

"COMPLETE YOUR CHORUS"

TEXT: I Pet. 1:4-8

INTRO: A. Peter lived in a culture where drama was an important part of the entertainment world and he borrowed terms and concepts from the dramatists vocabulary to make spiritual applications.

B. Such is the case here. Peter uses the word "add" in that way. The word in Greek is "epichoregeo" which literally means "to supply a chorus."

ILLUS: In Greek drama the "chorus" was a company of performers which provided explanation and elaboration of the main action. Websters Unabr. Dict.

It was the most important part of the drama. It was supplied with great outlays of money by the rich. Rigorous, disciplined rehearsals were held until it was near perfect!

C. Peter says here that we need to "supply a chorus" (Add") for our faith which leads to spiritual perfection or maturity...

NOTE: Faith is the main actor in the drama of the believer's life, but faith cannot stand alone...the chorus is a necessity. As the main actor gave direction in Greek drama, so faith will get us to heaven, but that is only the beginning.

ILLUS: Salvation is just the beginning of life in Christ. It's like the "I do" in a wedding. The groom doesn't say "I do" and then say "Now that I'm married I'll see how unfaithful I can be and stay married." Being married includes faithfulness...fidelity. Getting married is just the beginning.

TRANS: God says FAITH is the main actor, but we need to add the chorus to translate that faith into something which reaches to perfection or maturity.

I. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...VIRTUE (PURITY):

A. The First Member in the Chorus: "virtue"

1. To be clean is the first prerequisite toward maturity.
2. This deals with the doctrine of personal separation.

ILLUS: Daniel "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself..." If you wait till you are confronted with temptation to make the decision to be clean, you will fall. The girl who dates a promiscuous boy will not stay clean...she needs to decide not to date anybody like that in advance.

II. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...KNOWLEDGE (UNDERSTANDING):

A. The Second Member in the Chorus: "knowledge"

1. Some try to add knowledge to faith before adding virtue.
2. God reveals His Word and His will to those who are first clean.
 - a. We can find His will in His Word, but we must first "come out" ...separate.
 - b. Our knowledge must be first-hand not second-hand, i.e. those who depend on others (preachers, etc.) for their spiritual food are often led astray by his errors.

III. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...TEMPERANCE (SELF-CONTROL):

A. The Third Member in the Chorus: "temperance"

1. As we learn what the Bible teaches we are to control our lusts and passions.
2. When we find out what God says is wrong and fail to break those habits or change our lifestyle we have wasted our knowledge.

ILLUS: Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. Yet he did not add "temperance" to his chorus of graces and so he fell thru sexual lust!

Paul said "I die daily". Every morning you need to die...so you can live for Christ. Because every night while you sleep your old man gets resurrected again. You need to get under the Spirit's control every morning so you can defeat the lusts of the flesh.

IV. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...PATIENCE (ENDURANCE):

A. The Fourth Member in the Chorus: "patience"

NOTE: This word literally means endurance, perseverance, continuance.

1. Nearly anyone can run the 100 yd. dash!
2. God is looking for "cross country Christians"!

NOTE: How you respond to trouble and trials speaks volumes about the depth of your commitment.

Mt. 13:20-21

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

QUES: When you think of patience, which character do you automatically think of? Job...the PATIENCE OF JOB. Why? Because of his trials! Only the Christian who goes thru the fires of testing can "come forth as gold."

V. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...GODLINESS (PIETY):

A. The Fifth Member in the Chorus: "godliness"

1. The Bible speaks of a false godliness, i.e., "a form of godliness".
2. Those who say "I'm saved, but I don't think it is important to go to church...be baptized...tithe..." have a "form of godliness" but it is not God's form!
3. Godliness is reverence, sincerity, faithfulness.

ILLUS: Overheard...one man explaining what faithfulness is. He asked if I go to church most of the time, am I faithful? Then he asked If God only made the sun to rise most of the time would you call Him faithful? If God only kept His Word most of the time...

4. Godliness will make the ungodly uncomfortable in your presence!

VI. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...BROTHERLY KINDNESS (AFFECTION):

A. The Sixth Member in the Chorus: "brotherly kindness"

1. God's children are all in the same family, so they ought to "phileo" each other("philadelphos" phileo: love, aldephos: brother).
2. Family members are not to share faults outside the family!

VII. ADD TO YOUR FAITH...CHARITY (LOVE):

A. The Seventh Member in the Chorus: "charity"

1. This word for love is "agapao" or "agape" and speaks of sacrificial love.
2. This is the attitude that sees and loves in spite of faults and with faults.

NOTE: You can love someone even if you can't LIKE them (or embrace them as friends).

3. Since God is Love, if I let God rule in my heart the natural result will be love toward others...the kind of love that gives: "charity".

ILLUS: Greek dramas lasted for hours and endurance was needed on the part of the audience if the performance was not good. Their reaction was either applause or throwing of the food they brought for lunch! So with the world toward carnal Christians.

4. Seven is the number of perfection or maturity in the Bible...how mature is your faith?

CONCL: One measure of your maturity is fruitfulness. v.8 A second one is spiritual discernment. v.9 How is YOUR chorus coming? Do you have choral members missing? Which ones?