



The Path to the Divine Nature—

Foundational Teaching (II Peter 1:5-15)

The Discipleship Formula

“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, **add to your faith virtue**, to virtue knowledge, to **knowledge self-control**, to **self-control perseverance**, to **perseverance godliness**, to **godliness brotherly kindness**, and to **brotherly kindness love**. For if these things are yours and abound, you will **be neither barren nor unfruitful** in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is **shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins**. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will **never stumble**; for so an **entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” II Peter 1:5-11 NKJV

II Peter 1:5-11

- ☑ *“But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, **add** to your **faith** virtue, to **virtue** knowledge, to **knowledge** self-control, to **self-control** perseverance, to **perseverance** godliness, to **godliness** brotherly kindness, and to **brotherly kindness love**.”*
II Peter 1:5-7 NKJV

- ☑ **Add!**

- ☑ Add to your faith! This is not a recommendation, but rather a mandate. You must, with all diligence, add things to the faith that was given to you. This is the only time in the the entire bible that we see such a detailed math formula and emphasis on a specific order of development.
- ☑ It is free to get on the team, but it is not without effort that you develop into who God created you to be. Think like this. It cost you nothing to become a child of God, as Y’shua paid the total price for that. However, it costs you everting to become a disciple!

- ☑ **Faith—the free gift from Yahweh**

- ☑ The faith that it takes to believe Y’shua is the son of God, and that He was crucified, buried, and resurrected for you is a FREE GIFT FROM YAHWEH.
- ☑ You did not want it; you cannot earn it; you were not bad enough or good enough for it; you were not desperate

enough or content enough for it, you were not lost enough or deserving enough for it; you were not anything enough to receive this free gift.

- ☑ It is the foundation of all things. Without it you are nothing, and with it you are everything. It is the spiritual substance that makes up the universe. It is the very thing that Peter uses to identify himself and to those whom he writes, as equals—"to those with like-precious faith as mine."

- ☑ **Virtue—always the first thing that follows faith and must precede all others, or your coordinates will ALWAYS be off target!**

- ☑ The world calls this moral excellence. The problem with that definition for our purposes is that morality to the world is an ever changing moving target. What was considered unacceptable yesterday is perfectly fine today. As a matter of fact, today it is intolerable to have thought such things from yesterday as unacceptable. This is what happens when man's heart is used to define virtue.

- ☑ Instead, for our purposes, we will simply define virtue as what is right in God's eyes. To build upon our faith we must always ask this question first: "What is right to God

in this situation?" In other words, what does Yahweh think about this?

☑ And in order to know how to answer that question, we must be able to tap into the heart of God. Fortunately for us, we have not only the rights to do this (as free Faith gave us this right), but we have the ability and command to do so. We are told that "We have the mind of Christ," and we are instructed to "take all thoughts captive unto the obedience of Christ."

☑ We start with knowing what is right in God's eyes before we attempt to add one bit of knowledge.

☑ **Knowledge—is what you need to know in order to act wisely!**

☑ To do what is right in God's eyes we must fill in the knowledge gap. What do I need to know? What am I missing?

☑ This applies first in the spiritual realm as Paul prays for us by asking that God will give us a spirit of revelation and knowledge. About what? About all things that pertain to Y'shua, what He has done for us and what we have available at our disposal because of what He has done for us.

- ☑ If you add knowledge before you aim in the right direction (that would be virtue), then no matter how much knowledge you gain, no matter how much of an expert you become, YOU WILL ALWAYS MISS THE TARGET.
- ☑ This, of course, assumes you want to hit the target that Yahweh is holding out for you. Do you?
- ☑ But once you see the target and you know all you need to do it hit that target, it takes energy and effort to hit it! I can assure you of this, at that point challenges, distractions and difficulties will come. That is why you must always add self-control next.
- ☑ **Self-control—don't follow your first impulses and desires!**
- ☑ It is desirous to default to what appears easier. It can be tiring as you pursue the call of God, and even in the little things in life, you must be on constant guard that you are staying the course that He has laid out for you.
- ☑ Expedience is the spirit of the day—do what is easier, takes less effort, gets the quick flesh-satisfying results, and leaves plenty of energy to fill your life with more stuff that satisfies your craven desires.

- ☑ Telling yourself no, when yes is so tempting. And telling yourself yes, when no would be so much more convenient, is a life of self-control.
- ☑ Self-governance and self-mastery are regular practices for disciples of Christ. But I don't mean this from a personal improvement self-help point of view. I am talking about dying to the flesh because you are filled with the Spirit!
- ☑ Knowing the right thing to do never translates into doing the right thing unless you are a regular practitioner of self-control.
- ☑ And then, there is always that lingering question when what you know you should do, you do, and you know it is right in God's eyes, so you keep on doing it, and you're sure about it, but it just does not seem to be paying off or getting any easier? How long do you stay with it?
- ☑ The answer is...FOREVER! And that is why God tells us that perseverance comes next!
- ☑ **Perseverance—doing what is right no matter how hard or how long it takes!**
- ☑ In this world you will have trials, Y'shua said. Also, it is through many tribulations we enter the Kingdom of Heaven, we learn from the scriptures.

- ☑ It is clear that suffering, and challenges, and difficulties are part of the process. If Y'shua suffered, why not us? And that is where perseverance shines!
- ☑ Think of perseverance as PERMANENT SELF-CONTROL. You know what is right from God; you know what to do and how to do it; you discipline yourself to do it; and then it just won't happen; the fruit is elusive; the breakthrough absent; the hope starts to fade.
- ☑ Don't ever surrender! Don't give up. As Paul even says, "don't grow weary in doing good—in due time you will receive the harvest if you don't give up!" That is perseverance: permanent, relentless, never-ending self control.
- ☑ When you can arrive at this place in your spiritual life, and it is translating into all other facets of your life, then Yahweh wants you to add another component! It's an awesome label and it too has wonderful applications in the natural world in which we live.
- ☑ **Godliness —let's call this holistic integrity!**
- ☑ This will make more sense if we take a look at the inner workings of integrity. Think of integrity as a structural engineering term. When a structure is designed correctly,

it has integrity—it functions safely as it should and can be trusted.

- ☑ You don't want to cross a bridge over a deep chasm if the cables were used under the bridge to hold it up and the concrete blocks were used on the top as suspension support, do you?
- ☑ Suspension cables are at their best when they are suspending something. Why? Because they are designed to have strength when they are being pulled. Concrete is at its best when it is used to hold something up from below. Why? Because it is designed to have strength when it is compressed.
- ☑ When all facets of the bridge are in integrity, it is safe to cross and will offer years of faithful service to those who traverse the deep valley below.
- ☑ Godliness is spiritual integrity. This means that your Spirit, soul and body are all in complete alignment, doing what they designed to do by their creator. There is no loss of strength in any area—thereby we are living with holistic integrity.
- ☑ This alignment comes with great benefits; picture the favor of God pouring out of Heaven like rain, and all you must do is stand underneath it, in other words align yourself

with where the rain is falling. If you are not standing under the cloud of God's glory pouring out, what do you think you should do? Will God move over to you, or must you move under God's outpouring?

☑ This is something that must be practiced; it will not come easily, but it is certainly how we are called to live. Paul even encouraged us to be sanctified (set-apart) in Spirit, soul, and body at the coming of Christ.

☑ Once we have alignment, we are ready to pour all this out on others. That is why how we deal with others is next.

☑ **Brotherly Kindness—It's simple, but not easy...prefer others!**

☑ A serious disciple of Christ has so much to give others. Just meditate for a moment on all that we just reviewed and think about the type of person you have become to arrive at this place!

☑ You have so many good things pouring into your life, but why? What for?

☑ Christian Alert! It's not about you! It's easy to see that all that Christ did for us was about us, not Himself. That is how we should live, for others. No greater love is there than to lay down our lives for others, like Y'shua did.

- ☑ It reminds me how Y'shua was careful to quote two areas of scripture when asked about the greatest commandment. One from Deuteronomy 6, love God! And the other from Leviticus 19, love your neighbor! But it also tells us how how to love others in those Leviticus verses. Don't stand by and watch your neighbor sin and say NOTHING. Instead, you shall rebuke him and NOT put up with their sin. That is brotherly love at its best!
- ☑ Let's face it, there is no way to be crafted into the image of Christ, and let's have no doubts, that is our calling, without first being able to switch positions. Others first for me first. Let me say that again. There is no way to be crafted into the image of Christ, and let's have no doubts, that is our calling, without first being able to switch positions. Others first for me first!
- ☑ When you know the heart of God, know what and how to do what He calls you to, have the self-control and self-discipline to do it, no matter how long it takes or how hard it is, and you have become resolute to never give up, and you live your life in perfect alignment with God in all facets, Spirit, soul and body, and have arrived at the place where you can, with all honesty say, my life is about others, you are ready to tap the divine nature!

☑ **Love—God is love, plain and simple!**

- ☑ Peter tells us in this very chapter of II Peter that we have the rights to participate in the divine nature. Pause and think about this promise!
- ☑ We can expertise God in us! We can have the mind of God and think like God. WE CAN LOVE LIKE GOD!
- ☑ God's nature is love. And love is many things, a many faceted diamond. But love is definitely not an emotion or feeling. It is a willful, on purpose decision. Love's all encompassing, non-compromisable description is best read in I Corinthians 13. If all 16 attributes are not at work, at the same time, always, then you are not talking love.
- ☑ Love is all things all the time—God is love. It is the pinnacle of the discipleship model, the goal of the path to the divine nature. It is the full stature and image of Christ which is the ultimate goal and mandate for the existence of the church!

☑ *"For if these things are yours and abound, you will be **neither barren nor unfruitful** in the **knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" II Peter 1:8 NKJV*

☑ **Neither Barren nor Unfruitful**

- ☑ If you do these things! What things?
- ☑ Add to your faith: Virtue, Knowledge, Self-control, Perseverance, Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, Love.
- ☑ It will always pay off! It will absolutely bear fruit!
- ☑ **Knowledge of our Lord**
 - ☑ That fruit is a full and intimate knowing of Y'shua. Why, because He is the divine nature!
 - ☑ We will become like Him! We will have the mind of Christ!
- ☑ *"For he who **lacks these things** is **shortsighted**, even to **blindness**, and has **forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.**" II Peter 1:9 NKJV*
- ☑ **Lacks these things...**
 - ☑ Lacks what things?
 - ☑ Adding to your faith: Virtue, Knowledge, Self-control, Perseverance, Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, Love.
- ☑ **Shortsighted—even totally blind**
 - ☑ You are like a blind person if you do not see that this is the work you are called to do once you have received your FREE FAITH!
- ☑ **Forgotten you were cleansed from his old sins!**

- ☑ There is ONE THING that will ruin this process, stop you from progressing, and may even stop you from starting.
- ☑ Pay attention, this may be the most important thing you will EVER LEARN as a Christian.
- ☑ If you forget you were ALREADY cleansed from your past sins, you will not pursue... Adding to your faith: Virtue, Knowledge, Self-control, Perseverance, Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, Love.
- ☑ If that happens, all the promises go out the window; your participation in the divine nature, gone!
- ☑ You are no longer sinners saved by grace! You are saints! At least 16 times you are called that in the NEW TESTAMENT. You are no longer a dreadful sinner at the foot of the cross, you are perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
- ☑ In this very letter Peter tells us that we have ALL THINGS that pertain to life and godliness!
- ☑ Stop looking back! God doesn't, so why would you!

- ☑ *"Therefore, brethren, be even **more diligent to make your call and election sure**, for if you do these things you will **never stumble**; for so an **entrance will be supplied to you***

abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” II Peter 1:10-11 NKJV

☑ **Diligent to make your election sure!**

- ☑ So, live today like you know what you’ve been promised!
Your redemption does not depend on it, but your life today does!

☑ **Never Stumble**

- ☑ And by the way, what a wonderful safety net we have.
You will never come to a halt if you pursue God as such.
No matter what it looks like at any given time, you will have all that God promises!

☑ **Abundant Entrance into the Kingdom**

- ☑ The Kingdom—well that means the image and stature of Christ. You will experience that divine nature!

I’m about to die, so...

“For this reason I will not be negligent to **remind you always of these things**, though you know and are established **in the present truth**. Yes, I think it is right, as long as **I am in this tent**, to stir you up by reminding you, **knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me**. Moreover I will be careful to ensure **that you always have a reminder of these things** after my decease.” II Peter 1:12-15 NKJV

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- ☑ **Reminder of these things—so you ALWAYS have a reminder**

- ☑ The single most shocking piece in today’s scriptures is that none of this is new to his audience.
- ☑ Peter is writing this as a reminder to those he’s discipled, indicating to us that this was common knowledge of the day.
- ☑ I am simply writing it so you have it in writing forever and so you never forget.
- ☑ Question: why is this not common knowledge today in the church? Why can you interview believers of many years and they don’t know these things?
- ☑ How then, if not like this, is the church making disciples?

- ☑ **I'm about to die. I know this because Y'shua said so!**
- ☑ Lastly today we see the inspiration for why Peter is writing these things down now! He is in the very last days of his life. He knows this because the Lord revealed it to him.
- ☑ In essence, II Peter is his last will and testament. What do I want to leave for my loved ones?
- ☑ Question: what would you write down for your loved ones in a mere 1500 words if you knew you were about to die?
- ☑ And for reference, this Bible study was TWICE THAT LENGTH!

NEXT WEEK

The Path to the Divine Nature—Scripture Resources (II Peter 1:5-15)