



"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Isaiah 52:7

Both Feet In

Encouragement for the Consecrated

This issue:

Temperance and God's Divine Plan for Christian Development and Success

Articles:

"Steadfast Unto the End" by Mrs. E.G. White

"It's All About the Blood" by Mrs. Donna Hernberg

Studies in Brief:

2Peter 1:5-7 "The Ladder of Christian Progress"

- First rung - Faith
- Second Rung - Virtue
- Third Rung - Knowledge
- Fourth Rung - Temperance

The Divine Plan

2Peter 1:5-7

"These words are full of instruction, and strike the keynote of victory. The apostle presents before the believers the ladder of Christian progress, every step of which represents advancement in the knowledge of God, and in the climbing of which there is to be no standstill. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity are the rounds of the ladder. We are saved by climbing round after round, mounting step after step, to the height of Christ's ideal for us. Thus He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." AA 530.1

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."

2Peter 1:5-7

Steadfast unto the End

by Mrs. E.G. White

In the second letter addressed by Peter to those who had obtained "like precious faith" with himself, the apostle sets forth the divine plan for the development of Christian character. He writes:

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

These words are full of instruction, and strike the keynote of victory. The apostle presents before the believers the ladder of Christian progress, every step of which represents advancement in the knowledge of God, and in the

climbing of which there is to be no standstill. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity are the rounds of the ladder. We are saved by climbing round after round, mounting step after step, to the height of Christ's ideal for us. Thus He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

God has called His people to glory and virtue, and these will be manifest in the lives of all who are truly connected with Him. Having become partakers of the heavenly gift, they are to go unto perfection, being "kept by the power of God through faith." 1 Peter 1:5. It is the glory of God to give His virtue to His children. He desires to see men and women reaching the highest standard; and when by faith they lay hold of the power of Christ, when they plead His unfailing promises, and claim them as their own, when with an importunity that will not be denied they seek for the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be made complete in Him.

Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and prepare the mind for the reception of the knowledge of God. This knowledge is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation; and it is this alone that can make one like God in character. Through the knowledge of

God and of His Son Jesus Christ, are given to the believer "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." No good gift is withheld from him who sincerely desires to obtain the righteousness of God.

"This is life eternal," Christ said, "that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3. And the prophet Jeremiah declared: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23, 24. Scarcely can the human mind comprehend the breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments of him who gains this knowledge.

None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ's character. In His humanity, perfected by a life of constant resistance of evil, the Saviour showed that through co-operation with Divinity, human beings may in this life attain to perfection of character. This is God's assurance to us that we, too, may obtain complete victory.

Before the believer is held out the wonderful possibility of being like Christ, obedient to all the principles of the law. But of himself man is utterly unable to reach this condition. The holiness that God's word declares he must have before he can be saved is the result of the working of divine grace as he bows in submission to the discipline and restraining influences of the Spirit of truth. Man's obedience can be made perfect only by the incense of Christ's righteousness, which fills with divine fragrance every act of obedience. The part of the Christian is to persevere in overcoming every fault. Constantly he is to pray to the Saviour to heal the disorders of his sin-sick soul. He has not the wisdom or the strength to overcome; these belong to the Lord, and He bestows them on those who in humiliation and contrition seek Him for help.

The work of transformation from unholiness to holiness is a continuous one. Day by day God labors for man's sanctification, and man is to co-operate with Him, put

Faith is only the beginning...

*... giving all diligence, add to your faith...
2Pet 1:5*

What is our faith?

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1John 5:4, 5

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt 16:16

*Our faith is founded in
believing that Jesus is the Christ the Son
of the living God.*

We must examine our faith.

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves." 2Cor 13:5

*Do you believe that Jesus is the
Son of the living God?*

I'm sure you will say, "Yes!" But maybe upon closer examination of your belief you will find a point at which you believe Christ cannot truly be the Son of God. Many believe that Christ's divinity and equality with God make it impossible for Him to be God's true Son from the days of eternity. They believe that if Christ's existence truly came from God, if Christ as a divine Person was actually begotten before His incarnation at Bethlehem, that it makes Christ inferior to God. They reason that there was a time when Christ existed when He was not a Son, and that He became God's Son by His own choice solely as a functional role for the salvation of mankind.

Others believe that the words describing Christ as the Son of God in the Bible are merely metaphorical, meaning they are not to be taken literally as true, but as symbolic.

The danger with these theories is twofold. They deny the witness that both the Father and the Son gave of themselves by denying that Christ is truly and wholly the Son of God in His divine person.

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." 1John 2:22, 23

The third rung in the Divine Plan is knowledge of God...

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge..." 2Peter 1:5

"Having received the faith of the gospel, the next work of the believer is to add to his character virtue, and thus cleanse the heart and prepare the mind for the reception of the knowledge of God. This knowledge is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation; and it is this alone that can make one like God in character." AA 530.3

Knowledge of God is crucial.

If Christ is the Son of God, then who is God?

God is the Father.

"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph 4:6

"Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." 2Cor 1:3

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom 15:6

"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1Cor 8:6

"Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen." Php 4:20

It is a very popular idea in Christianity that the only true God is not only the Father, but a plurality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The only true God, it is believed, is three persons, yet one God. It is true that all three work together, but the identity of the only true God clearly belongs alone to the Father.

In His prayer to His Father in John 17, Jesus identifies who the only true God is: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee [Father} the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3

Christ, having come from God, is of the very same substance and nature as God. It is because Christ is the truly begotten Son that He is "equal with God in authority, dignity, and divine perfection" (ST, May 30, 1895 par. 3).

ting forth persevering efforts in the cultivation of right habits. He is to add grace to grace; and as he thus works on the plan of addition, God works for him on the plan of multiplication. Our Saviour is always ready to hear and answer the prayer of the contrite heart, and grace and peace are multiplied to His faithful ones. Gladly He grants them the blessings they need in their struggle against the evils that beset them.

There are those who attempt to ascend the ladder of Christian progress; but as they advance they begin to put their trust in the power of man, and soon lose sight of Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their faith. The result is failure--the loss of all that has been gained. Sad indeed is the condition of those who, becoming weary of the way, allow the enemy of souls to rob them of the Christian graces that have been developing in their hearts and lives. "He that lacketh these things," declares the apostle, "is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

The apostle Peter had had a long experience in the things of God. His faith in God's power to save had strengthened with the years, until he had proved beyond question that there is no possibility of failure before the one who, advancing by faith, ascends round by round, ever upward and onward, to the topmost round of the ladder that reaches even to the portals of heaven.

For many years Peter had been urging upon the believers the necessity of a constant growth in grace and in a knowledge of the truth; and now, knowing that soon he would be called to suffer martyrdom for his faith, he once more drew attention to the precious privileges within the reach of every believer. In the full assurance of his faith the aged disciple exhorted his brethren to steadfastness of purpose in the Christian life. "Give diligence," he pleaded, "to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Precious assurance! Glorious is the hope before the believer as he advances by faith toward the heights of Christian perfection!

"I will not be negligent," the apostle continued, "to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

The apostle was well qualified to speak of the purposes of God concerning the human race; for during the earthly ministry of Christ he had seen and heard much that pertained to the kingdom of God. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables," he reminded the believers, "when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount."

Yet convincing as was this evidence of the certainty of the believers' hope, there was another still more convincing in the witness of prophecy, through which the faith of all might be confirmed and securely anchored. "We have also," Peter declared, "a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

While exalting the "sure word of prophecy" as a safe guide in times of peril, the apostle solemnly warned the church against the torch of false prophecy, which would be uplifted by "false teachers," who would privily bring in "damnable heresies, even denying the Lord." These false teachers, arising in the church and accounted true by many of their brethren in the faith, the apostle compared to "wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever." "The latter end is worse with them," he declared, "than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

Looking down through the ages to the close of time, Peter was inspired to outline conditions that would exist in the world just prior to the second coming of Christ. "There shall come in the last days scoffers," he wrote, "walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." But "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them." 1 Thessalonians 5:3. Not all, however, would be ensnared by the enemy's devices. As the end of all things earthly

"... and to knowledge add temperance."

"There is no possibility of failure before the one who, advancing by faith, ascends round by round, ever upward and onward, to the topmost round of the ladder that reaches even to the portals of heaven." AA 533.1

We have the guarantee that, if we advance the ladder of Christian development in 2Peter 1:5-7 by faith, we will enter into heaven. Our success as Christians involves temperance.

What is temperance?

Temperance is the virtue of self-control. It is the fruit of the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Gal 5:22, 23). More specifically, temperance is the virtue of someone who "masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites" (Thayer's Lexicon).

What are sensual appetites?

"Appetite" is simply the desire or liking for something that satisfies a bodily need. A "sensual appetite" is the the desire or liking for something that satisfies the senses. Touch, smell, sight, hearing, taste... we have sensual desires, or sensual appetites. What do you desire to touch? To smell? To see? To hear? to taste?

*Appetites can be natural,
or they can be unnatural.*

A "natural appetite" desires those things that reflect the character of God, things that give, protect, and sustain life. An "unnatural appetite" desires those things that reflect the character of Satan, things that destroy, harm, and deplete life.

Because we are fallen beings, the "unnatural" often seems "natural" to us. This is why we need to seek God's counsel for wisdom and discernment in all that we do, especially regarding our sensual appetites, that we might learn the difference between good and evil desires, and cease all sinful indulgences that work to harm life.

When we consider what to touch, smell, see, hear, and taste we need to master our desires by choosing to honor godly principles above our sensual preferences: Do my choices align with God's desires for me, or do they align with Satan's? Do my choices stem from self-sacrifice, or selfishness?

What if we neglect to make the reformations of temperance?

If we neglect temperance, the conditions of the guarantee have not been met. If we willfully neglect any rung in our Christian development, the promise of heaven can be lost.

Reach for the portals of heaven...

"Precious assurance!

Glorious is the hope before the believer as he advances by faith toward the heights of Christian perfection!"

AA 533.2

"While a large number of professing believers would deny their faith by their works, there would be a remnant who would endure to the end."

AA 535.2

should approach, there would be faithful ones able to discern the signs of the times. While a large number of professing believers would deny their faith by their works, there would be a remnant who would endure to the end.

Peter kept alive in his heart the hope of Christ's return, and he assured the church of the certain fulfillment of the Saviour's promise, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." John 14:3. To the tried and faithful ones the coming might seem long delayed, but the apostle assured them: "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you. . . . Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

In the providence of God, Peter was permitted to close

his ministry in Rome, where his imprisonment was ordered by the emperor Nero about the time of Paul's final arrest. Thus the two veteran apostles, who for many years had been widely separated in their labors, were to bear their last witness for Christ in the world's metropolis, and upon its soil to shed their blood as the seed of a vast harvest of saints and martyrs.

Since his reinstatement after his denial of Christ, Peter had unflinchingly braved danger and had shown a noble courage in preaching a crucified, risen, and ascended Saviour. As he lay in his cell he called to mind the words that Christ had spoken to him: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." John 21:18. Thus Jesus had made known to the disciple the very manner of his death, and even foretold the stretching of his hands upon the cross.

Peter, as a Jew and a foreigner, was condemned to be scourged and crucified. In prospect of this fearful death, the apostle remembered his great sin in denying Jesus in the hour of His trial. Once so unready to acknowledge the cross, he now counted it a joy to yield up his life for the gospel, feeling only that, for him who had denied his Lord, to die in the same manner as his Master died was too great an honor. Peter had sincerely repented of that sin and had been forgiven by Christ, as is shown by the high commission given him to feed the sheep and lambs of the flock. But he could never forgive himself. Not even the thought of the agonies of the last terrible scene could lessen the bitterness of his sorrow and repentance. As a last favor he entreated his executioners that he might be nailed to the cross with his head downward. The request was granted, and in this manner died the great apostle Peter.

Mrs. E.G. White

From "Acts of the Apostles", pp. 529.2 - 537.3

Temperance and the Health Message

"True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful and to use judiciously that which is healthful. There are few who realize as they should how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny."

PP 562.1

True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely...

Exercising the virtue of temperance means to wholly, fully, completely, and unreservedly stop doing ALL of those things that cause injury to our spiritual and physical health.

... with everything hurtful...

"Men and women must be taught to take a careful review of every habit and every practice, and at once put away those things that cause an unhealthy condition of the body, and thus cast a dark shadow over the mind" (2MCP 794.3).

We must search our lives and carefully assess every habit and every practice to know if it is causing an unhealthy condition of the body. When we discover that a habit or practice is working against health, we need to give it up immediately.

The virtue of temperance is an overarching principle, meaning it includes every aspect of our lives. Our habits and practices, whether they be in working, recreation, dressing, cooking, eating, studying, breathing, exercising, and even ministry will come under review when we apply the biblical principle of temperance to our lives.

... and to use judiciously that which is healthful.

If we fail to apply the virtue of temperance to those things that are healthful by exercising sound judgment as to their proper use, then we have lost the principle of temperance, and what was healthful will become harmful. For

example, eating homemade whole grain bread is certainly healthful, but if too much good bread is eaten it overtaxes the the digestive organs, and the nutrients that are in the bread are not able to be properly absorbed by the body. The digestive organs are also overworked resulting in the deterioration of those organs. If the practice of overeating is persistent over time, it will lead to disease. Gluttony is a sin, whether it be with foods that are harmful, or foods that are healthful.

There are few who realize as they should...

The health message is exactly that: a message from God about the significance of health. Why would we not value our health as God does? "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3Jn 1:2. God values our physical health as highly as He does our spiritual health. If our will is in harmony with God's will, health will be a matter of the highest importance.

... how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny.

God has seen that it is necessary to give us explicit counsel regarding health because the consequences are at once so wonderful and so fearful determining not only our physical condition, but also the condition of our character (our minds), our usefulness in the world, and our eternal destiny.

It's All About the Blood

What is the significance of Christ's shed blood? Why does the blood of Christ mean so much to us? Because when Christ shed His blood, He gave us His life. The divine life of Christ was in His blood.

"... For the blood is the life..."
Deut 12:23

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood."
Leviticus 17:11

This was true of Christ, and it is true for us: "the life of the flesh is in the blood." "In order to have good health, we must have good blood; for the blood is the current of life" (CD 91.3).

Blood supplies essential substances and nutrients to the cells of the body. It also carries waste away from those cells. "When supplied with the proper food elements and when cleansed and vitalized by contact with pure air, it [blood] carries life and vigor to every part of the system. The more perfect the circulation, the better will this work be accomplished" (CD 91.3). Everything that affects both the quality of our blood and its circulation is acknowledged by health reform. Below is a small sample of how our blood is affected by our everyday habits and practices:

How much we eat:

"All that is taken into the stomach, above what the system can use to convert into good blood, clogs the machinery; for it cannot be made into either flesh or blood, and its presence burdens the liver, and produces a morbid condition of the system. The stomach is overworked in its efforts to dispose of it, and then there is a sense of languor, which is interpreted to mean hunger, and without allowing the digestive organs time to rest from their severe labor, to recruit their energies, another immoderate amount is taken into the stomach, to set the weary machinery again in motion. The system receives less nourishment from too great a quantity of food, even of the right quality, than from a moderate quantity taken at regular periods" (CD 103.1).

Regularity of meals:

"Neither should the meals be delayed one or two hours, to suit circumstances, or in order that a certain amount of work may be accomplished. The stomach calls for food at the time it is accustomed to receive it. If that time is delayed, the vitality of the system decreases, and finally reaches so low an ebb that the appetite is entirely gone. If food is then taken, the stomach is unable to properly care for it. The food cannot be converted into good blood... If all would eat at regular periods, not tasting anything between meals, they would be ready for their meals, and would find a pleasure in eating that would repay them for their effort. (CD 179.3, 4).

Types of food eaten:

Many a mother sets a table that is a snare to her family. Flesh-meats, butter, cheese, rich pastry, spiced foods, and condiments are freely partaken of by both old and young. These things do their work in deranging the stomach, exciting the nerves, and enfeebling the intellect. The blood-making organs cannot convert such things into good blood. The grease cooked in the food

renders it difficult of digestion. The effect of cheese is deleterious (life destroying). Fine-flour bread (white bread) does not impart to the system the nourishment that is to be found in unbolted wheat bread (whole grain). Its common use will not keep the system in the best condition. Spices at first irritate the tender coating of the stomach, but finally destroy the natural sensitiveness of this delicate membrane. The blood becomes fevered, the animal propensities are aroused, while the moral and intellectual powers are weakened, and become servants to the baser passions. The mother should study to set a simple yet nutritious diet before her family" (CTBH 46.3).

Methods of cooking:

"In order to make a good quality of blood, we must have the right kind of food, prepared in a right manner" (HL 181.1).

"A poor quality of food, cooked in an improper manner, and insufficient in quantity, cannot make good blood. Flesh meats and rich food and an impoverished diet will produce the same results" (HL 181.2).

How we dress:

The limbs and feet have large arteries, to receive a large amount of blood, that warmth, nutrition, elasticity, and strength, may be imparted to them. But when the blood is chilled from these extremities, their blood-vessels contract, which makes the circulation of the necessary amount of blood in them still more difficult. A good circulation preserves the blood pure, and secures health. A bad circulation leaves the blood to become impure, and induces congestion of the brain and lungs, and causes diseases of the head, the heart, the liver, and the lungs. The fashionable style of woman's dress is one of the greatest causes of all these terrible diseases" (PH134 7.1).

Reading and studying:

The exercise of the brain in study without corresponding physical exercise has a tendency to attract the blood to the brain, and the circulation of the blood through the system becomes unbalanced. The brain has too much blood and the extremities too little" (HL 180.1).

Our bodies are incredibly complex. Says the psalmist, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psalm 139:14). Our Creator has formed us in wisdom, and has supplied both the instruction and the strength that we need in order to preserve a healthful condition of our bodies.

I urge every Christian to heed the counsel of the Lord: "Examine yourselves," test your faith, and correct where you do err. And add to your faith virtue and to virtue knowledge of God, and to knowledge of God add temperance. Neglect nothing. Give yourselves unreservedly to the necessary reformations. There is nothing to lose but that which harms, and prevents your entrance through the portal of heaven.