



INTRODUCTION: The seven qualities of Christian growth, in II Peter 1:5-7, are interrelated. We exercise one of them as we are adding another. It is similar to the Fruit of the Spirit that we find in Galatians chapter 5. The difference is that the fruit of the Spirit is something God does in our lives; we cannot add them to our lives ourselves. They are the result of a Spirit filled life. What Peter gives us here, however, are things we are to work on ourselves. Peter then gives us a great promise that we can claim if we allow these qualities to flourish in our lives (1:8).

The essence of the Christian life is a living, loving relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Then he gives a warning to those who will not follow these steps of progression and therefore remain stagnant in the Christian growth (1:9). He has lost sight of his condition and he has lost sight of his conversion.

The first quality we are to build upon our foundation is virtue. We are to build virtue upon the foundation of our faith (II Peter 1:3-5). Peter said that there are two things that characterize Jesus as He walked this earth, and those two things are glory and virtue (II Peter 1:3). His glory is His brightness. It is His dignity and honor that can only be associated with the presence of Almighty God.

John 1:14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

His virtue referred to His moral goodness; His impeccable character.

Acts 10:38, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

Webster defines virtue as moral goodness; or a conformity of life and conversation to the moral law.

There are 3 words in the Bible that are translated **virtue** or **virtuous**. **Chayil** (Hebrew) – a force, whether of men, means or other resources; an army, wealth, virtue, valor, strength. **Arête** (Greek) – manliness (valor), i.e. excellence, praise, virtue. The most common is the Greek word **dunamis** – force or miraculous power: ability, strength, mighty (wonderful) work. Of these three words, the one found in our text is **arête**.

I. VIRTUE EVOLVES FROM A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

John 15:4, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

II. VIRTUE IS EVIDENCED BY A PRACTICAL FELLOWSHIP IN CHRIST

Psalm 1:1-3, "1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

A. SEPARATED FROM THE WORLD (PSALM 1:1)

I John 1:6, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."

In the Bible, the word **walk** is often used to describe a person's manner of life; what other people see. As Christians we are either walking forward or walking backward.

Galatians 5:16, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

Philippians 2:15, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;"

B. SATURATED BY THE WORD (PSALM 1:2)

Meditation is saturating our mind with the truth of God's Word. It is being intent on appropriating these truths and incorporating them into our lives.

It is important as we are reading God's Word that we ask ourselves some questions: What is God telling me here? Is there a sin that I need to avoid? Is there a promise that I need to claim? Is there a blessing in this passage that God has for me that I need to enjoy and be thankful for? What is the main thing that God wants me to learn in this passage? How may I apply this to my life today?

C. SANCTIONED BY THE WATER (PSALM 1:3)

Water is a symbol in the Bible. Water for cleansing which represents the precious Word of God. There is water for drinking which represents the Holy Spirit of God.

III. VIRTUE EXHIBITS THE POWERFUL WORKMANSHIP OF CHRIST

Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Workmanship – **poiema** (Greek): The origin of the English word **poem**.

Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The work of grace in your life should point people to the place of glorifying God.

Ephesians 1:5-6, "5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. "