor **worked hard to receive**....NO, it is something that we OBTAINED the recipients of this letter just like us have received our faith as a GIFT. Sense it is a gift, Peter would NOT now, a few verses later, exhort the believer to now “DO THESE THINGS” to obtained what was already given them!

Peter CAN NOT be telling his readers to “**elect, choose or call**” themselves It is God who calls, elects and chooses! So, what is this exhortation? It is for the benefit of the believer that they may under every circumstance and situation enjoy the certainty of God’s election, choosing and calling of us! Works don’t save us, but they are proof to ourselves that we are applying God’s resources to the two objectives of Knowing God and being transformed into His likeness! The

apostle John wrote something similar in 1 John 5:13 “*These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. And that you may continue to believe in the name of the son of God.*” Such blessed assurance is NOT for a certain few as Peter writes here a letter to the church ordinary Christians NOT certain outstanding “saints”. To common people Peter offers assurance, they can know that they are in the Beloved! If you were to look out at the entirety of church history at times of revival and reformation they common denominator of the work of the Holy Spirit is that His work of “awakening” always occurred when He assured them of their salvation and realized what they had been given in Christ. No revival was every started by God telling man that they needed to “earn His love”!

What Peter understands by way of the Holy Spirit is that “The Christian will not be able to function as He has created them UNTIL and UNLESS they are certain of His lasting love”.

The objections to Peter’s truth have abounded through our generations of the church.

- A. Some say if you tell Christians that they can know that they can be certain of their calling and election then they will become apathetic cease to grow. Peter’s exhortation is not “presumption” any more than it is “presumption” to say that because of Jesus work on the cross we can be certain and assured that our sins have been forgiven us!
- B. Some say that we cannot make be certain or assured of this until we are perfect, but the truth is that Peter doesn’t offer this God does knowing full well that those he is offering too are far from perfect. It is God that asks me to make my calling and election sure! Am I to say back to God, “No God, I can’t do so until I’m perfect?”

It is clear that God knows what HE is offering to His children and that I should do so because He says so and second I should do so because it is part of God’s method and plans in my salvation!

To not do so is to be “*incomplete*” and “*under-developed*” and “*immature*” in our faith! Having assurance doesn’t make us less of a witness of the grace of God but a better witness for Christ as the joy of the Lord is our strength. God doesn’t want the believer to be filled with fears and uncertainty in their relationship with Him.

The next question we need to ask is: “*How can this certainty or assurance be obtained?*”

First it is of necessity that this assurance can NEVER be obtained by glancing into the reflection of their own heart it can only be obtained by looking into the perfection of Jesus who is the way the truth and the life! If we fall into the trap of looking at our reflection to obtain assurance then we will fall into one of two pits:

1. Our whole focus on life will become nothing more then, self-examination, morbidly obsessed with their own efforts to be assured! The result of the Christian who fall into this pit is that they are always checking the pulse of their own heart and will never amount to anything for God’s kingdom.
2. The second trap we will fall into is waiting for the “Big Bang” of experience to determine the extraordinary manifestation that ‘proves’ our assurance. We will be a slave to our experiences as a scale is to someone on a diet!

Again, saint’s we obtain assurance and can be certain of it as we notice His work of adding to our faith these seven qualities. Peter’s exhortation is to “*Fill out your faith with God has furnished!*” Don’t just sit in contemplation of Christ but go out and practice the Christian life and when you do so an amazing then happens you become more aware of Him and more certain and assured of His calling and election of you!