

# A CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH

## BIBLE TEXT : II Peter 1:1-21.

LESSON 454 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (II Peter 1:10)

### BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

#### **2 Peter 1:1-21**

<sup>1</sup> Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

<sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

<sup>3</sup> According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

<sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

<sup>5</sup> And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

<sup>6</sup> And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

<sup>7</sup> And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

<sup>10</sup> Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

### Bible References:

#### Notes:

##### **Peter the Preacher**

Simon Peter is writing another letter. Let us listen carefully to the message, which comes from God, and is for us today even though it was given about 2,000 years ago. Other books become old, new books are written; but God's Word is always a true guide for our daily life, and if we follow its instructions we will someday see Jesus.

##### **Unfailing Promises**

We find in the Bible many "exceeding great and precious promises." One which you have heard often is, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: . . . that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1, 3). This is the first commandment with a promise for a long, happy life. Some other promises are: "In my Father's house are many mansions: . . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). Another promise, found in the last chapter of the Bible, is: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14). Someone has counted 8,810 promises in the Bible.

##### **Fruitful Christians**

We learned in the previous lesson that we should read the Bible in order to "grow" spiritually. In today's text we find a list of things to add to our Christian experience, and we are told that if we do this we shall be helpful to others, and become fruit-bearing Christians. We remember what Jesus said to the fig tree that did not bear fruit. He came year after year, looking for fruit and found none. Then the third year He said, "Cut it down." Some of the fruit found in the life of Christians is: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Galatians 5:22, 23).

##### **"Babes" in Christ**

Newly saved persons are "young" in Christ but capable of growth if properly fed. In I Peter 2:2 we read, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." The "sincere milk" means the whole, real or genuine. Milk is considered the perfect food: it contains protein, calcium and other minerals, and various vitamins, especially A, B, and C. If one would fill a baby's bottle with chalk and water and try to feed him, he would refuse it, and if he drank it, he might become sick. It would not have the nourishment contained in milk, although it might resemble milk. There is no substitute for the Word of God, and we must read it in order to grow spiritually.

Peter gives us an arithmetic problem: "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." What is the answer, or the sum total? The answer is: "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." We are

<sup>11</sup> For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

<sup>12</sup> Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

<sup>13</sup> Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

<sup>14</sup> Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

<sup>15</sup> Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

<sup>16</sup> For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

<sup>17</sup> For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

<sup>18</sup> And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

<sup>19</sup> We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

<sup>20</sup> Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

<sup>21</sup> For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

also told that if we keep adding these things to our Christian experience we shall never backslide.

On the other hand we are given the answer to the same problem if we do not add them to our life: "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

Which answer fits your life? Are you in the "fruitful" group or in the class of those who are near-sighted or blind? We are told that if we lack those things we are blind and cannot see afar off, or have forgotten that we ever were saved.

Peter knew that soon he would be going to his heavenly Home, and he said that he felt it necessary to "stir you up." He knew that before long he must give his life for his Lord.

### **On the Holy Mount**

A marvellous experience to which Peter refers in this chapter is the time when Jesus took with Him Peter, James and John into the Mount of Transfiguration. The face of Jesus shone as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. Peter was most happy to be there, and he spoke up and said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias" (Matthew 17:4). Then suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them and a Voice spoke to them, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Peter and James and John were frightened and fell to the ground. Then the vision disappeared and they saw only Jesus standing there.

### **Light in the Darkness**

None of us have ever had an experience such as this and seldom do people see visions in these days. But today we may know just as surely what to do as if Jesus spoke in an audible voice. Peter says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." Do you know what that sure word is? It is the Holy Bible. If a person would tell you that he had heard God speak to him, perhaps you would doubt it, and no one would really be benefited but the one who heard the Voice. Sometimes God does speak to people in a loud voice; but we have the Word of God, and are expected to read it and learn the will of God.

Missionaries have gone into all the world and told people about Jesus; faithful ministers are preaching the Word in church and on the radio; Gospel literature is being sent into all the world. The Apostolic Faith sends literature into more than 200 foreign lands and islands, and translates it into more than 70 languages.

A Bible or New Testament may be purchased for a very small price in our land. We had better take heed to it, for it is not man's words but God's. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Today, some part of the Bible is being published in more than 1,165 languages. In the United States alone, more than 10,000,000 volumes of the Bible were sold in 1959. Japan was second in Bible sales with a total of 1,886,909 for the same year. The Japanese Bible Society states that since the end of World War II, a total of 27,074,553 volumes of the Bible have been sold, and that in the entire period of time from 1876 to 1944, only 18,000 copies were sold.

Boys and girls, you have heard the important message by Peter, one of the "holy men of God" who spoke as he was "moved by the Holy Ghost." You will surely do well if you "take heed" unto the message.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Name a few great promises found in the Bible.
2. Name five things we are told to add to our faith.
3. What is said of those who lack these things?
4. How did Peter know that he was soon to die and go to be with Jesus?
5. What happened on the Mount of Transfiguration?
6. Who wrote the Bible?
7. Name the three Persons in the Godhead to whom Peter refers in this chapter.
8. Through what means does God speak to us today?