

Is Your Faith Growing?

2 Peter 1:5-11

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In 2 Peter 1:5-11, Peter says, “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things...”—which refer to the things we just read—“...are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

The Christian life is a life of faith. The Christian life starts with faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We're born again, we're regenerated by the Holy Spirit, we're given new life and we become children of God at salvation. That's just the beginning of the Christian life. It starts a whole lifetime of what we call “sanctification.” So the Christian life starts with salvation, and then it grows all the life through in sanctification. That means being set apart and made holy and more like Christ. And that takes place by faith as well. The Christian life starts in faith, it continues in faith and it culminates when we look in faith for Jesus Christ to come again, either by the rapture to be with Him in heaven or we die and immediately go into the presence of the Lord. “To be absent from the body [is] to be present with the Lord.”

A verse to introduce our topic of faith is Habakkuk 2:4. It says, “The just shall live by his faith.” That's one of the most important verses in the Bible. It's repeated three times in the New Testament: in Romans 1:17, in Galatians 3:11 and in Hebrews 10:38. Why is this important? It's interesting that in Romans, its theme is “the just.” When it's mentioned in Galatians, its theme is “shall live.” And when it's mentioned in Hebrews, its theme is “by faith.”

So it summarizes the Christian life. “The just” refers to Christians being justified before God. “Shall live” means we are sanctified by God. And how do we live? “By faith.” So it's true of all the Christian life; it doesn't just start with faith, but it continues in faith. And we grow in faith as we grow in “the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

So my question to you is—before we unpack these verses—“Are you growing in your faith?” Peter wants us to not only have a genuine faith, 2 Peter 1:1-4, but he wants us to have a growing faith, verses 5-11. Then at the end of the chapter, he wants us to have a grounded faith in the Word of God.

In verses 1-4, Peter says that if your faith is real, it is a “like precious faith,” verse 1; if your faith is real, it's a faith in “Jesus our Lord,” verse 2; if your faith is real, you experience God's power and the promises of God, verse 3; and if your faith is real, it makes us “partakers of the divine nature,” verse 4. That's what it means to be a Christian, having the life of God in your soul. So

it goes from verses 1-4—Is your faith genuine?—to verses 5-11—Is your faith growing?

The key to the passage we're going to look at is in verse 10, which says, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble." Notice verse 5 also says, "...giving all diligence, add to your faith." And in verse 10, it says, "Be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble," and you'll have an abundant entrance into heaven, verse 11.

So the theme all the way through this chapter is faith: genuine faith, growing faith, grounded faith.

Once you become a believer, God wants you to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," Philippians 2:12-13. Then Paul says, "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

A lot of people are confused by this Philippians passage where it says, "Work out your own salvation." This is what our Peter passage is all about.

You ask, "Well, aren't we saved by grace?" Yes. We aren't saved by our good works. But we are saved unto good works. Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone; it produces good works. The good works are the fruit of our salvation and not the root or the cause of our salvation. But when we "work out," we can only "work out" what God has worked in. So Paul didn't say to work for your salvation; he said "work out" your salvation. God saves you, and now you need to work it out, live it out, and you need all diligence to add to your faith.

And in our text, Peter gives us three things about a growing faith. First, he gives us the recipe for a growing faith; secondly, he gives us the reasons for a growing faith; and thirdly, we'll see the results of having a true, growing faith.

The first thing is the most important: what's the recipe for a growing faith? It is found in verses 5-7. Peter says, in the King James translation, "And beside this." So in addition to what he listed in verses 1-4, we are to add some things to what he listed. He said, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love." So you start the Christian life by faith, and then you add to your faith these ingredients to have a growing faith.

So what must we do to have a growing faith? It starts with "giving all diligence," verse 5. The word "diligence" means "to give intense effort." Give it your best shot. Work hard. Labor. It means "try your hardest" or some translations have, "Work hard at it." You need to be devoted to working hard and growing in your faith.

Peter also has, in verse 5, "add to your faith." So work hard at adding to your faith. And I want you to notice that it says, "add to your faith," not "the faith." There is a very important distinction here. In the book of Jude, it says that we should "contend earnestly," which means to put the

boxing gloves on, wrestle or fight “for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.” So we can’t add to the faith. What is the faith? It is the objective truth, the body of truth that we believe as Christians. And we need to know why that is.

Now when Peter says in our passage, “add to your faith,” he’s talking about your personal, subjective, individual, belief, trust, faith or reliance upon God. So he’s not talking about the body of truth that we believe; we can’t add to that. It is “once for all delivered.” But he’s talking about adding to your personal faith.

The word “add” has some interesting background as a Greek word. The word was used of individuals who underwrote the expenses of the choruses in the Greek plays in theatres. So the word came to mean “a generous and costly cooperation.”

Anyone who has been to the Holy Land or Rome or Greece knows that the Greco-Roman world was big on theatres. They were big on the acting stage and musicals. But the government didn’t supply the needed funds to sponsor them, so a wealthy individual would underwrite or sponsor the theatre and musical expenses. So the word “add” meant “an overflowing, abundance of supply.” The same word and meaning was used here where Peter says, “add to your faith.” It speaks of a “generous, costly cooperation.”

Now this is a mystery when it comes to the Christian life. We’re saved by grace, and we’re sustained and kept by grace. It’s the sovereign work of salvation, but we do play a part. We must present our “bodies as a living sacrifice.” We must “be transformed by the renewing of [our] mind” to the Word of God. We must yield to the Spirit of God. We must be in cooperation with God’s work in our lives. So we “work out” what God has worked in, but all the time, it is God working in us “to will and to do for His good pleasure.”

How those two things interplay is a mystery to me, but it is taught in the Bible. It is kind of like power steering in a car. If you have power steering, you know that doesn’t mean that the car steers itself. You don’t just fold your arms, step on the gas and the car takes off and turns where you want it to turn. You have to turn the steering wheel yourself. So power steering makes driving easier, but it doesn’t steer itself.

So God saves you by His grace, He supplies the power of His Holy Spirit, but we must cooperate with Him, we must add to our faith a “generous, costly cooperation.”

In the Greek, “add to your faith” is a command, and it carries with it a note of urgency. So it commands all of us believers; this is not optional. You can’t read this verse and say, “Well, I’m not into that. I don’t want to add to my faith. I have fire insurance; I’m saved and going to heaven and not hell. That’s all I want.” No. God wants us to grow in our faith as believers in Jesus Christ while on the earth.

And Peter lists for us seven character qualities that we need to add to our faith if we want to grow. The first thing or ingredient in this recipe for a growing faith is virtue, verse 5. “Add to your faith virtue.”

So the Christian life starts with faith, and what we add to it, what we work hard at, is virtue. The New Living Translation defines virtue well when it says, “moral excellence.” It means the courage to be committed to live a holy, separated, sanctified life in a hostile, corrupt, dark world.

Peter used the same word in verse 3. He said, “...as His divine power...”—or “dunamis”—“... has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.” That’s your calling; God has called you to virtuous living. God says, “Be holy, for I am holy.” That’s a communicable attribute of God; He wants us to be holy like Him. So now that I’m saved and born again and have the Holy Spirit, He wants to make me holy.

One of the chief purposes of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, is to make you more like Jesus Christ, to transform your life. So it’s not just salvation, but it’s also growing by adding to your faith in sanctification. And it takes a determined commitment to live a virtuous life.

A practical tip to help you do this is to determine, to decide before a temptation comes, that you’re going to be virtuous. Don’t wait until you’re in the heat of the temptation, when your vision of God is blurred and you’re in the grips of your lust, to try to decide whether or not you’ll yield to the temptation. Decide right now.

I like Daniel 1 where Daniel and his three Hebrew friends made a commitment that they would not be defiled by eating the delicacies and drinking the wine of the king. It says in verse 8, “Daniel purposed in his heart.” The reason Daniel was able to live a virtuous life in Babylon was because he determined in his heart. This is what this word “virtue” means.

So right here, right now, as you read this message, determine to live a pure, holy, godly life.

When the temptation comes, there is “No temptation...such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” So you virtuously say, “I’m committed to living a holy and godly life.”

Think of the three Hebrews in Daniel 1: Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego. Everyone in Babylon was bowing and worshipping the golden image, but they stood tall, strong and firm. So they were thrown into the fire where they met the Lord and were delivered.

So when everyone else in the culture is bowing down, we as believers are to live virtuously.

The second thing we need to add to our faith is knowledge, verse 5. “To virtue [add] knowledge.” So add to your faith, virtue and to virtue add knowledge. The word “knowledge” is the Greek word “gnosis.” It is the practical, experiential knowledge that is gained from the Word of God and walking in fellowship with God. It’s not the word “oida,” which is an intuitive knowledge. But it’s the practical, experiential knowledge.

So this is what you need as a Christian in order to grow: you need to read the Bible, study the Word of God, feed on God's Word and then assimilate it into your life. As you grow through experience, the Word of God becomes a deep conviction.

I've even noticed in my own Christian life over the years that what I learn intellectually from the Bible I experience practically and powerfully in my life. So after walking with the Lord, that knowledge is transferred into the way you live. But it starts with knowledge in the Word of God. You can't live a sanctified life without the Bible.

Jesus said it this way in John 17:17, when He prayed for us to His Father: "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth." That's one of the great verses on how God sanctifies our lives; it's through His Word. Psalm 119:9 and 11 says, "How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word....Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." So the Word of God brings that knowledge, and then it's lived out in our daily lives. I like what D. L. Moody used to say. He said, "Every Christian's Bible should be bound in shoe leather." That's to remind us to live it out in our daily lives.

So we are to grow in knowledge and experience, adding to our faith.

The third ingredient or character quality in this recipe of growing in faith is self-control or temperance, in the King James Bible. Verse 6 says to add "to knowledge [add] self-control." It is the inner power to control a person's desires and cravings.

But let me make a distinction for you. In the Scriptures, this temperance is not self-energized; it relies upon the Spirit of God. You don't have the resources to control yourself. But God's Spirit and His power within you gives you self-control.

In Galatians, one of the manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit is self-control. If you are filled with the Spirit, you won't be fulfilling the deeds of the flesh. Galatians 5:16 says, "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." So if you are yielding to the flesh, it's an evident sign that you're not walking in the Spirit. You're not growing in your faith. So we have the ability, through the Spirit's power, to gain victory over the flesh.

The fourth ingredient in the recipe for growing faith is patience. Whenever I read the word "patience," I get impatient. It's like someone said, "Whenever I hear the word 'exercise,' I sit down until that thought goes away. It makes me tired." Patience. Did they have to put that in the Bible?!

The word "patience" literally means "abiding under pressure." Self-control or temperance has to do with pleasures of life, while patience has to do with the pressures and problems of life. Patience is actually "perseverance" or "steadfast endurance."

Patience is not a passive concept. It's a positive concept of being persevering or continuing or not giving up. Patience is unmoved by adversity or difficulty.

So many Christians give up in their walk with God. They literally throw in the towel. I've heard that term my whole life—"throw in the towel"—but I never quite understood its meaning. But I was watching a boxing match one time, and I saw a towel come flying into the ring. When the towel comes flying into the ring, the match is over and the fight is stopped.

A lot of Christians want to throw in the towel. "I can't take it anymore, Lord!" They give up when there are trials, temptations, difficulties or hardships. But patience or steadfast endurance is adding to your faith.

So you need to have self-control in dealing with your sexual desires and lusts, and you need to also have patience in dealing with the pressures and problems of life.

How do you have patience? By looking to God, by trusting in God, by waiting on God and not giving up.

One of my favorite authors is B. Raymond Edmund. He once made the statement, "It is always too soon to quit." I've never forgotten that. Every time I want to quit, I remind myself that it's too soon. I can't quit. So I keep going. And then I want to quit again, but it's too soon. I can't quit. So I keep going. And then a little further down the road, "I want to quit!" But "No, I can't quit! It's too soon." So keep telling yourself that and keep persevering. Just put one foot in front of the other until finally one day you'll see Jesus face to face. And you'll be glad you had patience or steadfast endurance.

Peter fell. That's why later on in the passage he says, "You will never stumble." He denied the Lord three times. He doesn't want us to stumble; he wants us to grow, so he says you need to add "to self-control perseverance" or steadfast endurance.

The fifth ingredient is godliness. Peter says, "to perseverance [add] godliness." Godliness is simply God-likeness. So to be godly is to be like God. I like this explanation: "It is a person who seeks to please God in all things. It brings the sanctifying presence of God into all of life." It brings God into your marriage, into your family, into your work, into your thoughts, into your attitudes, into your actions and into your pastimes. God is brought into every area of your life.

One of the godliest people in all of the Bible is the Old Testament character Joseph. He is a very Christ-like individual. There is nothing bad said about Joseph in the Bible, except that he had a tendency to tell people about what he was dreaming. That got him in big trouble. But whether he was in the pit, in the prison, in the palace, whether his brothers were bowing before him, he always kept God in perspective.

Every time Joseph speaks on the pages of Scripture, there is a reference to God. When his brothers were bowing before him, and he had the power to take revenge and imprison or kill them, he said, "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good." When Mrs. Potiphar said to Joseph, "Lie with me," Joseph said, "How...can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Joseph always kept God in focus. And the reason Joseph was so godly was because he always thought about God, talked about God, kept God in focus in every aspect of his life.

That's so important.

The sixth ingredient is in verse 7: "brotherly kindness." If you're going to grow, to godliness you need to add brotherly kindness. In the Greek, "brotherly kindness" is the word "phileo." In the Greek, there are several words for "love." This "love" means "brotherly love." It is a fellowship of the brothers, a love of the brotherhood.

So godliness does not exist in a vacuum or in isolation from others. We must demonstrate brotherly kindness through acts of kindness in community with other believers. In Romans 12:10, Paul says, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love." So we are to be kind to the body of believers in Jesus Christ. And if you're not kind, you're not spiritual.

This means we are to be part of a local church. It is absolutely essential and necessary in order to grow in your faith, to become a mature believer, to be part of a local church. You can't say, "I have no need of you." We're the body of Christ. "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you.'" The church needs you and you need the church. Church is a blessing to you and you're a blessing to the church. You have gifts and abilities that bless other people. So "brotherly kindness" is in the context of being kind and affectionate to one another in brotherly love.

How can you keep the "one anothers" in the Bible if there are no others in your life? It's not enough to just stay home and watch church online. I have people tell me a lot, "I don't go to your church, but I watch you every Sunday." That's good, but you need to be in fellowship, "koine." That word means "joint participation." There's no substitute for it. Staying home and watching online is not church. When you go to church, you should reach out in brotherly love to one another, encourage one another, pray for one another. The Bible says, "You also ought to wash one another's feet." "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." So "brotherly kindness" is to be added in the context of the local church in order for you to grow.

The seventh and last character quality needed in order to grow your faith is "love." The King James translation says "charity." Verse 7 says, "and to brotherly kindness [add] love." Now here we have a different Greek word for love. It's not "phileo"; it's "agape." 1 Corinthians 13 describes this kind of love. It's a love not only for the brethren, but it's also a love for all mankind, even for your enemies.

As a Christian, you are to love everyone, even your enemies. The Bible says God "sends rain on the just and on the unjust." So we are not to have any "hate lists"; we are to love all people.

Love is the birthmark of the Christian. 1 John 4:7 says, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." Romans 5:5 says, "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit," when you're born again. So you are to have that agape love for others. In Romans 13:8, it says, "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law."

So what are we supposed to add to our faith? Moral excellence or virtue, knowledge, self-

control, patience or perseverance, godliness or God-likeness, brotherly kindness and love. This is the recipe for a growing faith. You can take that list, pray over it, work down the list and then bring a speedy earnestness or desire to lavish those things onto your faith.

The second division of this passage is in verses 8-9. This gives us the reasons for a growing faith. Why should we grow in our faith? “For if these things...”—which is a reference to verses 5-7—“...are yours and abound...”—or “overflow”—“...you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things...”—in other words, he doesn’t have them in him and abounding—“...is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

There are three things that should motivate us to have a growing faith. Number one, we don’t want to be unfruitful. Peter said that if these things are in you, you won’t be barren or unfruitful. This is a figure of speech whereby he states the positive to teach the negative. If we add to our faith these virtues, we will not be unfruitful or barren. We will have a fruitful, growing, budding Christian life.

John 15 mentions no fruit, fruit, more fruit and much fruit. That is all in relation to how you are abiding in Christ. Whoever abides in Christ “bears much fruit.” Then He prunes it so it might bring forth “more fruit.” It grows in your life. So we want to be fruitful believers. We want to be a blessing to others.

One of the hymns I used to like singing in church as a boy growing up is

“Make me a blessing,

Make me a blessing.

Out of my life

Out of my life

May Jesus shine.”

That’s a beautiful prayer.

But for this to happen, I need to add to my faith. I need to grow. And I need to stay dependent on God. I need to abide in Him. I want to bear much fruit. But if you don’t add these things to your faith, you will be unfruitful and barren. You won’t be a fruitful believer.

Number two, in verse 9, you don’t want to lose your spiritual vision or sight. Peter says, “For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness.” Here Peter is talking to believers, telling them they can become blind. You say, “Blind believers?! Shortsighted believers?!” Yes. They don’t see God in everything. They don’t see the reality of spiritual things.

They're not like Abraham who had a vision of "the city...whose builder and maker is God." They're like Lot, who could only see Sodom and Gomorrah, and as a result, he lost everything. In the Bible, Lot was called "a righteous man," but he was blind and shortsighted.

I want to be like Abraham. The two things that marked Abraham's life were a tent and an altar. He was a stranger and a pilgrim in this world—this world was not his home—and he constantly worshipped God. Everywhere he went he built an altar. And he constantly had a clear vision of God. So we want to keep our vision clear.

As a Christian, you can go blind, spiritually speaking. You don't see spiritual reality. You find yourself laboring "for the food which perishes, [but not] for the food which endures to everlasting life." You live for the mundane and temporal. You live for the now. Yes, you'll go to heaven, but you're not living for the heaven on earth. It's sad.

Then the third thing why we should grow in faith is we don't want to forget God. We don't want to forget that the Lord has forgiven us and washed us of our sins. Verse 9 says, "...has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins."

It's a sad thing when a Christian forgets that he is a sinner saved by grace, when he forgets about the Cross, when he forgets that God brought him out of a pit, put his feet upon a rock, put a new song in his heart, gave him a new heart and redeemed him by His grace. We should always stay at the foot of the Cross. We come to the Cross to be forgiven, and we stay at the Cross to stay humbly dependent upon Him. We should never forget about the Cross of Christ.

I like the story of John Newton, the man who wrote the song Amazing Grace. There are some great biographies on the life of John Newton. When he was old and lost his physical eyesight, he was still preaching. He was asked what truth was most important to him. He said, "One thing I know: I am a great sinner; God is a great Savior." He never forgot that "The blood of Jesus Christ...cleanses us from all sin." And that's what will keep you growing and worshipping and thankful as a believer: you never forget the Cross.

John Newton wrote the lyrics of the song Amazing Grace:

"Amazing grace! How sweet the sound.

That saved a wretch like me."

I once was lost, but now am found,

Was blind, but now I see."

Some churches have taken that out of the hymnal. They don't want to be called "wretches." But it belongs there. He saved "a wretch like me....Was blind, but now I see."

So you don't want to lose your vision. You want to see the Cross. You want to remember your

sin. You want to stay humble and dependent on God. You don't want to become unfruitful or lose your spiritual sight. You don't want to forget that your sins have been forgiven. And growing helps you in that regard.

The third division of our text is the results, the benefits or the blessings of growing in our faith, verses 10-11. "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent." I pointed it out earlier that in verse 5, it says, "giving all diligence, add..." Now, starting in verse 10, it says, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for..."—so here's the rationale—"...if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

There are three things that are benefits of having a growing faith. Number one is assurance. Verse 10 says, "Make your call and election sure." God chooses us in eternity past and calls us in time. Those who are the called and the elect children of God will manifest a changed life; they will walk in holiness.

One of the ways to have assurance of your salvation is you walk with the Lord and grow in the Lord. If you're backsliding, there is a question of whether or not you're a true child of God. So you want to make your calling and your election sure.

I believe in the doctrine of assurance. You can know that you have eternal life. And one of the greatest ways to know that is to be growing as a Christian, to be growing in the Lord. If you're not growing, that's a dangerous thing.

So you "make your call and election sure"; you have assurance.

The second benefit of being a growing Christian and having a growing faith is stability, verse 10. Peter says, "If you do these things you will never stumble."

Peter is writing this under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but Peter stumbled. He had self-confidence; he said, "I will not deny You!" to Jesus. But he was sitting afar off by the enemy's camp. He denied knowing the Lord three times. Then he went out and "wept bitterly." And then he was restored.

Peter doesn't want us to stumble. That's why he said, "If you do these things you will never stumble." So you'll have assurance and stability.

Thirdly, you'll have a triumphal entrance into heaven. I like this. Verse 11 says, "For so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." This is the conclusion.

This verse is not a question of whether or not you get to heaven; it's a question of how you get to heaven. Peter's not questioning whether you get to heaven; he's questioning how you get to heaven.

If you're a Christian, you're going to heaven. But the question is, will you go triumphantly? Or will you be ashamed? Will you hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant....Enter into the joy of your lord"?

The Bible tells us that when we enter heaven, we'll stand before the "bema," the judgment seat of Christ. There our works "will be revealed by fire." Some people have works that are like "wood, hay, straw." These works will be consumed by the fire.

But if we grew in our faith, we had a fruitful faith, we walked with the Lord, grew in sanctification and holiness and served the Lord, we will have "gold, silver, precious stones." They will refine us. It will be a triumphal, glorious entrance.

Verse 11 is a word picture. It's a picture of the athletes in the Greek Olympics. When they won the laurel wreath, they would come in the triumphal parade, like Roman generals and the army returning from victory. It was like a ticker-tape parade in celebration. This is how you're going to go to heaven.

This is something people don't often think about. But some Christians will go to heaven triumphantly, while other Christians will go to heaven being saved "by the skin of their teeth."

If you're a Christian, stop and think how you're going to heaven. Will it be a glad day, a triumphal day? Will you get a crown to throw at Jesus' feet? Will you hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant"?

If you're not growing, if you're not adding to your faith, if you're not bearing fruit, if you've become blind and shortsighted, if you forget you've been purged from your old sins, you'll still go to heaven, but it won't be a triumphal entrance into heaven.