

2 PETER

E V E R Y E F F O R T

2 PETER / MAKE EVERY EFFORT

The Apostle Peter, knowing the end of his life is near as he faces his execution, writes with fervor to encourage the church to persevere in the midst of persecution and to walk as faithful followers of Jesus in the midst of exile. He wants them to know that, even as he and the other original apostles leave this world, God has given the church all that they need to live Godly lives in the midst of a world that is pushing them to the margins. We face the same kind of exile today, even if it doesn't look exactly the same. Peter's words hit home for us as we seek to be faithful disciples of Jesus in the midst of a hostile and opposing culture.

Part 2: Every Effort to Know Your Calling

Read the text: 1 Peter 1:5-11

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 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. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an

entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

If you believe you are called by God into a faith in Jesus, then Peter implores us to make it certain to yourself and everyone around you. We have all seen people who say one thing and do another, and it is never more obvious than with those who claim to be religious. Peter calls those who have been saved by God's grace to pursue the godly way of life and lists specific ways to supplement our faith. This way of life is an intentional path that is differentiated from the status quo, seeks to honor God and lives for the betterment of others. If we don't try to pursue this way of life by God's grace, then we will be unfruitful and ineffective in our lives. Peter then promises that if we practice this way of life, we will never fall. However, victory is not ours because of our success or our production. Peter says that it will be provided for us through Jesus. We are able to live this way of life because of what Jesus has already done for us. We're called now to live in light of what Jesus has already accomplished.

Discussion Questions:

These questions are written for DNA groups, but you can use them in any setting, including missional communities. Because they were written for the intimacy of DNA friendships, you may need to adjust for larger groups.

1. Peter calls Christians to intentionality in their faith. He says, "make every effort to supplement your faith." We can have good intentions, but it's our actions that actually affect us. Do you intend to have intentions with no follow-through? Why do you think that is? What would "intentionality combined with action" look like in your life when it comes to faith?
2. The godly way of life is also differentiated from the status quo. It's distinct from the way of the world. Peter focuses in

on “virtue” and “self-control” as specific ways our lives look different from the world. What would virtue and self-control look like in a Christian in 21st century Eastside culture? What are the most tangible ways “self-control” might show up in your life through the power of the Spirit? It may be more about what you’re “not doing” than what you’re doing. Be as specific as you can.

3. Often, the substance of authentic godly character is exposed in suffering or under pressure. What are moments you have been put under pressure in this last year? What was revealed about you? Where did your life not look like Jesus? If you desire to grow in godliness, what do you think is motivating that desire?
4. The godly way of life also seeks to live for the betterment of others, not for ourselves. What truth of the Gospel allows us to love others who may not be easy for us to love? Who specifically do you think God is calling you to love? What would that tangibly look like?
5. Pastor Eddie shared how the idea of being “ineffective and unfruitful” is really the idea of being idle. Ineffectiveness is having all that we need for life and godliness, but not trying. It’s having all the power we need, but not relying on it. God can use our trying and failing, but doesn’t use our idleness. So, even if you were to fail, what’s the next tangible step you want to take to pursue the godly way of life?