I. His Grace Is Sufficient
   A. Be perfect as God the Father (Matt. 5:48)
      1. Perfection and love cannot be separated (Matt. 5:43–48)
      2. Example of a circle:
         a. God is the vast, perfect circle which encompasses the universe
         b. Each of us can be a small, perfect circle
      3. Two related aspects:
         a. Mature
         b. Complete
      4. Example of an apple
   B. Total love of God poured out to us (Rom. 5:5)—*but* we must *work* it out (Phil. 2:12–13)
   C. At new birth we receive the Spirit (nature) of Christ (Rom. 8:9)—*but* nature must develop into *character*, i.e., *obedience/suffering* (Heb. 5:8–9)
   D. Obey God’s Word (1 John 2:5)
      1. Evidence of our *love* for God
      2. Means by which God’s *love* is perfected in us

II. The Process of Being Perfected (2 Peter 1:2–7)
   A. A life of multiplication—continuing increase (v. 2)
   B. God *has already* provided all we need (v. 3)
   C. Through *knowing* Jesus (v. 3)
   D. The *provision* is in the *promises* (v. 4)—the goal: to become partakers of God’s own nature
   E. The starting point is faith (v. 5–7)—diligence vs. laziness

III. Seven Steps Upward
   A. Step 1: Virtue / Excellence
      1. Excel in every task or profession: e.g. teacher, nurse, bus driver, shop assistant
      2. I will show you what I believe by what I do (James 2:18)
      3. Be efficient, punctual
   B. Step 2: Knowledge of God’s Word and will, i.e.:
      1. Not ignorant of the mystery of Israel (Rom. 11:25–26)
      2. Warnings for church from history of Israel (1 Cor. 10:1–11)
         a. *Do not* lust after evil things
         b. *Do not* commit sexual immorality
         c. *Do not* tempt Christ
         d. *Do not* murmur or complain
      3. Not ignorant of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1)
      4. Not ignorant about the resurrection of believers (1 Thess. 4:13)
      5. Not ignorant of God’s measurement of time (2 Peter 3:8)
III. Seven Steps Upward (cont’d.)

C. Step 3: Self-control
   1. With endurance it is an essential requirement for further progress
   2. Pattern of an athlete (1 Cor. 9:24–27)
      a. Self-controlled (v. 25)
      b. With a goal in mind—not aimless (v. 26 [Prov. 29:18])
      c. Know your enemy and how to deal with him!
      d. Discipline and bring into subjection your fleshly desires—also moods and
tagattitudes (anger, resentment, bitterness, self-pity, depression)
      e. Proclaim 2 Cor. 5:17

D. Step 4: Perseverance / Endurance
   1. Must have self-control to endure
   2. Diligence to the end—not lazy—with faith and patience (Heb. 6:11–15)
   3. A gap between doing God’s will and receiving His promise (Heb. 10:36)
   4. Run with endurance—a marathon (Heb. 12:1)

E. Step 5: Godliness
   1. What is it? The presence of God with you
   2. Requires spiritual exercise (1 Tim. 4:7–8)
      a. Prayer
      b. Bible study
      c. Scripture memorization
      d. Meditation
      e. Self-denial
      f. Fasting
   3. Especially in these last days (2 Pet. 3:11–12)—contrast Jude 14–15 “ungodly”
appears four times

F. Step 6: Brotherly Love: love for our fellow Christians
   1. Sometimes the most severe test (Ps. 55:12–14)
   2. Possible only through the new birth (1 Pet. 1:22–23)
   3. Our primary witness to the world (John 13:34–35)
   4. Must be expressed by practical sacrifice (1 John 3:16–17)

G. Step 7: Love / Agape
   1. God’s love—when we were: without strength, ungodly, sinners, enemies of
      God (Rom. 5:6–10)
   2. Repaying good for evil (Matt. 5:44–48)
   3. Only good is strong enough to overcome evil (Rom. 12:21)—respond with the
      opposite Spirit

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