

THE GRACE OF THE CHRISTIAN'S DIVINE NATURE

God imputes to us, his elect, various graces. With some of these we are then able by that grace to progressively conform to the perfect Godly Nature of Christ Jesus. God imparts to us: faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. We take on the Christian divine nature in the process of sanctification. We become more like our Lord Jesus, the Son of Man.

On the attached form, Elements of the Christian's Nature, is a list of traits given in 2 Peter 1:5-7. Prayerfully, it will be useful in assessing our status as we progress in our Most Holy Faith. Paul encourages the saints in 2 Cor 13:5, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified."

To do so, please review the traits one by one. After, meditating on the meaning of the trait (element of a divine nature in imitation of Christ), rate yourself as accurately as you can.

The lower end of each scale represents, as indicated, the "early development" of the trait. It does not mean a "poor" rating. It means there is room to grow. That growth can come as we pray, read and memorize the Word of God, sit under the teaching/preaching of the uncompromised Word of God, fast, meditate, and go through the "fires" of the trials and tribulations of this world. May God bless His elect in this process.

If your rating is at the lower end, purpose to improve. If you are blessed with a rating at the upper end, praise God. As pointed out in the meditation message, the traits actually go beyond the scale. However, perfection in a nature (attribute) is only in existence in the Lord Our God. According to His Word, He is infinite in all that He is. *The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689*, Chapter 2, paragraph 1, declares, "The Lord our God is but one only living and true God; whose subsistence is in and of Himself, infinite in being in perfection; whose essence cannot be comprehended by any but Himself...." Also, A. W. Pink states in his book *The Attributes of God*, "Being infinite, He is possessed of all possible perfection."

The Christians' divine nature is not usually static. Therefore, it would likely be profitable to periodically reassess ourselves. If the progress toward, or the

maintaining of, a mature level of a trait is achieved, then “Praise God!” If there is a waning, or lack of progression, go to God in humble supplication for grace to mature.

Note: This instrument is only for those who profess Christ as Lord for salvation by His shed blood. If you currently have not confessed with your mouth and believed in your heart that Jesus Christ is God and Redeemer, please seek Him while there is still time. Afterward, please return to the assessment tool to keep track of your status.

Note: The “>” serves as a reminder to maintain our own humility. Some of the elect may reach a mature level of development in one or more traits. However, it is only the Lord Jesus Christ who is infinite in all His attributes. The symbol points to that infinity which is beyond our ability to achieve. We as Christians should still continue, by His spirit, to strive to imitate our Lord.

May our All Sufficient God continue to bless us.

Leo Montgomery (July, 2021)

ELEMENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN'S DIVINE NATURE IN IMITATION OF CHRIST

1. **Faith:** (4102) pistis [pis'-tis]: Conviction of a religious truth; belief in the truthfulness of God and especially the truth that God has provided salvation through the atoning work of Jesus Christ; His shedding blood for the remission of sins, i.e., salvation. And, the additional belief that Christ will return to receive for Himself and His glory the saints who will enter His eternal kingdom.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8,9)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

2. **Virtue (godliness):** (703) arete [ar-et'-ay]: moral excellence or goodness which can be worthy of praise; sometimes refers to power or strength;

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy – meditate on these things". (Phil. 4:8)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

3. **Knowledge:** (1108) gnosis [gno'-sis]: knowledge, facts, proven truths especially related to God and His Word; truths that come from God Himself.

". . . that you may walk worth of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Col. 1:10)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

4. **Temperance:** (1466) egkrateia [eng-krat'-i-ah] self-control; being able to refrain from sin; to have discipline; have discretion in behavior and speech; the ability to inhibit, especially in things which produce negative consequences; ability to discipline our spirit and body.

"And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown" (1 Cor. 9:25)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

5. **Patience:** (5281) hupomone [hoop-om-on-ay'] Ability to endure or to wait; ability to undergo/bear trials; show restraint in pursuing things that are obviously bad/sinful or things that may appear good but have the potential for displeasing God or bringing harm to oneself or others.

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,...."(Heb. 12:1)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

6. **Godliness:** (2150) eusebeia [yoo-seb'-i-ah] holiness; being devout, holy, pious; proper reverence toward God; "The reality and power of a vital union with God" (Nelson)

". . . for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Tim. 2:1,2)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

7. **Brotherly Kindness:** (5360) philadelphia [fil-ad-el-fee'-ah] affection, kindness, fondness and love shown by Christians to one another.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another". (John 13: 34,35)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

Early development

mature development

8. **Charity (love):** (26) agape [ag-ah'-pay] sincere affection; benevolence; endearing love; social or moral love; to be exhibited to all people even the unsaved.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law". (Gal. 5:22,23)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

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