

2 Peter 1:1-11

Week 1 - A Recipe For Godly Living

Learning Objectives

- God has given us everything we need already, and we are empowered by Him to live out our faith with fruitfulness and courage.
- We are called to continue to grow in our qualities as Christians through intentional and God-blessed action that leads to closeness with God and connection with other believers.

? What qualities do you appreciate most in your closest friends? Why?

Optional Transition: When friends have different qualities, it leads to better and more fruitful relationships. In this study, we'll talk about qualities we should develop in order to be fruitful in Christ.

Pray for your time together today.

Leader's Note: "Second Peter teaches that the grace of God in Christ truly transforms and empowers Christians to live righteously, even in the face of opposition. This grace, introduced in 1:2-4, serves as the foundation for the remainder of the exhortations. The indwelling Holy Spirit produces virtuous 'qualities' in followers of Christ, which in turn results in fruitful lives."

– ESV Study Bible © 2008

Read Out Loud: 2 Peter 1:1-11 (NIV)

¹Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:

²Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

³His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

¹⁰Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

? What do vv. 3-4 say about who God is and what He provides for us?

Possible Answers: God is powerful and generous. He provides "everything we need for a godly life" and has called us because of his glory and goodness.

? Why is it significant that God has given us "everything we need"?

Possible Answers: We are not waiting for anything, nor are we insufficient to do what God has called us to! We have His blessings and power to live out our faith in radical, courageous, and fruitful ways, without fear.

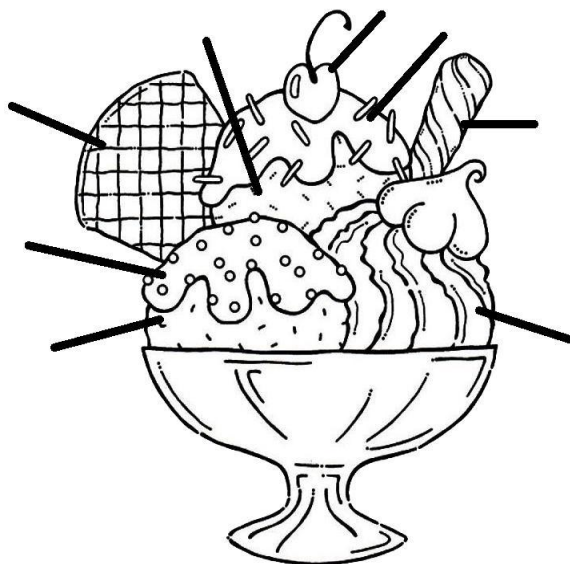
? What trajectory should our walk with God follow, according to vv. 5-7? How does faith lay the foundation for other aspects of our walk with God?

Possible Answers: Our walk with God should bring us closer to Him and to other believers as we grow and learn. We should continue to grow and develop our characters, so that our lives reflect our faith. Faith is the beginning; if we do not believe, we cannot gain the other things that God has prepared for us. All the other qualities depend on our belief.

Leader's Note: If this following activity will not go over well in your group, feel free to use this alternative question (the possible answers are the same): How do you see the qualities listed in vv. 5-7 building off each other to lead toward a mature faith?

? An ice cream sundae is made up of different delicious parts that create a complementary whole. One part is good all by itself, but when combined, the parts become even better! Like an ice cream sundae, the different qualities listed in the passage work together to make us more rounded Christians. Label the sundae below with the different qualities listed in the passage, and talk with your group about how the parts complement one another.

"Ice Cream Sundae
Annette Wallace
ClipartFest.com and



Clipart Black" created by Mrs.
from Murrieta downloaded from
modified

Faith: Faith is the first quality and comes from God and our decision to follow Him. It's the cornerstone of Christian life and growth.

Goodness: Once you believe, you desire to do good as God is good and as He calls us to be good. Before you believe, you may not know what is good, but God gives that knowledge as you grow in your faith.

Knowledge: As you grow as a Christian, living out goodness, you understand more and more what that means and what it costs. You gain knowledge by reading the Bible, talking to other believers, and through prayer.

Self-control: Once you know what is right and what is wrong, you can put it into practice, using self-control to do what you don't naturally want to, and to not do what is sinful.

Perseverance: As you exercise self-control over the long-term, it becomes perseverance, which grows stronger the more faithful you are in your self-control.

Godliness: Persevering in obeying God and having self-control leads one to be like God, and gain godliness.

Mutual Affection: When you become more like God, you feel connection, empathy, and caring for your fellow believers who are also striving to follow God like you do.

Love: Mutual affection quickly leads to love, which is not merely a feeling but a lived-out choice to be in a strong, lasting, engaged community with one another.

Possible Answers: Open discussion! Your group's answers may be different than the suggested answers. Encourage group members to discuss.

? Why are these attributes important in a Christian's life?

(vs. 8)

Possible Answers: These attributes help us to become more rounded, grounded, flourishing, and sharing Christians. By developing these, we draw closer to God and to one another in our faith.

"This list [2 Peter 1:5-7] does not reflect a legalistic code but rather the desires and features of a transformed heart."

– ESV Study Bible © 2008

? Love is the result of growing in all of the previous qualities in this list. Why is love so significant in the journey of spiritual growth?

Possible Answers: Love binds all these attributes together. God calls Christians to love throughout Scripture, and is described as being Love. Love is what God wants most from us, and it is how we show the world that we are different. Cross-references to God and love:

Mark 12:30-31 — ³⁰‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.

1 Peter 4:8 — Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

John 15:17 — This is my command: Love each other.

? How does the way you love others reflect God’s love?

Possible Answers: The practical ways we love our family, friends, coworkers, and others is a reflection of God’s practical love and provision for us. If we are kind, good listeners, active participants in their lives, and generous with our hearts, they can see God in those reflected qualities. The answers your group gives will vary by person. Encourage them to open up by sharing your own experiences with love pointing the way to God’s love.

? Optional: What does it look like to be “ineffective and unproductive in [our] knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”? Why does it matter how productive and effective we are, as Christians?

Possible Answers: An ineffective and unproductive Christian may not be growing personally, nor might they be sharing the good news about Christ with others. A Christian in this futile place might also be proud but not connected in a meaningful way with other Christians. 1 Corinthians 8:1b says, “But knowledge puffs up while love builds up.” Just knowing the truth doesn’t mean that you are using it wisely or loving others well. All of us need to keep striving to grow deeper in our faith. Knowing Christ should transform our lives from the inside out—our lives after Jesus should look significantly different from our lives before Jesus. If you’re continuing to outwardly live the same life, it may be an indicator that your knowledge of Jesus hasn’t made its way down to your heart.

Read Out Loud: In the ESV translation, “unproductive” is instead written as “unfruitful”; this can be connected to John 15:2, which says, “He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.” We are meant to be fruitful in Christ; it is our purpose. God cares deeply about this!

? How does your transformed heart affect your desires and actions?

Possible Answers: A transformed heart can show up in a million ways, but here are some examples: You may be more prone to forgiveness than harboring bitterness for hurts and wrongs. You may love those who are difficult to love, as Christ loved you. It could lead you to sharing the hope of Christ with someone else, and inviting them to church. It may mean integrity at work or a servant heart in your relationships.

Leader's Note: You may choose to use the next two questions in your accountability time depending on the level of comfort of your group.

? What is drawing you away from God's truth, or causing you to forget that He cleansed you from your past sins? (vs. 9)

Possible Answers: Personal; will vary. This question will allow people to examine what is distracting them, which will then enable them to think about how they can remove or cope with the distraction that pulls them away from God.

? What practices or activities tend to draw you to God's truth? How can you prioritize your relationship with God, growing in what He calls us to in this passage?

Possible Answers: Personal; will vary. This is important as it ties in with the last question, and propels people forward into positive action. For some, being outdoors, in creation may draw them to God. For others, it's through reading, through using their gifts and passions, or through Christian community. We should carve out time in our busy lives for the activities and practices that draw us closer to God.

For Discussion and Accountability

? How can you develop the qualities/priorities listed in this passage (vv. 5-7) this week? How will that help you in your walk with God?

? Though God has given us everything we need to be fruitful in Him, sometimes we feel lacking in certain areas. What do you need from God this week, or what truth do you need to lean into? What steps can you take to take hold of these things this week?