

Good versus Best

How might the good be the enemy of the best?

How might the best be the enemy of the good?

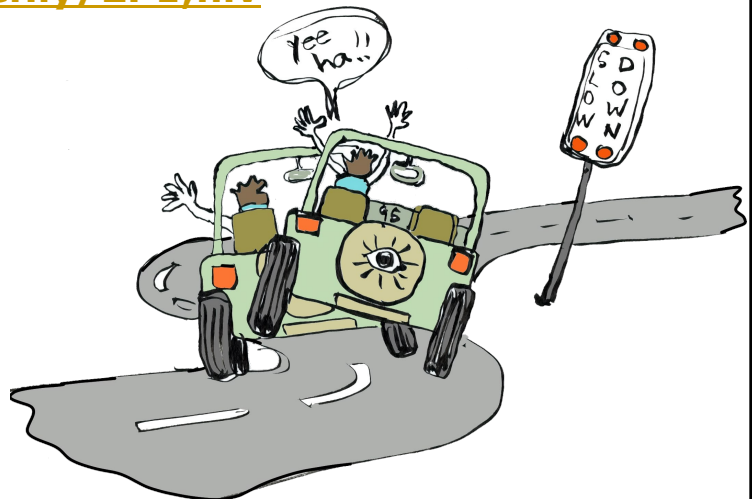
How might this show up in the Christian life?

1

The Excellence of God

2 Peter 1:1-15

ref.ly/2P1;niv



2

2 Peter 1:1-15

Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,
To those who through the righteousness of our God
and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as
precious as ours:

² Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the
knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

3

³ His divine power has given us everything we need
for a godly life through our knowledge of him who
called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through
these he has given us his very great and precious
promises, so that through them you may participate
in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in
the world caused by evil desires.

4

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to
add to your faith goodness;
and to goodness, knowledge;
⁶ and to knowledge, self-control;
and to self-control, perseverance;
and to perseverance, godliness;
⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection;
and to mutual affection, love.

5

⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing
measure, they will keep you from being
ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge
of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have
them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they
have been cleansed from their past sins.

6

¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

7

¹² So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. ¹³ I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, ¹⁴ because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. ¹⁵ And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

8

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to
 add to your faith goodness;
 and to goodness, knowledge;
⁶ and to knowledge, self-control;
 and to self-control, perseverance;
 and to perseverance, godliness;
⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection;
 and to mutual affection, love.

9

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to
 add to **your faith** goodness...

“The Faith” = Christianity

“So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.” Acts 6:7

“your faith” = an individual’s trust in Jesus

“Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” Luke 7:50

10

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to **your faith** goodness...

“your faith”

= “our knowledge of him who called us”

The means by which we enter “his very great and precious promises”

The essential foundation for growing in God-likeness

11

Assurance of Salvation

➤ **Conscious trust in Jesus’ death & resurrection**

“He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

They replied, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved**—you and your household.” Acts 16:30-31

12

Assurance of Salvation

- Conscious trust in Jesus' death & resurrection
- Inner witness of the Spirit and His work
 - "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Romans 8:16
 - "By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit who he has given us." 1 John 3:24
 - "the Gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction." 1 Thessalonians 1:5

13

Assurance of Salvation

- Conscious trust in Jesus' death & resurrection
- Inner witness of the Spirit and His work
- Evidence of a transformed life
 - "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds." James 2:18

14

⁵ For this very reason, **make every effort** to **add to** your faith **goodness**..

"goodness"

Not "good...better...best"

The same Greek word as "him who called us by his own glory and GOODNESS"

➤ NET Bible: "excellence"

➤ Others: "outstanding goodness, moral excellence"

1 Peter 2:9: "...so that you may proclaim the VIRTUES of the one who called you"

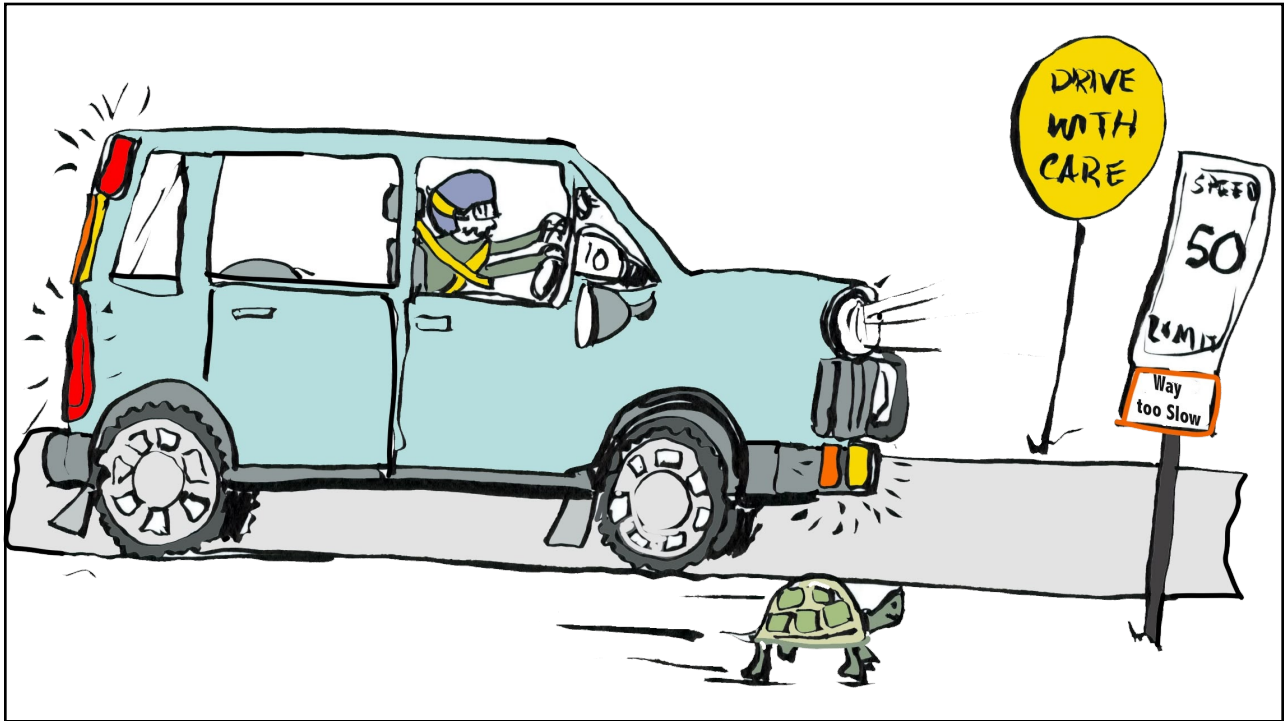
The moral excellence of God

15

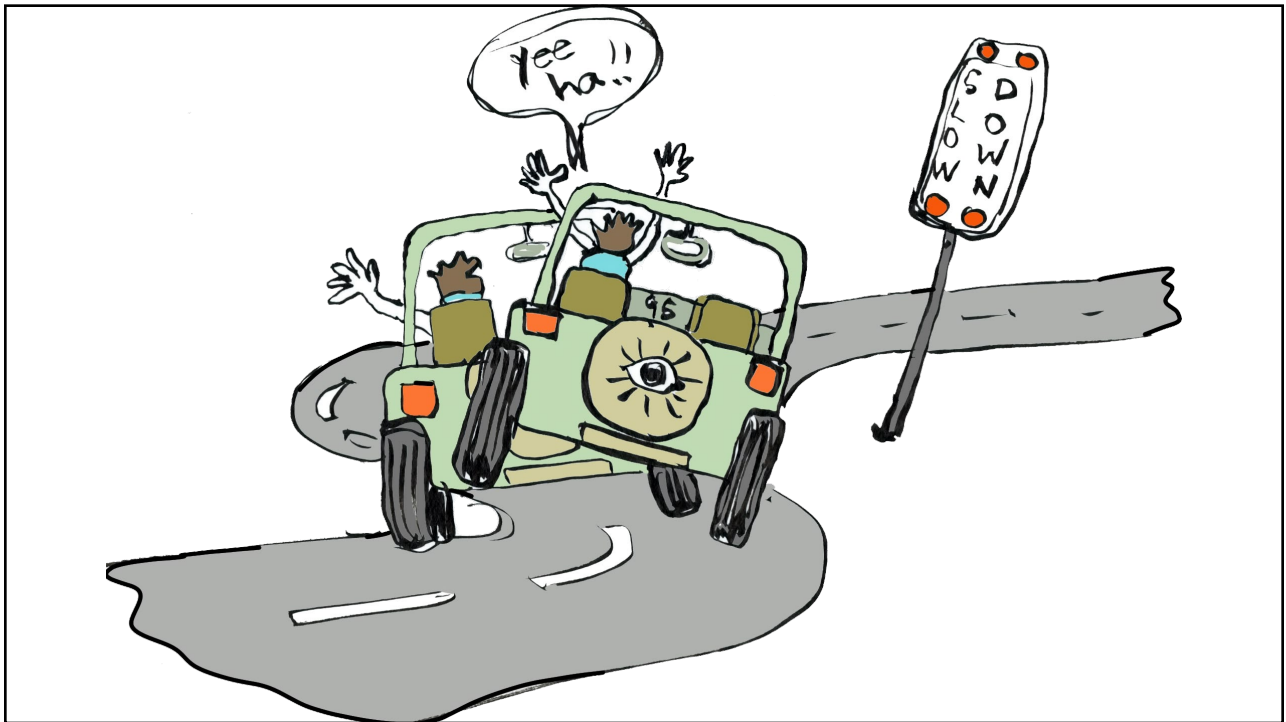
The Big Idea

God calls us and empowers us
to grow into the moral excellence of God

16



17



18



19

What is the best way to drive?

- Neither too fast nor too slow

~~**What is the best way to live?**~~

- ~~➤ Neither too bad nor too good~~
- ~~➤ Moderation in all things~~

Peter calls us to the moral excellence of God!

- To participate in the divine nature
- Called into the glory and excellence of God

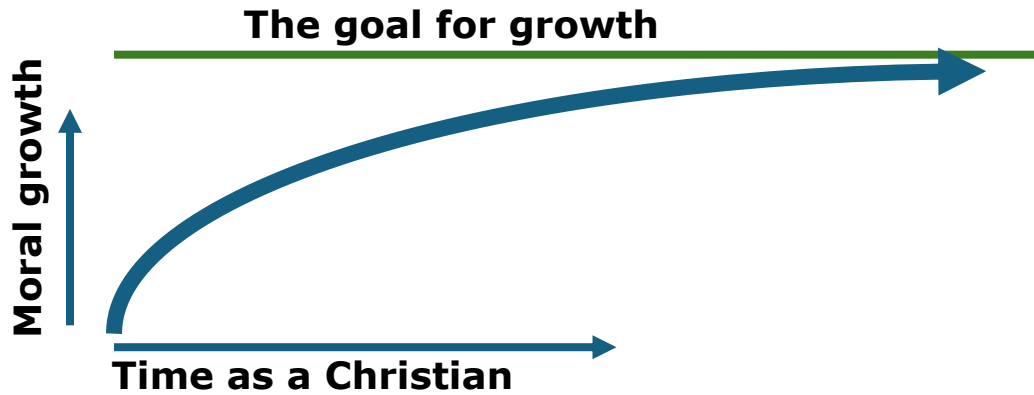
Yet without...

- Pride
- Judgment

20

Models for growth in 'goodness' as a Christian

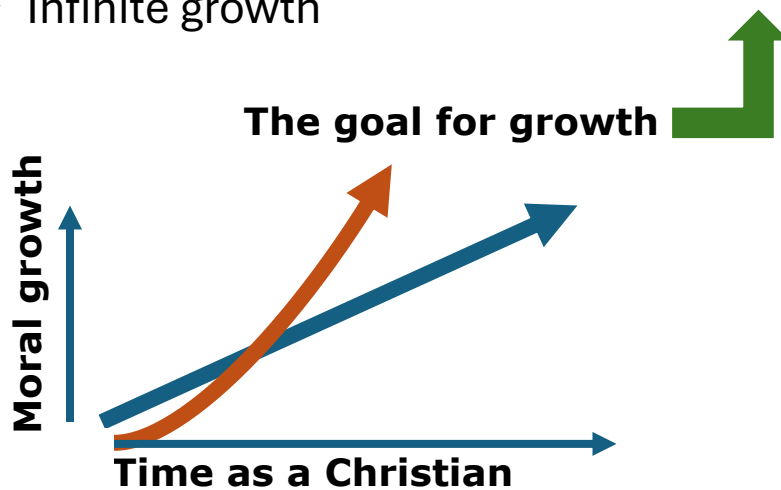
- Asymptote



21

Models for growth in 'goodness' as a Christian

- Infinite growth



22

Two great dangers

Being “lackadaisical” about growth in goodness

- Lacking enthusiasm and determination; lazy
- Thinking we’re close to ‘good enough’
- Thinking we can’t make meaningful progress
- Adjusting to the standard around us

Pursuing moral excellence in our own strength

- “Legalism” or “Moralism”
- Judging other people
- Judging ourselves

23

Hold tightly to two things

1. The Spirit’s presence and work to bring transformation

24

Ezekiel 36:26-27

God's promise for the "New Covenant"

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and **give you a heart of flesh**. And I will **put my Spirit in you** and **move you to follow my decrees** and be careful to keep my laws."

By the Holy Spirit who is given to us freely through Jesus, God will do radical heart surgery to transform us!

25

Hold tightly to two things

1. The Spirit's presence and work to bring transformation
2. Determined pursuit of the character of God: Moral excellence

26

The Big Idea

God calls us and empowers us
to grow into the moral excellence of God

27

Putting it into practice

- **Live the new life in Christ**
 - God gives a new heart and gives His Spirit
 - Always pursue "our knowledge of him who called us" (1:3)
 - "Grace and peace through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." (1:2)
 - "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!" (Romans 8:1)

28

Putting it into practice

- **Pursue the moral excellence of God**
 - Our Father who deeply loves His children is watching our hearts and our lives
 - We can and must make genuine, meaningful progress by God's work in us

29

Putting it into practice

- **By the Spirit's power in us**
 - We participate in the divine nature ***through the very great and precious promises of God***
 - Constantly pursue knowing God
 - Seek the Spirit's work in our hearts
 - Worship God for His astounding goodness

30

Putting it into practice

- **Challenge: Where should YOU be growing?**
 - By August 15...
 - I want to stop...
 - I want to be doing... **Pick 1 or 2...or 3**
 - I want to change...
 - I want to have done...
 - Pray daily
 - Scripture: memorize, meditate, ...
 - Action items for this month
 - Find someone to do periodic check-ins

31

The Big Idea

God calls us and empowers us
to grow into His moral excellence

32

Make every effort
IN CHRIST
to grow into the moral excellence of God

Hold tightly to 2 things:

- The Spirit's presence and powerful work to bring transformation
- Determined pursuit of the character of God: Moral excellence