

2 Peter

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[0 : 00] As the Lord shall be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the second epistle of Peter, chapter 1, verses 10 and 11.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence 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.

Chapter 1, the second epistle of Peter, and the 10th and 11th verses.

Our subject brings before us a business in which every sinner born again is engaged from time to time as grace is given.

[1 : 30] And it is good when you can realize the word diligence wrought out in your soul's exercises.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

You must not balk at that word, diligence, because it is in the word of God. Then the apostle Peter was inspired by the Spirit of God to use it where it is placed in our subject.

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Indiligence, slackness, in things divine, will work a great deal of havoc in your soul's experience.

And at times, if you fall a prey to such a frame of mind, you will hardly know what you are or where you are. I want, as the Lord shall help me, to look at the subject from three or four viewpoints of it.

[2 : 59] From time to time, I have tried to bring this subject before you. But it has come up on my mind rather pertinently as I have lately stood by a grave or two.

And death has been brought upon my mind in thinking about seeing all that is mortal of poor sinners born again well laid in the grave.

And there is a word here which the apostle Peter uses. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

And now a word like that, not that the preacher needs it, not that any preacher ordained of God needs it, but I say a word like that is a warrant to often bring before you the same subject.

And not be negligent in putting you in remembrance of it. Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

[4 : 27] Hovering round this word diligence, if you weigh the matter up as you read the word of God, and I hope many of you do that, and as you do, you will not need the preacher to tell you that often the life of the righteous is likened by illustrations to that which sets forth the necessity of diligence.

The apostle Paul says, fight the good fight of faith, lay hold upon eternal life.

If you were indiligent, slack in a fight, you would soon be aware of the folly of behaving like it.

And then the apostle Paul uses the illustration, let us therefore run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, looking up all beside as it is in the original, so godly scholars tell us.

And he says again, so run that ye may obtain. It will be to no particular purpose if you should run a race of chapel going and you do not obtain.

[6 : 03] I want you to think that over. Chapel going by itself will be a benefit to you in this life. But it will be bodily exercise which profiteth little.

In your chapel going as you run in that race, coming week in, week out to appear before God, you must give diligence to obtain.

Obtain something for your soul. And do business in heaven's marketplace. And seek to gain by trading there. And then you find in the book of Revelation that the epistles to the seven churches use the illustration in each instance to him that overcometh.

And that needs diligence because the life of the righteous is a life of conflict. I have already hinted it is a fight.

And then says the apostle Paul, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against wicked spirits in high places, margin reading.

[7 : 27] And their wicked spirits are never weary. Or they never grow weary in doing their wicked work in opposing people who were taught of God.

And you must seek divine aid not to be weary in wrestling against such inveterate holes. It needs diligence.

Such is the life of the righteous. Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

And now the next word to look at is the word sure. In the things of God you must be sure.

And sure not only regarding the things of God being what they are. The things of God. Eternal realities. What you must be sure of is your own interest therein.

[8 : 44] Oh you do not want it to be said later on there was no part or lot in this matter for thy heart is not right with God.

And you know dear friends it is a wonderful privilege when you can feel a while sure that you do belong to the people of God.

One with God one with each other in the things of God. Sure. How sure do you feel about your soul's experience this Sabbath afternoon?

Some of you blessed be God assure that you're in you're out the Lord has appeared for you made his goodness and mercy to attend you and you can say our good guidance Savior has helped us thus far and tis by his favor we are what we are.

Some of you as yet ask in the way to Zion with your faces thitherward you feel sure that Jesus is the one thing needful I without him perish must and you want as the hymn writer goes on grace your spirit make me heedful help me in his name to trust and with pleasure in him as my portion boast you are sure about the things of God being what they are and when you look on people taught of God you feel happy is the people that is in such a case yea happy is that people whose God is the Lord but as yet you are not sure that you are numbered with them you are not sure before God that matters are right between your soul and God what you want is this the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and now you must give diligence the Lord will give you the grace to do it if you ask him to bestow it if ye being evil know how to give good things unto your children how much more shall your father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him then you must be urgent before God for it is a matter of supreme importance that you should make your calling and election sure seeing you are a dying man a dying woman with a never dying soul and any day that dawns may be one day must inevitably be your dying day teach me to live that I may dread the grave as little as my bed said Bishop Ken and good it will be if you say so too before God wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure and now many of you before God this Sabbath afternoon have the inestimable mercy to know that in your soul's experience there has been brought by God that which has made you sure that the good work is begun in you and being carried on but that sweet knowledge you must make a right use of it and that means then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord and you need to give diligence to be confirmed in your soul that your past experience is indeed that which

[13 : 19] God has wrought that you may feel as it were doubly sure the good work is indeed begun and God is carrying it on and that in his time he will complete it much might be said about this word sure and then maybe some of you dear young people who are beginning to seek the Lord who are after the spirit the things of the spirit you want to be sure from another viewpoint of truth you want to be sure that when Jesus Christ died on Calvary's cross that he died for you it is good you should have it in your heart to feel like that because that knowledge is only found in a new heart where a new spirit has been given where that word in Ezekiel has been fulfilled a new heart will

I give you a new spirit will I put within you I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh I will give you a heart of flesh God has already dealt graciously with you for you to have such a desire such a hunger such a thirst that you might participate in the benefit and blessing of what was done on Calvary's cross Lord Jesus make thyself to me a living bright reality and now you will not be content with anything less than that which helps you to feel sure as to where you are and what you are in the things of God you want to be sure you are a pilgrim to Canaan bound and you will often be saying how stands the case my soul with thee for heaven are thy credentials clear and I look at the subject from another viewpoint wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure it might surprise you if

I tell you but what I am telling you is the truth you would not think it would be otherwise and you may be surprised at the viewpoint of making your calling and election sure that the apostle Peter takes in this chapter because it is not possible for you to ascend above the blue skies and see your name written down in the Lamb's book of life and God as it were to put his holy finger where it is and give you the privilege to read it you are not to know your election like that because that is an impossibility it will be well if you send up many a petition in thy fair book of life and grace oh may I find my name recorded in some humble place beneath my Lord the Lamb but do listen if it is recorded there it will be recorded also in the word of

God itself as to your character you will find when you look into the word of God and look at the exceeding great and precious promises that your character is defined in this promise or that it may not be when you look at those promises that tell about the holy brethren or saints or the godly or the righteous or the pure in heart because you may feel such characters are so high I cannot attain there too but you will find characters such as a bruised reed he shall not break smoking flax he shall not quench he will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer and this word should help you oh every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters and he that hath no money come ye by wine and milk without money and without

Christ and think of what the psalmist says as the heart panteth after the water brooks so panteth my soul after thee O God and now when you find your character recorded in the sacred pages that is a sweet confirmation that your name is also recorded in the Lamb's book of life think of what you read in Malachi 9 the book of remembrance was written before the Lord for them that fear the Lord and that think upon his name how condescending that is of the Holy Spirit to record it like that think upon his name thy name is as ointment poured forth how sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ears it soothes his sorrows heals his wounds and drives away his fears and now you know if you do think on his name if you are like Mary and she pondered all these things in her heart and you know if you have secret moments when you do some business before God with whom you have to do remember me

[19 : 08] O Lord with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people O visit me with thy salvation and now coming back to the viewpoint of this truth the apostle Peter takes throughout it is not it is not that you should as I said ascend up into heaven to see your name recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life but that you should so live your life that men may take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus.

In the context, the Apostle Peter is stressing about being neither barren or unfruitful.

Look in the margin and see what it says for barren. Very significant and suggestive, I feel. Idle. The opposite to diligence.

Yes. When on the bell rich fruit we see it is then we cry a goodly tree. And now the Saviour said marvel not if the world hate you but know this it hated me before it hated you.

And now if you should be given some religion that God is the author of the world will know it. And make you aware of what the world's attitude is toward it.

[20 : 44] If you were of the world the world would love its own but the world will not love you. May give you civility and they should do that.

May respect you until you stand up to them face to face and show them what will be the issue of the ungodly lives they live and then you will know what is the nature of the world in which you live and move.

Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure. And now strange to say in eternal purposes election is first.

But the Apostle Peter puts it here in the second place to calling. And why? If you can give diligence to make your calling sure you will have made your election sure at the same time.

If you can say before God as the Apostle Paul and he called me by his grace if you can search out in your soul's experience that evidence which alone the grace of God can produce and thus make sure your calling as you read in the Epistle to the Romans among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ.

[22 : 32] If you can make your calling sure like that before God with whom you have to do then your election is made sure at the same time.

remember that when you think of the word election what a word it is in the so-called religious world.

If it is read or if it should be dropped as a word in conversation you will find some religious folk will react to it and show their resentment at the truth of it.

Although they are religious folk as I say it is astounding the enmity to the truth of electing love that is made manifest at times and the hard speeches that drop from the lips of religious folk regarding it that they would never believe in a God who could save a multitude and not save all but allow the others to go down into eternal misery.

And yet the Church of England folk say sometimes at least I hope they do they should do when the 17th article of the Church of England is read that the doctrine of election is a great truth and full of comfort and so it is.

[24 : 20] And if you are taught of God you will not kick at it or resent it but you will say though God's election is a truth small comfort there I see till I am told by God's own lips that he has chosen me.

You will have some feeling like that. You will know it is a truth because the Saviour says ye have not chosen me but I have chosen you.

And that will touch according your soul's exercises. And you will be saying say unto my soul I am thy salvation.

You will be given diligence to make your calling and election sure. Much might be said about this word election and the blessed truth it sets for here it sets for you being made to know that Jesus Christ died for you and you giving the evidence of it in your everyday life so that even the world at large can see there is a difference between the world and you.

And you must never lose sight of that word who maketh thee to differ from another and what is thou that thou dost not receive. And I give a word to you dear young people as you know the pastor does wish you well and that is never argue about the doctrine of election because while you might be able to argue and seek to prove it all that you may do with whom you are arguing is not to convert them but it may be to silence them confound them and it will not gain you any ground in the things of God.

[26 : 31] The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned. The eyes of the blind shall be opened the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped and you must never forget the things of God can only be known and right by revelation.

It is good that you should search the scriptures and seek to find out what saith the scriptures about this doctrine and that but you must not try to argue people into believing what is sound doctrine.

A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. let it be your attitude lead me in thy truth and teach me wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure.

There is a word in the epistle to the Romans which you might think at the first reading of it is a very hard scripture to ponder the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded.

And now what you must do is to compare scripture with scripture and you will find if you were helped to do that that you will get down to what really is bedrock truth and you will read a scripture like this if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost and now that is a very solemn word I felt it to be a terrible scripture I remember trying to preach from it once if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost and now that is the last thing that any preacher ordained of God wants to happen is that people listening to the gospel shall be lost every such a preacher says with the apostle

[29 : 00] Paul brethren my heart's desire for Israel is that they might be saved and now if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost in whom the little g-god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them the election hath obtained it God has ordained that vast multitude a number which no man can number making there the people in the aggregate to be the election and they have obtained a religion to live by and die by and righteousness to make them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light and the rest were blinded but not by God do remember that the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure the next thing to look at is this word calling because the

Savior said many are called but few are chosen there is what is the general calling under the gospel whereby all ordained of God to preach or to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and if they're helped a preacher to write they will issue a general calling but there will be in that general calling a particular calling whereby the word of God will be fulfilled as many as were ordained to eternal life believed and they will be called by grace when you look at church history or even if you look at the earliest church history if you might so term it and you could do if you look into the gospels as Jesus Christ went about there were thousands of people who gathered round about where Jesus

Christ preached but at the most according to what the word of God says there were only a few hundreds who were born again wrought on by the spirit of God you could not make the number up to a thousand I mean according to how it is recorded in the word of God in fact when the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians that Jesus Christ after his resurrection was seen of above five hundred brethren at once it made a great impression on me because I had gone through the gospels seeking if I could to find out round about the number and I could only get somewhere round about a hundred and fifty it opened my eyes and my heart to enlarge it then the apostle Paul says above five hundred brethren at once but then sometimes he addressed five thousand seven thousand thousands at a time and that was the general call but the particular call comes down to hundreds remember that wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure and now this calling

I give you just some characteristics of the nature of it it will not be just to be found under the sound of the gospel and come and go and evidence no good gained and yet that will be the general call of it and it is to be feared how many many people have grown up under the gospel and heard it all their life long and at the end of life's journey you do not know what to say when you stand by their ground because they did not give that evidence that your soul desired to see I could not tell you what pleasure it gives a preacher especially a pastor when he can stand by the graveside and feel a sweet confidence regarding whoever it is all that is mortal of is being laid in the grave but if your calling an election is made sure there should be something seen by people round about you regarding it or they should observe the fruits of it and there is another thought you get a feeling that you cannot put into words that some people are indeed sinners born again and they may not say anything to you for quite a while about it and yet you have got a consciousness that they are asking the way to

Zion with their faces thitherward you sometimes discern that with young people who are not ready to say much about their spiritual feelings at any time until out of the abundance of the heart the mouth can speak but I can tell you this from the pulpit end of the chapel that sometimes a preacher is given a consciousness that one particular person is hearing the gospel as a life and death matter and there is one giving diligence to make his or her calling and election sure remember that and now this calling is a calling from death unto life and you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins oh it is a wonderful mercy to be alive unto the gospel hear the gospel for yourself be like

[35 : 49] Asaph when he said I would hear what God the Lord will say to have your ear attend to the gospel trumpet and sometimes prove blessed is the people that know the joyful sound they shall walk oh Lord in the light of thy countenance when you hear the gospel what are you listening for not just the amen it concludes the sermon surely surely you want to hear what God will say to you that you might make sure your calling and election and go on your way built up in our most holy faith with yet another evidence another token for good some intimation of participating in the favour that the Lord bears to his dear people yes it is a calling from death unto life

I wonder if you could go back over life's journey and remember when you first heard the gospel you have heard it many of you from baby days on but when did you first of all hear it in your soul's feelings and feel tis the gospel's joyful tidings points to heaven and shows the road all since that time whenever you were found under the gospel in a right mind you were concerned to give diligence to make your calling and election sure and you want the Lord to lead the preacher whoever he is in that way that you feel to be that you can be confirmed in your soul that you are indeed a sinner born again wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make you a calling and election sure it is a calling from darkness to light the entrance of thy word giveth light in thy light shall we see light many people are under the gospel

I'm not making any reflections on you but it could apply to some of you many people under the gospel are like the man who was blind of whom the Lord Jesus he took him out of the town and he made clay with spittle and put it on his eyes and asked him to look up and tell what he could see and he said I see men as trees walking and then the Lord Jesus gave him another touch and he could see clearly and you must remember this you dear greyheads especially that sometimes amongst those who are in life's mourning who are beginning to make their calling and election sure that for quite a while they may only see men as trees walking but their eyes are being opened and the

Lord will give them in his time another touch and they will see clearly like you think you do remember that wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure I say it is a calling from darkness to light Paul says ye were one time darkness but now are ye light in the Lord in darkness born I went astray and wandered from the gospel way since the saviour gave me sight I cannot see without his light it is also a calling from slavery to service and you know that as you were born you were just slaves to sin all of us live according to the dictates of our carnal mind until the

Lord in his mercy deals with us and we are made manifest as being sinners born again and then instead of being the servants of sin what is said of you you serve the Lord Christ it is a calling from slavery to service it is a calling from being an enemy to the truth to the love of it you did receive the love of the truth it is a wonderful mercy to have that love he that loveth is born of God and when you have that love of the truth you love all other folk who do love the truth irrespective of any denominational label we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and you get a discernment who are the brethren when you meet with one and another and they begin to tell out the dealings of

[41 : 26] God you find as in water face hands with unto face so does the heart of man to matter and by that love shed abroad in your heart which produces the unity of the spirit with all others taught of God you do of a truth make your calling and election sure by this shall all men mark that word in all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another but I must come to the amen wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make you a calling and election sure and so election is the root calling is the fruit and it is a wonderful mercy if you can say as I have already hinted like the apostle

Paul and he called me by his grace and now you find the apostle Peter was stressing that in making your calling and election sure there was one special aim which seems to shine forth above all other aims you did sing about one aim before the sermon began to know my Jesus crucified by far excels all things beside wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure for if you do these things you shall never fall if you are indiligent and you should have a real spell of it running into weeks and months and it could be years and yet you are a sinner born again and you follow like Peter of old far off if you should then be tossing on your dying bed you will have some heavy work you will have some dark dismal experiences ere the

Lord appears for you at length to bring you forth again into the light and make matters right between him and you do suffer the word of exhortation and do seek for this blessed holy diligence to make your calling and election sure and says the apostle Peter if you do these things you shall never fall a pray to ifs and buts and hows to sink you in the gloom of all that's dismal in this world or in the world to come for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ oh what a good ending that is to one's journeying through life an entrance an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and you remember the apostle Paul said that I might finish my course with joy and the word of God is a guarantee and deliver them who through fear of death were subject all their lifetime unto bondage I believe I could not exactly prove it from the pulpit but I can believe it although I cannot prove it I believe that strictly speaking according to the word of God every sinner born again gets an abundant entrance into the heavenly kingdom here's the Saviour come ye blessed of my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world but in getting that abundant entrance many of them too many of them

I fear never leave a dying testimony to cheer and comfort those who love them and mourn their loss but the good work being begun God has guaranteed to finish it and as the word of God says the Lord will give grace and then glory surely glory is indeed an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and sometimes it is good when you can go by a dying bed and see that those who are dying have got that abundant entrance into this everlasting kingdom and they leave a dying testimony this morning before I set out to go to Staple earth I was on the phone speaking about our friend

[46 : 56] Mr. Gale who is dying and as I inquired how he was another of the Lord's servants his son in law Mr.

George Jensen said to me oh my friend what I have seen by this dying bed recently has done me so much good and strengthened me in my ministry because the dear man was favored with a foresight of this abundant entrance after a time of darkness and distress then the clouds dispersed and the light shone and my friend said to me as I came away I said if this is what it is to die I shall not be afraid to die when my time comes and now I simply say be this religion yours and mine to live right and at the last to die right amen amen