Grow in Grace and Knowledge, #1

2 Peter 3:14-18

Introduction:

1. Notice 2 Peter 3:18.

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen (2 Peter 3:18).

1. Grace.
   1. When a person works an eight-hour day and receives a fair day’s pay for his time, that is a wage.

When a person competes with an opponent and receives a trophy for his performance, that is a prize.

When a person receives appropriate recognition for his long service or high achievements, that is an award.

But when a person is not capable of earning a wage, can win no prize, and deserves no award–yet receives such a gift anyway–that is a good picture of God’s unmerited favor. That is what we mean when we talk about the grace of God.

* 1. Readers Digest wrote of the late Harvey Penick:

“For 90-year-old golf pro Harvey Penick, success has come late. His first golf book, *Harvey Penick’s Little Red Book*, has sold more than a million copies, which his publisher believes makes it one of the biggest things in the history of sports books.  His second book, *And If You Play Golf, You’re My Friend*, has already sold nearly three-quarters of a million.  But anyone who imagines that Penick wrote the books to make money doesn’t know the man.

In the 1920's Penick bought a red spiral notebook and began jotting down observations about golf.  He never showed the book to anyone except his son until 1991, when he shared it with a local writer and asked if he thought it was worth publishing.  The man read it and told him yes.  He left word with Penick’s wife the next evening that Simon & Schuster had agreed to an advance of $90,000.00.

When the writer saw Penick later, the old man seemed troubled.  Finally, Penick came clean.  With all his medical bills, he said, there was no way he could advance Simon & Schuster that much money.  The writer had to explain that Penick would be the one to receive the $90,000.00.”

People often have Penick’s reaction to the fabulous gift of salvation offered in Jesus Christ. We ask, “What must I do?”  God answers, “Just receive” (*Leadership*, Fall 1995, Vol. XVI, No. 4, Page 40).

* 1. How do I grow in grace?

1. Knowledge.
   1. Someone has said that the true mark of genius is not to create awe in others, but to be awed.  Many of us have a tendency to become cynical, close-minded, disinterested, even bored.  Concentrating on our knowledge rather than our ignorance, we lose our sense of awe.  My ignorance is my friend, not my enemy.  It is my playground of the future.  I don’t need to compare what I know to anyone else.  I need to compare what I don’t know with the vast amount I can learn.  The more we know, the more we realize there’s so much more to stimulate wonder  (*Leadership*, Summer, 1981, Vol. II, No. 3, Page 38).
   2. How do I grow in knowledge?
2. Notice the context of the two books Peter wrote.
3. SUMMARY.
   1. In his first letter, he was trying to encourage Christians who were suffering terrible persecution from without; in his second letter, he is warning them of danger within the church.
   2. The first letter was to console; the second was to warn.
4. 1 PETER.
   1. The living hope and what goes with it.  1:1-2:10
   2. The pilgrim life and how to live it.  2:11-4:11
   3. The fiery trial and how to bear it.  4:12-5:14
5. 2 PETER.
   1. Ingredients of spiritual growth.  Chapter 1
      1. Faith.
      2. Virtue.
      3. Knowledge.
      4. Self-control.
      5. Perseverance.
      6. Godliness.
      7. Brotherly kindness.
      8. Love.
   2. Opponents of spiritual advancement.  Chapter 2
      1. False teachers.
      2. False attitudes.
      3. False living.
   3. Motivation for spiritual growth–the coming of the Lord.  Chapter 3
      1. Some say He won’t come.  vv. 1-7
      2. But He will.  vv.  8-10
      3. So what?  vv. 11-14
      4. How can I keep from getting discouraged?  vv. 15-18

Conclusion

1. Peter wrote that the way to overcome any obstacle and to have eternal hope is to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. Let’s observe Peter and see how that principle was demonstrated in his life.
3. Peter was perhaps the most vocal of the apostles.
4. We will watch him grow in grace and knowledge as he
   1. Walks on the water.
   2. Confesses Jesus.
   3. Rebukes Jesus.
   4. Denies Jesus.
   5. Preaches the first gospel sermon.
   6. Preaches to the Gentiles.
5. If you have never known Jesus as your Lord and Savior and you want to start your growth in Him, Peter tells the way to start:

Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).