

Passion for Your Journey

2 Peter 1:1-11

Introduction

Believers are to be diligent to pursue their spiritual development with passion in order to be useful to God on earth and have an abundant entrance to heaven. Followers of Jesus Christ should be intentional about their pursuit of what God has provided by participating with God in maximizing the gifts given to us, both for usefulness now and in eternity. Passivity will not bring the desired result of a triumphant trip to heaven. You can't sleep walk through the Christian life and expect to gain that which requires your effort. Diligence is also necessary to experience maximum spiritual development. Growth doesn't happen without your participation. 2 Peter 1:5 says we are to make every effort which implies that we are to do our best to do our part to grow in God. Without this diligence, we sabotage our ability to experience spiritual victory over the world. It is the new nature (2 Peter 1:4) that gives us victory over the world, and that new nature is cultivated through our diligence.

Diligence involves disciplining ourselves for godliness. It's like bodily exercise; in the same way you must discipline yourself to work out, you have to discipline yourself to grow spiritually. Development doesn't just happen automatically. Believers must cooperate with the work of God within us. While the work of salvation has been done because of Christ's payment for our sins, it is our responsibility to work in order to connect with the gift we have been given and to use it. We must work out our salvation (Philippians 2:12-13). In this passage Paul was exhorting the believers to press to become Christ like in their everyday lives. This is the work that one does in salvation while partnering with God's divine nature given to us.

The only way this work will happen is if we prioritize our activities to bring glory to God. We must be mindful of doing that which brings God pleasure, and passionate about pursuing that which honors Him. We can achieve diligence by understanding that we already have a great foundation for our faith. Through our commitment in word, thought, and action, we are only adding to it. The responsibility for the hardest part of our faith walk has already been done through the death and resurrection of Christ. It is simply our role to build on this salvation, through faith exhibited in our Christian life. Diligence is accessed by understanding the importance of faith, and that without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). Our faith must be married to works in order for faith to develop and grow, and for us to receive an abundant entrance into heaven.

Getting Started

1. 2 Peter 1:5 tells us to make every effort to add to our faith the building blocks of spiritual development. This takes passion and diligence. What are you passionate about it? How does your treatment of that which excites you compare to your passion for spiritual growth?
2. Do you have an example in your own life of how your faith is married to your works? Give those in your group an example of where you are currently exercising diligence.

Let's Get Personal

1. Could you be more diligent in your spiritual development? What would that diligence look like? What is getting in the way of you taking action in the area that comes to mind?
2. Where in your spiritual walk do you struggle with the discipline required to exercise diligence? In other words, where do you want to improve but struggle with the discipline or self-control to do it?
3. What do you think would change in your life if you exercised more discipline and diligence in your spiritual walk?

Take the Next Step

1. What's one thing you can do this week to exercise discipline and diligence necessary to participate with God by building on the great foundation of faith that has been made available to you? Share with your group, then spend time in prayer for each other, asking God to help you do your part so that you have victory now and a triumphant entry to heaven later.
2. Want to dig deeper? Take a look at Philippians 2:12-13; James 2:14-20; Romans 5:1-2; Hebrews 11:1,6; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Colossians 1:29; Ephesians 3:20; and 1 Timothy 4: 7-8.

Renew Your Mind

"... He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world..." 2 Peter 1:4