



Pentecost NOT in Lockdown (2020) 5 – Step by Step **2 Peter 1:3-11** (Last evening)

Dear Father

Thank you that I/we was/were made to your image;

Thank you for showing me/us that you value me/us as your creation and that you were impressed with the result;

Thank you that you did not refrain from me/us when I/we sinned against you;

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for stepping into my/our place and paying my/our debt by dying on the cross;

Thank you, Holy Spirit, for leading me/us to Christ and for giving me/us the guarantee that I/we am/are God's child/children.

Father thank you for loving us so much and for saving us from a fruitless life. Please fill me/us with the Holy Spirit that I/we can enjoy a fruitful life.

As your child/children, I/we would like to become the person that you want me/us to be and to understand what my/our true value is and how our relationship with you can add value to my/our life here on earth.

Amen

Before Lockdown we as a family liked to play Catan a board game that my daughter in the Netherlands introduced to us in her visit in 2016. Then came the Lockdown. Now we discovered Catan Universe the online version and we use WhatsApp Video and we enjoy a game with our children in different parts of South Africa and in the Netherlands. It takes some co-ordination, but the game goes on.

Initially you want the basic game, then comes the add-ons. The same with so many electronics. First the basics are enough and then you discover what more you can accomplish with all kinds of Apps.

In our spiritual life we should also want the add-on's and any new Apps. Maybe not electronic, nor available on the internet, but the add-on's that God provides.

We have focussed on four aspects thus far:

God values us

A Spirit filled life is merely a prayer away

We have a responsibility within the Body of Christ

We need to have the right reason, attitude and purpose

The fifth has to do with a sequence of events, the add-on's.

2 Peter 1:3-10 Confirming One's Calling and Election

*³His 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. ⁴Through 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.*

Firstly, from God's side He has done everything possible to provide a way into a relationship with Him, to enjoy a godly life, and to participate in a divine nature. These gifts (grants bestowed upon – the perfect tense emphasizes the continuing nature of that which was given). Thus, from God's side He will never stop providing all you and I need to have this relationship with Him.

He has given His **greatest** promise – magnificent, elative super, very great

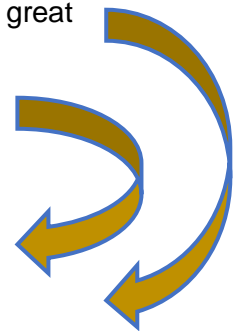
What would be God's greatest promise?

He has given His most **precious** promise – valuable, honourable

What would then be His most precious promise?

– His Son, **Jesus Christ** is the most precious gift God could have given us!

– **Holy Spirit** is the greatest gift God could have given us!

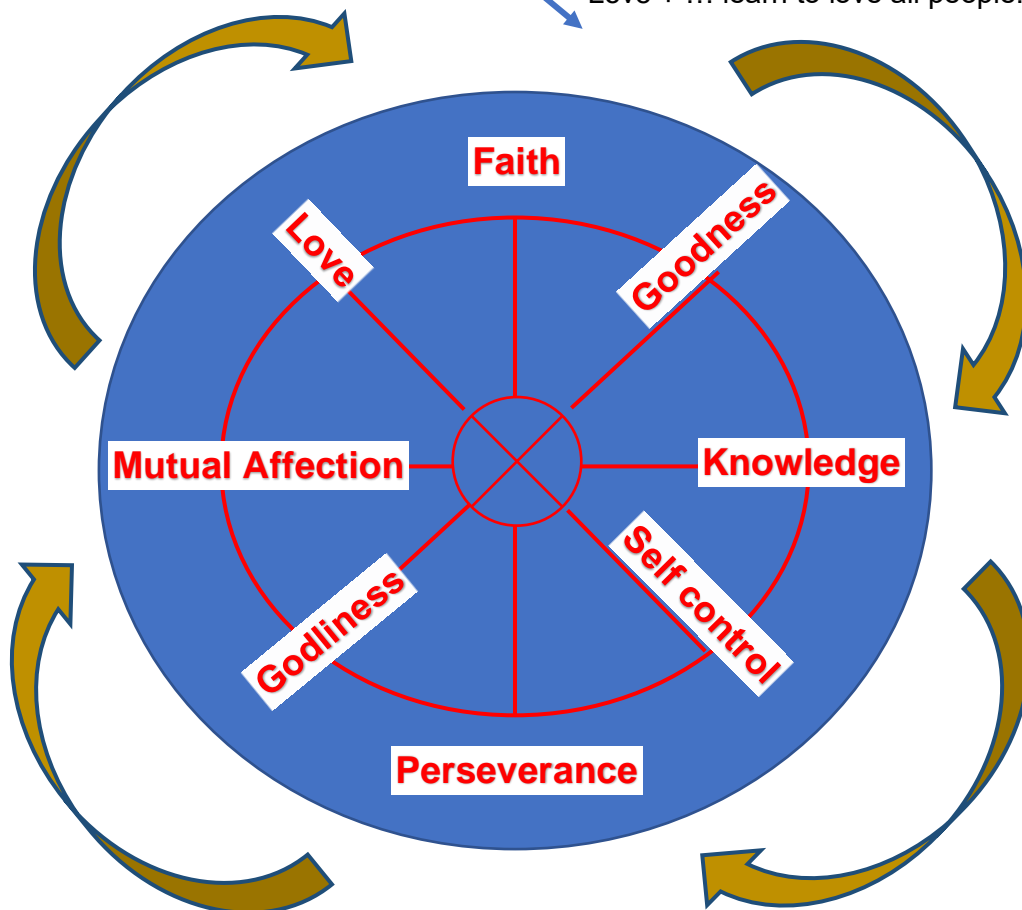
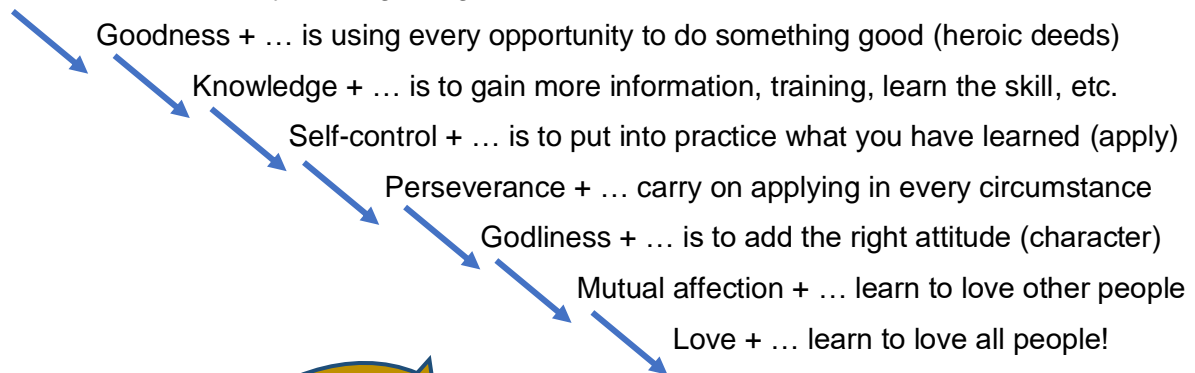


It is not the one without the other or one more superior to the other it is the normal sequence of how God intended to give us access into a divine nature and to escape from the corruption caused by our evil desires. Jesus paid the price and sent the Holy Spirit in order that we could live a godly life. This is the basics that we have when we come to faith. Without the basics none of the add-ons will work. You need the basics in your faith Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

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

Once we have accepted the greatest and most precious gift from God (Jesus and the Holy Spirit) there is a number of things we need to do. We need to add on – things we need to bring into this relationship, ‘alongside’ what God has done we need to make every effort - every ounce of determination we can muster – more than what is expected or demanded to add onto our faith (basics):

Faith + Faith is merely the beginning



Doing good – doing something in faith, believing that it is something God wants you to do. Don't wait until you are called to do something. Be proactive, volunteer, try it out, ...

Knowledge – to learn from past experiences, getting official training, reading more about what you are involved in, get supervision, join the Bible Study group, ...

Self-control – to put what you have learned in practice needs a lot of self control but doing it once is not enough ... you need self-determination, the first time is always difficult, BUT with the help of the Holy Spirit (Parakletos & the Body of Christ) ... YOU CAN DO IT!

Perseverance – to keep on doing it until you are getting good at it, until it becomes a lifestyle – doing something once is sometimes challenging but exciting, doing it again and again takes effort, energy, determination and stamina.

Godliness – to do something is not what we do but how, when and where we do it – having the right character, attitude. This may take some time, but eventually you get there as you are becoming more depending on the Holy Spirit to fill you with the right 'fruit'.

Mutual affection – to love someone that loves you is easy, BUT to learn to love someone you don't like is already a challenge. Learning to love one another here at church is easier as we have a common factor, we are children of God and we are filled with the Holy Spirit. But the learning curve is here where we meet and greet, worship and pray together, having coffee or tea, sharing in Holy Communion, and even doing something together in the community. We need this 'school' as the next step becomes even harder.

Love for all people (irrespective of friends or foes, all kinds of differences – socio-economic, political, ethnic, gender, age, intellect, or sport teams) even those that have willingly hurt you. The kind of love that Jesus had for us, dying for us while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8)

It doesn't end here the requirement is that you often go around this circle adding on to faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection, love, ...

The next add-on is to do the exercise again and now in increasing measure (continual action)

We should never get to the point of thinking we have arrived or accomplished everything as the increasing measure shows that there is so much more to accomplish, learn, do, be, ...

Where are you now in your spiritual life and relationship with God?

No matter where you are in your spiritual life, you need not stop to grow, develop, add on to what you already have, have done, know, applied, character developed, etc.

What would you like to add on?

Goodness? Knowledge? Self-control? Perseverance?
Godliness? Mutual affection? Love?

If you think you have arrived, and you have nothing more to accomplish, read this:

. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

To end this message:

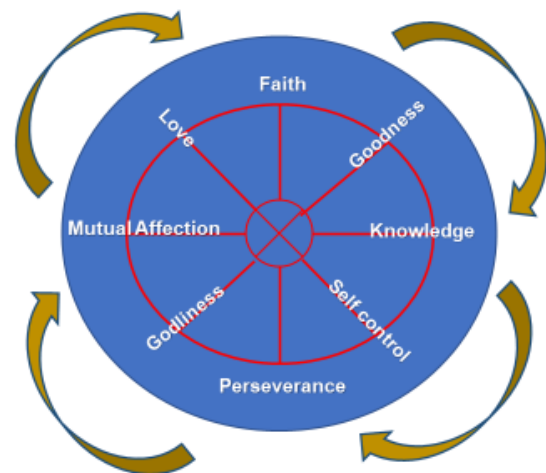
¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, ^[a] make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This whole process of adding on to is an effort to confirm your calling and election – your testimony and prevent you from stumbling (falling back in sin) and will ensure a (hearty) welcome when you enter the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All though we are in Lock down, God is not in Lock down, and what he has done also applies for your current circumstances. It might be awhile before we are able to re-join in our building. In the meantime, it is now up to you to do something.

Your spiritual growth and adding onto your relationship with God can happen inside you home where you could learn to apply something that your learned, something that you might need some character building.

2 Peter 1:3-9



May you in reflecting on the passage start looking for the opportunities that are current in your reach, at home, work, using technology, social media, ... BUT do it prayerfully, in line with God's word.

Heavenly Father, thank you for pouring out the Holy Spirit on all believers – young & older. Holy Spirit thank you for enabling us to be the body of Christ and

- for providing us with different gifts and ministries
- to build each other up in our faith,
- to equip us for our ministries,
- to be available to carry each other loads.

Thank you that we can in a time like this come to the fore and share our gifts and ministry to strengthen, encourage and to comfort one another. May we glorify you through our participation in Church. May your Gospel spread through our gifts and ministries where we represent you in our community. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. May your Kingdom come. May your name be glorified.

Amen