

A Study of The Epistle of 2nd Peter
Theme: “Grow in Grace and Knowledge”

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Lesson: 4 Chapter 1:8-11 Date: 8-1-21

... be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



BIBLE TEXT:

- (8) 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**. (9) For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.
- (10) Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (11) For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into **the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**.

STUDY NOTES:

- (8) 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**.
- (9) For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.
- (Job 5:14; 12:25; Is 59:10; Zeph 1:17; Mt 1:21; Jn 15:2; Eph 5:26; Col 1:9-12; Titus 2:14; 3:14; Heb 9:14; 1 Jn 1:7; 2:9-11; Rev. 7:14)**
- (10) Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.
- (11) For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into **the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**.

(Ps 145:13; Mt 7:20; 25:46; Ac 14:22; Gal 5:6; Eph 1:3-6; Col 1:13; 1 Th 1:4; 2 Tim 4:18; Heb 3:14; 6:6; Jas 2:18; 1 Jn 2:10; Jude 24)

LUTHER’S WORKS – VOLUME 30

10. *Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election.*

“Indeed, **the election and God’s eternal foreordination** is firm enough in itself and requires no confirmation. The call is also strong and firm. For he who hears **the Gospel**, believes in it, and is baptized is called and will be saved. Now since we, too, are called, we must be zealous, says Peter, to confirm this call and election for ourselves, not only for **God**.

Now this is a way of speaking employed in Scripture, just as St. Paul says in Eph. 2:12: “You were strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without **God in** the world.” Although there is no man, whether good or evil, over whom **God** is not lord, since all creatures are His, yet Paul declares that he who does not **know God**, does not love Him, and does not trust in Him has no **God**, even though **God remains God** so far as **He Himself** is concerned. Thus here, too, although the call and election is firm enough in itself, yet it is not strong and firm enough for you, since you are not yet certain that it pertains to you. Therefore Peter wants us to confirm this call and election for ourselves with good works.

Thus you see what this apostle attributes to the fruits of faith. Although they apply to our neighbor, in order that he may be served with them, yet the fruit does not fail to strengthen faith and to cause it constantly to do more and more good works. Thus this strength is far different from physical strength, which decreases and is consumed if one uses and does something too much. But this spiritual strength increases the more one makes use of and applies it. It decreases when one does not apply it. Therefore with the battle of faith **God** first led, drove, and disciplined **Christendom** this way in shame, death, and bloodshed, in order that it might become truly strong and powerful. The more it was oppressed, the more it flourished. Now St. Peter means that one should not let faith rest and lie still, for it is so constituted that through application and practice it becomes stronger and stronger until it is sure of the call and election and cannot be wanting.

Here bounds are fixed with regard to how one should deal with election. There are many frivolous spirits who have not felt faith deeply. They rush in, attack the matter at the top, and concern themselves with it for the first time. They want to ascertain with their reason whether they are elected, in order that they may be sure of where they stand. But desist from this quickly. It is not the proper method. But if you want to be sure, you must adopt the method St. Peter suggests here. If you choose another way, you have already failed. Your own experience must teach you this. If your faith is well exercised and applied, you will finally gain assurance, and this will keep you from failing, as is clear from what follows:

For if you do this, you will never fall.

That is, you will stand firm and not stumble or sin; but you will proceed properly and confidently, and everything will turn out well. Otherwise, if you undertake to accomplish this with your own notions, the devil will soon cast you into despair and into hatred of **God**.

11. *So there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

This is the road by which one enters **the kingdom of heaven**. Therefore no one should get the thought that he will enter by means of the kind of dream and ideas of faith he has devised in his own heart. It must be a faith that is alive—a faith well exercised and applied. So help me **God**, how our seducers have written and taught contrary to this text! They have said that he who has even the slightest degree and only a little spark of faith in the hour of death will be saved. If you want to postpone matters until that time and expect to acquire such faith suddenly and quickly, you will have waited too long. Yet mark well that even those who are strong have enough to take care of, even though one should not despair of those who are weak. For it can well happen that they will enter **the kingdom of heaven**.

But this will be difficult and arduous, and it will cost much toil. He, however, whose manner of living shows that his faith is accompanied by good works and thus becomes strong will have an entrance richly provided for him, and he will enter yonder life cheerfully and confidently. Thus he dies courageously, despises life, departs with pride, as it were, and leaps into **the eternal kingdom**. But if the others enter at all, they will not go so joyfully. The door will not be open so wide for them. They will not have such a richly provided entrance; but it will be narrow and difficult for them, so that they struggle and prefer a lifetime of weakness to the thought that eventually they will have to die.”

LIFE APPLICATION

If you are richly provided an entrance
into **the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**,
then how **can you** be effective and fruitful in **the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ**?