

“How to Keep From Falling” **II Peter 1:10**

Introduction: If there were anyone in the New Testament that could warn us about the predicaments of falling, it would be Peter. Warren Wiersbe, concerning Peter, stated, “He rushed ahead when he should have waited; he slept when he should have prayed; he talked when he should have listened. He was a courageous, but careless, Christian.” Certainly, Peter would be a good example of someone that has fallen many times. However, he learned from his falls through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Holy Spirit used him to give us an exhortation about falling. Concerning the subject of falling, the Scriptures offer several passages relating to this topic. Notice:

1. The Potential to Fall I Corinthians 10:12- *“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”*
2. The Paths to Falling I Timothy 6:9- *“But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.”*
3. The Picture of the Fallen Hebrews 4:11- *“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”*
4. The Product of Falling II Peter 3:17- *“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.”*

Body: Now that we understand the dangers of falling, let us observe the recipe to steadfastness given by a professional on the subject. If we observe these truths and practice them in our daily walk, according to this passage, we can keep from falling.

- I. The Acceptance of Salvation v. 1- *“to them that have obtained like precious faith”*
 - A. The Possession of Salvation- *“to them that have obtained”*
 - B. The Presentation of Salvation- *“like”*
 - C. The Preciousness of Salvation- *“precious faith”*
 - D. The People of Salvation- *“with us”*
 - E. The Performance of Salvation- *“through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”*
- II. The Attributes of Salvation vs. 5-9- *“giving all diligence, add to your faith...”*
 - A. A Description of these Attributes vs. 5-7 (One quality develops as we exercise another quality.)
 1. v. 5- *“faith”*
 - a. *“faith”* (Strong’s)- *“conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man’s relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it”*

- b. “faith” (Webster’s)- “In theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Simple belief of the scriptures, of the being and perfections of God, and of the existence, character and doctrines of Christ”
- 2. v. 5- “*virtue*”
 - a. “virtue” (Strong’s)- “a virtuous course of thought, feeling and action; any particular moral excellence, as modesty, purity”
 - b. “virtue” (Webster’s)- “Moral goodness; the practice of moral duties and the abstaining from vice, or a conformity of life and conversation to the moral law.”
 - c. “A Christian is supposed to glorify God because he has God’s nature within; so, when he does this, he shows ‘excellence’ because he is fulfilling his purpose in life. True virtue in the Christian life is not ‘polishing’ human qualities, no matter how fine they may be, but producing *divine* qualities that make the person more like Jesus Christ.” (Warren Wiersbe)
- 3. v. 5- “*knowledge*”
 - a. “knowledge” (Strong’s)- “knowledge signifies in general intelligence, understanding; the general knowledge of Christian religion”
 - b. “knowledge” (Webster’s)- “Learning; illumination of mind.”
- 4. v. 6- “*temperance*”
 - a. “temperance” (Strong’s)- “self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, esp. his sensual appetites)”
 - b. “temperance” (Webster’s)- “Moderation; particularly, habitual moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions; restrained or moderate indulgence”
- 5. v. 6- “*patience*”
 - a. “patience” (Strong’s)- “steadfastness, constancy, endurance; in the NT the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings; a patient enduring, sustaining, perseverance”
 - b. “patience” (Webster’s)- “The suffering of afflictions, pain, toil, calamity, provocation or other evil, with a calm, unruffled temper; endurance without murmuring or fretfulness. Patience may spring from constitutional fortitude, from a kind of heroic pride, or from Christian submission to the divine will.”
- 6. v. 6- “*godliness*”
 - a. “godliness” (Strong’s)- “reverence, respect; piety towards God, godliness”
 - b. “godliness” (Webster’s)- “A religious life; a careful observance of the laws of God and performance of religious duties, proceeding from love and reverence for the divine character and commands; Christian obedience.”

- c. “*Godliness* simply means ‘God-likeness.’ In the original Greek, this word meant ‘to worship well.’ It described the man who was right in his relationship with God and with his fellowman.” (Warren Wiersbe)
- 7. v. 7- “*brotherly kindness*”
 - a. “brotherly kindness” (Strong’s)- “love of brothers or sisters, brotherly love; in the NT the love which Christians cherish for each other as brethren”
 - b. “kindness” (Webster’s)- “Good will; benevolence; that temper or disposition which delights in contributing to the happiness of others, which is exercised cheerfully in gratifying their wishes, supplying their wants or alleviating their distresses; benignity of nature. Kindness ever accompanies love.”
- 8. v. 7- “*charity*”
 - a. “charity” (Strong’s)- “brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence”
 - b. “charity” (Webster’s)- “In a general sense, love, benevolence, good will; that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men to think favorably of their fellow men, and to do them good. In a theological sense, it includes supreme love to God, and universal good will to men.”

B. A Development of these Attributes v. 8

- 1. You Can Get Them- “*if these things be in you*”
- 2. You Can Grow Them- “*and abound*” (Where there is life, there must be growth.)
- 3. You Can Glean from Them- “*they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

C. A Destitution of these Attributes v. 9

- 1. A Lack Produces Sightlessness- “*But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off*”
 - a. “Nutritionists tell us that diet can certainly affect vision and this is especially true in the spiritual realm. The unsaved person is in the dark because Satan has blinded his mind (2 Cor. 4:3-4). A person has to be born again before his eyes are opened and he can see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). But after our eyes are opened, it is important that we increase our vision and see all that God wants us to see.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - b. “The phrase *cannot see afar off* is the translation of a word that means “shortsighted.” It is the picture of somebody closing or squinting his eyes, unable to see at a distance.” (Warren Wiersbe)
- 2. A Lack Produces Slackness- “*and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins*”

III. The Assurance of Salvation v. 10- “*give diligence to make your calling and election sure*”

- A. The Surety of the Calling- *“calling” II Thessalonians 2:13-14*
1. “It is not our profession of faith that guarantees that we are saved; it is our progression in the faith that gives us that assurance.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 2. “The person who claims to be a child of God but whose character and conduct give no evidence of spiritual growth is deceiving himself and heading for judgment.” (Warren Wiersbe)
- B. The Surety of the Choosing- *“election” II Thessalonians 2:13-14*
1. “We do not preach election to unsaved people; we preach the Gospel. But God uses that Gospel to call sinners to repentance, and then those sinners discover that they were chosen by God!” (Warren Wiersbe)
 2. “Peter also pointed out that election is no excuse for spiritual immaturity or for lack of effort in the Christian life. Some believers say, ‘What is going to be is going to be. There is nothing we can do.’ But Peter admonishes us to ‘be diligent.’ This means ‘make every effort’ .” (Warren Wiersbe)
 3. “The Christian who is sure of his election and calling will never “stumble” but will prove by a consistent life that he is truly a child of God. He will not always be on the mountaintop, but he will always be climbing higher.” (Warren Wiersbe)

Conclusion: (Revelation 2:5- *“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.”*)

1. Practice of Faith v. 10- *“for if ye do these things”*
 - a. What about someone that does not practice these things?
 - b. “Nature determines *appetite*. The pig wants slop and the dog will even eat its own vomit (2 Peter 2:22), but the sheep desires green pastures. Nature also determines *behavior*. An eagle flies because it has an eagle’s nature and a dolphin swims because that is the nature of the dolphin. Nature determines *environment*: squirrels climb trees, moles burrow underground, and trout swim in the water. Nature also determines *association*: lions travel in prides, sheep in flocks, and fish in schools.” (Warren Wiersbe)
 - c. “If nature determines appetite, and we have God’s nature within, then we ought to have an appetite for that which is pure and holy. Our behavior ought to be like that of the Father, and we ought to live in the kind of “spiritual environment” that is suited to our nature. We ought to associate with that which is true to our nature (see 2 Cor. 6:14ff). The only normal, fruit-bearing life for the child of God is a *godly* life.” (Warren Wiersbe)
2. Prevention from Falling v. 10- *“ye shall never fall” I Corinthians 9:27*