

# “ADD TO YOUR FAITH” (PART 2)

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Second Peter 1:5-8 says, “*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” In studying these things we are go grow in spiritually, we have previously considered the foundation of faith, and the adding of virtue and knowledge to that faith. We now continue with an examination of adding temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity.

## **Temperance**

To faith, virtue, and knowledge, we are then told to add temperance (2 Pet 1:6). Temperance is a word which means self-control. After gaining knowledge of God’s will, we must exercise control over ourselves in order to do what we now know to do. Temperance is part of the fruit of the spirit (Gal 5:22-23). There is no law against it. Bringing our bodies under subjection will keep us from becoming castaways (1 Cor 9:27). Paul taught temperance to Felix (Acts 24:25), and temperance is one of the qualifications for elders in God’s church (Titus 1:8).

## **Patience**

We must next add “to temperance patience” (2 Pet 1:6). Although we tend to think of this word more along the lines of long-suffering, this word “patience” is literally *endurance*. When we know God’s will, and have self-control, then we must be able to endure every temptation to depart from it. When we do well, we will suffer for it, and we must endure those sufferings (1 Pet 2:19-20; Rom 12:12; 2 Cor 1:6; 2 Thes 1:4; 2 Tim 2:12; Heb 10:32-36; Jas 5:10-11). The Lord defines this endurance as “*not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing*” (1 Pet 3:9). Jesus never returned evil for evil (1 Pet 2:22-25), but only good for evil (Luke 22:49-51; 23:33-34). Likewise, when suffering for well doing, we must not rebel against God by returning evil for evil, but instead we must follow Christ’s example of enduring sufferings for righteousness’ sake by returning good for evil (Matt 5:38-48; Luke 6:27-36). The reason that we are told to endure the sufferings of Christ and to even rejoice when they come is for the good that those sufferings produce. Enduring sufferings for righteousness’ sake is the means by which we grow to be perfect (complete) like Christ. Jesus was made perfect through sufferings (Heb 2:10; 5:8-9), and we must walk in the same steps he walked (Rom 5:3-5; Heb 12:1-3; Jas 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-7; 2:19-25; 4:1-2; 5:10; 1 John 2:5-6). This is the fruit that we bring forth with patience (Luke 8:15). We need to be strengthened unto “all patience” (Col 1:11). The key for us is to follow after patience (1 Tim 6:11), and then to endure to the end. “*He that endures to the end shall be saved*” (Matt 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; see also Rom 2:7; Jas 1:12; Rev 13:10; 14:12). Jesus said, “*In your patience possess ye your souls*” (Luke 21:19).

## **Godliness**

We are instructed to add “to patience godliness” (2 Pet 1:6). “Godliness” literally

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means “piety,” with the roots of the word meaning “to revere” what is “good.” As we grow spiritually by enduring tribulation, we need to grow in our love and reverence for what is good. Then we need to see what is good (Psa 34:11-12), and do it (Psa 34:14). This is revealed in God’s word, where we have all things that pertain to life *and godliness* (2 Pet 1:3). The words of Christ comprise “the doctrine which is according to godliness” (1 Tim 6:3; see also Titus 1:1). We must follow after godliness (1 Tim 6:11), but not nonchalantly. As some devote themselves to bodily exercise, we should exercise ourselves unto godliness. In contrast to the small temporary profit of bodily exercise, exercising ourselves unto godliness is profitable *unto all things* (1 Tim 4:7-8). Godliness is great gain (rather than vice versa, 1 Tim 6:5-6). We have been commanded to pray for earthly authorities so that “we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Tim 2:1-2). We need to have *all godliness* (2 Pet 3:11).

### **Brotherly kindness**

To godliness, we must add brotherly kindness” (2 Pet 1:7). To revere what is good will require us to add a love for our brethren in Christ. Romans 12:10 commands: “*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.*” 1 Thessalonians 4:9 says, “*But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.*” First Peter 1:22 says, “*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*” Hebrews 13:1 puts it very succinctly: “*Let brotherly love continue.*” The command to “love one another” directs us to love our brothers and sisters in Christ (John 13:34-35; 15:12,17; Rom 13:8; 1 John 2:7-11; 3:10-23; 4:7-21; 2 John 5). Brotherly love is exhibited by serving (Gal 5:13; 6:10), by bearing each other’s burdens (Gal 5:14 + 6:2), by forbearing one another (Eph 4:2; Col 3:13), and forgiving one another (Eph 4:32; Col 3:13).

### **Charity**

Finally, we are to add “to brotherly kindness charity” (2 Pet 1:7). Having God’s love *perfected* (completed) in us is God’s ultimate purpose for us (Matt 5:43-48; John 17:22-26; 1 Cor 13; Eph 4:11-16; 1 John 2:5; 4:12,17-18). Love is the “bond of perfectness” (Col 3:14). God’s love is built upon the foundation of faith, and these other spiritual qualities. This is the endpoint. Love must be added to our faith or else we are nothing. Paul wrote, “*And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing*” (1 Cor 13:2). “*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love*” (Gal 5:6). “Perfect” literally means “complete.” A *complete* love must be built upon a *complete* faith (2 Thes 3:10; 1 Pet 1:9; Heb 12:2), with a full amount of everything else in between (Col 1:9-11). Right now, we should have *some* of all of these things added to us, but we need to keep growing in all of them until we are complete in faith and love. These things are what make us fruitful, and make our calling and election sure so that we might have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom (2 Pet 1:8-11).