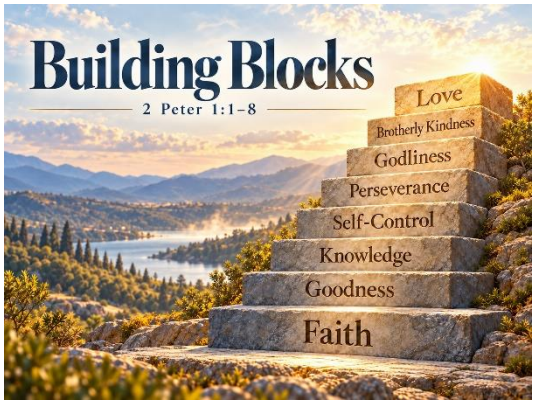

Building Blocks – Part 7

(2 Peter 1:1–8) Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: {2} Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. {3} His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. {4} Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. **{5} For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; {6} and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; {7} and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. {8} For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Make every effort
From faith to goodness
From goodness to knowledge
From knowledge to self-control
From self-control to perseverance
From perseverance to godliness
From godliness to brotherly kindness
From brotherly kindness to love
Abide and strive
Faith expresses itself through love!
Forgiven people forgive people
Love becomes evidence of faith

The Christian life is not a reservoir
Love is the destination because Christ is the destination
The cross is both our salvation and our pattern
Love is the death of self-centered Christianity
Love redefines spiritual maturity
Love is patient, Love is kind
Love "keeps no record of wrongs"
Love is the family resemblance of heaven
Love is where theology becomes incarnate
This is what spiritual maturity really looks like

Now we are ready for verse 8

(2 Peter 1:8) For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual maturity is measured by increasing fruit

Ask yourself: Am I growing?

A Christian can be saved and still be unproductive

(James 1:22) Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

The danger of spiritual stagnation

(John 15:5) "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

The fruit does not save the tree

(Matthew 7:18) A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

This brings us back to grace

(Titus 2:11–12) For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. {12} It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,

The Christian life is a partnership of divine grace and human response

(Philippians 2:12–13) Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, {13} for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

What does this mean for us?

(Philippians 1:6) being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

If you are a Christian who has become spiritually comfortable—

(Romans 6:14) For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

If you have become bitter toward another person—

(Ephesians 4:32) Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

The cross is where grace and growth meet

(Romans 5:8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

An analogy

Faith, Love, and Righteousness

What Righteousness Looks Like on Us

(Ephesians 6:14) Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

(1 Thessalonians 5:8) But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

(Galatians 5:6) For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

(2 Peter 1:1) Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours:

God gives us a righteousness we could never establish for ourselves

(Philippians 3:4–9) though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: {5} circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; {6} as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. {7} But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. {8} What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ {9} and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

(Romans 4:4–5) Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. {5} However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

(2 Corinthians 5:21) God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

God's grace gives us a reason to make every effort