

2 Peter 1:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

Analysis

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. "Wherefore" connects this exhortation to the previous warning (v. 9). Because barrenness indicates blindness and forgetfulness, "the rather" (mallon, μᾶλλον, "all the more") believers must "give diligence" (spoudasate, σπουδάσατε, same root as v. 5)—earnest, eager effort—to "make your calling and election sure" (bebaian hymōn tēn klēsin kai eklogēn poieisthai).

This phrase requires careful interpretation to avoid Arminian or Pelagian misunderstanding. Peter isn't teaching that human effort secures divine election or that salvation can be lost. "Calling" (klēsis) and "election" (eklogē) are God's sovereign acts in salvation (Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:4-5). "Make sure" (bebaian poieisthai, βεβαίαν ποιεῖσθαι) means "confirm" or "establish"—not making it objectively certain (God has already done that) but making it subjectively evident through transformed living. Diligent pursuit of godliness provides assurance of genuine salvation.

"For if ye do these things" (the virtues of vv. 5-7), "ye shall never fall" (ou mē ptaisēte pote, οὐ μὴ πταίσητε ποτε, emphatic double negative: "certainly not ever stumble"). This isn't sinless perfection but perseverance—not falling away from faith or being eternally lost. Those whom God elects and calls will persevere,

evidenced by growing godliness. Peter grounds assurance in both God's sovereign faithfulness and believers' responsive fruitfulness.

Historical Context

The Reformed doctrine of perseverance of the saints, grounded in biblical texts like this one, teaches that God preserves His elect to final salvation (John 10:28-29; Phil 1:6; 1 Pet 1:5). However, perseverance isn't passivity but includes believers' diligent pursuit of holiness as evidence of genuine faith. This balances divine sovereignty and human responsibility without collapsing into either fatalism or works-righteousness.

In the early church, debates about apostasy arose when persecution caused some professing Christians to deny the faith. Were these true Christians who lost salvation, or false professors exposed under trial? Peter's teaching supports the latter—those who ultimately fall away demonstrate they were never genuinely elect, while true believers persevere through trials, confirming their calling. Against false teachers promising security without holiness, Peter insists that assurance comes through demonstrated transformation, not mere profession.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you balance confidence in God's sovereign election with Peter's call to diligently confirm your calling through godliness?
2. What fruit in your life provides assurance of genuine conversion, and what barrenness should concern you?
3. How can churches provide both comfort to struggling saints and warning to presumptuous false professors?

Interlinear Text

διὸ	μᾶλλον	ἀδελφοί	σπουδάσατε	βεβαίαν	ὑμῶν	τὴν	
Wherefore	the rather	brethren	give diligence	sure	your	G3588	
G1352	G3123	G80	G4704	G949	G5216		
κλῆσιν	καὶ	ἐκλογὴν	ποιοῦντες	ταῦτα	γὰρ	ποιοῦντες	
calling	and	election	if ye do	these things	for	if ye do	
G2821	G2532	G1589	G4160	G5023	G1063	G4160	
οὐ	μὴ	πταίσητε	ποτε				
G3756	G3361	G4417	fall				
			G4218				

Additional Cross-References

2 Peter 3:17 (Parallel theme): 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 stedfastness.

Hebrews 6:11 (Parallel theme): And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:

Psalms 121:3 (Parallel theme): He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Psalms 112:6 (Parallel theme): Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

Micah 7:8 (Parallel theme): Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.

Psalms 62:2 (Parallel theme): He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.

2 Peter 1:5 (Parallel theme): And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

2 Timothy 2:19 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Revelation 22:14 (Parallel theme): Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Isaiah 56:2 (Parallel theme): Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

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