

YEAR OF GROWTH

VIRTUE WEEK 1

EXPLANATION

Definitions:

The Greek word translated as “virtue” in 2 Peter 1:5 means, “Moral goodness or excellence; valor or manliness.” Strong states that it comes from a root word that means, “Male” and refers to physical strength. Other translations render this word as ‘worthiness’ or ‘moral character.’ In the KJV this word is also rendered as ‘virtue’ in Philippians 4:8 and 2 Peter 1:3. It is translated as ‘praises’ in 1 Peter 2:9.

The word “virtuous” is found 3 times in the Old Testament (Ruth 3:11; Prov. 12:4; 31:10). This Hebrew word also refers to strength of character and is most often translated as “armies.” When rendered as ‘virtuous’ it always refers to women. In Proverbs 31:29 it is given as ‘virtuously.’

Day One – Sunday

Reflect on the previous lessons concerning faith. It is in our faith and to our faith that we are to add virtue. Think upon the definitions of the words that God used to describe virtue. Pray for wisdom in understanding this characteristic. Pray for strength as you prepare for this study.

Day Two – Monday

Ruth 3:9-11

The example of Ruth will be studied more closely in next week’s lesson. At this time, think about how this short passage describes the moral goodness and strength of character in Ruth. She placed the law of God before fleshly or worldly desires. She deliberately sought out the near kinsman. She did not seek out youth, beauty, or material wealth. Instead, she submitted her will to the instructions of the Lord. Thus, Boaz and the entire town knew that she was a virtuous woman. How does this passage help in our understanding of the word ‘virtue’?

Day Three – Tuesday

Proverbs 12:4

The idea of virtue is illustrated in this passage by showing its opposite. To ‘make ashamed’ is to bring shame upon another by sinful, corrupt actions. In contrast, a virtuous person will do what is right no matter the difficulties. Living with moral excellence affects both oneself and those with whom he or she is associated.

Day Four – Wednesday

Philippians 4:8

To help us understand the concept of virtue, consider the characteristics that it is associated with in this passage. It will be helpful to both write this verse and memorize it. Take the time to look up the words in this passage: true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, and praise. How do these terms relate to virtue and help us to understand it?

Day Five – Thursday

2 Peter 1:3-5

In this passage virtue is associated with glory. Thayer gives the following definition of the word glory: “Opinion, estimate, whether good or bad concerning someone; in the NT always a good opinion concerning one, resulting in praise, honor, and glory.” Thus, the idea of being virtuous is related to others having a good opinion of an individual. *{There is some discussion as to whether God calls us to glory and virtue or He calls us by glory and virtue. Either way, the relationship between the words is the same.}*

Day Six – Friday

1 Peter 2:9

This verse records a beautiful description of both the individual Christian and the church. The goal of our becoming children of God is to show forth His virtue (translated as “praises” in the KJV). The virtue of God is seen in His grace and faithfulness in providing a plan and keeping His promise to bring salvation to the world through Jesus – in spite of the fact that many rejected Him (vs. 1-8). Thus, we could receive mercy and become the people of God (vs. 10). As a result, we are to live lives of virtue, described in verses 11-20.

Day Seven – Saturday

Mark 5:30; Luke 6:19; 8:46

These verses serve as an interesting sidenote. The Greek word rendered as ‘virtue’ in these verses is actually the word for “power” – an entirely different word. However, the translators of the KJV saw a moral component to the miraculous power exercised by Jesus. Thus, they chose to use the word ‘virtue.’ This simply illustrates to us the depth of meaning in the idea of moral excellence. There must be power in our virtue. In other words, it takes great strength of character to live a virtuous life. This is an area in which all need to exercise and grow.