

09-27-2015

Message: God's Grace and Peace Come through Knowing Christ, Part 4

Text: 2 Peter 1:1-11

Introduction

- A. God multiplies grace and peace to us through granting us a true knowledge of Himself and His Son, Jesus Christ. This knowledge involves informational, convictional, and experiential knowledge of the Lord.

2 Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

- B. The way the Lord, our Good Shepherd, protects us from false teachings and teachers who would cause us to grow distant from Him is to cause us to grow closer to Him by enabling us to grow in the grace and knowledge of Him.

2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,¹⁸ but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

- C. Therefore, Christ, through His apostle Peter, commands us to make every effort to add to our faith an increasing experiential knowledge of the godly virtues of Christ.

2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence**, and in *your* moral excellence, **knowledge**,⁶ and in *your* knowledge, **self-control**, and in *your* self-control, **perseverance**, and in *your* perseverance, godliness,

- D. Moral excellence must be guided by knowledge, which will lead us to self-control in all things. However, life is often hard, and when we become tired, weary, discouraged we can be tempted to give up self-control, self-discipline in some things or even all things. Therefore, we are encouraged to seek grace from the Lord to add perseverance to our faith in Christ.

I. Perseverance/endurance is continuance in faith in Christ amid sufferings, hardships, trials, tribulations.

- A. We translate the Greek word "hupomone" in verse 6 as "perseverance," "endurance."

2 Peter 1:5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence**, and in *your* moral excellence, **knowledge**,⁶ and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, **perseverance (hupomone)**,

- B. I had unconsciously assumed it's meaning to be identical with the mere idea of continuance.

John 8:31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you **continue (meno)** in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine;

Hebrews 13:1 Let love of the brethren **continue (meno)**.

- C. The definitions do overlap, but are not completely identical, for NT writers reserve perseverance/endurance (hupomene) specifically to indicate continuing in faith amid trials, hardships, sufferings, persecutions.

1. Notice that perseverance/endurance is birthed in the environment of trials and tribulation.

Romans 5:3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that **tribulation brings about perseverance** (hupomone);

James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter **various trials**,³ **knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance** (hupomone).

2. Notice that this word, "perseverance/endurance" is used in the context of hardships, trials, sufferings.

2 Corinthians 6:4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, **in much endurance**, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses,

Romans 12:12 rejoicing in hope, **persevering in tribulation**, devoted to prayer,

3. So "continuance" has the broader definition, including all perseverance, but "perseverance/endurance" has the narrower definition, not including continuance in the absence of trials. Illustration: If a pair of our wives on vacation returned from shopping and found their husbands sitting under the shade of palm trees on a pleasant sunny day at the beach, sipping on smoothies brought to them by a pampering waiter, would they approach their husbands and say, "How do you endure this, On, how do you do it? Of course not, because there was nothing to "endure." We don't speak of enduring pleasantness, but hardship, trials, suffering.
4. So we must be careful not to deceive ourselves into thinking that because we have been continuing in faith that we have necessarily supplied "endurance/perseverance" to our faith.

II. Perseverance through trials produces Christlike character, enabling us to grow in the grace and experiential knowledge of Christ.

- A. When we supply perseverance by our faith in Christ, we die to self, allowing us to grow in all the virtues of Christ.

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,² so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

- B. That is why the Biblical writers tell us that perseverance leads to lacking nothing of God's holiness.

James 1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces **endurance** (hupomone).⁴ And let **endurance** (hupomone) have its perfect result, **so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.**

Hebrews 12:4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin ...⁷ It is for discipline that you **endure** (hupomeno); God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? ...¹⁰ ... He *disciplines us* for *our* good, **so that we may share His holiness.**¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards **it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.**

- C. How can we grow in the experiential knowledge of Christ unless we follow Him by faith through those sufferings that create an opportunity for perseverance?

Philippians 3:8 I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ...¹⁰ **that I may know Him** and the power of His resurrection **and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;**

III. Perseverance/endurance is a God-empowered virtue of Christ.

Colossians 1:11 **strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness (hupomone)** and patience;

2 Thessalonians 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, and **He will strengthen** and protect you from the evil one.⁴ We have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will *continue to* do what we command.⁵ **May the Lord direct your hearts** into the love of God and **into the steadfastness (hupomone)** of Christ.

IV. God saves us through a persevering faith, so persevere for your own soul's sake.

A. An enduring faith is that faith by which God saves us.

Luke 21:16 "But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put *some* of you to death,¹⁷ and you will be hated by all because of My name.¹⁸ "Yet not a hair of your head will perish.¹⁹ **By your endurance (hupomone) you will gain your lives.**

Hebrews 10:36 For **you have need of endurance (hupomone)**, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.³⁷ FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.³⁸ BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.³⁹ But **we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.**

B. So for you own soul's sake, don't shrink back, don't scale back in your devotion to Christ when our flesh our flesh cries out, "Spare me hardship, self-denial/sacrifice, suffering."

Romans 2:6 who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:⁷ to those who **by perseverance (hupomone)** in doing good **seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life;**

2 Timothy 2:12 **If we endure (hupomone), we will also reign with Him;** If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

V. Like Christ, persevere for the sake of the souls of others.

A. Let your perseverance be a blessing and example for the sake of the souls of others.

1. An example

2 Timothy 3:10 **Now you followed my** teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, **perseverance (hupomone),**¹¹ persecutions, *and* sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium *and* at Lystra; **what persecutions I endured (hupomano),** and out of them all the Lord rescued me!¹² Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

James 5:10 **As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience,** take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.¹¹ **We count those blessed who endured (hupomeno).** You have heard of **the endurance (hupomone) of Job** and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and *is* merciful.

2. A blessing

2 Timothy 2:10 For this reason **I endure (hupomano) all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.**

B. Those of us who are older must be examples of endurance to the church.

Titus 2:2 **Older men are to be** temperate, dignified, sensible, **sound in faith, in love, in perseverance** (hupomone).

C. Of the many who by their endurance bore witness to God by their faith, Christ, by His endurance, is our chief example.

Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **run with endurance** (hupomone) the race that is set before us,² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him **endured** (hupomeno) the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ For consider Him who has **endured** (hupomeno) such hostility by sinners against Himself, **so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.**

Galatians 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for **in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.**

Conclusion

A. When our Lord Jesus Christ returns in the glory of His Father with His holy angels, who will be able to endure His coming?

Joel 2:11 The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, and who can endure it?

Malachi 3:2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears?"

B. Who can endure His coming? It will not be unbelievers, it will not be those who have professed faith but have failed to persevere to the end. It will be those who have endured/persevered by faith in Him through the trials, hardships, sufferings of this life and have not grown weary.

James 1:12 Blessed is a man who **perseveres** (hupomeno) under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.