

Attaining Faith

by Alan Martin

This sermon emphasizes the importance of diligently seeking God and growing in the knowledge of Him to experience His grace, peace, and power for life and godliness. It highlights the need for repentance, godly sorrow, and a desire for diligence to bear fruit and be effective in the Christian walk.

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Transcript

Treasures of our heart. Oh Lord, that we would guard the treasures of our heart. Our love, and our peace, and our joy, and our hope, and our expectations.

Lord, at your feet all things are possible. All things are possible. At your feet, Lord, is endless.

There's endless possibilities at your feet. There's nothing impossible in the presence of the living God. And that's our strength, and that's our hope, and that's our joy.

And everything flows from the freedom that we have, that we walk in you, Lord. Oh Lord, may we never be distracted. Even by the ministry, Lord, may we never be distracted from the beauty, and the glory, and the treasure of your freedom.

A freedom that doesn't strive. A freedom that doesn't have to work itself up, Lord. Because all the work is yours.

Lord, your word says that we have ceased from our works. And we have entered into your rest. Lord, I pray that you would give us a glorious revelation of that scripture.

Each and every one of us, Lord, our hearts would burst open wide, and receive that scripture into our hearts. To know what it truly means to cease from our own works, and to enter into your rest. For the works are all yours, Lord.

For your good pleasure. They're all yours, Lord. You simply ask us for obedience.

And to walk with you, wherever that means to each and every one of us. Not just to walk with you, but a beautiful thing. We were created to glorify you, Lord.

And just to walk hand in hand with our Father. Thank you, Jesus, that you made it way back. Thank you, Lord Jesus, that you reconciled the children to their Father.

You're a beautiful, loving God. Beautiful, loving God. We love you, God.

We love you, Father. Abba, Father, we love you. In the name of Jesus, we love you.

And our heart's desire is nothing more than to walk with you, Lord. You have your work for us, all ahead of us, Lord. We just walk.

And you take us along our path. And there it is. You've already done it.

Your Spirit's already done the work. It's not about us striving. It's just about us loving.

Oh, Lord, that we would treasure these treasures. That we would let nothing, nothing come in the road of these treasures. That we would be all for you, Lord Jesus.

In the glory of your presence, in the beauty of your holiness. That we would walk in such a way that our light would so shine before men. That that world that you love so much, Lord Jesus, that dwells in darkness, would be drawn to the light of the love of God that burns within our heart.

Lord, may each and every one of our hearts burn today. Burn with the love of God. May we be consumed by a passion for you.

And all earthly passions, Lord, would be shorn for what it is in the light of you. It's no good, Lord. It all has an end, but you have no end.

And we thank you for that in Jesus' name. Well, our brother, Alan, is going to come. Can you take your hymnal and look at 410? We'll sing this before he brings us the word.

Years ago, when I was just out of high school, lived in Athens, Georgia. We were a group discipleship program at the time. In the Bible school over at Toccoa Falls, the Christian and Missionary Alliance School, if you recall, some of you look back at the dam that broke.

And some friends of mine went over to Toccoa Falls to help clean up and literally find the bodies of the lives that went home to be with Jesus. The dam broke during the night. It was all over the news everywhere.

And I stayed and took care of the house where we were living, and I just stayed back. They needed electricians and all kinds of things. I'll never forget the stories that came back of the experiences they had at Toccoa Falls.

They said that whenever they would find a body that was under a refrigerator or in the mud or something, everybody in that whole area would stop what they were doing and they would sing this song. It is well with my soul. It is well with my soul.

You recall the story of Horatio Spafford who wrote the song? He sent his wife and girls ahead to go to England for a moody crusade. He was a businessman. And of course you recall that they died at sea in a

storm.

And when he came to come across, he'd ask the captain if he could to come and get him when they came to the area where his daughters were lost. His wife had sent back a message saved alone. And he wrote the words to these songs looking out across the waters.

When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrow like sea billows roll, whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul. We get to the chorus. Ladies, if you'll sing the it is well and all the men, let's do the bottom, the base, it is well.

And we're just going to sing an a cappella. Let's just stand together and sing this, 410. When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my lot, it is well, it is well with my soul.

It is well with my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul. Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, let this blest assurance control that Christ has regarded with my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul. My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought, my sin not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul. And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sighed.

The clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trump shall resound, and the Lord shall be saved. Even so, it is well, it is well, it is well, it is well. This is Doug Cooper from Star City, Arkansas.

Elder down in the church down there. And then Barry is pastor of Lighthouse. Lighthouse.

They're going to pray for Alan as he shares. And then after the next session, Doug is going to sing a song for us that the Lord has given to him. And I've known Doug for several years down there in Arkansas.

So brothers, Barry, why don't you start off? Thank you, Father. Father God, we thank you so much for the precious gift of your servants as they have come to minister the word of God. And Lord, we praise you that the word has come forth in truth and in power in the demonstration of your Holy Ghost.

And Father, we just lift this precious brother to you now, God, that you would just release him into this place, God. Father, that he would be hidden, that Christ would be revealed. Lord, that your word would come forth, Father, that our hearts would be pierced.

And Lord, there are so many things about you that I don't understand. I don't know how you can convict our hearts so greatly and at the same time embrace us in your love. But you've been doing that very thing, Lord.

God, we've all been convicted. We've all been pierced, God. We've all been touched in this place.

I know we have. And yet we know that you love us, O God. We know that it is in your mercy that you're speaking to us, O God.

And Father, we receive it today, Lord. We receive it and I pray that every heart would pray that prayer, that we would receive what it is that you are doing. Lord God, just once again use this precious vessel, God.

Use him, Father, to your glory. Glorify your name in this place, O God, we pray. We ask it in the precious, precious name of Jesus.

Father, we thank you this afternoon that we can stand here before you and sit, Lord, under the Word. We praise you, Father, for your blessed salvation in your Son. And, Father, we pray as our brother here speaks, we pray for open hearts.

We pray for open heaven. We pray, Father, for a reception of your Word. We pray, Father, that it might penetrate into our hearts and change our lives, that we might be more holy, more like thee, more like the Master.

And so we thank you, our Father, because you're here and because of your Holy Spirit. And so, Lord, we commit this all into your hands. Anoint him and bring to his mind words from heaven.

In Christ's name we pray, amen. Allow me to take a moment and thank Brother Brian, and Brother Frank, and Brother Mark, and Brother Jim, all those who've labored here, all the ladies who prepared the food, all the people from here in Barnes Hall First Baptist Church and the other churches here represented that are cooperating, for just ministering to us out of your means. Do you realize that Jesus' ministry included people who just followed him and supported him with their means? And you know what the Scripture says, when you find Jesus taught his disciples, actually, when you find a place that's worthy of your peace, let your peace abide here.

And I say peace in the name of the Lord Jesus on this place. May the peace of the Lord rest upon this place. I think it's worthy of the peace of the Lord.

If you'll open to 2 Peter chapter 2, or actually 2 Peter chapter 1, find it and also put a finger in Titus chapter 1. 2 Peter chapter 1 and Titus chapter 1. This message is for those who've obtained like precious faith this afternoon. You see that in verse 1? 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 1, Simon Peter a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who've obtained like precious faith. I only want to speak to those who've obtained a measure of that like precious faith today.

If you've obtained a measure of that like precious faith, either today or so far in your spiritual journey, I want to speak to you. Titus says much the same thing in Titus chapter 1 verse 1. Paul a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth which accords with godliness. I really only want to speak to those who have ears to hear today.

I don't want to argue the doctrines of grace with those who deny the power of godliness. And I want to encourage those of you who've obtained a like precious faith that Christ and God through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit can do all and end all through you. Don't waste your time arguing the doctrines of grace with those who deny the power of godliness.

From such, turn away. God's servant must not strive. Don't strive with those who deny the Christ power.

The power does not lead to godliness because the knowledge of the truth, the genuine truth, leads to godliness. And if they deny godliness, they do not know the truth. If anyone says, I have fellowship with him and walks in darkness, he lies.

And he does not the truth. But for those who've obtained a like precious faith, I'm going to speak to you. And back to 2 Peter chapter 1. Does Peter make an audacious statement here in verse 2 of chapter 1

when he says, may grace and peace be multiplied to you? Who could say such a thing? Who could say, may grace and peace be multiplied to you? Do you realize what he's saying by what's in that statement? He's full of grace and truth.

Only a person who is full of grace and truth could have the audacity to say, may grace and peace be multiplied to you. Just because you're a believer doesn't mean grace and truth is being multiplied to you. Obviously not.

Peter didn't just assume it would be. He said, may it be multiplied to you. And aren't some of us ready for grace and peace to be multiplied? Aren't we tired of living as paupers when God is able to make all grace to abound to us at all times so that at all times having all sufficiency we may have grace to abound in all things? We can live a life like God called us to be in all things in everything overwhelmingly conquering through Him who loved us.

Notice how he says this grace and peace is to be multiplied to us. Look there in verse 2. How is this grace and peace to be multiplied to us? It says either in or by. It's the Greek preposition in.

It's an instrumental. It can be in your knowledge of God. It can be by your knowledge of God.

But will grace and peace be multiplied to you apart from the knowledge of God? No. Now the next verse, verse 3. Read with me again. Actually in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.

Verse 3. As His divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness. Notice also how has His divine power given us all things through life and godliness? By the knowledge of Him. So grace and peace is going to be multiplied to us.

And His divine power has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness through a certain means. Through the knowledge of Him. Well if grace and peace being multiplied to us.

And if His divine power and His supply for life and godliness is also through the knowledge of Him. Can you see that you will have no more grace and peace nor divine power than you have knowledge of Him? Do you really fully know Him? You know Him no more than you're having grace and peace being multiplied to you. You know Him no more than you're experiencing divine power to live a godly life.

And if you claim to know Him and that's not the manifestation of knowing Him. You've deceived yourself. Do not merely listen to the word.

And so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. He that merely listens to the word and does not do it himself is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror.

And what does this man do? How quickly does he forget if he doesn't do? Immediately he goes away. He forgets what he's like. But if you really know the Lord.

And if you're growing in the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace is going to be being multiplied to you. You're going to be endowed with power from on high.

The power that you receive from really knowing Jesus Christ. That's why Paul said look with me in Colossians chapter 2. Actually chapter 1. Colossians chapter 1. Let's start with verse 24. I now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of His body which is the church.

Which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you to fulfill the word of God. The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations but now has been revealed to His saints. To them.

God has willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles. Which is Christ in you. The hope of glory.

Him we preach. Admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ. I think that there's going to be some people who think they're going to get to heaven and say Paul didn't you know no one can be perfect? I think if the apostle Paul labored he never labored in vain.

And if he labored to present every man perfect in Christ I think that's what we should all labor for. Full, mature, complete, adult, finished, productive, stable, steadfast, abounding in the work of the Lord. Perfect men.

Bearing fruit. From victory to victory. From glory to glory.

And he says in verse 29 to this end I also labor. Striving according to His working which works in me mightily. For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and for those in Laodicea and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh.

That their hearts may be encouraged. Being knit together in love. And attaining to all the riches of the full assurance of understanding.

This word full assurance is the same word that was used for Abraham. When it says he did not waver through unbelief in regard of the promise of God but was strengthened in his faith giving glory to God being fully persuaded. Are you fully persuaded that God has power to do what He's promised? See this is what Paul labored to do to bring men to this full assurance.

To the knowledge of Christ. To the full assurance of understanding. The Greek word here for understanding is sunesis.

What it was used of, it was first used to describe a place where two streams came together. What two streams are coming together here? God's thoughts and our thoughts coming together. Is understanding.

And the understanding of God's thoughts and our thoughts is perfected when we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Because it's through the knowledge of Jesus Christ. In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

That you and I supply of life and godliness is available. That's where grace and peace is going to be multiplied to us as the spirit of God comes down. When He the spirit of truth comes.

He will take from what is mine and do what? Make it known to you. He will bring glory to me. It's actually what Jesus said.

He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. So do you see as you begin to know Jesus Christ. And begin to have grace and peace multiplied to you.

As the divine power of God begins to produce in you life and godliness. Who's glorified? Jesus Christ is glorified. Not by a concept.

By a demonstration of the spirit and of power. And especially the power of godliness. But it's through the knowledge of Him.

Now if in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If in Him is everything we need for life and godliness. Then regardless of how great a treasure it is.

The only thing that can bridge the gap between potentially having it. And actually possessing it. Is what? Capacity.

What do I mean by that? Lake Michigan has a lot of water, doesn't it? Do you think Lake Michigan has enough water to irrigate most of the fields in Michigan? Do you think you could do so with a garden hose? Do you understand what I'm saying? Do you understand what capacity is? Yes, Lake Michigan has plenty of water to water all of Michigan. But a garden hose can only hold so much water. And in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

But if that comes to you only based upon your knowledge of Him. And if your knowledge of Him is limited, what else is limited? Your capacity to receive. Oh ye of little faith.

All things are possible to him who believes. You know Jesus told the parable of the sower. And there was only one soil out of four that actually bore fruit.

And do you remember that soil that bore fruit was that person who out of a... through what produced a crop? Endurance. Through endurance. Endurance is the ability to remain under.

And God has a way because we need a work of endurance. Matter of fact, James says let endurance have her perfect work. That you may be mature and complete.

Lacking nothing. So God has a way to get us ready to receive. To enlarge our heart.

To tenderize us. To break us. To prepare us to receive.

And His design to perfect His power in us does not agree with our plan. I want to feel like Superman. Leaping tall buildings with a single bound.

I want temptations to bounce off me like bullets. I don't want to feel a thing. When Christ is in me, I want to feel like a raging bull.

But the problem is I always act like one. And I do more damage when I feel like Superman than anything. But you know what? God's power is not perfected in Superman.

God's power is perfected in broken men. And our problem is we don't like the way God perfects His saints. It pleased the Father to bruise the Son.

And it was God's will to crush Him. To cause Him grief. Make me like Jesus.

Make me like Jesus. He was a man of sorrows. Well acquainted with grief.

Well, not that Jesus. You know, there's a poem in my Bible. I think I got it from the streams in the desert.

I walked a mile with pleasure. She chattered all the way. And left me none the wiser for all she had to say.

I walked a mile with sorrow. And narrow words said she. But oh the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me.

And although He was a Son. He learned what? Obedience through what? The things He suffered. It was fitting for God to make the author of our salvation perfect through suffering.

You see, suffering men and weak men need something. They need power. They need help.

That's why when Paul, not understanding, was being pled with this thorn, that this thorn in the flesh be taken from him. He pled with the Lord three times that he would not have to battle this thing that just constantly plagued him. And the Lord said to him, Paul, my grace is sufficient for you.

For my power is made perfect in weakness. Paul went on to say, Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses. Therefore, that's why for Christ's sake I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in difficulties, in hardships.

Do we really delight in those things? Do we delight when others mistreat us? Do we delight in the evil reports about us? Do we delight being neglected? Do we consider it pure joy? Do we receive it from the Father? Thank you, Father. Thank you for loving. Thank you.

Thank you. Or do we murmur and complain? Does God want any of us to sin? So what happens if he sends difficulty to break us and we murmur to complain? What do you think he does? Well, wish you could have handled it. Do you think he wants to break us? Do you think he wants to bring us to the point where do whatever you want, Lord, just make me like your son.

But there's a capacity problem. We are so weak in faith. You understand the concept of low capacity.

What happens if while our being weak in faith, God were to just fill us with power? If we must receive this great supply of grace and peace and this power for godliness through knowledge of Him. Let's say our knowledge of Him is very limited and He just overwhelms us with power. What do you think would happen? What happens if you take a huge power supply and a thin electrical wire and attach it to something? What's going to happen to that wire? It's going to overheat and burn up.

So the more the power here, if you want to take a large amount of power and transfer it from here to here, you must increase load capacity. And that capacity is our knowledge of Him. Why do you think Peter said, as newborn babes crave the pure spiritual milk of the word, so that you may do what? Grow up in your knowledge of salvation.

Do you give babies loaded guns? Do you give them chainsaws and tell them to go to work? You know, babies are cute when they're little. But honestly, they are the most selfish things that exist on the earth. Maybe they smile at you, but you just let them get uncomfortable and they scream.

You let them get hungry and they scream. You let them get wet and they scream. And they require both your arms to take care of them.

And they're only cute at that stage. But tell me that they're cute at 20 years old, if they're still an infant. And I know what I speak.

I have a daughter named Anna Hope. She'll be 20 July 19th. She wears diapers.

She can't speak. She needs help being dressed. You know what she is? It's not an impolite word.

She's retarded. Her growth and her development is not normal. And you know what Christians are? When they have not developed, when they have not grown in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, they're handicapped.

They're special needs. And they require a lot of intensive care. And they are not productive.

You know, how effective is an ICU unit? Does it mean that it's really doing a great job because there's eight beds filled and there's no beds left? Okay, so what if a church is full of people who are not productive and every week they need to be hooked to the ventilator and the pastor breathes for them. And someone has to hook their blood up to a dialysis machine to cleanse all the impurities out this week so they can go back home, fill themselves back up with more of it, come back, hook up. The place is working great.

That's what a lot of churches are. They're critical care units and they're full of people but they'll never get any work done for the ministry. They don't know God.

Or they know Him in such an infantile state that they've, honestly, they're guilty of doing something that Israel was. They're guilty of limiting the Holy One of Israel. Israel limited the Holy One of Israel.

You know what limits Jesus? Not very many things limit Jesus. But one thing limits Jesus and He could not do many mighty works there because of... Why is it so hard to figure out why He can't do many mighty works in the church today? It's like we pray, Lord, we believe, help their unbelief. We believe, Lord, help their unbelief.

They may be actually more honest than we are. So if the key to be having grace and peace multiplied to us, if the key to receiving power for life and godliness is through the knowledge of Him, is the knowledge of Him affected by our actions? Is the rate of that development affected by our... Is it relative to the way we seek Him? Or is it just growing up in Him? Is it just automatic? If it were, you wouldn't have places like Hebrews chapter 5 when the writer of Hebrews is wanting to explain more about our great priest, Jesus Christ, and he's wanting to explain it, but he says, you know, we have much more to say about this, but it's hard to explain. And why is it hard to explain? He says, because ye have become dull of hearing.

How do you take something so magnificent and so awesome? How do you take tea on steak and make an infant appreciate it? He says, you've come to need milk, not solid food. Solid food is for the mature, who by reason of what? Use. Who by reason of use have exercised their senses to the discerning of good and evil.

How can we... It's so obvious to us that exercise produces strength. How many of you think right now that you could go to the gym and binge press 500 pounds? Raise your hand. Does anyone just start off lifting 500 pounds? But they have to lift, don't they? Will you ever grow in your grace and knowledge of Christ if you do not seek Him with all your heart? If you do not crave for Him? If you do not crave the pure spiritual milk like a baby? You know, when babies are born, no one has to tell them to drink.

And the Bible says something too about this. That there are four things on earth that never say enough. Are you familiar with that? There are four things that never say enough.

One is land that never says enough water. Another is a barren womb. Does a mother who wants children and is barren ever stop wanting children? Never.

And one of the things that most impresses me that never says enough is fire. Fire never says enough. And you know, I wonder sometimes why someone claims to have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire and they crave, they do not crave for more of Jesus Christ.

The more a person really begins to know Jesus Christ, the more they want to know. How can you look into the face of the glory of God and say, praise you God, wow, it's wonderful that you're that way. It's wonderful that you're so rich in wisdom.

It's wonderful that you're so good. It's wonderful that you're so powerful. I sure wish I had some of it.

To me, that would be, oh, wretched man that I am. That's not the glory of God. That's not the glory of God.

God does not reveal His glory and show it to you to leave you empty. God reveals His glory to us and says, in Him all the fullness of the Godhead dwell bodily. And what's the next verse? The reason I just said that is for the next verse.

What's the next verse? And ye are complete in Him. What good does it do for us to bless God for the fullness in Christ if it doesn't complete us? I don't want a Jesus that I worship from a distance. I want a Jesus who lives in me.

You know, I used to sing that song. I liked the song. He paid a debt He did not owe.

I owed a debt I could not pay. I needed someone to come to wash my sins away. Now I sing a brand new song, Amazing Grace.

He paid a debt that I could never pay. I added a verse. He called me out to bring me in.

He broke the power of death and sin. I needed someone to come and live within. And now I live by Jesus' power alive by faith filled with power.

Christ Jesus brought me out that He could bring me in. I don't bless Him for just being the purpose of God giving Jesus Christ the last Adam was when He originally made man. He said, let us make man in our image and our likeness.

And He did. He made four men out of the dust of the ground and He breathed into his nostrils the breath of God and He became a living being. Well, that was the first Adam.

And Adam, He became a living soul. But when He wanted, because that race didn't work out too well, did it? So He made another Adam called the last Adam to make a new race of men. And this Adam became a what? A life-giving spirit.

And here's how this works. Here's how He completes us. Are you familiar with grafting? Like fruit trees? You familiar with that? I wasn't very familiar with that.

I believe I was led by God's Spirit to look into it. I don't plan to grow any fruit trees or graft any. But I felt led by the Spirit of God to look into this.

And here's what I found. Here's how fruit trees are grafted. They have these good trees.

The tree that has every single quality of the fruit that they want. I mean, if it's a Bartlett pear tree, they have to have a Bartlett pear tree. It has to have all the qualities they want.

They can take any old other tree. They call it rootstock. And they can take that rootstock when it's about pencil high.

And they take a knife to it. And they come above the roots. And they cut it right off.

Then they take the shoot, what they call the scion. Well, I didn't want the scion. I had to look it up in the dictionary.

I felt led by the Spirit to look it up in the dictionary. Guess what scion means? It means son or descendant. How about that? So they take the son or the descendant.

And they graft it onto the simple old rootstock. And the two become one. You know what? I admit my roots are in Adam.

But my fruits are in Christ. That's how it works. But it didn't stop there.

The Spirit of God continues to speak. I knew there was something else in it. And He walks with me.

And He talks with me. And He tells me I am His own. And the joy we share.

I'm telling you, when God is communicating to you like a best friend, it's a joy none other has ever known. I was just continuing to commune with the Lord. I had to look up.

Why do they call it grafting? I just didn't accept the fact that they use grafting. Why grafting? I'm just a curious soul. I believe the Holy Spirit gave me a desire in my heart to find out why grafting.

I should have known this. I'm familiar with the Greek language. But I grabbed another dictionary.

I've got this dictionary that takes you to the root of words. And I open it up. Grafting, grafting.

And just about the time I got to the graft section, I saw it graphine. I didn't recognize it. It's the Greek word to write.

All right. It hit me. And I will graft my law upon their heart.

When Christ, the very Word of God, has been grafted upon our heart, it produces the fruit of the Son of God. Even in common, ordinary root stock. God is good.

He's good. But this is seeking. I'm seeking.

I'm finding. I'm knocking. I'm asking.

Again, back to a question. I do want to leave. If the capacity of knowing him can be limited by our inaction, what is the answer? What will produce in us the true and appropriate response to such an offer of exceedingly great and precious promises? Because if you'll notice in 2 Peter, and you can look there, I'm not even open to there right now, but it burned in my heart anyway.

In light of these exceeding great and precious promises, that through these we can become partakers of the divine nature, escaping the corruption in the world through lust. In light of the fact that grace and peace

can be multiplied to me. In light of the fact that through the knowledge of him, everything I need for life in Godliness is there, and I can partake of the divine nature and escape the corruption of the world through lust.

The proper response to this, Peter says in verse 5, is what? Therefore give all diligence to supply to your faith virtue. And to virtue knowledge. And to knowledge self-control.

And to self-control godliness. And to godliness brotherly kindness. And to brotherly kindness love.

For if these things be in you and abound, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man. If these be in you and abound, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive. But how do these? How does virtue? How does knowledge? How does self-control? How does brotherly kindness? How does love? How do these things get in you and abound? If it's not by giving all diligence.

I'm all for revival services, and I'm all for conference, but let me tell you what God will not do. God will forgive people for being neglectful. God will forgive people for deceiving themselves.

God will awaken people to righteousness and grant them repentance. But God will not in a single servant cleanse them and fill them all the way up and make them mature in a moment. God will clean you up and put you back on your feet, and he'll say walk.

He'll grant you, but you start where you left off. And for us to preach another gospel is to leave people pitiful. God's merciful, but he wants to deal with the root of the problem.

You see, we have a great salvation. But if the message they heard, every violation and disobedience received a just recompense, how are we going to escape if we do what? Neglect. Such a great salvation.

Therefore, we better give all the more earnest heed. We let these things slip. Look with me in Hebrews chapter 6 real quick.

Just Hebrews chapter 6. O that to God that every one of us would inherit all the promises in Christ Jesus, but for me to sit here and make an altar call and call you up here and say, brothers and sisters, come forward, I'll pray for you. You'll be filled with the Holy Spirit. I can make you mature in one moment.

Liar. Liar. Men are liars that do that.

You might receive an awakening from sin. You might receive mercy from God. You might receive a touch of grace, but you will not come to the fullness of Christ apart from diligent seeking with all.

And the problem with church, a lot of churches, the problem with my own life, that's how come I'm convicted about this and I know it, because my own spiritual wall languished through neglect. It wasn't the capacity of Christ that was the problem. It was the unbelief in Alan Martin.

If I was the limiter of God, let God be true for a change in every man a liar. I was the problem. Look here in Hebrews chapter 6 verse 11.

And we desire that each one of you show this what? Same diligence unto what? Here it is again. The full assurance of hope unto the end. So that you do not become what? You know what the Greek word for sluggish here means? It's the negative prefix ne and theo.

It means not to push. Jesus says the kingdom of God advances how? Forcefully. And forceful men do something.

They lay hold of it. Paul says I press forward. I'm not sluggish, I'm not lazy.

I press forward to lay hold of that for which I was laid hold of. And you know what he did? He could say from the bottom of his heart, I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course.

I have kept the faith. And now there is laid up for me in store a crown of righteousness. We want to say the same thing without showing the same? Diligence.

That's an unjust balance. That is a false weight and God abhors such things. Jesus warned in the parable, back to the parable of the sower, this need of endurance to the end of showing the same diligence so that you could actually obtain the promises.

He explained, he added something to the parable. He said be very careful then how ye hear. For with the measure ye meet, it shall be measured to you.

Whoever has, he shall be given more. And that person shall have abundance. But whoever does not have, even that which he thinks he has shall be taken from him.

You realize that that's why some people are never filled with the Holy Spirit? They are virgins waiting on the return of Christ and you know what they lack? They lack what they think they have. You know why most people don't ask? Listen, how could it be more simple? Asking that you shall receive. Seeking you shall find.

Knocking the door shall be opened to you. All Satan really has to do to keep you from asking is make you think you have. You know, he doesn't care about what kind of sins he can get you doing.

All of those are distractions rather than an attraction. See, the Holy Spirit is all about attraction. Satan is all about distraction.

What is the Holy Spirit wanting to attract you to? Jesus Christ. He wants you to see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. And what does Satan want to distract you from? The God of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers so that they will not see the light of the goodness of God in the face of Christ.

And if he convinced you that all there is about Christianity is you don't do as many bad things as the world does and you come to church and you're on your ICU, Christian support network, and you do pretty good and after all you're not near as bad as they are. Yeah, I may not be as good as they are, but if that's it, you got it, right? Someday you'll get to heaven and be perfect. He's got you right where he wants you.

He'd rather have you that way because you'll be a lot more effective for his kingdom than being out there. That's what they learned in the Vietnam War. Just wound the Americans, don't kill them.

Because every one you wound takes three or four others just to try to help that one out. Paul says we're not unaware of his schemes. Now, I need to finish the question and be done.

If we're honest, what if we don't have evidence of the fire of God that we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire? What if you don't have a fire that says, I can never have enough. When I am walking with

Jesus, I crave the Word of God. No one has to tell me to pray.

No one has to tell me I need to read my Bible. I've never told a young person they need to turn on the radio. You know, wherever a man's treasure is, there will his heart be also.

So what if it's not there? How does it get there? How do we receive a work of diligence, a desire for diligence if it's not there? Turn to 2 Corinthians 7. Read with me in verse 8. For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it, though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry. Here's the key, though only for a little while.

Now I rejoice that not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led you to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us and nothing. For a godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Now observe this in verse 11. Observe this very thing that you sorrowed in a godly manner, and what did it produce in you? Yes, Brother Al, you know when God granted me repentance, I became so sorry for looking like Adam, that I wasn't going to stop repenting until I looked like Christ. That shows a real work of grace.

When God grants believers a godly sorrow for blaspheming his name among the Gentiles, for professing that they are the people of God and having just as much abominations and sin and failure and broken homes and biting and devouring and fighting in the works of the flesh, when we begin to mourn, blessed are those who mourn. They'll be comforted with the Comforter. That's the truth, and that's what we need in the church today.

We need to mourn with a godly sorrow. Produce diligence so that for the sake of your name, oh Lord, that my life would no longer be a contradiction of the gospel, but a demonstration of the gospel. We're going to take a break, but maybe you need to take a break with God for a few minutes.

Get on your knees and ask him to search your heart. We'll be back here at 3.30 for our next time together. So God bless you.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/faZaCoxm1fo.mp4>
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