Grow in Grace and Knowledge, #6

2 Peter 3:14-18

Introduction:

1. grace:  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 (*Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*, [Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.]  1995).
2. knowledge signifies in general intelligence, understanding the general knowledge of Christian religion, the deeper more perfect and enlarged knowledge of this religion, such a s belongs to the more advanced, esp. of things lawful and unlawful for Christians, moral wisdom, such as is seen in right living (*Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*, [Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.] 1995).
3. Growing in grace and knowledge is a process by which God gives us His good favor, the forgiveness of sins, a constant loving family relationship with Him, learning from our mistakes and failures, bringing us to another opportunity to grow in grace and knowledge–receiving another gift and learning another lesson.
4. In the Academy at Athens, where the flower of Greek youth came to study, there was a three year’s course.  In the first year the youths were called, “The wise men.”  In their second year they were called “Those who loved wisdom.”  But in their third year they were called simply, “The learners.”  The further they proceeded into knowledge the more they realized how little they knew (*And Jesus Said*, William Barclay, page 207).
5. Let us observe Peter as he continues in the process he wrote about in the last verse of the last book he wrote.

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. GROWING IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE IS BEING HONEST WHEN I HAVE BUYER’S REMORSE AND ASKING FOR REASSURANCE.
   1. The Rich Young Ruler.  Matthew 19:16-26
      1. Asked a good question.
      2. Received an unexpected answer.
      3. Was disappointed at the demand.
      4. Jesus told of the difficulty of rich people entering into the kingdom.
      5. Although difficult, He assured them it was possible.
   2. Peter asked a question that many would have feared to verbalize:  “What do we get?”

Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.  Therefore what shall we have?” (Matthew 19:27).

* 1. Jesus cultivated an atmosphere where grace and knowledge flourished. Matthew 19:28-30
     1. No sincere question was dumb.
     2. Any thought could be explored.
     3. People were not reprimanded who wanted more grace and knowledge.
  2. “They say we are not open.”
     1. Let’s think positive.
     2. We need to count our blessings.
     3. When we trust God, everything will work out.
     4. We don’t need to dwell in the past.
     5. It’s time to move on to the next level.
     6. We’ve talked about that enough.
     7. You need to respect your elders (preacher, deacons, parents, etc.).

1. GROWING IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE IS AFFIRMING YOUR INACCURATE ABSOLUTES, EATING YOUR WORDS, AND BELIEVING THAT GRACE IS STILL AVAILABLE.
   1. “Never wash my feet.”
      1. Servants allow others to serve.
         1. Jesus wanted to teach a lesson about greatness.  John 13:1-5,12-17
         2. Peter didn’t want to participate.  John 13:6-8
         3. It is hard to accept a gift a person offers–no more, no less. John 13:9-11
      2. Jesus permitted His feet to be washed before He washed the disciples’ feet. Luke 7:36-50
   2. “Never be made to stumble”

Peter answered and said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble” (Matthew 26:33).

* + 1. Arrogance is not strong faith.

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Corinthians 10:12).

* + 1. Growing in grace is strong faith. Matthew 26:69-75

“But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you” (Mark 16:7).

* 1. “Never eaten anything common or unclean.”
     1. Peter was reluctant to do what he had never done.  Acts 10:9-16
     2. God was teaching him about food and people.

Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation.  But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10:28).

* + 1. Peter was questioned about his actions when he returned to Jerusalem.  Acts 11:1-18
    2. Growing in grace is changing my mind when God speaks.

Then Peter opened his mouth and said:  “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.  But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:34, 35).

Conclusion:

1. Are you willing to learn from your mistakes, sins–grow in grace and knowledge?

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.  The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16).

1. Have you delayed the gift and the lesson?

“And now why are you waiting?  Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).