

Home Group Leader's Notes
Week of January 14, 2024

Sermon Series: *You CAN Have It All*

This new series is a challenge us to grow us up in character, qualities – branch number two of discipleship – becoming more like Jesus. This is actually stated in 2 Peter 1:4 – Peter wrote this so that we might “participate in the divine nature,” i.e., the qualities of Jesus Christ.

Our topic for the week is FAITH. This is the starting place of discipleship.

ELIJAH AND THE FALSE PROPHETS: WHO IS THE REAL GOD?

Pastor Doug taught on the story of Elijah confronting the false prophets in Israel (the Northern kingdom). Reread the story in 1 Kings 18:1-40. How would you describe Elijah's faith?

The purpose of this initial conversation is to begin to reflect on the centrality of “faith.” This was the quality that Jesus expected of all his disciples.

Elijah exhibited amazing courage which came from His faith – his belief that God called him to do this, that God has all power and is the due the worship of all people.

LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD IN 2 PETER

We are walking through a passage in 2 Peter 1. This teaches us essentials we need to live a life of reverent devotion to God that results in our transformation to be like Jesus Christ in our character and actions. This is an amazing promise!

Read 2 Peter 1:1- 11 and consider the following questions:

What is promised in verses 3-4? (a) How is God, the one who makes the promise, described?

(b) What are the results of believing and following His promises?

(a) *glorious, good, One who promises.*

(b) *participate in the divine nature, escape the corruption of the world*

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble,¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

According to verses 5 and 10, what is our part of becoming like Jesus Christ?
What are the results in 10-11?

Beginning in verse 5, Peter lists seven “qualities” (v. 8) to “supplement” or “add” to FAITH. For this week, we will begin with a short survey of FAITH as the starting place of our life in Christ. Read through the following passages and **record what you learn about “faith.”**

About FAITH: We will define (describe) faith as “Confidence (assurance) and trust in God that moves us to obedient action.” Faith is built upon the revealed character, works, and ways of God.

Be sure to read and answer each of these.

What Jesus said about “faith”

Matthew 6:30

Matthew 8:5-13

Matthew 8:23-27

Matthew 15:21-28

Matthew 16:8

Mark 6:6

Luke 12:28

What do we learn about FAITH from other places in the New Testament?

Hebrews 11:1-3

James 2:17-24

What do we learn about people who live by FAITH in Jesus?

Proverbs 3:5

John 14:21

Finally, what do we learn about how we grow in FAITH in God/Jesus?

Acts 20:21

John 14:6; Romans 3:22

Hebrews 12:1-2

Colossians 2:7

1 Peter 1:7, 8

2 Timothy 3:15-16

DISCUSS TOGETHER

Obviously, living by faith is both essential and extensive. Let's discuss a few aspects relevant to our time in 2 Peter 1.

How is Peter viewing the starting place of "faith" in 1:3-8? How does this connect with the rest of the passage?

Every other quality that Peter urges us to "add" or "supplement" to faith is not possible without "faith" as the starting place. All the other qualities of being a disciple of Jesus build onto and out of faith in Jesus Christ.

According to what we read this week, how is faith expressed in our lives? How might we finish this statement: "Real faith leads to _____."

Possible answers are numerous: trusting God, action, ministry, courage, etc.

What are the evidences of a growing faith-relationship with God? What helps you grow in faith?

Some evidences: (1) Growing relationship / intimacy with God and others, (2) an increasing passion to worship God, (3) becoming more like Jesus in character and love, (4) a growing desire to serve God – a life given over to obedience and following Jesus, (5) a joy in sharing Jesus with others, believers and outsiders, (6) a willingness to surrender and sacrifice yourself daily .

PLEASE PRAY

- Our church family has been overwhelmed by loss of loved ones, hit by anxiety, and challenged by change. Please pray for our loved ones.
- Please pray for our team of people who are partnering to help kids, students, and young adults learn to live by faith in God's community.
- Please pray for the Pavoni family who just returned to Portugal, and for our other global partners in challenging times including the Anaya family.

Grace to you as you Shepherd God's family,
Steve