

## A CHRISTIAN IS TO GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST

2 Peter 1:2-11; 3:18

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** Sadly, many Christians think that once they have been saved, baptized and joined a church that that is it and there's nothing more for them to do but attend services now and then. This is not God's plan at all for a Christian. God wants every one of His Children to grow and to grow in knowing more and more about Jesus. Peter reminds everyone that there are a lot of benefits that come from a believer increasing his/her knowledge of Jesus and a lot of negative things can happen. Christians need to know (be told) what all is involved in growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

### I. JUST WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "GROW IN KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS?"

1. There are eight things that need to be developed in the Christian's life:

- 2 Peter 1:5-7 lists and defines the eight things needed:

- Faith - "conviction and strong assurance"
- Virtue - "moral excellence, goodness"
- Knowledge - "correct insight"
- Self-control - "self-discipline"
- Perseverance - "bearing up under trials"
- Godliness - "godly character out of devotion to God"
- Brotherly kindness - "love toward one's fellow Christians"
- Love - "active goodwill toward others."

- The Christian must "abound" in these eight graces and only then will one be "growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ."

- "Growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ" is more than simply increasing one's "intellectual" knowledge of Jesus.

- Plain knowledge of Jesus does have a place but it's just one of the necessary graces.

- One needs to grow in a FULLER and more PERSONAL knowledge of Jesus.

- One needs to develop the "Christ-like" attributes.

- The more one grows in these graces, the more he/she will really know Jesus.

- Growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ involves more than just intellectual knowledge.

- It means to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly, accurately and well.

- Practice, demonstrating the Christ-like graces generates the needed knowledge.

2. The eight graces work together:

- Each one is "added" to the other - 2 Peter 1:5

- "to found, support, lead, keep in tune, provide"

- They work in harmony with each other to produce an overall effect.

- Each grace is to adjust and make perfect the grace that goes before it.

- **"...to knowledge (add) self-control, to self-control (add) perseverance..."** self-control enables one to correctly apply the knowledge one has and in turn needs to have perseverance to be steady and consistent day after day.

- Each grace is necessary for the other and must all be developed along with each other.

- One can't just pick and choose and leave some behind.

3. One is to develop the eight graces with all diligence:

- 2 Peter 1:5, 10

- Earnestness, zeal, sometimes with haste.

- To grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ requires MUCH effort.
- One does not accidentally or naturally develop these graces.
- Some may have been Christians for many years, but unless:
  - they have added to their faith the Christ-like qualities with all diligence, they are simply repeating their first year of being a Christian over and over again and again.

## II. WHY GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS?

1. Grace and peace are multiplied:
  - Grace and peace are common forms of greeting one another in the New Testament:
    - Grace - a greeting which requested God's unmerited favor upon the person being addressed.
    - Peace - a greeting requesting the natural result of God's favor.
  - Both Grace and Peace are to be multiplied in the knowledge of Jesus Christ - 2 Peter 1:2
    - Every person experiences God's favor and its result to some degree - Matthew 5:45
    - Only in Jesus Christ can one enjoy the "fulness" of God's favor and peace - Ephesians 1:3; Philippians 4:6-7
  - To have God's grace and peace multiplied in one's life, it is through the knowledge of Jesus Christ as one becomes more like Him.
  
2. Everything pertaining to life and Godliness are provided:
  - God provides all things pertaining to life and godliness - 2 Peter 1:3
    - "Life" is referring to one's spiritual life and well-being.
    - "Godliness" refers to the godly conduct which comes out of devotion to God.
  - As one grows in this knowledge, he/she enjoys the true, full life that comes by God's power.
  - If one desires to have all that God offers related to life and godliness, it comes as one develops the Christ-like character.
  
3. Failure to grow indicates that a person has forgotten why he/she was redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ in the first place - 2 Peter 1:9b
  - have one's sins forgiven - yes
  - also to become what God wants a believer to be - like His Son.
  - Unless one wants to be guilty of forgetfulness and shortsightedness, he/she needs to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.
  
4. One will never stumble when growing in knowledge of Jesus Christ.
  - 2 Peter 1:10
    - If one is diligent to make his/her calling sure
    - If one adds to his/her faith virtue, etc.
    - If one abounds in all these eight graces.
  - One may still sin, however - 1 John 1:8, 10
    - "Stumble" means to fall into misery, become wretched
    - One will never stumble or fall short of one's salvation.
  
5. There will be a great entrance into the everlasting kingdom:
  - 2 Peter 1:11
    - The Heavenly Kingdom - 2 Timothy 4:18
    - The final destiny of the redeemed.
  - "abundant entrance:"
    - It triumph - 2 Timothy 4:6-8

## CONCLUSION:

1. Becoming a Christian is beginning a new life brought about by all that Jesus has done and by one's faith in Jesus Christ, however that is not all there is to being a Christian.  
- Every Christian needs to be seeking to be more like Jesus every day
2. Growing in Jesus Christ is something that brings one to be more like Jesus Christ ever day and there are certain "graces" that help a Christian do just that.
3. How is YOUR daily walk with Jesus? Does it need to be improved? How many of the eight graces have YOU developed? Which of them are YOU lacking?
4. Are YOU making progress in growing in the "knowledge of Jesus Christ?"