Introduction

Can you define an effective and productive Christian? What does this kind of life look like? Is effectiveness measured by how many notches we have in our "gospel gun" belt showing how many people we witnessed to this week or the number of people we personally led to Christ? Is productivity measured by how large our ministry is, or how popular we are on social media? Is it determined by how we dress or what kind of music we listen to? Is our health or our bank account taken into consideration?

Unfortunately, in the opinion of some, all of these things, at some point, have been considered important in defining effective and productive Christians.

However, when it comes to defining effective and productive Christianity, only God's opinion matters. So what does God say about effective and productive Christianity? In this study, we will endeavor to take an honest and clear look at a portion of Scripture (2 Peter 1:1-15) that will help us understand God's viewpoint on what effective and productive Christianity is all about.

Let's begin by laying some groundwork for this study:

God's Criteria

In 1 Samuel 16 Samuel has been sent by God to anoint a new king for Israel. After looking over the sons of Jesse and evaluating them by what a normal man would look at, the outward appearance, age and perceived abilities for the job, Samuel is told by God he is looking at the wrong criteria. God says in 1 Samuel 16:7b, "… *The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."* As we begin to study this passage, keep in mind what God looks at. It should change what we focus on!

Effective & Productive Defined

In 2 Peter 1:8 the Bible uses the terms "ineffective" and "unproductive." What do these mean?

"Ineffective"

The Greek word used here is the word "argos" and it means lazy, idle, useless or unprofitable. So to be an "Effective Christian" simply means to be active, working, useful and profitable for God (2 Timothy 2:21).

"Unproductive"

The Greek word used here is "akarpous" and it means to be "unfruitful" or a waste! To be a productive Christian simply means to be fruitful. It means to not waste our life, but to invest our life in the things that God says are important and eternal (Matthew 6:19-21). It means to follow God's plan for our life (Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:13).

EFFECTIVE & PRODUCTIVE CHRISTIANITY
2 Peter 1:1-15

Our Passage of Scripture - 2 Peter 1:1-15

The Writer
Peter is writing not long before his death (1:14). He is writing to believers (1:1).

The Purpose
His two-fold purpose is to warn them about false teachers who will be confronting them and to challenge them to grow in their faith (3:17-18).

The Foundation & Assumption
The entire instruction of the book is based on the foundation and assumption that the people Peter is writing to have already believed in Jesus Christ as their Savior and thus have FAITH. Everything else he is going to teach is based on this (1:1b).

The Goal & How to reach it
In both 1 Peter and 2 Peter, the book begins with the same greeting, "Grace and Peace be yours in abundance." The way to have grace and peace in abundance is identified in the greeting of 2 Peter, "... through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." For the rest of this study, the Knowledge of God will be our theme and focus, for in this truth we find the key to living an effective and productive Christian life.