

# **A Special People**

**1 Peter 2 v 9 – 12** "...once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God, once you had not received mercy, but now you have." **v 10**

**CHOSEN** = *selected, brought out from the masses, receiving a stamp of ownership.*

The fact that God has chosen us does not disregard the freewill He has give all mankind.

\*Imagine a game of Pass-the-Parcel. All the kids are in the circle. All may receive the parcel. The music stops. One person may unwrap the parcel. But all were invited to the game. Many are called, but few are chosen.

God desires that all may come to salvation **John 3 v 16** "...whosoever believes in Him..."

God also knows that many will reject that salvation **John 3 v 36** "...whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not have that life, for God's wrath remains on him."

**PECULIAR** = *different from the norm, quirky by design, strange in a distinct manner.*

As God's people: **v 9 - 10**

We are DIFFERENT – "...a people belonging to God..."

We are DESIGNED – "...called to declare the praises of Him Who called you out of darkness..."

.We are DISTINCT – "...weren't, but are now a People...weren't, but now have received His mercy..."

**Isaiah 40 v 28 – 31** "Don't you get it? Weren't you paying attention? The Lord is our Creator God. He'll never give up on us, so we don't need to try to comprehend His ways....(read verse 31!)

## **Add To Your Faith**

### **Psalms 25 v 1 – 10**

**v 3** "...no-one whose **hope/faitH/trust** is in You will ever be put to shame."

**v 5** "...for my **hope/faitH/trust** is in You, Lord, all day long."

*Quote:*

Faith is active. Not a stationary claim – but an active endeavour.

A Trust Fund - monetary

"In God We Trust" – on paper money

"Trust You!" – can we trust anyone?

**2 Peter 1 v 5** "make every effort to add to your faith..."

Faith is a process of advancing in our **trust of God**, and our **hope in God**.

**Romans 10 v 17** "Faith comes by hearing God's message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ." – The Bible

**"Waiting"** can be a negative action, or a positive action.

We can be "*waiting around, aimlessly*".

We can be "*waiting expectantly*"

**Isaiah 40 v 31** "They that wait upon the Lord shall **renew their strength...**"

Why would we need strength if we're not going to do anything?

*Quote:*

Faith is not in *what we do* – but in *what Christ has already done* for us.

*Quote:*

*Our* Faith does not decide our victories – Christ has already won the victory by his death on the cross.

*Our* Faith is claiming that victory!

**Hebrews 11 v 1** "Faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see."

As we add to our faith, we are unwrapping the gifts of God. If we do not unwrap His gifts, we will not grow in our faith.

**2 Peter 1 v 3** "He has given us everything we need for life..."

**v 5** "make every effort to add to your faith

Goodness - Knowledge - Self-control - Perseverance - Godliness -  
Brotherly Kindness - Love."

## **“...as a Grain of Mustard Seed”**

**Matthew 17 v 20 – 21** “If you have faith as small as a grain of mustard seed.....with God, nothing will be impossible for you!”

Adding to your faith –

NB. Only add to your faith that which will enhance its growth;

Only add to your faith that which will enable its development;

Only add to your faith that which will enrich its purposes.

**Galatians 5 v 22 – 23** “For the Fruit of the Spirit is...”

We all commence our walk of faith in our Christian journey with “faith as a grain of mustard seed”

*And that is at best! Has your faith moved any mountains, lately?*

We are not limited to this – not if we’re ready to move mountains.

**2 Peter 1 v 5** “Make every effort to add to your faith...”

(The gift box)

**Add To Your Faith...Goodness**

**Add To Your Faith...Knowledge**

**Add To Your Faith...Self-Control**

**Add To Your Faith...Perseverance**

**Add To Your Faith...Godliness**

**Add To Your Faith...Brotherly Kindness**

A seedling plant requires that which will enhance its growth.

A seedling plant requires that which will enable its development.

A seedling plant requires that which will enrich its purposes.

The Apostle Paul warns, in **1 Corinthians 13 v 2** “...if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”

**Add To Your Faith...Love**

## **Add to Your Faith...GOODNESS**

**Mark 10 v 17 – 18** “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus replied, “Why do you call Me ‘Good’? No one is good, but God alone.”

To add Goodness to our Faith, does not mean we must **be** Good, but that we must desire that which is good – for only God is truly Good.

Advert on lorry – “Delivering another load of Goodness!”

“Oh, my goodness!” – an exclamation of delight and surprise.

**Psalms 23 v 6** “Surely, goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.”

Goodness – that which flows from *being* or *doing* good.

Goodness is not a statutory noun. It is an essence of Good.

When we add Goodness to our Faith, we add an attitude which God possesses.

**Ephesians 2 v 10** “We are God’s workmanship, prepared by Him to do good works.”

As we live out our faith, day by day, so we express God’s plan and His desire for our lives.

**Romans 7 v 18** “I know that nothing good can live in my sinful nature, even if I desire to do good, I can’t.”

It is God who gives us the goodness which is added to our faith.

**Romans 8 v 9** “Those under the control of their sinful nature, cannot please God, but you are not, for the Spirit of God lives in you.”

## ...and to Goodness...KNOWLEDGE

**Colossians 2 v 1 – 10** “...be encouraged in heart, and united in love, to receive the full riches of complete understanding to **KNOW** the mystery of God, for in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

Paul is refuting the heresy of Gnosticism that says, “*knowledge is the means to salvation*”.

Head Knowledge *versus* Heart Knowledge.

Paul claims in, **2 Timothy 1 v 12** “I am not ashamed, because I **KNOW** Whom I have believed and am persuaded/convicted that He is able to guard that which I have entrusted to Him for that Day.”

My faith is built on the Knowledge of God’s faithfulness to me.

**Hebrews 10 v 22** “Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart, in full assurance (*in the certain knowledge*) of our faith.”

So, is knowledge a good thing?

The world is full of knowledgeable theologians etc. – Head Knowledge

**Psalms 119 v 66** “Teach me **Your Knowledge** and good judgement, for I have confidence in Your commands/instructions.”

**Proverbs 3 v 5** “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding (*your own knowledge*). In all your ways acknowledge (*to own the knowledge of*) Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

**Colossians 2 v 4** “...I tell you all these things so that you will not be deceived by those who would try to confuse or mislead you from the Truth by fine-sounding arguments.”

## ...and to Knowledge...SELF-CONTROL

**1 Corinthians 9 v 24 – 27** “...everyone who competes in the race, goes into strict training...I beat my body into shape.”

Self-control is related to self-discipline.

**1 Corinthians 6 v 19 – 20** “...a temple of the Holy Spirit...honour God with your body.”

It is an attitude of mind which says –

Even if it hurts, I will dedicate myself to it, because I desire the better result.

**Proverbs 25 v 28** “Like a city whose wall are broken down, is a man who lacks self-control.”

The city is defenceless and unprotected against enemies.

We need to be ready, prepared and guarded against the world and all its challenges.

Self-control is a feature of our spiritual armour:

**1 Thessalonians 5 v 8** “Let us be alert and self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breast-plate.”

**Titus 2 v 11** “For the grace of God teaches us to say “No!” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives.”

This section finishes with God’s desire for our lives, in **v 14** “that we might be rescued from wickedness, a people purified for Himself, eager to do what is good.”

Demonstrating Self-Control is an expression of the New Life we now live in Christ:

**2 Corinthians 5 v 14 – 17** “If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation – all things have become new!”

Add to your Faith that you may be able to overcome the evil-one.

**1 John 2 v 15 – 17** “The world and its desires pass away, but he who does the will of God shall live forever.”

## **...and to Self-Control...PERSEVERANCE**

**James 1 v 2 – 5 & v 12** “...for the testing of your faith develops perseverance.”

To persevere – to strive forward against all adversity, especially in the face of discouragements.

These verses suggest that our walk of faith in Christ is not meant to be an easy one.

**1 Thessalonians 5 v 18** “*In everything give thanks...*

**Romans 5 v 3** “...for we also **rejoice in our sufferings**, because we realise that suffering produces perseverance...”

*...for this is the will of God...*

**Hebrews 10 v 36** “You need to persevere so that when you have done **the will of God**, you will receive what He has promised.”

*...in Christ Jesus, concerning you.”*

**Hebrews 12 v 1** “Let **us** run with perseverance, the race which is set out before **us**.”

## ...and to Perseverance...GODLINESS

**Matthew 5 v 13 – 16** “So let your light shine before men.”

Godliness is a characteristic we should express as a representative/ambassador of God.

**2 Corinthians 5 v 17** “If anyone is in Christ, he is a New Creation – the old has gone, the new has come...” **v 20** “We are therefore CHRIST’S AMBASSADORS, as though God were making His appeal through us.”

To be God’s representative, we need to be like Him – Christ-like.

**1 Peter 1 v 15** “In obedience, do not conform, but, just as he who called you is holy, be holy in all you do.”

**Romans 12 v 1** “...holy and pleasing unto God.”

**2 Peter 3 v 11** “...you ought to live holy and godly lives.”

The Gospels show us the value and relevance of LIGHT.

Jesus tells us in **Matthew 5 v 14** “You are the light of the world.”

And yet in **John 1 v 4** “In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.”

Christ has handed us the responsibility of SHINING HIS LIGHT.

When we add to our Faith...Godliness, we are adding the seal of God’s approval on our walk of Faith.

An Ambassador is chosen by a higher authority to be a representative.

**John 15 v 16** “You didn’t choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit.” **v 19** “I have chosen you out of this world.”

Godliness is not an attribute of this world – it is an attribute from God!

**John 17 v 16 - 18** “They (my disciples) are not of the world, just as I also Am not of the world. Father, sanctify them by Your truth. As You sent me, so I send them into the world.”

**Matthew 5 v 16** “So, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven.”



## ...and to Godliness...BROTHERLY KINDNESS

**1 John 4 v 7 – 12** “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” **v 11**

This is NOT a “Fruit of the Spirit”. It is a TOOL of our Faith.

Brotherly Kindness is the expression of our Faith to the World – TESTIMONY.

“Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is of God, and anyone who shows love is born of God, and knows God.” **v 7**

In fact, our testimony is not – being good

It is not – going to Church

It is not being charitable or kind

It is not even by preaching the Gospel

Our Testimony (that which is evidence that we belong to Him) –  
is Brotherly Kindness – loving one another!

Jesus told His disciples, in **John 13 v 34 - 35** “A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so I want you to love one another. Because, by this (witness), everyone will know that you are My disciples – by your love for one another.”

This is not really a *new* commandment –

See **Leviticus 19 v 18** “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

Jesus reaffirmed in **Matthew 37 – 40** “...and love your neighbour as yourself.”

Without Brotherly Kindness we have NO TESTIMONY.

We can have a belt full of tools to enable our walk of Faith –

But, who would ever know?

We are God’s family – so let’s show that love to others.

Jesus prayed to His Father in **John 17 v 23** “May they be brought to complete unity, to let the world know that You sent Me.”

Paul exhorts us, in **Romans 15 v 5 – 6** “May the God who gives you endurance and encouragement, give you also a spirit of unity among yourselves, as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**Colossians 3 v 14** “...put on love which binds you all together in perfect unity.”

## ...and to Brotherly Kindness...LOVE

**John 15 v 9 – 17** “Greater love has no one than this – that he lay down his life for his friends.”

**Romans 5 v 7 – 8** “Very rarely would anyone die for a righteous man, though it is a possibility. But God demonstrated His love for us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

The love of God is over and above any love that we might show.

How can such love be a TOOL to add to our Faith?

**1 Corinthians 13 v 13** “...but the greatest of these is Love.”

The “Love” chapter lays out a list of everything that Love should be.

All the gifts of the Holy Spirit: explained in **Chapter 12 v 1 – 11 & 27 – 31**

Our importance as part of the Body of Christ: explained in **v 12 – 26**

**v 31b** “...however, now I will show you a more excellent way.”

**13 v 1 – 3** “...but if I don’t have love, I gain nothing.”

**Galatians 5 v 22:**

It is no accident or coincidence that **love** is the first “Fruit of the Spirit”.

By being mentioned first – it is saying Love is the dominant feature of bearing spiritual fruit.

**2 Peter 1 v 5 – 7:**

It is also no accident or coincidence that **love** wraps up the tools for the development of our Faith

By being the last mentioned Tool – it is saying that the rest of the Tools are meaningless without **Love**

God has set the bar higher than we could ever attain.

**John 10 v 14 – 15** “I am the Good Shepherd. I know My sheep, and My sheep know Me.”

Jesus love for us is sacrificial and undeserved.

If we can just strive to love with Christ’s love, then our Faith will be more effective.

Let us love when it is inconvenient to show love.

Let us love when it is unlikely to be appreciated.

- By this will my Faith be more effective, if I add Love.