

## Climbing the Ladder of Spiritual Success

We always rejoice with heaven when another person makes a decision to obey the gospel and is born again. This puts him into the kingdom (**John 3:5**) and ends his relationship with sin. He is raised to walk in newness of life (**Romans 6:4**). As a matter of fact, everything is new for this new creation in Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

Baptism is just the beginning. Peter tells us to add to our faith. We see God's plan for spiritual success in **2 Peter 1:5-11**.

The faith to which we add is important. **Hebrews 11:6** says that the faith that pleases God goes beyond belief in His existence—it motivates us to *diligently seek Him* because we believe that He will reward us. Diligence is the key in our passage in **2 Peter**. The passage begins and ends with diligence. **Verse 5** says, "...giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue." **Verse 10** says, "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure..." We show God our dedication, love, and faith by the degree of diligence and effort we make to grow.

There are several words listed (virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, love) which describe the character we are to become though making the great effort to become transformed into the glorious image of Christ (**2 Corinthians 3:18**). **Galatians 5:21-22** also contains a similar list; neither list is exhaustive, but both describe well the kind of people God wants us to be. The passage in Galatians begins with love; Peter culminates his list with love. Being the greatest command, our diligence begins and ends with our love for God.

Peter promises conditional security for us if we are diligent and abound in these characteristics. We won't stumble; we can make our calling and election and entrance into the kingdom certain. This is what we all should be striving for. Nothing else matters.