

A Weathered Soldier Speaks: 2 Peter 1:5-11

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 September 2026

Preacher: Jayson Turner

[0:00] Amen. You enjoy that church? You say amen. Why don't you go and have a seat.!

11, this morning, and I've entitled the sermon, not that sermons need a title, but Add to Your Faith. But it's as a question, add to your faith? So, if you want to put that in, go ahead and do that. Well, let me pray for our time, and then we'll spend some time in God's Word this morning.

And it's good to be together this morning, church. Amen? It's good to be together. Well, let's pray. Father, we come before You this morning, and we delight to gather to begin our week praising Your name, Jesus.

You're worthy of it. And Lord, I pray that there would be a refreshment for each person here this morning, spiritual refreshment. Lord, that we would be built up in our faith.

[1:28] I pray, Lord, that You would this morning open our eyes, and we would behold wonderful things from Your book. I believe that that's already occurred in our neighborhood groups and our discipleship this morning, as we considered some of the pages of Hosea.

And Lord, I trust that You will continue to do work through Your inspired Word, through the proclamation of Your Word, through the power of Your Spirit.

And Lord, that we would hear from You today. So, we give You thanks, and we commit our time to You now. It's in Jesus' name. And all God's people said, Amen. Amen.

Amen. So, we just began two weeks ago this new book that we're studying together, 2 Peter. We've entitled this sermon series, A Weathered Soldier Speaks.

And we found out in the last couple sermons that Peter is at the end of his life, even perhaps this is the night before being executed within the capital city of Rome.

[2:34] He pens words of encouragement for our benefit. And I was just thinking this week, like, he didn't have to do this, and yet he took the initiative, he took the time to do so.

This is a man who lived out his days well, following Jesus, living for God's glory, living for the joy of others. And he wants all who follow in his footsteps to do the same.

So, he took the time to pen these words. Even for those of us who follow Jesus now some 2,000 years removed. But brothers and sisters in Christ, we have the privilege to hear the words from a faithful, not a perfect soldier who walked with Jesus in this life.

And I believe that he is giving us his very best in his final words. Now, recall last week, we were actually encouraged, we were reminded that it is possible to walk, to follow Jesus in this life.

And I hope that you left last week built up, encouraged. Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1, verse 3, So, that power that raised Jesus from the grave is actually the same power and work within each of us, those of us who have claimed Christ in this life, who have repented of our sins and cried out to the Lord to be our Savior.

[4:16] That same power is at work within us. We have a new nature in Christ. We have a new heart in Christ. We have God's Holy Spirit dwelling within us.

We now have an appetite for God's glory that is now on board for the first time. I have a friend, a young man actually at the school that some of my kids attend.

And he has a condition from birth where he has never smelled. The nerve connecting the nose to the brain, it's missing.

And he doesn't even know the concept of smelling. The best, he's nose blind. And, you know, people have tried to describe to him what it's like to smell. And he's like, okay, I mean, and he's like, Jay, I think the best thing that people have told me is like it's like tasting with your nose.

But he has no concept of that feeling, that experience. That's like us before Christ. We didn't have an appetite for God's glory. That's now on board for the first time.

[5:23] And so we have a desire to live for his glory. And I love the fact that we can do this. Peter's saying it's possible. You can walk with the Lord in this life.

There's massive encouragement there. Especially if you're coming off a week where maybe you didn't walk so well. Or a year where you didn't walk so well. Or there was a season of rebellion that you keep reflecting back upon.

And yet Peter this morning is saying, it's possible. You can follow Jesus in this life and be faithful to that. In fact, it's so good that Scott penned a new word, coined it.

I even like put it into my dictionary and word so that when I see hopefulist, it's like it's part of our vocabulary now. But we can be hopefulists. And I think we need encouragements like this.

But God, he's doing a work and we can walk with him in this life. We have the resources. And Peter's telling us, hey, as I look back on my life, it's actually possible.

[6:22] Because I could look back on my life and I could see some of those faithless days. I could remember the evening that I wept bitterly after denying Christ three times. But then he sees there's a whole bunch of days where he walked faithfully with Jesus.

And friends, we can too. Amen? So let's look at this new life that Peter paints for us. And we see it in this section that we're going to be studying this morning.

Beginning here in verse 5. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue. And virtue with knowledge. And knowledge with self-control.

And self-control with steadfastness. Steadfastness. And steadfastness with godliness. And godliness with brotherly affection. And brotherly affection with love.

For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.

[7:29] Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure. For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall. For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior. Now, as careful students of God's word, we've been encouraged that we can walk with Jesus. We can see transformation in this life.

But if you consider the passage we're looking at, not only is it possible, but you've probably recognized it's actually expected.

We have a king who has organized his kingdom in a particular fashion, and he actually has expectations on his subjects.

See, salvation without transformation, it's actually not a biblical concept. I mean, unless, of course, you're the thief on the cross, right?

[8:39] You profess Christ, and there's not a lot of time to see transformation occur. But for the majority of us, we came to faith, and now we're given days. And so salvation without transformation, it's not biblical, but it gained traction, certainly.

And we see it in different places in Scripture where, like, for instance, the church in Corinth, they were struggling with this concept. I think it's definitely fashionable in many Christian circles today that you can come to faith in Jesus, and essentially nothing changes.

And, in fact, Paul warned us. He told Timothy this in 2 Timothy 4.3. He says, hey, the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.

And so certainly there are some today that sort of believe I can come to faith, I can get sort of the bronze package, not the one where I'm transformed, the gold and maybe the silver, but I'm going to take the bronze, you know, I get salvation, and then I get to live my life.

I run into this all the time, driving Uber. It's surprising to me when I'm having a conversation with someone, and, you know, what are we doing Saturday night? Oh, we're going out.

[9:59] We're going to get just blitzed. And I'm like, oh, okay. And what about the rest of the weekend? Oh, we got church in the morning. I'm like, and yet what's shocking is there's no pause.

This is just like, this is normal. This is accepted. And yet as we come to God's Word, this is not the expectation for God's people.

Friends, theology and ethics, or we could say belief and behavior, they don't stand in isolation from one another. Good theology always has implications on the way that we live.

And in regards to being a disciple of Jesus, it's not enough to simply believe. Now, this is important. Faith alone is enough to save.

Faith. But action demonstrates the genuineness of that faith. It's the fruit. If there's no fruit, what in the world has been planted?

[11:05] It's not an apple tree. It's not a fig tree. I don't know what you're growing. Maybe you're growing some hairy vetch. I don't know. But there's going to be fruit that manifests. And I would say just a very elementary question.

To be a follower of Jesus implies what? That you actually follow. And that's what Peter's getting at this morning.

Or as he put it in verse 5, For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith.

Make every effort. This is our role in sanctification. Power's on board. There's gas in the tank. New nature.

Spirit of God dwelling within us. Hey, we can drive. Justification. Sanctification. Don't mix them. Justification.

[12:06] Being declared righteous. That's all God. We add nothing to our salvation, save perhaps our sin. Sanctification is us and God.

And probably the best text that describes this is when Paul writes to the Philippians in Philippians 2, 12, and 13. And he says, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now not only in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. So, sanctification is us and God.

I think the best metaphor, actually, for this is probably gardening. How many of you guys love to garden here? How many of you guys hate to garden, but you garden? Yeah, I get it.

I know. Scott, hand raised. Yeah, gardening. Have you ever seen, like, a giant sunflower, and you're like, how did God squeeze that massive flower and the little seed?

[13:15] What? How does that even work? I don't know. But I can certainly participate because I'm out there, and I'm weeding, and I'm irrigating, I'm tending, but it's God who causes the growth.

And I think that is the best picture of sanctification. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling because it's God who works in you. And here, Peter says, the work, supplement your faith.

The Greek word, epichorizeo, which is where we get our word choreograph, choreography from. Choreograph your life. Fill it with the right things.

Build upon. Furnish. Furnish your life. Could you imagine building a new home and then you, like, put nothing in it?

You don't paint it. No carpet. No sofas. No rugs. No coffee tables, end tables, appliances. You just leave it in. You're like, that's a house, but it's not a home.

[14:25] Right? You fill it. You furnish it. We have the fire station. It's coming together. Right? And we're going to furnish it. We're going to put some really nice things that we might even put, like, a caffeine dispenser in there.

Right? Like, it's going to be, it's going to be wonderful. You want to fill that. You want to furnish it. And I think maybe that's the metaphor we can think about. Add to your faith. Furnish it. We don't leave it empty.

And so, friends, these are very practical words. Amen? These are also very disruptive words.

Amen? Amen? Amen? Yeah. Because Peter's actually talking about, what? Changing one's behavior. Which is something our flesh fights against.

And I would say the central reason why people don't come to Jesus, it's not intellectual, it's volitional. And even Jesus told us that in John 3. Men love darkness, hence they avoid the light.

[15:33] And even for those that are in Christ, we are still in this process of wrestling, right? With the old man, we're wrestling for all of these areas to be surrendered to the Lord.

Sometimes we don't do so well. So, I've been out of commission for about a week and a half, but I'm back to a degree.

Whatever you guys gave me, thank you. But last Saturday or so, we were up, we were at the Dahlia Festival, and I wasn't doing great.

We had a men's breakfast, and then I just went, and I basically laid down on the grass. And I was just kind of, then I had to go to the car for some reason. I'm just kind of wandering around. I'm trying to navigate. And I'm like, I'm barely kind of like there.

And I ran, there was a young man, young lady. They were trying to get by me. And I was obviously, we were just not in sync. And I went, you ever had that?

[16:34] and nope. And, but I was like not quick on my game. So, I was probably just the problem. I get that. And, and we were doing this. And then finally, the young gal just, you know, we get by each other, and she's like, she doesn't say, oh, you know, excuse me.

She goes, excuse you. I know what James 119 says. I, I know, right, that I need to be like quick to listen, and slow to speak.

Like, I know God's word. But in my compromised state, I said, excuse you.

Not your pastor's finest moment. And, it was the flesh. And I just, then I got to the car, and the whole time, I'm like, excuse you.

What? What? And so I'm like, Lord. So I had to repent. Lord. That was, you know, I was looking, I did not see, could have had a conversation. Hey, you know, I was a little chippy back, and, but it's like, that's that, that battle, guys.

[17:53] Well, let's consider the furnishings that we're to, to fill out our lives with as a result of knowing Jesus. Verse five. This very reason, make every effort to supplant your faith with virtue, virtue, knowledge, knowledge, self-control, self-control, steadfastness, steadfastness, godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

We're given from Peter seven characteristics that grow out of, that are, that we put forth effort in, that are part of genuine faith.

And, I believe here, Peter is speaking as the artist, not the engineer. I don't see a sequencing here as though you work on one, you work on virtue, and then if you get that down, then you can get on to, to knowledge, and I don't see that here.

I think he's just, he's painting a picture for us of what a genuine believer looks like. And so we're just going to try to hit these things and maybe draw out a few applications from each. Seven characteristics, furnishings to fill out our lives with.

First one is, what? Virtue. For this very, very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue. What is virtue? It's goodness.

[19:06] It's moral excellence. It's that which happens both on the outside, but also the inside. The psalmist says in Psalm 19, 14, let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable.

Where do we find virtue? Where do we find goodness? Like, should we go and spend more time on social media and find, I mean, are we getting virtue there?

Watch more movies? Maybe hang out with friends that lack morals? Are we going to collide with virtue? And how do we even know what the morally good is?

It's interesting. Plato, 4th century BC, Greek philosopher, kind of wrestled with this question and he actually asked a question.

One of his writings, Euthypro, is this writing where Socrates and Euthypro are having this conversation and he created this dilemma and apologists have sort of asked the question related to the question he asked in this conversation.

[20:27] and he asked this question, is something good because God commands it or does God command things because they are good? How would you answer that?

Is something good because God commands it or does God command things that they're already inherently good? And I would say, don't be hasty in the way that you answer the question because actually both answers are flawed.

If you were to answer it, things are good because God commands them. The problem there is that moral goodness now depends entirely on God's command. And if he were to command cruelty as good, is that now good?

This makes morality, goodness appear arbitrary. But if you answer the question that God commands things because they're good in and of themselves, then goodness would exist independently of God.

Which means something is ultimately above God, dictating to God. God answers to morality. And I would say a better way to answer the question, the biblical response is a third option, that goodness is actually grounded in the very character of God.

[21:38] God doesn't arbitrarily invent goodness through commands, nor does he discover an external moral standard. Rather, God's nature is the ultimate standard of goodness.

And then his commands express that nature. Right? God is light. In him is no darkness. So virtue emanates out of the character of God. And so then, how do we know what the good is practically? Where do we look? We look to God.

And what's so brilliant about God is he allows us to do this specifically through the incarnation. Now we have goodness with flesh. This is super helpful.

We look to Jesus. We spend time in the Word and we observe Jesus, right? Oh, the one who came not to be served, but to serve.

[22:36] Well, that's an aspect of goodness as it is a virtue of Christ. And so we look to Jesus. But what's also very cool is we can look to friends who are being transformed by Jesus.

They're not perfect, but I think that's the grace of the church. Oh, now I can see goodness. I can observe that in others. Right?

When I got chippy with that gal at the festival, who was the first person I thought of? Pastor Scott. Because I'm like, excuse you?

I'm like, great. Scott was returning a dishwasher for the seventh time and he's being gracious and I just get in the way of this growl and I can't even say, oh, excuse me.

So I was like actually thinking about you, Scott, going, oh, man. Wow. But I have an example. We have an example in one another. That's the grace of the church.

[23:45] We're helping one another as we walk faithfully with the Lord. Yeah. For our teens, if you spend most of your time with friends that don't know Jesus or are token in their pursuit, I don't think virtue's got a chance to form in your life.

In fact, I know it doesn't because Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15, 1333, bad company corrupts good morals. And I would say, young people, don't advocate for your carnal friends.

Like, I gotta go and I gotta go to the party. I gotta go cruise the streets so that I can be a witness to my friend. No, don't do that. If you want to be a witness, we have an amazing youth ministry discipleship plan here at the church.

Invite them. Come to a Wednesday night. Come to a Bible study. Come to a social gathering with other believers. You have plenty of opportunity to be a witness in better contexts.

All right. Second characteristic, second furnishing to fill out our home with. Make every effort to, verse 5 says, to supplant your faith with virtue and virtue with knowledge.

[24:51] Knowledge. Knowledge. Wait a second. Didn't Paul in 1 Corinthians 8 tell us that knowledge puss up? And now Peter's saying, you need more of it.

I would say, Paul's point in 1 Corinthians, hey, you need to grow in equal parts humility and love. But I don't think Paul ever advocated for people staying simple, untaught.

So what sort of knowledge? Well, Peter's actually already told us the type of knowledge we need to grow in. He says in verse 2, it's knowledge of God and of Jesus.

Verse 3, it's knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory. So it's knowledge of Christ. That's where we need to grow. But it's interesting in those two places, Peter uses a term for knowledge, epinosis.

Okay? And it's a particular kind of knowledge. It's a deeper, personal, experiential knowledge. But then when he gets here to verse 5, Peter uses the common word for knowledge, just gnosis.

[26:00] It's not epinosis, it's gnosis. But I think his point here is this. You already have personal knowledge of God. You're in relationship with Him. But here he's saying continue to grow in your understanding of His ways.

Don't rely on yesterday's insights. You memorize verses in Awana, but are those the only verses you're able to meditate on and then share with others?

Give attention to your soul today. How do we grow in our understanding of God's ways? Man, we just play more video games. I'm just telling you, those phone games are the best, right?

No, by reading, thinking, discussing with one another centrally, God's word. That's how we do it. Had a great discussion this morning in our neighborhood group. If you're not here 9 a.m., please gather.

We want you to be part. We want you to know people more than in a larger gathering. They're smaller groups. We'll find one for you. And we're encouraging you.

[27:06] Actually, like, spend time in the Minor Prophets during the week. You should be reading Hosea this week. Chapters 8 through 10. There you go. I know what, I know what a portion of my quiet time, abiding time, is going to be this week.

Let's spend time in Hosea chapter 8 through 10. We can all do that. We're trying to, we're trying to be self-feeders. We're trying to hear from the Lord directly through His word on our own.

That's how we grow in knowledge. If you don't have a Bible reading plan or a program, Scott and myself, we have a friend that we've never met. His name's Gregory. He's South African.

But he reads the Bible to us, to both of us. He's on the Dwell app. We like him because he's got a cool accent and we sound like Hicks. So, you know, whatever it takes, if that's how you redeem your commute, praise God.

But like, prioritize. Because Peter says, man, you need to, you need to furnish your home, your spiritual home. And to goodness, knowledge.

[28:08] Verse 6, and to knowledge, self-control. Third, furnishing, self-control. This is a virtue related to one's passions. I think there's an emphasis here related to our sexual appetites.

That strongest passion, right? Let marriage be held in honor, says in Hebrews 13, 4. Let it remain undefiled, the marriage bed undefiled. If you're married, if you're unmarried, don't dabble with sexual intimacy.

Don't dabble with sexual intimacy if you're not married. It's thievery. Okay? If you're married, don't dabble physically, mentally with another.

For both married, unmarried, let's be draconian in our fight against sin. Especially as it comes to us through technology, or I could just say through our screens. Big screens, small screens.

I love Pastor Noah. He's encouraged the youth. He's done a lot of work in the area of just theology of technology. And he's like, man, put your phone to bed.

[29:16] Like, you put yourself to bed, but you put your phone to bed. Have a bedtime. When you know, like, man, if this is going to be a temptation, then you put it to bed. I would encourage you to do that. For some of us, it's just, you need to be more disciplined because you wake up in the morning, you're still in bed, and you're just starting to scroll.

No, don't do that. Because you want to begin in the morning devoting yourself unto the Lord. Julie and myself, we put our phones in the bathroom, charging. We bought, like, old school alarm clocks. They still make them.

It's shocking. I mean, you know, it's not an option. You wake up at 3 a.m., well, I guess I'm going to have to pray. It's not such a bad thing. There's not a characteristic that undermines our witness faster than believers who live for their secret passions and lack self-control.

I think we've all heard the stories, right? I mean, the beginning of this year, Philip Yancey. I have a ton of his books. And then he comes out and says, hey, I was in an eight-year adulterous relationship.

Now, I commend him because he had the integrity to say, you know what? I'm done. I'm out of ministry. And I need to get right because I have an appointment with the Lord. The cost, friends, however, is emotional doubt that it energizes in those that are watching us saying, man, is the faith in Jesus, is it really legitimate?

[30:46] I recently had a conversation with a young man who's like, he's filled with just rage and emotional doubt because of the hypocrisy of a parent.

This week, I was made aware of two other individuals. Same exact story. Nothing will undermine our testimony faster than when we don't furnish our faith, our home with self-control.

All right. Fourth, verse six, it says, self-control, steadfastness. Steadfastness. What is steadfastness? Steadfastness is remaining even under trial, patiently enduring, persevering.

It's, as Eugene Peterson said, it's that long obedience in the same direction. Even with disappointment, that's steadfastness. Even with unanswered prayers, that's steadfastness. Even in difficulty, you're not hitting the eject button. We need people in our lives who are steady at the plow, unshakable. Amen?

[32:00] Steadfast, even in the face of slander, accusation, or culture telling us that we're hateful in our allegiance to Jesus or all that he says that is praiseworthy.

Steadfast people don't change their theology in order to hear the applause of the world. Oh, how we need steadfast people. Remember Jesus?

John 7, 7, hey, the world hates me. It could have loved him, but it hated him because he said, hey, your works are evil. Man, if he would have just toned it down, he would have been so much better loved.

Steadfast, steady. This is probably my favorite characteristic in Pastor Scott. He's steadfast. Truly.

This is probably one of the best gifts that he gives forth, gives to our church. He's steady. You want a lead pastor who is steadfast, friends.

[33:06] Amen? Amen? Amen. Okay? If you've got a sea captain, you need somebody steadfast in the midst of all those storms. Same goes for lead pastors. And I love that. I love that. It's an encouragement to me, and it's a grace for our church.

Man. I would say, too, if you want to be a parent or you are a parent, do you think you need steadfastness? Any hard days? You need steadfastness.

You will need this quality to adorn your life. Just heard recently parents saying, hey, you know what? I am working on no's for my child because I need to prepare them for adulthood.

So I make it a practice to say no at least once a day. It's not going to be popular. Some of you want to be missionaries overseas?

This is the quality that's required in spades. Why? Because mission work is hard. Are we good?

[34:15] You take care of that girl. Vested. Man. Steadfast.

Steadfast. All right. Let's move on. Number five. You guys are getting all the things this morning. This is to steadfastness, godliness.

What is godliness? And mind you, these categories, there's a lot of bleed over. So you're like, oh, how do I keep that tight? I mean, godliness, godlikeness, a life devoted to the Lord.

And I would just suggest to us that godliness is more about attitude, heart posture versus a list of behaviors. Jay, I need a list. Give me the list. What's godly?

If you live your life with a reverence to the Lord, you're going to, you're going to see godliness form. Because your heart is in that posture of God. Yes.

[35:22] Whatever you ask, yes. You're going to walk in the fear of the Lord. And friends, that transforms everything. Because all of a sudden, godliness is just you saying, I'm going to take God seriously.

And now that informs the way that I work and play and parent and serve and date and recreate everything. And I would just say, practically, it's this reverence, this surrender, and it's just that posture that we need to begin each and every day with.

I think it's like waking up in the morning and saying, Lord, I want to yield to you again today. Yet again today. Lord, give me, give me a heart that's yielded to you today. Whatever you ask.

Number six. Look at verse seven. To godliness, brotherly affection and brotherly affection, love.

So these last two furnishings really demonstrate how faith is now played out relationally, right? The first one, brotherly affection.

[36:25] That's number six. Philadelphia in the Greek. I think it's the same in Latin, actually. We actually have a city with this name.

Philadelphia. You know, the motto of Philadelphia is let brotherly love continue. It's kind of ironic. Continue? Like, have you been to Philly?

I don't even know when it began in Philly. But this is the love that the Christians are to have for one another. They're to cherish. We're to cherish one another as brethren.

And I think when we come to like brotherly affection, it can easily lose like weight of the term since we have seen it. We're like, oh yeah, I know. Yeah, Philadelphia brotherly love.

Right? We've seen it in the Bible. But this is shocking that this word is in the Bible. Because this is a term that would have only been used if you were speaking of one's immediate family in this particular day and culture.

[37:32] In the New Testament, it's the only place this word is used outside of that context. That's shocking. And yet it's used to describe that affection that we're to have for one another.

it emphasized the quality of this relationship we're to express to one another. Actually, that we are a family. That was unknown in this time.

We're a family of families. Probably one of the sweetest moments I can think about experiencing this in a church when we were over on the west side, the dark side.

Okay, got it out of the way. And we were going through our adoption journey, Julie and myself, three year, long, hard.

And just thinking about the kindness, the interest of the church and the prayers that people prayed for us and meals they prepared in different moments and just often encouraging notes and encouragements that they gave us through that.

[38:40] I mean, it was just, it was such a sweet time and it was just such a surreal moment. I still remember the first Sunday we got back from Ethiopia and we showed up and Julie and myself, Julie and myself, we had the twins for the first time and Caleb and Sam and it was, it was something I'll never forget.

I felt like it was Black Friday and I was the item on sale and I was the last one because the entire church, we come through the doors and everybody just like, and you do it, everybody's kind of crying together.

And man, just that, that scene reminds me of like this brotherly affection. But it was interesting thinking about that even this week and sharing that.

I have that affection here. Like we, we feel that here. Which is really shocking. I'm not going to explain that.

But, it's just interesting how the Lord can knit your heart with His people even when you move to a different place and do life with different people and it's just like, man, it's just, it's, it's, it's God's gift.

[39:51] Like this is home. Like, and, and this is, this is a family of families. Again, I can't, I can't encourage you enough to, to come at 9 a.m. That's why we've broken up into neighborhood groups.

I mean, I know it's not like the, the cleverest thing in the world and it's like, oh, maybe it's a little artificial to have to be with these people. But yeah, you get to be with those people and you're going to get to know some people that maybe live nearby and you might even like want to get together on occasion and maybe they have a need and you want to be the one to get over there and serve and help and encourage and this is how, we got to get out of just the gathering into smaller groups.

It's how God's people have done it for the last 2,000 years. It's a brotherly affection. And then finally, number seven, we need to furnish our, our spiritual lives with what?

Love. Agape. It's the highest form of love, sacrificial love. It's really an alien love. The world doesn't know it only because of God. It's not natural.

Peter ends this list by, actually, what does he do? He raises the bar. It's not just that you're kind and you're serving those that you have like kind of an emotional affection with. It's like, we're serving the body.

[41:05] We're serving one another. But I wonder too, is this Peter's way of saying, hey, actually, let that brother, like, like, don't, don't just love the brethren.

Is this his way of like saying, also, love the world? Right? Extending the circle beyond just our community of faith that life should be given away for the joy of many, even those, even those who malign you.

I get it. Sometimes it's hard. Sometimes it's hard to think of the world and have like, oh, I want to serve. Had an occasion recently one of my daughters was driving down to vision and somebody like, you know, just side swiped her and then just ran, drove off.

I'm like, man, I love the world. Right? Lord, help me to love those that even run into my kid's car and drive off.

Help me to love the person that says, excuse you. Right? I mean, it's just super practical. I think this is the perfect place for Peter to end the list, that faith ultimately leads us to a place of loving our world in a radical fashion.

[42:29] Right? And that's Jesus. That's Jesus. That's what our king did as he walked the Via Dolorosa, right? That, in Latin, the way of sorrow to the cross.

And friends, if these seven furnishings outfit our spiritual lives, as we are gardening with God, we're putting forth effort to see these things fill out our lives, then two realities are going to be true of that, of us.

And this is how Peter ends. Two realities. If this is the life that we live and it just increases, this is what he says, verse 8 and 9. For these qualities are yours and, for if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he's blind having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. So if we have a furnished life, a fruitful life used, fruitful life, it will be used of the Lord in the lives of others.

If this is our life, God wants to use our life. We'll have effective ministry. God will use us for kingdom purposes. And if God uses us, it's actually the promise of what?

[43:54] Of joy. Because there's nothing better than being used of the Lord. So it's a promise of joy. Conversely, if your spiritual growth is stagnant, you dial it in, there's a danger of living a very nearsighted life, living for the now, which is to say just you live spiritually blind.

It's a life with no vision for God's mission. Your big dreams are flesh dreams. They're temporal dreams. And what you will be doing in life is you will be chronically clawing for joy your entire life unable to access.

You serve another person in the name of the Lord, you will experience the thing you really want, joy. How have I endured 10,000 Uber rides sitting in my car?

That's a lot of hours to sit in one's car. And that's not joyful. But what is are the conversations and the opportunities to tell people about a Savior who's so kind and has died on their behalf?

And that's joy. Second reality, as our lives are furnished with these seven characteristics, verse 10 and 11, therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure.

[45:21] For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall. For in this way, there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The second promise, your faith, will show to be the genuine article when it comes time to enter into the eternal kingdom.

That's what Peter's saying. There's an assurance of salvation, actually, that accompanies those who actually follow Jesus in this life. The put forth effort.

John said it this way, 1 John 3, 14, we know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. And when that day comes when we enter eternity, there is a promise within this last verse, verse 11, that it will be a joyful entrance.

There will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom. So I guess the question for us today that we leave with is how will we enter into God's presence?

For some who fashion their lives with wood, hay, straw, it's not going to be as joyful as it could have been. You will suffer loss.

[46:41] You will be saved but through fire. There will be difficulty, regret, sorrow. You don't want it on the day you meet your Savior, your King, face to face.

And Paul said that. 1 Corinthians 3.15, If anyone's work is burned up, he'll suffer loss, though he himself will be saved but only after fire. So I'm laboring for you and for me, for us, like let's be faithful.

Let's make every effort. Let's supplement on our faith. Let's build our lives, lives of ministry. Friends, we get one life and it's very, very short.

And I was reminded of that even this week because on Friday I sat with a friend, a wife of a husband who passed away this month, just two weeks ago.

He's out on a sailing trip or a boating trip, sailed around the United States and up into the Great Lakes, hit a storm, and he drowned.

[47:46] And it's shocking. I'm shocked. And I've done ministry with this individual for a number of years and it was just like I can't believe my friend is gone.

It's short. And Peter, at the end of his life, he's actually given us his best. Man, if I can labor, if I can tell my friends so that they don't fall.

And friends, the good news is you're not having to do this alone. We get to do it with one another.

And my exhortation for us is let's stir one another up.

Let's stir one another up to love and good deeds. Let's do it while there's still time. Amen? Father, thank you for your book, your words. Lord, we want our lives to be filled with the things that you say are beautiful.

And Lord, actually our joy, this is not duty, it's joy. I pray, Lord, that you would give us opportunities to have ministry with people this week.

[48:55] Lord, I pray that you give us somebody we could serve. Lord, that we could we could be selfless with. That we could lay down our rights.

Lord, give us a increase our appetite for holiness. Lord, I pray as temptation comes that our song, our eyes would look to you and Lord, you give us a song to sing in our hearts to you and give us ministry to carry out with others.

Lord, I think as we live these lives of ministry, it is actually one of the greatest deterrents to sin. But Lord, I pray that we would rededicate our hearts to living out our days in your service because you're worthy.

You're good. We pray all this to your glory, Jesus. Amen. Amen.