

Virtue

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. Philipians 4:8

Virtue is, moral goodness, right standards, strength and courage, modesty and purity—all done in excellence.

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col. 3:12-17)

We acquire Virtue by our faith, our obedience to Christ, being persistent in Him, and clothing ourselves in Him. Virtue functions when we are focusing our thoughts and feelings on Christ and we exercise appropriate actions that are in line with God's precepts. It is not forcing ethics upon others; rather, it is exhibiting a lifestyle so that others can understand it and desire it, too. We obtain Virtue from holding onto the call and teachings of our Lord. It is the effectiveness of our beliefs in actions that are good. If your relationship with God is not growing, then your Virtue is not working!

Philosophers long ago from the classic Greeks, Aristotle and Plato, to modern theorists realized the importance of ethics. Without it, society unwinds, becomes corrupt and rowdy, and, then, soon fails. Jesus Himself stated the importance of ethics by saying, **so in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 7:12)**. Immanuel Kant said, **"Everyone is obligated to act only in ways that respect the human dignity and moral rights of all persons."** Basically, philosophers and Jesus—the greatest philosopher—are saying, **I need to treat others as I would want them to treat me, and everyone must be obliged to do whatever will achieve the greatest good for the greatest number**. In so doing, society, business, and even the Church will flourish!

Many people today will do all they can to skirt these principles and forsake personal responsibility. And, they seem to get away with it—from politicians to business leaders—until they are caught and/or it negatively affects another person or group. As Christians, we must not wait. When our lives or situations unwind negatively, we must always strive to first do what is right!

Being Virtuous means we are doing what is right. It is *a/ways* doing what is right, even when no one else seems to be doing it. It is not about what others are doing or saying; it is about our relationship to Christ and our responsibility to be the example He has called us to be—regardless of others, our culture, or our situation. When we start to compromise, saying, *everyone else is doing it*, then, we are doing wrong!

Seven dangers to human virtue



1. Wealth without work
2. Pleasure without conscience
3. Knowledge without character
4. Business without ethics
5. Science without humanity
6. Religion without compassion
7. Politics without principle

When Virtue is functioning in us properly, we will be making a difference in the lives of others.

discipleshiptools.org