

Expanded Report: Final Exhortations and Benediction (2 Peter 3:14-18)

Prologue: Living in Expectation and Spiritual Growth

As the family gathered around the table for their evening Bible study, Ryan opened the Bible to 2 Peter 3:14-18. This passage presents Peter's final exhortations to believers as he encourages them to live in readiness for Christ's return, emphasizing the need for spiritual growth, vigilance, and steadfastness. Peter urges believers to grow in grace and knowledge, to guard themselves against the dangers of being led astray, and to live lives that are pure and blameless as they await the Day of the Lord.

"Tonight, we're going to look at how Peter encourages us to live while we wait for Christ's return," Ryan began. "Peter calls us to grow spiritually and stay on guard, making sure that we're not led away from the truth."

Ariel, reflecting on the passage, asked, "How do we grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus?"

"That's a great question," Ryan replied. "Peter tells us that growth comes through being diligent—through studying God's Word, living by His commands, and praying. The more we know God, the more we can live like Him."

Alice, holding Mr. Fluffernutter, asked, "So, we need to keep getting better and closer to God?"

"Yes," Yaya added. "Our spiritual journey is one of constant growth. As we get to know Jesus more, we become more like Him. We never stop growing!"

Key Teachings: Diligence, Growth, and Guarding Against Deception

1. The Call to Live Diligently and Blamelessly

2 Peter 3:14

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

- **Living in Expectation of Christ's Return:**

Ryan explained, "Peter reminds us that because we are waiting for Christ's return, we must live with intentionality. We should strive to live in peace, without spot or blemish, reflecting the purity and holiness of Christ in our lives. Diligence in this regard means staying focused on living a life that pleases God."

Ariel asked, "Does that mean we have to be perfect?"

"Not perfect in the sense that we never mess up," Ryan said. "But it means that we are striving to live holy lives and seeking forgiveness when we fall short. God knows our hearts, and He sees our efforts to live for Him."

- **Being Found Blameless:**

Ryan continued, "Being blameless doesn't mean never making mistakes, but it means living in a

way that aligns with God's will. It's about actively working to be faithful and following Christ's example."

Yaya added, "Peter is encouraging us to be ready when Christ returns. We don't know the day or the hour, but we can live with confidence and peace, knowing we are doing our best to live for Him."

2. Growing in Grace and Knowledge

2 Peter 3:18

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

- **Spiritual Growth as a Lifelong Pursuit:**

Ryan explained, "Peter encourages us to grow in two ways: in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Growing in grace means understanding more of God's unmerited favor and letting that change our hearts. Growing in knowledge means studying God's Word, learning more about Him, and letting that knowledge transform the way we live."

Ariel asked, "So, we're always supposed to grow?"

"Yes," Ryan said. "Spiritual growth is ongoing. Every day, we can grow closer to God by reading His Word, praying, and applying what we learn."

- **Knowing Jesus More Deeply:**

Ryan continued, "When we know Jesus more intimately, it changes us. We begin to think like Him, act like Him, and love like Him. This is the goal—to become more like Jesus every day."

Yaya added, "And as we grow, we also become more aware of God's grace in our lives. The more we understand how much God loves us and has forgiven us, the more we can reflect that love and forgiveness to others."

3. Guarding Against Being Led Astray

2 Peter 3:17

"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."

- **The Danger of Deception:**

Ryan explained, "Peter warns that we must be careful not to be led astray by false teachings. The world and even some in the church may try to pull us away from the truth, and we must be on guard to stay rooted in God's Word."

Ariel asked, "How can we tell if something is wrong?"

"By knowing the truth," Ryan answered. "The more we know Scripture and spend time with God, the easier it is to spot what doesn't align with His Word. That's why it's so important to stay diligent in studying and praying."

- **Staying Steadfast in the Truth:**

Ryan continued, “Peter calls us to be steadfast—firm in our faith, unshaken by the winds of false teaching. The only way to do that is to stay grounded in the truth of God’s Word and live it out daily.”

Yaya added, “Staying steadfast means not just knowing the truth but living by it. It’s about holding fast to what we know is right, even when the world tells us something different.”

4. The Key Teaching: Spiritual Vigilance and Growth in Christ

Key Teaching:

The key teaching of this passage is that believers must live with spiritual vigilance, actively growing in grace and knowledge while guarding against the dangers of being led astray. Peter calls us to live diligently, with a focus on purity and peace, and to always pursue spiritual growth in our relationship with Jesus. This includes being alert to false teachings and standing firm in the truth, knowing that Christ’s return is certain and that we are called to be ready.

Ryan summarized, “Peter is urging us to grow, be diligent, and stay strong in the truth. The more we know Christ, the more we become like Him, and the more prepared we are for His return.”

Practical Applications: Living with Diligence and Faithfulness

The family discussed how they could apply these teachings in their lives:

1. **Daily Pursuit of God’s Word:**

Ariel suggested, “I can make sure to read my Bible every day, so I’m growing in my knowledge of God and His will.”

Alice added, “And I can ask questions if I don’t understand something, so I can keep learning more about Jesus.”

2. **Living with Purpose and Steadfastness:**

Ryan encouraged them, “We need to live every day with purpose, doing our best to honor God in everything we do. And when we face challenges or doubts, we can stay steadfast, knowing that God is with us.”

3. **Encouraging Each Other in Faith:**

Yaya reminded them, “We are not meant to walk this journey alone. We can encourage each other to stay grounded in God’s Word and to keep growing in our faith.”

Takeaway: Staying Diligent in the Faith

As the family reflected on the passage, Yaya shared a story about a time when she struggled with staying strong in her faith but found renewed strength through daily prayer and Bible study. “There

were times when I felt discouraged, but I knew that if I stayed close to God, He would help me stay firm. And He did. I grew stronger and more faithful through that time.”

Ariel smiled, “So, staying close to God helps us grow stronger?”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Just like we have to take care of ourselves physically, we also have to take care of our spiritual lives. That’s how we grow in Christ.”

Key Points Summary

1. Live Diligently and Blamelessly:

- We are called to live with intention, pursuing holiness and living in peace as we wait for Christ’s return.

2. Pursue Spiritual Growth:

- Growth in grace and knowledge is essential, and it requires daily effort through prayer, Bible study, and living out God’s truth.

3. Guard Against Deception:

- Vigilance in guarding the truth and staying faithful to God’s Word is crucial to prevent being led astray.
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Key Verse:

“Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:18)

This passage encourages us to live with spiritual diligence, grow in our relationship with Jesus, and guard ourselves against the dangers of deception. As we grow in grace and knowledge, we remain steadfast in our faith, eagerly awaiting Christ’s return.