Grow in Grace and Knowledge, #2

2 Peter 3:14-18

Introduction:

1. Peter tells us to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).
2. What do he mean by grace and knowledge?
   1. Grace:
      1. grace – that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech.
      2. good will, loving-kindness, favor – of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues.
   2. Knowledge signifies in general intelligence, understanding.
      1. the general knowledge of Christian religion.
      2. the deeper more perfect and enlarged knowledge of this religion, such as belongs to the more advanced.
      3. esp. of things lawful and unlawful for Christians.
      4. moral wisdom, such as is seen in right living.
3. Let us look at a parallel passage by Paul to 2 Peter 3: Titus 1, 2.
4. How can I grow in grace and knowledge? 2 Peter 3:18
5. GOD’S GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE ARE BASED ON TRUTH.
   1. Paul begins by showing the connection of truth to godliness, eternal life, and God. Titus 1:1, 2
   2. He then gives instructions for appointing elders who will be knowledgeable in the word for encouragement and refuting false teachers.

He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it (Titus 1:9, NIV).

1. FALSE TEACHERS WILL TRY TO TURN PEOPLE FROM THE TRUTH. Titus 1:10-16; 2 Peter 3:3, 4
2. PEOPLE WHO ARE GROWING IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE WILL ACT ACCORDING TO THE WAY GOD TEACHES HIS PEOPLE TO LIVE.
   1. Older men.  Titus 2:2
   2. Older women.  Titus 2:3
   3. Young women.  Titus 2:4, 5
   4. Young men.  Titus 2:6-8
   5. Servants.  Titus 2:9, 10
3. GRACE (GOD’S GOOD WILL, LOVING-KINDNESS, FAVOR) IS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works (Titus 2:11-14).

* 1. Brings salvation.
  2. Has appeared to everyone.

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

* 1. Grace teaches us.
     1. Negatives–denying
        1. Ungodliness.
        2. Worldly lusts.
     2. Positives–should live.
        1. Soberly – it suggests the exercise of that self–restraint that governs all passions and desires, enabling the believer to be conformed to the mind of Christ (Vines).
        2. Righteously–in relationship to others.
        3. Godly–in our relationship to God.
     3. Grace and knowledge are connected.
  2. Grace gives us hope in the Person and promises of Jesus Christ.
     1. The accountability and reward are in the coming of Jesus.

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.  Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? (2 Peter 3:10-12).

* + 1. The hope is in the sacrifice of Jesus to pay the price for our sins and purify us for Himself.
  1. We grow in that grace as we believe, practice, and accept that gift.

1. TITUS WAS TO KEEP TELLING THIS TRUTH.

Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority.  Let no one despise you (Titus 2:15).

Conclusion

1. We can know the will of God, if we want to.

“If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority” (John 7:17).

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17).

1. Both grace and knowledge are practical–they are to be seen in a difference in our lives.
   1. “He who learns and makes no use of his knowledge is a beast of burden. Comprehendeth the donkey whether he carries on his back a library or a bundle of (sticks)?” (*Lifetime Speaker’s Encyclopedia*, Jacob M. Braude, Volume 1, page 415).
   2. Grace includes both forgiveness and transformation.
      1. Emphasizing forgiveness without transformation results in sloppy living.
      2. Emphasizing transformation without forgiveness results in perfectionism that grinds people down because they never get there (Randy Harris, Jubilee, 1995).
2. All people sin.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8).

1. Growing in grace and knowledge is accepting the gift and asking the question:  “What did you learn from that?”
2. God provides the forgiveness from our sins.

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).

1. Will you grow in grace and knowledge?