

Knowledge

“. . . in your moral excellence, knowledge” (2 Peter 1:5).

Moral excellence cannot develop in an intellectual vacuum.

It's a frightening thing to realize the extent to which our culture downplays knowledge in favor of emotions. These days people are more likely to ask, "How will it make me feel?" instead of, "Is it true?" Sadly, the church has bought into the spirit of the age. Many people go to church, not to learn the truths of God's Word, but to get an emotional high. The focus of theological discussion also reflects the contemporary hostility to knowledge. To a shocking extent, truth is no longer the issue; the questions being asked today are, "Will it divide?" or "Will it offend?" To ask if a theological position is biblically correct is considered unloving, and those who take a stand for historic Christian truth are labeled as divisive.

But knowledge is inseparable from moral excellence and Christian growth. It should be obvious that people can't put into practice truths they don't know; we must first understand the principles of God's Word before we can live them out.

Peter knew well the importance of knowledge in developing a stable Christian walk and the assurance of salvation that accompanies it. Therefore, he urged his readers to add knowledge to their moral excellence. *Gnosis* ("knowledge") refers to insight, discernment, and proper understanding of truth. Lacking such knowledge, believers become "children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). The resulting turmoil is not conducive to spiritual growth or the development of a settled assurance of salvation.

The Bible commends child-like (i.e., trusting, humble) faith, but not childish faith. Paul exhorted the Corinthians, "Brethren, do not be children in your thinking . . . in your thinking be mature" (1 Cor. 14:20). "So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord," urged Hosea. When we do so, "He will come to us like the rain, like the spring rain watering the earth" (Hos. 6:3).

I pray with the apostle Paul, "that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment" (Phil. 1:9).

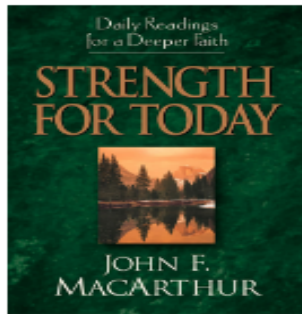
Suggestions for Prayer

Pray that God would enable you to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

For Further Study

Read Proverbs 23:7 and Philippians 4:8. What do those verses teach about the importance of godly thinking?

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STRENGTH FOR TODAY

Tuesday, July 23, 2024

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