

Christian Growth; Apostles' Eyewitness Testimony

2 Peter 1

Group ¹	C	V	Description
Growth in Christian Virtue	1	1a	Author—Simon Peter
		1b-11	Addressee—“those who received a faith the same kind as ours” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salutation - v. 2 • God's gift for life and godliness, rooted in knowledge of grace through Christ - v. 3 • God's promises should lead to growth - v. 4-7 • Spiritual growth will lead to being productive - v. 8 • A call to diligence in growth - v. 9-11
		12-15	Peter's promise to remind fellow believer's of God's blessings in Christ
Eyewitnesses		16-18	Peter and the apostles were eyewitnesses, not just clever storytellers
		19-21	Their testimony is equal to Scripture as a prophetic declaration

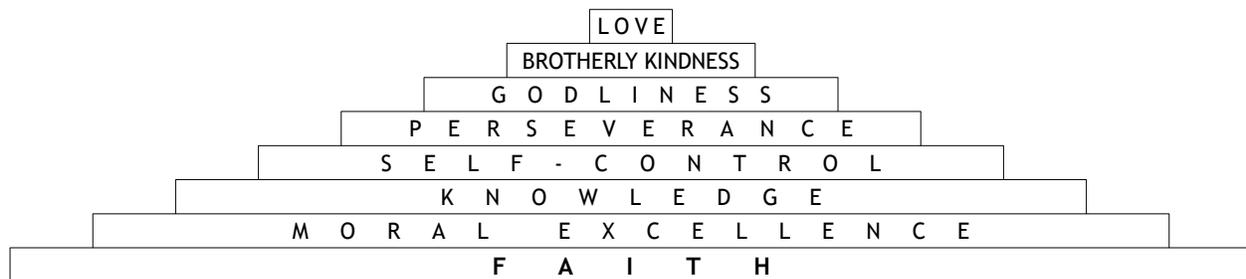
Three times in this short chapter, Peter uses the word diligent² (2) or diligence³ (1), so it would be wise to consider both the meaning of the word and its use in this chapter. Diligent is an adjective, or a noun modifier, and diligence is a noun and they have a combined meaning of being constant in effort to accomplish something that is undertaken. It implies a sense of persistence and persevering in one's effort. In this case, twice Peter asks his readers to be diligent toward something and once he promises to be diligent about something. Below are the references.

2 Peter 1:5 NASB Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge,

2 Peter 1:10 NASB Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

2 Peter 1:15 NASB And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

In verse 5, Peter is asking his readers to be diligent in building on their faith, trusting in the divine power which granted the grace and peace, enabling them to escape the corruption of worldly lusts. So what are they to be diligent in building on their faith. It can be visualized in the following graphic.



1 (NASB) “Group” column from the headings in the NASB text.

2 (*Dictionary.com* “diligent”) adjective - “constant in effort to accomplish something; attentive and persistent in doing anything; done or pursued with persevering attention; painstaking.”

3 (“*Dictionary.com*” “diligence”) noun - “constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken; persistent exertion of body or mind.”

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The foundation has to be faith, in particular that Jesus is the Son of God, who sacrificed His life and was raised from the dead, fulfilling all the Old Testament Messianic prophecies, and has ascended into heaven and is awaiting His return to establish His kingdom forever. Without this, everything else is merely human effort resulting in nothing but just another form of religion. God doesn't want religion, which is really just a form of idolatry. He wants relationships with His creation.

There is much to be said about each of these character qualities and how they build upon each other. For example, in order to add moral excellence to your faith, you need to know what God deems as being moral, thus the need for knowledge. Knowledge alone is useless but if used to develop moral excellence, it aids in developing self-control. I think you get the picture.

The second time Peter asks his readers to apply diligence is a repeat of the first. His purpose for doing so is to encourage his readers to remain faithful and continually apply these principles to their faith, ensuring their salvation.

Peter then promises to be diligent in prompting them to remember these things and to recall them. They are going to be facing persecution, and probably already have to a lesser degree. So their need to remain faithful is essential. Both as a witness to their persecutors and when they are present before the Lord.

So we too need to be diligent in building on our faith, growing in our love (not emotion, but intentional goodwill) for the brethren and for those who are in need of Jesus as their savior.

Peter gives weight to his message by reminding them of his being an eyewitness of the life of Jesus and having heard twice a Voice announce from heaven that Jesus was God's Son. (John also makes reference to being an eyewitness to Jesus' life - John 1:14; 1John 1:1-3, 4:14.)

Baptism

- **Matthew 3:16-17 NASB** After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove *and* lighting on Him, **17** and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."
- **Mark 1:10-11 NASB** Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; **11** and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."
- **Luke 3:21-22 NASB** Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, **22** and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."

Transfiguration

- **Matthew 17:5 NASB** While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"
- **Mark 9:7 NASB** Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!"
- **Luke 9:34-35 NASB** While he was saying this, a cloud formed and *began* to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. **35** Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!"

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John's Eyewitness Claims

- [John 1:14 NASB](#) And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- [1 John 1:1-3 NASB](#) What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— [2](#) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— [3](#) what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- [1 John 4:14 NASB](#) We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.

Additionally, Peter makes clear that the apostles prophetic word was as good as Scripture itself. Just as he asks his readers to build on their necessary faith, so to he had to build on his faith.

For if Jesus wasn't really the Son of God, why would these men continue to follow the teachings when He was gone? Their message and God's word can be depended on as being true and the greatest source for knowledge of life and godliness.

Key Words: New Testament, Letters, 2 Peter, Peter, Eyewitness, Apostle, Prophecy, Scripture, Faith, Diligence



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(NASB) New American Standard Bible. La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995. Print.