

“Steps For Growth!”
2 Peter 3:14-16

Introduction:

1. The Last Couple Of Sundays, We Have Focused Our Attention On The Future!
 - And How The Glorious Future For Christians Ought To Stimulate Us To Grow As Christians!
 - But, In Order To Grow:
 - Can't Just Focus On The Future!
 - Need To Also Focus On The Present!
 - And The Personal Responsibilities We Have In Order To Grow!
2. And This Is Just What Peter, Near The End Of This 2nd Letter, Is Teaching Us!
 - God Has Given Us Time To Prepare For Eternity!
 - And Provides Us With Certain Steps For Growth – Spiritual Growth – As We Await The Coming Of The Lord!
 - These Steps For Growth:
 - Are Given To Us In 3:14-16! Read Passage!
 - We Each Have A Personal Responsibility To Apply The Truth To Our Own Lives In Order To Grow!
3. **IE:** Any Successful Farmer Knows What It Takes To Have A Successful Crop!
 - It Takes Nature! Need Rain / Sun In Proper Balance!
 - It Also Takes Hard Work! It Takes Personal Responsibility! Crops May Grow On Their Own, But A Successful Harvest Requires Proper:
 - Planning / Plowing / Planting / Watering & Irrigation / Herbicides / Pesticides / Harvesting!
 - These Don't Happen By Themselves! Takes Work!
 - We Also Need To Know What Is Expected Of Us, As Christians, In Order To Grow!
 - Of Course, As Jesus Said: “Without Me Ye Can Do Nothing!” (John 15:5) So, We Must “Abide In The Vine!”
 - But, As While We “Abide In The Vine” - It Still Takes Personal Effort In Order To Grow!
 - So, Peter Is Telling Us – In Order To Grow:

1. *Be Diligent!*

- 3:14 - “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless!”
 - In Order To Grow - You Must Be Diligent!
 - In Your Walk With God!
 - In This Verse, Peter:
 - Commends The People Of God!
 - Then - Commands The People Of God!
- What Does Peter Commend?
 - That Christians ARE Looking For Such Things!
 - That We Are Focused On The Future!
 - That We Are: “Looking For & Hasting Unto The Coming Of The Day Of God!”
 - That We Do: “Look For New Heavens & A New Earth, Wherein Dwelleth Righteousness!”
 - True Christians Are Looking For Such Things!
 - And This Is Good & Important!
 - But It Must Not Stop Here!
 - Why Peter Then Says: “Wherefore!”
 - That Future Is To Impact Your Present!
 - Leads To A Command!
- What Does Peter Command?
 - “Be Diligent!”
 - A Key Word In 2 Peter & A Key Command Here!
 - Diligence Is Necessary In Order To Grow!
 - Need It To Grow As A Farmer!
 - Few Days Off! Working Late At Night!

- Need It To Grow As A Christian! Diligence!
- Be Diligent In Your Position Before God!
 - “Be Diligent That Ye May Be Found Of Him In Peace!”
 - How Will You Be Found When Jesus Returns?
 - Are You At Peace With God?
 - This Peace Only Comes Through The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - Romans 5:1 - “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - Jesus Alone Can Reconcile You To God!
 - So You Can Be At Peace With Him!
 - And “Be Found Of Him In Peace!”
 - Do You Know & Do You Believe In Jesus?
 - Why Peter Also Tells Us In 1:10 - “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall!”
 - Make “Sure” Of Your Position In Christ!
 - Make “Sure” Of Your Peace With God!
 - Make Sure You Are Truly Saved / Born Again!
 - By Seeking Him!
 - By Submitting To Him!
 - By Serving Him!
- Be Diligent In Your Position Before God!
- Be Diligent In Your Purity From God!
 - “Without Spot!”
 - To Have A Character Of Purity!
 - That Reflects The Character Of Christ!
 - James 1:27 - “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world!”
 - How Pure Are You? What Are Some Spots In Your Life? This Takes Effort / Work / Diligence!
 - Be Diligent In Your Purity From God!
- Be Diligent In Your Practice For God
 - “And Blameless!”
 - To Have A Conduct That Is Pure!
 - Without Spot - Purity On The Inside!
 - Blameless - Purity On The Outside!
 - We Need To Be Pure & Blameless:
 - In The Sight Of Others!
 - This Takes Effort / Work / Diligence!
- God Has Given You Time To Prepare For Eternity!
 - Be Diligent With Your Time!
 - Be Diligent In Your Walk With God!
 - Takes Effort / Work / Personal Application The Truth! Also - In Order To Grow:

2. ***Have Discernment!***

- 3:15a - “And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation!”
 - In Order To Grow - You Must Have Discernment!
 - As You Wait For God!
 - A Discernment / Understanding Of Some Things!
 - Discernment Is Necessary In Order To Grow!
 - Need It To Grow As A Farmer!
 - Know The Weather / Soil / Insects / Nematology - Simte
 - Need It To Grow As A Christian! Discernment!
 - Discernment About:
- The Priority Of The Lord!
 - “Account” - Another Command!

- To Consider & Think About & Meditate!
- Peter Is Giving Us An Important Truth:
 - That We Need To Let Sink Into Our Minds & Hearts!
 - That Needs To Govern Every Aspect Of Our Present Life!
 - That Needs To Dominate Our Thinking!
- This Truth Is A Priority Of The Lord:
 - “The Longsuffering Of Our Lord Is Salvation!”
 - So, When The Timing Of The Lord’s Return Seems So Far Off! When It Seems Like He Will Never Come! When It Seems Like The Scoffers Were Right! Remember This Truth!
 - Have Discernment About:
- The Patience Of The Lord!
 - God Is A Patient & Longsuffering God!
 - Psalm 86:15 - “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth!”
 - The Fact That God Has:
 - Not Yet Returned!
 - Not Yet Judged The World!
 - Not Yet Destroyed The World!
 - Not Yet Set Up His New Creation!
 - Shows His Patience & Perseverance & Long-Suffering & Mercy & Kindness!
 - This Is What We Need To Consider & Discern About God!
 - Also About:
- The Purpose Of The Lord!
 - “The Longsuffering Of Our Lord Is Salvation!”
 - See The Purpose Of His Patience:
 - 3:9 - “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance!”
 - God’s Patience Is Salvation To The Lost!
 - Providing More Time & Space To Repent!
 - So Others Too Can Be Saved From The Penalty Of Their Sins!
 - God’s Patience Is Salvation To His Lambs!
 - Don’t Be In Such A Hurry For Heaven - Because God Has Given You & Me – Christians – Time To Prepare For Eternity!
 - There Are Parts Of Our Salvation That Can Only Be Experienced In This Life!
 - Salvation From The Power Of Sin!
 - More & More! More Victory! More Purity! More Holiness! More Praise & Glory To God!
 - Salvation From The Pleasure Of Sin!
 - More & More! Loving Righteousness More & Hating Iniquity More!
 - God Has Given You Time To Prepare For Eternity!
 - Have Discernment In Your Time!
 - Have Discernment As You Wait For God!
 - Keep This Truth In Your Mind:
 - “The Longsuffering Of Our Lord Is Salvation!”
 - But Also, In Order To Grow:

3. ***Keep Digging!***

- 3:15b-16 - “Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; / As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction!”
 - In Order To Grow - You Must Keep Digging!
 - In The Word Of God!

- In Order To Discover More Things About God Through His Word!
- Digging Is Necessary In Order To Grow!
 - Need It To Grow As A Farmer!
 - To Plow & Break Up That Ground
 - Need It To Grow As A Christian! Digging!
- The More You Dig, The More You Will Discover!
- Discover The Consistency Of God's Word!
 - 3:15b - "Even As Our Beloved Brother Paul Also!"
 - Peter Shows That He Wrote Was Nothing New!
 - What He Taught Was Nothing Unique!
 - The Same Gospel Truth Written & Taught By Peter:
 - The Same Gospel Truth Written & Taught By Paul As Well!
 - The More We Dig Into The Word Of God:
 - We Will See That It Is Completely Consistent & In Harmony With Each Other!
 - This Will Help Us Grow!
- Discover The Counsel Of God's Word!
 - 3:15b - "According To The Wisdom Given Unto Him Hath Written Unto You!"
 - Peter Calls Paul's Writing & Teaching: "Wisdom!"
 - But It Wasn't A Natural Wisdom!
 - Not Paul's Own Wisdom!
 - But It Was / Is A Supernatural Wisdom!
 - God's Own Wisdom!
 - That He Gave To Paul!
 - Paul Agreed!
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:13 - "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe!"
 - This Is How We Need To See & Receive The Word Of God!
 - It Is Not The Wisdom Of Man!
 - It Is The Wisdom Of God!
 - To Be Thought About / Trusted In / Talked About / Train By / Live According To!
 - This Will Help Us Grow!
- Discover The Claim Of God's Word!
 - 3:16a - "As Also In All His Epistles, Speaking In Them Of These Things; In Which Are Some Things Hard To Be Understood!" / "Difficult To Comprehend!"
 - The Claim Here - Not Everything In God's Word Is Easy To Understand! Some Things Are "Hard" To Understand!
 - There Is Milk / There Is Meat!
 - Hebrews 5:14 - "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age!" (Spiritual Maturity / Experience)
 - This Claim - Not To Discourage Us From Learning / Digging Into The Word Of God!
 - But To Drive Us To Learn / Dig More!
 - This Takes Work / Effort / Time!
 - Become A Mature Christian!
 - To Understand More:
 - You Need God's Light!
 - Psalm 119:18 - "Open Thou Mine Eyes, That I May Behold Wondrous Things Out Of Thy Law!"
 - John 16:13 - "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth!"
 - You Need To Labor!
 - 1 Timothy 5:17 - "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine!"
 - 2 Timothy 2:15 - "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that

- needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth!"
- And This Takes Work! Keep Digging! But:
 - Discover The Caution Of God's Word!
 - 16:5 - "Which They That Are Unlearned And Unstable Wrest, As They Do Also The Other Scriptures, Unto Their Own Destruction!"
 - When It Comes To God's Word: We Need To "Handle With Care!"
 - Because It Is So Easy For Those Who Are Not Mature:
 - They Are "Unlearned" – Untrained!
 - They Are "Unstable" – Unrestrained!
 - To "Wrest" – Twist / Torture God's Words!
 - "To Force Them To Say What They Want Them To Say!" (Hiebert)
 - We Need To Be Cautious When We Handle God's Word!
 - Because Mishandling God's Word Is Sin & Will Be Judged By God!
 - Revelation 22:18-19 - Not To Add To Nor Take Away From God's Words - Otherwise Will Have Serious Consequences / Punishment!
 - Why - "It Is The Duty Of The Church To Train The People How To Rightly Interpret & Use" The Word Of God! (Hiebert)
 - God Has Given You Time To Prepare For Eternity!
 - Keep Digging With Your Time!
 - Keep Digging In The Word Of God!

Conclusion:

1. Because, As Peter Mentioned Earlier In This Chapter, The Bible Is The Source For All Of Your Growth!
 - And These Are The Qualities You Need In Your Life:
 - If You Are Going To Grow!
 - If You Are Going To Use Your Remaining Time To Prepare For Eternity!
2. How Prepared Are You? To Be Prepared, You Need: D / D / D!
 - How Diligent Are You?
 - In Your Walk With God?
 - How Much Discernment Do You Have?
 - As You Wait For God?
 - Believe: "The Longsuffering Of Our Lord Is Salvation!"
 - How Much Digging Are You Doing?
 - In The Word Of God?
 - Feasting On The Meat / Not Just On The Milk!
 - These Are What You Need In Order To Grow!

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com