

"Expand in Knowledge and Skill"

Overview



Many of us have decided that our days of study and learning are over. Education may have been OK for a while but now we are more than thankful to be done with all that so we can start living!

Except - there is a problem. In today's age of innovation and technology, even if we are up to speed on things today we know we might not be current tomorrow. Constant personal development seems to be a requirement if we don't want to fall behind.

It turns out there is a spiritual parallel to this as well. Spiritual advancement and growth is part of a vital Christian experience. This lesson will outline God's call for us to pursue increasing maturity and advancement in our walk of faith.

Getting Started



1. What book (other than the Bible) has impacted you the most in life? In what way?
 2. What question regarding your faith would you most like answered (NB: it could be a question regarding your life, a theological issue, etc.)?
 3. Are you a naturally curious person? What do you find yourself most curious about?
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The Text



³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:3-11 (NIV)

The Audio (optional)



"Expand in Knowledge and Skill" - by Dennis Bunio, Oct. 13/19

NOTES: _____

Understanding



1. Is it God's job to grow us (or is it ours) (vs. 3, 5; Phil 2:12-13)? What implications does your answer have for the way we pursue spiritual growth?
2. What impact does "knowledge" have in our spiritual life (vs. 2-4)? What does this knowledge consist of? How do we attain it (check also Jer. 22:13-17, John 15:15, Rom. 8:15-17, 2 Tim. 3:14-16)?
3. What does Peter mean when he says that we may "participate in the divine nature" (see more of Peter's thoughts in 1 Peter 2:9-12)?
4. Aside from gaining greater understanding, in what ways are we to grow spiritually (vs. 5-8)? Is this kind of growth really necessary (check also vs. 10-11), 1 Thess. 3:12-13). Why? NB: What are we being spared from when we grow in this way (vs. 4, 8, 10; 3:17-18)?
5. How is it possible to be both "near-sighted" and "blind" (vs. 9)? What is the problem Peter is addressing in verse 9 (and how can it be corrected)?
6. What should our attitude be towards spiritual growth (i.e. how much effort should we put into it) (vs. 5, 10)?
7. Bonus Question: If God is the one who calls and elects (John 15:16, Romans 8: 29-30, Eph. 1:4) then in what sense do we make our calling and election "sure" (vs. 10)?

Applying



1. On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being "not interested at all" and 10 being "I'm ready to grow in every way") how eager are you to pursue growth in your spiritual life right now? Explain why you chose the number you did.
2. Are there times when it's OK to not be concerned about advancing in our faith? If so, when?
3. Are you pursuing growth in your knowledge of God and Jesus Christ? If so, in what way(s) has your knowledge grown in the last 6 months (be specific)? If you don't have a plan for growth (or your present plan is not working), what next step could you take to grow in this way?
4. Which of the characteristics listed in verses 5-7 would you say you are the strongest in? How could that strength be used to benefit others? In which of the characteristics are you the weakest? What steps could you take to strengthen that weakness?
5. Do the encouragements which Peter gives in verses 10-11 motivate you to pursue spiritual growth? Why or why not?

Memory Verse(s)



His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness

2 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

Extra Resources



- ❖ *"Expand in Knowledge and Skill"* by Pastor Dennis Bunio ("Immanuel Church" website, Oct. 13, 2019). Pastor Dennis takes a detailed look at 2 Peter 1 where the apostle lays out the importance of spiritual growth.
- ❖ *"Knowing God"* - by J. I. Packer (Hodder & Stoughton, 2013). In this classic, Packer expounds on how we know God, God's attributes, and the benefits of knowing Him. A challenging read for some - but well worth it. *Christianity Today* voted this book one of the top 50 books that have shaped evangelicals. NB: This latest edition comes with a study guide.
- ❖ *"Discipleship Essentials"* - by Greg Ogden (IVP Connect, 2007). This workbook guides students through a study of essential Christian teachings. Designed to be used in a micro-group (3-4 people) setting.