



LESSON THREE

God's Promises and the Seed of Faith

Scripture Reading:

2 Peter 1: 1 - 11

- 1:1** Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
- 1:2** Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;
- 1:3** Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,
- 1:4** Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
- 1:5** And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue; and in virtue, knowledge;
- 1:6** And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;
- 1:7** And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.
- 1:8** For these things, existing in you and abounding, constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1:9** For he in whom these things are not present is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his past sins.
- 1:10** Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble.
- 1:11** For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you.

QUESTIONS:

Section 1:

1. What has been given to us to live the divine life? By what means does this divine power operates within us?
2. How do we cooperate with the Lord for the divine power to operate in us?

Section 2:

1. What have we been called to? How does God's promise relate to it?
2. What is God's purpose for granting us precious and exceeding great promises? What is the result of us partaking of God day by day?

Section 3:

1. What kind of knowledge should we develop and why do we need to develop self control?
2. What is the picture of full development in these verses?
3. What is the difference between "brotherly love" and "love"? How does it relate to our experience?

Section 4:

1. What does it mean "to be constituted with the divine nature"? What is the difference between develop something and being constituted with something?
2. What is the eternal kingdom refer to and how can we have a rich entrance to this kingdom?

LIFE AND GODLINESS

Second Peter 1:3 says, “Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue.” The “all things” in this verse refer to all the aspects of the riches of the Triune God. These things pertain to the divine life, to *zoe*, not to the life that is for our pleasure. All things have been given, imparted, infused, into us so that we may live the divine life and also live out this life. The life is inward, but godliness is outward, for it is God Himself expressed.

In all of our living we should express God. We should testify of God and speak about Him. When God becomes our expression, this is godliness. In our conversation we should express God. If we are expressing God, surely we could not engage in gossip. We should have God in our being and also in our living. Our mind should be filled with Him, and the very fiber of our being should be constituted of Him. Then we shall have godliness, the outward expression of the inward life.

THROUGH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE ONE WHO CALLED US

In 1:3 Peter uses the preposition “through” and says that the divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness “through the full knowledge of Him.” The impartation into us of all the things of life is through the full knowledge of God. This full knowledge is a deep, thorough, experiential knowledge.

The preposition “through” used in relation to full knowledge indicates that we need to pass through a process. If we have the practice of gossiping, this practice is an indication that we have not yet passed through the process leading to the full knowledge of the One who has called us. I do not think that if we have the full knowledge of the One who has called us to His glory and virtue, we shall waste our time gossiping.

The divine power has infused us with all things pertaining to life and godliness. However, this infusion, this impartation, requires that we have

the full knowledge of God. If we do not pass through the process to gain the full knowledge, it will seem that what the divine power has planted in us has been in vain. The divine power is operating, but there is the need for us to cooperate with this operation.

Many Christians do not know anything about what the divine power has imparted to us. Likewise, many do not know that it is necessary for us to pass through the process to gain the full knowledge. There is the need for us to be trained by the Lord so that we may pass through the process to gain the full knowledge of the One who has called us. My desire in these messages is to help you pass through this process. We may use the illustration of a train and say that we are all on a train that is going through the passage of the deep, thorough, and experiential knowledge of the One who has called us.

In verse 3 Peter does not speak of the knowledge of God nor of the knowledge of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Instead, he speaks of the full knowledge of the One who has called us to His glory and virtue. Here Peter does not say that God has called us to heaven, nor even that He has called us to redemption or sanctification. In this verse Peter says that God has called us to His own glory and virtue. We need to have the full knowledge of this. We must not be content to know it superficially. We can know the One who has called us to His own glory and virtue only by passing through a long process. Regarding this, we should be like tourists taking a slow train ride through a beautiful countryside. Such tourists like to ride slowly in order to have a good view of the scenery. In like manner, we need to consider 1:1-4 thoroughly and slowly. You may read through these verses quickly again and again and not see anything. Therefore, as we read these verses, we need to consider carefully everything included in them.

OUR COOPERATION WITH GOD’S OPERATION

We definitely need the full knowledge of the One who has called us for the purpose of bringing us into His glory and virtue. If we have such an experiential knowledge of Him, the divine power will operate in us effectively. Otherwise, the divine power will not be able to work in us. Even though this power is great, it

will not be able to work in us if we do not fulfill the conditions for its operation. As we have seen, the condition we must fulfill is that of our cooperation with God's operation.

Many Christians do not know that God has called them to His own glory and virtue. It seems that in their theology there is no room for 2 Peter 1:3. Although the divine power is present and is working, it does not operate in those who do not render the proper cooperation. If we do not pass through the process to gain the full knowledge of the One who has called us, the divine power will not be able to operate in us.

I can testify that the divine power is working in me and that daily I cooperate with God. In the morning I open to Him and say, "Lord, I am here before You. Go on, Lord. I would not hinder You. Rather, I would give You a free way within me. Lord, whatever You speak to me I will proclaim." I can testify that the more I cooperate with the divine power within me, the more I am brought into God's glory, enjoy His virtue, and express this virtue as godliness.

-----[SECTION 2]-----

GOD'S PROMISES

In 1:4 Peter continues, "Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises, that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust." We have seen that the preposition "through" here may also be rendered on account of or on the basis of. The relative pronoun "which" refers to the glory and virtue in verse 3. Through and on the basis of the Lord's glory and virtue, by and to which we have been called, God has given us His precious and exceedingly great promises.

It is not easy to know the meaning of the words "through which" as they connect verses 3 and 4. In order to have the proper knowledge of this, we need experience and also spiritual understanding. Here Peter is saying that through the divine glory and virtue God has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises. This indicates that if God had not called us to His own glory and virtue, there would be no need for Him to give us promises. But God has called us to His own glory and virtue. This goal

is great, vast, profound. Who is able to reach God's own glory and virtue? None of us is able to arrive at this goal. Therefore, there is the need of God's word of promise to assure us, encourage us, strengthen us, and speed us on our way toward this goal.

Suppose Peter had said that God has called us to heaven. If heaven were the goal of God's calling, there would have been no need for God to give us promises. If heaven were the goal of God's calling, we could simply be happy and rejoice, live according to our pleasure, and then wait for heaven.

However, Peter does not say that God has called us to heaven. He says that God has called us to His own glory and virtue. When we hear about this, we may wonder how we can attain to such a goal. Knowing our need for assurance, encouragement, and strength, God has given us precious and exceedingly great promises. An example of these promises is the Lord's word to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness." This promise was given to Paul to enable him to suffer the thorn in the flesh. In order to bear with a "thorn," we need the Lord's sufficient grace. This is an illustration of the fact that we need many promises to help us reach the goal of God's glory and virtue.

All the promises of God have been given to us through the glory and virtue to which God has called us. This is the reason Peter begins verse 4 with the words "through which." God's promises are words of assurance and encouragement. Through the glory and virtue which are the goal to which we have been called, God has given us the promises we need.

We have pointed out that the Greek preposition translated "through" in verse 4 is *dia* and that its use here is in the instrumental sense becoming causal. We have rendered this word literally in order to make our translation correspond to the Greek text. It would also have been correct to translate this word "on the basis of which" to indicate that God grants us the precious and exceedingly great promises on the basis of the glory and virtue to which He has called us.

We cannot reach the high goal of God's glory and virtue by ourselves. For this, we need the

Lord. Because we do not know what lies ahead of us, God has given us precious promises. One of these great promises is in Matthew 28:20: "Behold, I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age." No doubt, this promise was an encouragement to all the disciples.

The Lord's promises encouraged Peter and the other disciples on their way toward the goal of God's glory and virtue. When Peter and the eleven stood up to preach on the day of Pentecost, God's glory and virtue were with them. The disciples manifested divine virtues, not natural human virtues. In Acts 3 a poor man looked to Peter and John for a gift of money. Peter said to him, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). Then Peter took him by the hand and lifted him up, and immediately the lame man was healed. "He leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God" (v. 8). What did Peter and John express on that occasion? They manifested God's virtue and glory. This was carried out by the promise of the Lord that He would be with them all the days until the completion of this age.

In Matthew 28:20 the Lord seemed to be telling the disciples: "When you go out to disciple the nations, I shall go with you. Wherever you go, you will go with Me. You will be bringing Me with you." Therefore, on the day of Pentecost the disciples stood up with the Lord to preach the gospel. Furthermore, in Acts 3 Peter and John brought the Lord Jesus to a lame man. This was a fulfillment of the Lord's promise to be with them all the days until the completion of the age. By means of the Lord's promises the early disciples were encouraged to press on to reach God's glory and attain the divine virtues.

PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE

According to 2 Peter 1:4, God has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises for a specific purpose. His purpose is that through these promises we may become partakers of the divine nature. Through the precious and exceedingly great promises, we, the believers in Christ, have become partakers of His divine nature in an organic union with Him. In Acts 2 and 3 Peter and the other disciples surely were partaking of the divine nature. It is no wonder

then that when others looked at the disciples, they saw the expression of God. Because the disciples enjoyed God and partook of God, they were constituted of God.

Just as we are constituted physically of the food we eat, so the disciples were constituted of the God of which they partook. This should also be our experience today. If we enjoy God and partake of Him, we shall be constituted of Him. Of course, we shall never become God in the sense of attaining to the Godhead or becoming an object of worship. However, we may be thoroughly constituted of God's nature.

To be a partaker of the divine nature is to be a partaker of the elements, the ingredients, of God's being. When we partake of God, the aspects of what God is become our enjoyment. We partake of His righteousness, holiness, kindness, love, compassion. This is to enjoy the constituents of the divine nature. God's purpose in giving us the precious and exceedingly great promises is that we may become partakers of the divine nature.

THE CYCLE OF ESCAPING AND PARTAKING

In 1:4 there is a condition for becoming partakers of the divine nature: it is "having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust." The more we escape this corruption, the more we shall enjoy the nature of God. Likewise, the more we partake of the divine nature, the more we shall escape the corruption that is in the world by lust. This is a cycle, a cycle of escaping and partaking and of partaking and escaping. I can testify that because this cycle of partaking and escaping works within me in a strong, rapid way, it is difficult for me to take in any of the corruption of the world. I partake of the divine nature, and this divine nature strengthens me to stay away from corruption. Then the more I stay away from the corruption of the world, the more I enjoy the riches of the divine nature. This is the experience of God's economy. What we have in 1:1-4 is actually a full picture of our enjoyment of God's economy.

DEVELOPING THE SEED OF FAITH

Virtue

Verse 5 says, “And for this very reason also, adding all diligence, supply bountifully in your faith virtue, and in virtue knowledge.” The Greek word rendered “adding” literally means bringing in besides. Besides, along with, the precious and exceedingly great promises given to us by God, we should bring in all diligence to cooperate with the enabling of the dynamic divine nature for the carrying out of God’s promises.

In verse 5 Peter urges us to supply bountifully in our faith virtue. What the divine power has given us in 1:3 and 4 is developed in verses 5 through 7. To supply virtue in faith is to develop virtue in the exercise of faith. The same principle applies to all the other items.

The word “supply” here actually means develop. Peter is telling us to develop what we already have. We have faith, and now in our faith we need to develop virtue.

The faith Peter mentions in 1:5 is the like precious faith allotted to us by God (1:1) as the common portion of the New Testament blessing of life for the initiation of the Christian life. This faith needs to be exercised that the virtue of the divine life may be developed in the following steps to reach its maturity. Faith in 2 Peter 1 may be compared to a seed. On other occasions I have pointed out that in chapter one of 1 Peter the seed is the word with Christ in it as life. Now in 2 Peter 1 this seed becomes our faith, which, no doubt, is the like precious faith. This precious faith is one with Christ as the seed.

After a seed has been sown in the soil, it needs to be developed. The principle is the same with the development of the seed of faith. In our faith we need to develop virtue. Literally, the Greek word for virtue means excellency. It denotes the energy of the divine life issuing in vigorous action. If faith is regarded as the seed, virtue may be considered a root that comes out of this seed.

Knowledge

In 1:5 Peter also tells us to supply “in virtue knowledge.” Virtue, the vigorous action, needs the bountiful supply of the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord (vv. 2, 3, 8) regarding the all things related to the divine life and godliness and the partaking of the divine nature (vv. 3-4) for our enjoyment in the following development. The knowledge which we should develop in our virtue includes the knowledge of God and of our Savior, the knowledge of God’s economy, the knowledge of what faith is, and the knowledge of the divine power, glory, virtue, nature, and life. Actually, this is the knowledge of all things related to life and godliness. We must have this knowledge developed in our virtue. It is not adequate to have virtue without knowledge. I believe that knowledge also is a primary root that develops out of the seed of faith. With virtue and knowledge we have the growth of the seed.

Self-control

In verse 6 Peter continues, “And in knowledge self-control, and in self-control endurance, and in endurance godliness.” Self-control, or temperance, is the exercise of control and restraint over the self in its passions, desires, and habits. This needs to be supplied and developed in knowledge for the proper growth in life.

Once we have acquired knowledge, it is easy for us to become proud. For this reason, we need to develop in our knowledge self-control. Self-control implies restriction. As a tree grows, the roots spread out, but the trunk grows upward in a rather restricted manner. This is an illustration of the fact that along with the development of virtue and knowledge, we need the restriction that comes with self-control.

Endurance

According to Peter’s word in verse 6, in our self-control we need to develop endurance. Self-control is to deal with ourselves; endurance is to bear with others and with circumstances. In order to live a proper Christian life, we need endurance toward those around us and also toward our environment and circumstances.

Godliness

In our endurance we need to develop godliness. Godliness is a living that is like God and expresses God. As we exercise control over the self and bear with others and with circumstances, godliness needs to be developed in our spiritual life so that we may be like God and express Him. If faith is the seed, virtue and knowledge the roots, self-control the trunk, then endurance and godliness are the branches. Here we see a rather full development: out of the seed come the roots, the trunk, and the branches. Eventually, in verse 7 we see brotherly love and love as the blossom and the fruit.

Brotherly Love and Love

In verse 7 Peter concludes, “And in godliness brotherly love, and in brotherly love, love.” The Greek word rendered “brotherly love” is *philadelphia*, composed of *phileo*, to have affection for, and *adelphos*, a brother; hence, brotherly affection, a love of delight and pleasure. In godliness, the expression of God, this love needs to be supplied for the brotherhood (1 Pet. 2:17; 3:8; Gal. 6:10), for our testimony to the world (John 13:34-35) and for the bearing of fruit (John 15:16-17).

The Greek word for love in verse 7 is *agape*, the word used in the New Testament for the divine love, which God is in His nature (1 John 4:8, 16). It is nobler than *phileo*; it adorns all the qualities of the Christian life (1 Cor. 13; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:13-14). It is stronger in ability and greater in capacity than human love (Matt. 5:44, 46), yet a believer who lives by the divine life (2 Pet. 1:3) and partakes of the divine nature (v. 4) can be saturated with it and express it in full. Such a love needs to be developed in brotherly love, to govern it and flow in it for the full expression of God, who is this love. As we have seen, faith may be considered the seed of life, and this nobler love, the fruit (v. 8) in its full development. The six developments in between are the stages of its growth unto maturity.

Peter’s thought in chapter one of his first Epistle is that the full salvation of the Triune God issues in holiness and brotherly love. Holiness is related to godliness. Hence, the issue of God’s full salvation is the expression of God and the love for the brothers. According to

some translations, the word love in 2 Peter 1:7 indicates a love not only for Christian brothers but for all men. According to this understanding, first we love the brothers and then we go on to love all men. However, I do not believe that this understanding is accurate.

We have pointed out that *agape* is nobler than *phileo*. In quality and perhaps also in quantity *agape* is greater than *phileo*. Sometimes we may love the brothers in a narrow, limited way with a certain amount of brotherly love. In our love we may have preferences and love certain brothers more than others. We may claim that we love all the saints, but our love for them is not the same. Because Peter was experienced and knew the situation among the saints, he did not stop with brotherly love but went on to speak of love, of *agape*, the deep and noble love with which God the Father loves all mankind, both believers and sinners.

In Matthew 5:44-47 the Lord Jesus said, “But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may become sons of your Father who is in the heavens, because He makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not also the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what are you doing extraordinary? Do not also the nations do the same?” As God sends rain upon both the just and the unjust, so we should love not only our brothers but also our enemies. It does not take much strength or energy for someone to love his own brother. But it does take a special strength and energy to love our enemies. We all need to have this noble love.

Actually, in the church life we may prefer a certain brother whom we regard as nice and love him, but we may not appreciate another brother as much. We may have love for both brothers, but that love is shallow. Therefore, we need a deeper, nobler love. This love is *agape*. When we have this kind of love, we love all the brothers the same, no matter what kind of brothers they may be.

In 1:5-7 we have the development from faith to love. This development includes virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, and

godliness. Eventually, we have the full development and maturity from the seed of faith, through the roots of virtue and knowledge, the trunk of self-control, and the branches of endurance and godliness, to the blossom and the fruit of brotherly love and love.

-----[SECTION 4]-----

“THESE THINGS” EXISTING IN US AND ABOUNDING

In verse 8 Peter goes on to say, “For these things, existing in you and abounding, constitute you neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The words “these things” refer to all the virtues covered in verses 5 through 7, from faith to love. Faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly love, and love should all exist in us. Nevertheless, these are only some of the “all things” that have been granted to us by the divine power. We need to see that all these things are included in the seed. This seed contains the root, the trunk, the branches, the blossom, and the fruit.

The Greek word for “existing” is *huparcho*. It denotes the existence of certain things that belong to someone from the beginning and thus become his rightful possession to the present. This indicates that all the virtues mentioned in verses 5 through 7 are the possession of the believers and exist in them forever through their experience of partaking of the divine nature in all its riches.

Peter speaks of these virtues not only existing in us but also abounding. The divine virtues are not only existing in and possessed by the believers, but are also abounding and multiplying in them in the development and growth of the divine life. All the virtues already exist in the seed, and now they are waiting for the opportunity to abound. In order for the virtues in the seed to abound, the seed needs to be sown in the soil and then grow and develop until it blossoms and bears fruit.

CONSTITUTED NEITHER IDLE NOR UNFRUITFUL

Peter says that if these things exist and abound in us, they shall constitute us neither idle nor unfruitful unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. This indicates that the virtues of

the divine life and divine nature are the constituents, the elements, of our spiritual constitution, our spiritual being, making us persons without the elements of idleness and unfruitfulness.

Being constituted is different from trying to correct ourselves, adjust ourselves, or improve ourselves. In order to be constituted we must have a certain element or constituent. The elements, the ingredients, of the divine nature are the constituents of which we need to be constituted.

Christians are often exhorted and taught to improve themselves. However, in the New Testament we are not exhorted to correct ourselves: we are exhorted to be constituted of the elements of the divine nature. Confucius may have taught people to improve, but he certainly did not teach them to be constituted of the divine nature.

There is a distinction between developing something and being constituted of something. Developing a matter implies that we already have something which needs to be developed. But being constituted of a particular element implies that something is about to be added to us that we do not already possess. We have faith as a seed that includes Christ as life. Actually, this seed is the Triune God. We have seen that we need to develop in our faith virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly love, and love. We also need to be constituted of all these elements that are developed.

Actually, our natural being needs to be reconstituted. From the time of our birth, we have been constituted a certain kind of person. Now that we have been regenerated, we need to be reconstituted; that is, we need to be constituted of the elements of the divine nature. We were constituted once in our natural life. Now in our new birth with our new life we need to be reconstituted of the divine nature. The divine nature is rich in ingredients, in constituents, with which we need to build up ourselves into a God-man, into a person mingled with the Triune God.

If we are constituted of the elements of the divine nature, we shall not be idle or unfruitful. Literally, the Greek word rendered “idle”

means unworking; hence, idle. One may not be idle, but may still be unfruitful. To be fruitful requires more growth in life and more supply of life. Idleness and unfruitfulness are constituents of our fallen being; working, the energizing of life, and fruit-fulness are the constituents of our spiritual constitution. Peter's use of the word "unfruitful" in verse 8 indicates that what is covered in verses 5 through 7 is the development of the growth of the divine life unto its maturity.

The word idle implies many things. It seems that it is a rather insignificant word. Actually, this word is very important and implies a great deal. We may say that gossiping is a sign of idleness. Anyone who gossips is idle. Such a one may not spend adequate time reading the Word and praying, using the excuse that he is too busy. But such a one is not busy—he is idle.

UNTO THE FULL KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

In verse 8 Peter speaks of not being idle or unfruitful "unto the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." The constitution with the spiritual virtues as its constituents advances in many steps toward the full knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a view to the full realization of the all-inclusive embodiment of the Triune God. In this section of the Word, three prepositions are used regarding the relationship of the experience of life to spiritual knowledge: in, in verse 2, referring to the sphere of the knowledge; through, in verse 3, referring to the channel of the knowledge; and unto, in verse 8, referring to the knowledge in view as a goal. Our experiential knowledge of the Lord increases according to the degree of our growth in life.

BEING SHORTSIGHTED

In verse 9 Peter says, "For he in whom these things are not present is blind, being shortsighted, having forgotten the cleansing of his past sins." As in verse 8, "these things" refers to all the virtues covered in verses 5 through 7. The one in whom these things are not present is blind, being shortsighted. The Greek word rendered "shortsighted" comes from the root word that means to close the eyes due to strong light; hence, to be shortsighted. To be thus shortsighted is to be spiritually blind, unable to see something further in the

divine life and divine nature of the Triune God dispensed into the believers as their bountiful supply.

DILIGENT TO MAKE OUR CALLING AND SELECTION FIRM

In verse 10 Peter continues, "Therefore, brothers, be the more diligent to make your calling and selection firm, for doing these things you shall by no means ever stumble." Here to be diligent is to develop the spiritual virtues in the divine life, to advance in the growth of the divine life. This makes God's calling and selection of us firm.

ENTRANCE INTO THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

In verse 11 Peter concludes, "For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly and bountifully supplied to you." The bountiful supply we enjoy in the development of the divine life and divine nature will bountifully supply us a rich entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord. It will enable and qualify us to enter into the coming kingdom with all the riches of the divine life and divine nature as our excellent virtues unto the splendid glory of God. This is not merely to be saved to go to heaven.

The eternal kingdom in this verse refers to the kingdom of God given to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Dan. 7:13-14), which will be manifested at His coming back (Luke 19:11-12). It will be a reward to His faithful believers, who pursue the growth in His life unto maturity and the development of the virtues of His nature, so that they may participate, in the millennium, in His kingship in God's glory (2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 20:4, 6). To enter thus into the eternal kingdom of the Lord is related to the entrance into God's eternal glory, to which He has called us in Christ (1 Pet. 5:10; 1 Thes. 2:12).

Second Peter 1:11 indicates that we may have an entrance richly and bountifully supplied into the kingdom of our Lord. However, a good number of Christians will not have such an entrance, because they have never built up this entrance by developing the divine seed unto maturity. If we are not constituted of the divine virtues, we shall not be able to build up such an

entrance. But if we have the development of the divine life and are constituted of the elements of the divine nature, a rich and bountiful entrance into the coming kingdom will be supplied to us.