

john 15:4  
**Abide in ME**



Bible studies for disciples who make disciples

Loudonville Community Church

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**THE GOSPEL FILTER:  
Make Every Effort  
II Peter 1:3-11**

**THIS WEEK'S CORE STATEMENT**

**Constant Abiding:** Disciples seek to abide in Christ in order to be faithful and to bear fruit. We find this helpful imagery of faithfully abiding and bearing fruit in John's Gospel.

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**His Life** (verses 1-8). A branch is good for only one thing – bearing fruit. It may be weak in itself, but it has a living relationship with the vine and can be productive. To abide in Christ means to be in communion with Him so that our lives please Him. We know that we are abiding when the Father prunes us, cutting away the good so that we can produce the best. We glorify God with fruit, more fruit, much fruit.

**His Love** (verses 9-17). Abiding depends on obeying, and obeying depends on loving. Love and joy go together and make it easy for us to obey His will. We should love Him, love His will, and love one another. Note the "fruit of the Spirit": love (verse 10), joy (verse 11), and peace (John 14:27, Galatians 5:22).

**His Name** (verses 18-27). We enjoy the love of Christ and of the brethren, but we also must endure the hatred of the world for His name's sake. The more we are like Christ, the more the world system will oppose us. Depend on the Spirit's power and you will be a fruitful, faithful Christian (verses 26-27).

A disciple is one who follows Christ in faith and produces fruit for Christ's kingdom! Our prayer is that the disciples who come from LCC would be both faithful and fruitful!

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We know that we are abiding when the Father prunes us, cutting away the good so that we can  
produce the best. We glorify God with fruit, more fruit, much fruit.*

## This Week's Complementary Passage

John 15:1-27 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup> These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

<sup>12</sup> "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup> No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. <sup>17</sup> These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

<sup>18</sup> "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup> If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. <sup>20</sup> Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. <sup>21</sup> But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. <sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. <sup>23</sup> Whoever hates me hates my Father also. <sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. <sup>25</sup> But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'

<sup>26</sup> "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. <sup>27</sup> And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

### STEP ONE . . .

**READING** what the passage says  
(*Read it at least three times*)  
II Peter 1:3-11 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. <sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. <sup>11</sup> For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

appointed  
 baptized  
 Caesar  
 enemy/demons/Satan  
 eternal life  
 fathers & children [in one color different from Moses]  
 Gentiles  
 gospel  
 grace  
 Holy Spirit  
 in the name of Jesus Christ  
 Jesus  
 Jews  
 Law (of Moses)  
 men of the council  
 Moses [in different color from fathers & children]  
 prayer  
 repent (repentance)  
 resurrection (raised up)  
 salvation  
 suffering  
 the Way  
 the promise of the Father  
 witnesses  
 word of God

## STEP TWO . . .

### OBSERVING how the passage moves

- Circle all of the words in these passages that speak of the Triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit, etc.).
- Underline the significant verbs/action words in these passages.
- In II Peter 1:3, underline the phrases: “divine power,” “all things that pertain to life and godliness,” and “the knowledge of him who called us.”
- In II Peter 1:4, underline the phrases: “he has granted to us his precious and very great promises” and “you may become partakers of the divine nature.”
- Highlight II Peter 1:5-7 and observe how each trait builds upon the foundation of the one that it follows.
- Highlight II Peter 1:8-9 and observe the negative consequences if you lack these traits or fail to continually cultivate them.
- Highlight II Peter 1:10 and underline the phrase: “confirm your calling and election.”
- Highlight II Peter 1:11.

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## STEP THREE . . .

### Ask the five “W” questions and the one “H” question:

1. **WHO** is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? And, to **whom** is it speaking?
2. **WHAT** is the subject of the passage? What does the passage say about the subject?
3. **WHEN** do or will the events occur? When did something happen to a particular person, people, or nation?
4. **WHERE** did or will this happen?
5. **WHY** is something said or mentioned? Why would or will this happen? Why at this time? Why this person?
6. **HOW** will it happen? How is it to be done? How is it illustrated?

## STEP FOUR . . .

### UNDERSTANDING what the passage means

*This commentary is intended to enhance your own study of the text.*

#### II Peter 1:3-11 (ESV)

**1:3 - “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.”** This verse is a refutation of the Gnostic false teachers’ theological separation of salvation through secret knowledge and daily godly living. Deity provides for eternal life and daily Christlikeness. True knowledge is faith in Jesus Christ that impacts daily living. The term translated as ‘godliness’ is a compound word that comes from “well” and “worship.” It has the connotation of daily living that is acceptable to God. Peter repeatedly emphasizes the need for godliness because of the false teachers’ neglect of personal ethics and morality.

**“Through the knowledge of him.”** This is another slap at the false teachers emphasis on secret knowledge. The gospel is the true knowledge and Jesus is the truth. This phrase points to experiential knowledge. The gospel is a person and He must be experienced, not just theologically defined.

**“Of him who called us.”** Nobody comes to God unless the Holy Spirit draws them to God!

**1:4 - “By which he has granted to us.”** Deity’s divine power has given and continues to give believers all they need both initially (at justification) and continually (during sanctification) by means of His promises.

**“His precious and very great promises.”** These descriptive terms must refer to the gospel, whereby believers become partakers of the divine nature (i.e. the indwelling of Holy Spirit). Fallen mankind’s hope is the steadfast and gracious character of God, expressed through His promises!

**“Partakers of the divine nature.”** This refers to (1) the indwelling Holy Spirit, which comes at salvation or (2) is simply another way of referring to the new birth. This does not mean we are gods or will ever be; but it means that we are meant to be like Jesus Christ. Believers are to model the family characteristics of God (i.e. the image of God).

**“Having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.”** “Having escaped” implies a completed act. Peter was writing against the false teachers who were advocating a special secret knowledge, but depreciating daily godly living. Believers’ lives are evidence of their true conversion. There can be no fruit, if there is no root!

**1:5 - “For this very reason, make every effort to supplement.”** This passage refers back to believers’ response to God’s gifts and promises in the previous verses. God has wonderfully provided salvation; now believers must walk in it. The gospel, once received, becomes a cost-everything daily discipleship. This is the paradox of the gospel. It is a gift, but also a covenant with privileges and responsibilities. The true gospel affects the mind, heart, and hands!

**“Faith.”** This term may have several distinct connotations: (1) its Old Testament background means “faithfulness” or “trustworthiness”; (2) our accepting or receiving God’s free

offer of forgiveness in Christ; (3) faithful, godly living; or (4) the collective sense of the Christian faith or truth about Jesus. In this context it refers to receiving Christ as Savior. Then the expectation is for believers to grow and develop as disciples.

**“Virtue.”** This quality was used of Christ (or God the Father) in verse 3. This trait is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It is the antonym of “excess.”

**“Knowledge.”** Knowledge of the gospel that leads to Christlikeness is a wonderful thing. The false teachers were advocating a false knowledge that led to debauchery.

**1:6 - “Self-control.”** This virtue describes someone who is able to control the self-centered pull of the fallen sin nature. In some contexts it alludes to inappropriate sexual activity and because of the immoral tendencies of the false teachers, it may include that connotation here.

**“Steadfastness.”** This term refers to an active, voluntary, persevering endurance. It is a God-like characteristic of patience with people and circumstances.

**“Godliness.”** This is a pivotal term that is used repeatedly in the Pastoral Letters. It refers to the doctrinal and daily lifestyle implication of the gospel. It describes not the exceptional, but the expected. It is a compound term taken from two words translated as ‘good’ and ‘worship.’ True worship is daily living by means of proper thinking.

**1:7 - “Brotherly affection.”** This is the compound Greek term *phileō* (love) and *adelphos* (brother). We get the English word Philadelphia (city of brotherly love) from this Greek term. In this context it refers to covenant brothers and sisters.

**1:8 - “For if.”** This is an unusual way to begin a conditional sentence, but it states the evidence necessary for assurance which is based on a changed and changing life of repentance, faith, obedience, service, and perseverance. Eternal life (i.e. the divine nature) has observable characteristics: believers exhibit Christian qualities, believers have these qualities and they are increasing, believers are useful and fruitful to God, and believers live out the true knowledge of God (i.e. Christlikeness). This verse provides a description of a true Christian.

**1:9 -** This verse describes believers who are being influenced by the false teachers’ erroneous separation of knowledge from life, theology from ethics, and correct beliefs from correct practices!

**“So nearsighted that he is blind.”** This phrase literally means to “blink,” “wink,” or “squint.” It was used metaphorically of one who tries to see clearly, but is unable, possibly willfully turning away from the light.

**“Having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.”** This implies that these are believers, but they have been

lured back to a godless pagan lifestyle by the false teachers. What a tragedy. This lifestyle brings no joy, peace, or assurance. This lifestyle thwarts evangelism. This lifestyle destroys effective ministry. This lifestyle brings about an early death. In this phrase Peter is referring to the purification or cleansing from sin that occurs through Christ's vicarious, substitutionary death on our behalf.

**1:10 - "Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent."** This phrase is a command and can mean: (1) to do something quickly; (2) to do one's best; or (3) to be eager. The third option is most likely.

**"To confirm."** This term is used in three ways: (1) to be certain by being well established; (2) to be dependable; or (3) to be verifiable. The bottom line is that Christians can have assurance!

**"Your calling and election."** As believers, our ultimate hope is in the character of the Father, the work of the Son, and the wooing of the Spirit. However, these are confirmed in individual believers by their lives of faith, godliness, etc. God deals with humanity in a covenant relationship. He sets the agenda, He initiates the encounter, He draws us to Himself, but we must initially and continually respond in repentance, faith, service, obedience, and perseverance. The gospel is a

person to be welcomed, a truth to be believed, and a life to be lived!

**"For if you practice these qualities you will never fall."** The "these qualities" refer to the traits listed in verses 3-7. Eternal life has observable characteristics. The promise that we "will never fall" gives great assurance to struggling believers in the midst of suffering, persecution, and false teachings.

**1:11 - "There will be richly provided for you."** This phrase points to the future God has for us. He will provide all believers' needs. Believers are commanded to respond appropriately in light of God's provision. Their response was not the way to be accepted by God, but the evidence that they have been accepted.

**"The eternal kingdom."** This phrase refers to the eternal reign of the Lord and the Messiah.

**"Lord and Savior."** This same phrase was used to address the Roman Emperor. This title was used to describe Jesus often by Peter in this letter.

[Resource for Commentary:](#)

Robert James Utley's *Study Guide Commentary Series* from Logos software

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## STEP FIVE . . .

### SUMMARIZING the message

God's grace is the driving force behind all change in our lives. Internally, the grace of God moves us to see our sin, respond in repentance and faith, and then experience the joy of ongoing transformation. The truest measure of our growth is not our behavior (otherwise the Pharisees would have been regarded as the godliest people on the planet), but our grasp of grace. This grasp of grace involves coming to a deeper assimilation of God's justifying grace on a daily basis. When we are failing to grow in grace by possessing the qualities of faith in increasing measure, Peter's diagnosis is that we have become nearsighted or even blind, "having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins" (1:9). When we aren't growing it is because we are suffering from vision problems (i.e. nearsightedness, blindness) and amnesia! Our vision of the good news of the gospel has become blurred and our memory of what Christ has done for us has faded away.

Remembering, revisiting, and rediscovering the reality of our justification every day is the path for our personal transformation. This is great news for all seasoned "do-it-yourselfers" who feel that once they are justified, they are then on their own to make their spiritual growth happen. Many of us think that achieving and doing is the mark of spiritual maturity. Godly behavior, however, is the result of resting and receiving Christ's "It is Finished" into our hearts, smashing any sense that we can do something to secure what Christ has already secured for us. Growth always happens in grace (cf. 2 Peter 3:18).

At the same time, the consistent teaching of the New Testament is that our growth in grace also requires effort on our part. In 2 Peter 1:5 Peter says, "For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith ..." Then in verse 10 he states, "Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall." Count the letters carefully—*effort* is not a four letter word. It is critical to understand that the effort ordered by Peter is always grace-empowered effort but effort nonetheless. Certainly, the Holy Spirit motivates and empowers us to make the effort. He doesn't do it for us.

Paul captured this well in referring to his own labors as an Apostle; "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me." Christians work hard! We are not afraid of striving, fighting, and working. We are to work to kill sin. We are to work to live in the Spirit. The grace that saves us is also the grace that transforms us, freeing us to be diligent and obedient. If there is no obedience to show for our gospel profession, our conduct shows that we have not understood the gospel. In Phil. 2:12b-13 Paul tells us, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." It has been said, "We work out what God has worked in us." His work in you is what He accomplished in Christ. We work by fighting the sin that so easily entangles us and by adding to our faith the qualities Peter mentions in verses 5-7: virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection, and love. Only the Holy Spirit can truly develop these qualities in us, nevertheless we are told make every effort to add them to our faith.

## STEP SIX . . .

### EXPLORING the passage through discussion

1. Are most Christians too hard on themselves (i.e. thinking they are filthy scum) or too easy on themselves (i.e. think nothing at all about pursuing holiness in their lives)?
2. Read 2 Peter 1:9. In the message, Pastor Paul stated that Christians who aren't growing suffer from both vision problems (i.e. nearsightedness and blindness) and amnesia. What is it that we fail to see or remember?
3. What is involved in getting a grasp of God's grace every day as it relates to our sanctification?

4. Read the following comment:

Ongoing failure in our growth is the direct result of failing to remember God's love for us in the gospel. If we fail to remember our justification, redemption, and reconciliation, we'll struggle in our sanctification.

- What is the difference between justification and sanctification?

- How does our justification and sanctification work together to produce spiritual growth?

5. What is the best measurement of our growth in Christ?
6. Review the list of qualities in 2 Peter 1:5-7. What other list in the New Testament does this list sound like? How do we make every effort to add these qualities to our faith?
7. What has been the most helpful truth or principle for you in *The Gospel Filter* series?

## STEP SEVEN . . .

### APPLYING the passage to my life

*Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the Word but doers ~ James 1:22*

When you apply God's Word, you are thinking about what God might be saying to you through the Scriptures. Application involves action. Application makes your reading become a reality in your own life. Make your applications specific (state who, what & when). You are encouraged to use the **S.P.E.C.K.** method to apply God's Word to your life. Remember that each passage of Scripture may not lend itself to answering all five of these questions.

**S - SINS** to confess and avoid (Are there sinful actions, attitudes, or thoughts that you need to confess to God based upon your study of these Scriptures?)

**P - PROMISES** to claim (List God's promises for you from these Scriptures.)

**E - EXAMPLES** to follow (What examples, for right thinking or right actions, can you take for you own life from these Scriptures?)

**C - COMMANDS** to obey (List God's commands for you from these Scriptures and seek to be obedient to them.)

**K - KNOWLEDGE** of God to apply (God's character is visible throughout the Scriptures as an example to us. What attributes and/or attitudes does God display that you can apply to your own life?)

### **This Week's Memory Verse**

This week we will memorize the final two verses.

#### **II Peter 1:3-9**

*<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. <sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge. <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. <sup>8</sup> **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.** <sup>9</sup> **For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.***

