

or eternal life? We can determine this from the passage itself. In verse 4 Peter says that God's provision pertains to becoming participators in the divine nature; in verses 5-7 he says that we are to supply in our faith various qualities of character; and in verse 8 he speaks of these qualities as increasing. It appears that Peter is speaking of spiritual life and its development toward maturity. God has given believers everything necessary to nurture spiritual life, so that they may grow spiritually.

Peter also says that God has provided us with everything pertaining to godliness, which is simply the quality of being godly or godlike. When we first trust savingly in Christ, we are made godlike initially (i.e., we recreated in God's image); and as we nurture this godlikeness, we grow more and more like God.

But now we must press the question: What has God provided for our growth in spiritual life and godliness? Peter lists seven foundational provisions that God has given us for our development toward spiritual maturity.

A. The first of these seven foundational gifts is spoken of in verse 10. Peter says:

"Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall,"

Peter tells us to make certain about God's calling and choosing (or electing) us. But what does election provide for spiritual life and godliness? Well, it provides for the initial communication of spiritual life and godliness, and the maintenance and preservation of life and godliness throughout the whole of our existence as believers. And it ensures that those whom God has chosen to salvation and destined to be made into the likeness of His dear Son will be made spiritually alive, will be sustained in spiritual life, and will one day be made fully spiritually alive. Election assures us that those whom God has chosen to make like Christ will not only have that good work begun in them, but will have that work continued in them right up to the day of Christ's return!

How can we have this assurance? There is only one way, and that is by putting our trust in Jesus Christ and His saving work. That is how we can assure ourselves that God has really called and chosen us! With trust we look at the cross of Christ and find written there these words: "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world."

B. The second of these foundational gifts is referred to in verse 1. Here we read: