

## TRUE WORDS DEVELOP BELIEVERS

**PLEASE do not read these comments until you have prayed and read the Bible for this lesson to learn what the Holy Spirit wants you to teach your students. Then let Him guide you in using these notes. When you follow this procedure you will be a better teacher of your students.**

**Lesson Aim:** Stimulate believers to grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ throughout their lives.

**Suggestion:** This lesson will call attention to important truths in this week's Lesson. After the lesson, give your class next week's Student Lesson so they can share their answers in class next week.

**Introduction:** Peter helped the believers overcome persecution in his first letter. He helped believers overcome false teaching and scoffers in this letter, which was a more difficult problem. Persecution purifies believers while false teaching corrupts them. Persecution attackers come from without the church, but false teachers come from within the church. False teachers cannot be ignored; they must be defeated by the truth. "Knowledge" of the truth in Jesus Christ is the key to overcome false teachers. We are to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet 3:18).

**What knowledge is needed to grow in grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? 1:3-4**

There are three truths that believers need to know in these two verses that make it possible for them to grow in grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. First, believers must know that they have been given divine power so they can have victory over the lusts of the flesh and grow in grace. Without this knowledge of divine power, believers try to live the Christian life by their own power. The lusts of the flesh are too powerful and they will fail. They need to know that they have access to divine power, which will enable them to defeat the lusts of the flesh every time. They need to call on the Lord for His power and depend on His power to win the victory over every sin that controlled them before they were saved. Second, believers must know that the Lord has given them exceeding great and precious promises. There are many in the OT and in the NT, but we will limit them to some that Peter gave to believers about salvation in his first letter. We cannot grow in grace until we are born again. Believers were "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever" - 1 Pet 1:23. Christ bore "our sins in His own body on the tree" and "by His stripes we are healed" - 1 Pet 2:24. "Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" - 1 Pet 3:18. Third, believers need to know that they became partakers of the divine nature when they claimed these precious promises for salvation. By having the divine nature, they became the children of God. As children they need to grow and become strong members in the family of God.

**How does a believer grow in grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? 1:5-7**

There are seven fruits that Peter reveals in our growth in grace. We are to diligently seek these fruits in our lives. Growth is not automatic. God and the believer must work together to produce these fruits. The first is virtue, which refers to moral excellence, i.e., purity, courage and other good qualities of character - Phil 4:8. Knowledge comes by a study of God's Word to know His will and to obey it - Rom 12:2; Col 1:9; 1 Jn 2:3-4. Temperance is self-control by the power of the Holy Spirit - Gal 5:23. Self-control done in the power of the flesh is bound to fail - 2 Pet 2:18-19. Patience which means endurance, steadfastness, or perseverance - Heb 12:2. The believer who has arrived at this level in his Christian life is able to resist the pressures of the world that lure him into sin. Godliness which is purity in practice; it is to be holy as God is holy - 1 Pet 1:15. It comes from a great respect for God. Brotherly kindness is the result of love for God, which produces a love for His children - 1 Jn 4:7-21. Love (*agape*) is the strongest word for love in the Bible. This love flows from God. It is a self-sacrificing love. It is not a love that arises from the emotions, but one that arises from the will. It is a love that embraces one's enemies as well as one's friends - Rom 5:6-8.

**What promise is given to those that abound in these seven fruits? 1:8, 10, 11**

They will know Jesus Christ intimately. They will be certain of their salvation and will never fall. They will have a rich entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

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