

## Richard Doctor - Give Diligence

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Well, dear ones, this afternoon, and I don't have to bring the love from the Chicago class because they're right here, and I would estimate there's just under 40 in the room.

We think about legacies, and in second Peter we have this instruction. Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, ye shall never fall, and that's 2 Peter 1:10, as we look at the origin of this.

This was Peter's final epistle. Peter knew that he was going to be crucified on Vatican Hill. Of course, I think the tradition is correct that he was crucified on Vatican Hill in Rome, and what would you give as instruction to the brethren if you knew that you were facing a painful execution? What would be the last thing that you'd want to share?

That's what we have in this second epistle, and he begins it by, of course, the introduction, Simon Peter, a servant, an apostle of Jesus Christ to them that have obtained the like precious faith. You know, we don't do this by ourselves. I think that's important to remember, and for those of you that were on the study or the discourse yesterday, there's a connectedness that I think is in that picture of the navel of the Beloved, but we didn't amplify on that.

But we have a precious faith that we share. We need each other. Through the righteousness of God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, through and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him. Knowledge we're going to amplify in all these scriptures that hath called us to glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceedingly great and precious promises. That by these you might be partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And beside this, giving all diligence, and to your faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience.

And to patience, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off.

And it's forgotten that he was purged of his old sins. Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you shall never fall for. So an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Well, let's go back and start analyzing these verses that we've read.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you. We need to ask, is grace being multiplied in our life and peace? And are we growing in grace? Brother Russell says in reprint 2137, as we grow in grace, we will grow in peace, and this term is so precious, in fact, I have to take a little excursion.

It's so precious.

In Russian, it is a proper name, Vladimir. Okay, that's grace and peace in Russian. It's also the name of a lot of Russians we know in the news.

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And it's a matter not just of knowledge being multiplied, but the Greek word Here is Strong's 1922 epignosis. Okay? Knowledge is from the same Indo European root as our word no. So we say no in English, in Greek, gnosis.

But they put an intensifier in front of it, and this is generally translated as an acknowledgement, a full knowledge, full discernment. So it's not just head knowledge, but it's head knowledge that becomes heart knowledge that we're acting on. That's what epignosis is.

And it says, according to his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness through the knowledge of him, and that has called us unto glory and virtue, and you say, why is Brother Richard bringing up the Sinaitic codex? Well, reprint 2136 says, you know, there's an improved reading if you look at the original text as it was conveyed in the Sinaitic Codex, and so that's what we did. In fact, if you notice what's happening, for those of you who are close enough, you can see the words are not separated by any spaces as we would in English.

The words just flow one into the other. Because if you are knowledgeable in reading the language, you wouldn't have a problem knowing how to discern the words. But there were a series of the manuscript's clearly written out, but there's a series of dots that the editor put in. One of the later editors said, look, this is in the text, but don't read it. Well, Brother Russell says, let's pull that back out and make it part of the text.

And so that's what we did over here. That part actually says that pertain unto God and life and godliness. So this idiomatic phrase, which is now understood but wasn't even understood by Benjamin Wilson when he translated of the Diagloth. This is the same phrase we find in John 1:1, Romans 5:1. It's found Hebrews 2:27.

This is something where it's in the service of or pertaining to God and just giving a reference to beauties of the truth. Where there's an amplification on this issue that Brother Russell draws to our attention from verse three we haven't simply been called to glory. Wouldn't that be nice?

But nobility of character, virtue is also part of the requirement for our development in Christ Jesus.

And I wanted to give this quote from an early reprint. 781. The man who essays the building of a house for himself and his goods has not only to select his material, but you need to have a plan. But to rear it after a definite plan and on correct architectural principles. Else if his house did not tumble about his ears, it may perhaps be laughing stock to all gazers.

How much more important is building up the house of God and through the master builder melee the oops, there we go. Foundation. Though the master builder may lay the foundation ever so well, there is still great care and much wisdom needed in the superstructure. In the Scriptures there are frequent references to the style of building necessary, and as to the quality, we can see this in 1st Corinthians 3, 10, 15.

The gold, silver, and costly stones contrasting favorably with the wood, hay, and stubble, which the fire of trials is sure to destroy as to kind. Peter gives it without a figure in his Second Epistle, chapter one, which is exactly what we're focused on here. Where faith grows into virtue, virtue into knowledge, knowledge into temperance, followed by patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. This is the edifying or upbuilding which results in noble good and holy character, whereby are giving unto us exceeding great and precious promises, and this is a quote from one of the newspaper sermons.

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But I really like the point that was being made here. It's if our fellow men are willing to endure hardships for the trivial rewards that are theirs, what should we be willing to endure who have believed?

And I find that something that's very stimulating.

And we're promised the divine nature. God wants a family. He wants an intimate family, and, you know, it's his desire to see us be successful. We were talking a little bit about that yesterday in the Song of Songs.

How much the Lord loves and desires us, even those that start to drift away. He.

He has a desire to see them, you know, not do that and come back.

We're given this promise of being partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world through lust.

And besides this. Okay, so this isn't quite enough. We keep building now, okay? And we're talking about building with these precious stones and metals, giving all diligence, and I like the Weymouth translation.

The Greek word here are a te is linked to our word for aristocracy. Okay? That's where you have the most virtuous, the best leading in a Krato government, and we have the idea of moral excellence, goodness and valor of character, and Wemyss just translates it, noble character.

But you can't do that without a foundation of faith, and who is the father of the faithful? Well, we're told that without faith it is impossible to please him. In Hebrews 11:6, the father of faith who sets the example for those of us that are human is Father Abraham, and we build off of that root.

And this promise that God gave him, you know, when he left Ur of the Chaldees, think about. Ur was one of the most well developed, modern and sophisticated cities of the ancient world, and literate too. They'd already started. They were well into literacy by the time of Abraham.

And he's asked to travel, I think it's about 800 miles or so because you follow the Euphrates going up to Carchemish and present day Turkey, and then you go south into the Levant and to get to the promised land that way to leave everything.

Then he's promised a son. But it's not the son that comes through the work of the flesh, it's not Ishmael, but a son of promise that comes through Sarah, it's Isaac that the seed will be brought through, and then he's asked to do the incredible thing of sacrificing that son, his only son that he loved, as God sacrificed his precious, his most precious thing, his only son. This requires real faith and we can't amplify on it here. But I believe that the rabbinical analysis of this whole text is accurate.

Looking at chiasms for those of the brethren here, okay, I see some smiles. Okay, they've been through chiasms.

The focus of that whole text comes to where Abraham says to Isaac, I am with you in this experience, and he doesn't know how it's going to end. But that is the father of faith, and we can amplify on that some other discourse. Wherefore it is of faith that it might be by grace to the end.

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The promise might be sure to all the seed not only to that which is of the law, but to that which is of the faith of Abraham, and by the Lord's grace, we trust that those of us who are together listening are part of this group that has taken hold on these precious promises and the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. Romans 4:16 Our Lord had a last legacy. We're focused on Peter's but knowing that his crucifixion was close at hand. He had so much he wanted to share with his disciples.

And when we read through the Gospel accounts, we see how the focus of this last week of our Lord really makes up the bulk of that material, and here we see him as evening comes on the Olivet Mount of Olives, overlooking the city and explaining some of his prophetic concerns, sharing his prophetic concerns with the brethren.

We know Matthew 24, but here's a specific section for he says in 24:21 for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time no nor ever shall be, and except those days should be shortened. There should be no flesh, say no flesh be saved. But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. You know, this is something that focuses on us, and we are the ones that are in this time of tribulation and should be passing along the belief, the bright, let's say the silver lining on the cloud, that beyond all this trouble which is taking place to bring man to humility, there is going to be a beautiful kingdom day.

And we're told that the trouble will be such as never was since the beginning of the world, and we're not going to amplify on all that trouble except that each of us has a special part in this Matthew 24:21 scripture.

Commenting on that in Reprint 5874, Brother Russell says, be not overly anxious, an anxiety which would rob the soul of rest and peace and indicate a lack of faith. We're focusing on faith. This is going to be a test of our faith as we develop and a test of how anxious are we about the things happening in this world with our souls at rest, in God at peace as he gives peace, earnest to follow God's commands, and that's going to require faith and building a noble character. See this used the word, you know, I'm tying it back in there.

We're ready for knowledge. So Brother Russell again is bringing this reprint article 5874 into the focus of second Peter chapter one.

We're told, you know, all of us know that we have to have a heart like the Lord's heart, but we really do need knowledge. It's not just I think my heart is like Jesus, and that's where I'm standing, you know, on my faith and trust in is atoning blood, and you can say things along that line. But we look at Isaiah 53:11, which says, he shall see the travail of his soul. This is the suffering servant.

This is, this is the Messiah, and shall be satisfied by his knowledge. Shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. So he's bearing the iniquities, but he is expecting us to know what the divine will is by acting in accordance with knowledge. That's part of our job.

And we're told in the sixth verse, to knowledge add temperance, and to temperance, patience, and to patience, godliness. Now let's just look at that word, temperance. This is Strong's 1466 Ankratia.

This is self control.

This is the. I'm giving a definition here. I think this is from Thayer. The virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites, and I thought we'd already talked about

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nobility of character.

So please contrast for me, brother Richard, nobility of character with where is the apostle trying to direct us with this? Well, I think we have the example that works for me. Looking at Nathan reproving David and then David's experiences. Now clearly David had nobility of character, okay? He had this praise in his heart from the time he was a shepherd boy in the field when he came to say, well, isn't anybody going against, you know, Goliath when he comes out and rebukes the living God, you know, I'm going to go against him.

He had the nobility of character, but he hadn't developed temperance, the self control over sensual desires, and so the grief that came upon him as the sword was within his very family that he loved so much. A daughter raped by a half brother, that half brother murdered by the brother of the daughter. You know, that murderer then goes on to. That's Absalom.

Absalom goes on to rebel against his father and turn some of the close counselors, even of the father, away from David, and you know, the sword was within his own household as a consequence of everything that he had failed to do from not having the proper self control of those noble assets of character that did make him a faithful servant that we know is going to be amongst the ancient worthies, but with a lot of experience.

To knowledge, temperance. To temperance, patience, and to patience. Godliness. Now, I want to.

We're going to go through an extended section because it links to the experiences of the church. Now, on patience, this Greek word is discussed by Pastor Russell in the reprints. I'm not citing that here, but this is upon in English. Our Indo Aryan root remain and maintain is the same as the nene here. So this is to stay in one position.

But hupo, with something that you're bearing, that's bearing down something that. That's the word hypo, like hypodermic needle and that sort of thing. This is the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings, and that extended definition is from Thayer.

And I want us to see something that uses this word hang in there, because we're going to see this word getting used specifically. This isn't saying my friend is 45 minutes late for a planned meeting, but I'm being patient. Or I'm waiting in the doctor's office and it's been an hour and a half, but I'm being patient. This is bearing up under a trial, and we're going to walk together through Revelation 14.

1, because it applies to us now.

And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood upon Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 having his father's name written in their foreheads, and I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder, and I heard the voice of Harpers harping with their harps, and, you know, we're supposed to be able to do that harping, because look at what verse three tells us, and they sung, as it were, a new song before the throne and before the four beasts and the elders.

And no man could learn that song. But the hundred and forty and four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

These are they which are not defiled with women. Now, we're talking here about the defiling church systems, the Jezebel that is mentioned in Revelation throughout. For they are virgins. These are

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they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

And of course, with the confusion in the churches, if there are firstfruits, there are going to be afterfruits. The purpose of developing this mediator, which actually takes longer when you look at it, than the whole mediatorial phase of the kingdom. Okay, we're more than 2,000. We're about 2,000 years into the development of the Mediator. That's going to be the first fruits, but will make possible the second fruits.

And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault, and I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel, and I just want to pause here to say that sometimes things that are clearer in the Greek don't really have a good way to get translated. But the word for angel is untranslated. Okay?

That's a messenger. Angelos is a messenger. So this is Angelos who are evangelizing. You know, evangeloste, actually, in the Hebrew, Greek, they're angels that are evangelizing. Might be something that would preserve the Greek, but wouldn't give you the correct sense in English.

So they're preaching the everlasting gospel unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people saying with a loud voice, fear God. Okay? This is. This is the message. Fear God and give glory to him.

Now it's like, oh, we want to glorify the Lord. Remember what that phrase, give glory to him means in Hebrew, okay? And remember, John's writing in Greek. He's thinking in Aramaic and Hebrew, but he's writing in Greek as best as he could, and this phrase, give glory to God means confess.

If you look at the experiences that Israel had after their wonderfully, amazingly successful, divinely overruled conquest of Jericho, the strong city, then at this smaller city, they suffer defeat, and they know something's wrong. So there's an inquiry made by the high priest. What has gone on here. We find out that there is one of the fighters named Achen, who has kept some of the goods, the booty from Jericho and buried it under his tent, and this brought defeat and defeat and death onto Israel.

And what does Moses say to him? Give glory to God, which means confess your sin, which he does and suffers the punishment. So here's the two messages. Fear God. Confess your sins.

Of course, giving glory to God's a good thing. Okay? You know the way we use glory, but fear God. Give him glory. Confess your sins.

Why? Because this is the judgment hour. People are talking about the Day of Judgment. We're in it, okay? It's.

Come and worship him that made heaven and earth and sea and the fountains of waters, and there followed another angel. This brings it right into our period, saying, babylon has fallen. Has fallen that great city. Because she made all the nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

Yesterday we were talking about the songs of Solomon, and we talked about wine. Wine is, in one sense a picture of doctrine.

Yesterday we could see in the garden, you had the beloved, the lover and the beloved together actually enjoying some sangria in the cool of the garden, and this is not an enjoyable sangria here.

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This is the wrath of God. While doctrine is the picture, I can tell you it's not that it's a matter of presenting doctrine. This is talking about wine as life experience that we need to take in.

It starts with doctrine, it builds on doctrine, but it's life experience, and the life experience that is going to be drunk by the great whore in this case is the wrath of God. That is not going to be a pleasant drink, and it's not just doctrine. That's the point I'm making about be careful, you know, some brethren's minds are like a trap.

They get an idea and they hang there. No matter, you know, you've got to recognize, yes, doctrine, but also life experience, because it's obvious that it's life experience. Here in Revelation 14:8, the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast in his image and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand in the thinking. Now here we're talking doctrine.

Or in the actions in his hand, the same shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture. So that's why I say it's no water in it, no pomegranates, as we saw in the Song of Songs. Into the cup God's indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. We recall this word.

Tormented here means put to the test.

And brimstone is a purifying agent that is used for cleaning up messes. You can read about that in other Greek literature, like Homer's Odyssey, and the smoke of their torment ascends up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, who worship the beast in his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

Let's see, here is the patience. Here is the patience of the saints. This is the word we've seen in Second Peter, chapter one. This is what patience is all about. Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

So this is an instruction as we go through this period that actually precedes the Lord's second presence. I think we would want to begin this period here with the picture of the well not preceding the Second Presence. Speaking off the top of my head, that's wrong, because you have the 144,000. So this is talking about the time from spring of October 1878 on, when near, you know, when the large number of this 144,000. It doesn't mean that it's complete.

It's just talking about the class, the way we'd say the 12 tribes. So we see the 144,000 with the Lord. We have to have the patience during this time, the hupommene, the bearing up under the trials and getting back then into our Scripture.

To this patience, we add Eusebia. Some of us may remember that this became a Christian name, and so there's a church historian, Eusebius of Caesarea, who was the writer of the church history and a supporter, but waffled on his support for Arius. But the thought of Eusebia is piety, and possibly to really amplify on this term, let's take a look at how it's used in 1 Timothy 6.

Here Paul says, if any man teach otherwise and consent not to the wholesome words, even to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the doctrine which is according to Eusebia, okay? According to godliness. He is proud, knowing nothing but doting about questions and strifes of words. Wherefore whereof comes envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, and then this last phrase, supposing that gain is godliness.

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So from this we see that Paul would not be in support of the prosperity Gospel as preached by some of the televangelists, okay? And it doesn't work. It's not going to work for us, okay? It's not a matter of how prosperous we get from such withdraw thyself, but godliness, Eusebia, with contentment, is great gain. So there we have, I think, something that brings together this whole focus on the piety that we should have and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity.

Well, that word for brotherly kindness is the word Philadelphia, Okay? This has. There's two Greek words for love, as we all know. Agapeo, the love that's sometimes called the selfless love, and this brotherly love, and, you know, really, the point is, we're not only supposed to love the brethren, we're even supposed to like the brethren.

I think that as, and I'LL have to say that there's nothing that brings the joy to me the same as being able to be together with the brethren in conventions and in the meetings. It just makes a difference, and I like them. I actually like them.

And I were told that for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. So they're not only supposed to be in us, but abounding in us, and that's the challenge. But he that lacks these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten he was purged of his old sins.

You know, self focus is really part of the. Of the many problems of this day, self focus is definitely one of them.

Not looking at the big picture, which is what sustains us. It's like, well, there's problems here, there's problems here. I can't see beyond the problems. You know, everything's going wrong, there's problems here, and so like, you know, this is part of the Lord's provision that is going to change this order.

And it's going to change when man learns that we can't do it without God.

When that blessed scripture at the end of Psalm 46:10, Be still, be silent actually, and know that I am God when that takes place. Well, we've got a long way to go with, you know, the powers in this world right now until that happens. But those that don't have this vision and, and are lacking in this, oh boy, that's what they're going to be focused on. We need to set a better example or we need to set a good example. Not a better example, but a good example of those that have this faith and remember those messages in revelation.

Fear God, confess what's wrong. Okay, do give glory, but give glory and confess what's wrong. Because it's the day of judgment we're in.

Wherefore the rather brethren, give diligence in this word smooth on here. Okay, I didn't write it down. The word is eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you shall never fail, and how many scriptures.

Well, we have the scriptural promises, but if we do these things, we shall never fall. Like by Redfield accidentally, we shall never fall. To me, this really touches my heart and encourages me, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you just squeaking through the door. Well, that might happen. But if we can really build with these stones, these good building stones that are here in second Peter.

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We're going to have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Well, brethren, trusting that what we've presented has been both a blessing to your heart and in harmony with the rich, rich blessings we are enjoying in this period, and of course, there's trouble, confusion and whatever, you know, that's, that's been with the Church from the beginning and it's going to be with the Church through the end, because that's part of the polishing and developing process, and may the Lord add his blessings.