

## How Do We Determine if We Have Grown in God's Grace?

The admonition of Peter is that Christians grow in the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2nd Pet. 3:18). How can we measure our growth in God's grace?

The example of Esau gives us a pattern of growing in God's grace. Esau first had murderous intentions against his brother Jacob (who took his birthright), but a couple decades later Esau "*ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him,*" and said, "*God has dealt graciously with me.*" (Gen. 33:4, 11). What changed? What changed was that Esau grew in God's grace.

But how do we know if we have? In 1st and 2nd Peter we are given benchmarks.

**We are purified; we have let God deliver us out of temptations (1st Peter 1:22; 2nd Pet. 2:9).** In the case of Esau, he let God purify his murderous heart. If we persist in our sins, we growth in God's grace is hindered. We need to let God deliver us out of temptations. When we overcome temptations, we know we have grown in God's grace.

**We have assurance – "a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1st Pet. 1:3).** This is confidence in what Jesus accomplished by His resurrection. If we realize this assurance, we know we have grown in God's grace!

**We are submissive and suffer. We do not waste time wrangling over our rights. (1st Pet. 2:13—3:17).** Jesus did not get distracted over the mistreatment by His enemies. Jesus "*committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.*" Jesus did not stop His mission because He was mistreated. Esau too could have harped on life's injustices, but he did not. He suffered and moved on. He grew in God's grace. When we have absorbed injustices for the greater cause, we know we have grown in God's grace.

**We honor (care for) all people even though they are not perfect and loving.** When strangers, authorities, brethren, or even our spouse have not acted as they should, we can still grow in God's grace and be what we should be. When we do, we know we have grown in His grace.

**Eagerly, we love more, forgive more, pray more (1st Pet. 4:7-9).** This shows us we are growing in grace!

Let us grow in God's grace!

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