

# Add to your faith virtue

## Lesson for Sunday, August 17, 2025

### INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Have you ever wrestled with the question, “Why am I here?” It’s an important question that gets to the heart of purpose. What is my purpose in this life? Why was I created in the first place?
- ⇒ Some people never ask themselves that question. The result is an unstable life.
- ⇒ Some ask the question and answer it wrongly. The result is a wasted life.
- ⇒ Some ask the question, answer it correctly but live differently. The result is a dysfunctional life.
- ⇒ Then there are a few who ask the question, answer it correctly and live accordingly. Their life is described by Jesus in John 10:10 when He described the abundant life.
- ⇒ For the first two weeks in our series in 2 Peter 1, we have been “exploring the farm.” We have learned that has provided us with everything we need for discovering the abundant life.
- ⇒ In today’s lesson we begin to “work the farm.” It’s time to roll up our sleeves and get to work.

### BIBLE STUDY:

1. Defining Virtue (2 Peter 1:5)
  - a. We need to take the time to carefully define this word because we don’t normally use it in the same way in our modern culture.
  - b. The word is only used five times in the NT, and three of them are in this chapter, and two of them are in this verse.
  - c. The actual word is *arete* in the Greek and means “excellence.” It was used to denote the proper fulfillment of anything. Something was excellent (virtuous) only if it fulfilled its purpose.
    - i. Example: It does not matter how beautiful a sword may appear if it cannot cut something. It would not be considered *arete*.
    - ii. Example: It does not matter how a boat may appear if it cannot float in water.
  - d. So, the question for the Christian is: What has the Christian been created for? We can look the part, but if we are not carrying out our primary function, we cannot say that we are virtuous.
2. Defining Purpose (1 Peter 2:9)
  - a. Peter clearly states the purpose of each Christian in 1 Peter 2:9 (read).
  - b. The word in our KJV translated “praises” is the same Greek word *arete*.
  - c. We could read the second part of this verse as follows:
    - i. That you (the Christian) should show forth the excellencies of God.
    - ii. We see in this verse that God has *arete* – He is excellent in all His character and in all His ways.
  - d. Tie together 2 Peter 1:5 and 1 Peter 2:9...
    - i. Our excellence is related to how well we are fulfilling God’s purpose for us (2 Peter).
    - ii. That purpose is to develop and display the excellencies of our God (1 Peter).
  - e. The overarching purpose for the Christian is a call to Christlikeness.

- f. In our key text of 2 Peter 1:5-7, Peter clearly spells out what Christlikeness looks like: displaying knowledge, self-control, endurance, Godliness, brotherly kindness and love.
  - g. Summary: We have one purpose on earth. We are to become like Christ in our character and then by our manner of life to show others what Christ is like so that they will honor Him too.
    - i. Jesus summarized this for us in Matthew 5:16.
    - ii. Paul summarized this for us in Romans 12:1-2.
3. Defining Normal Christianity (Matthew 7:24-27)
- a. What we are discussing in the previous point is supposed to be normal Christianity. Unfortunately for many, what should be normal seems to be supernatural.
    - i. Many think of excellence in Christlikeness as something only a special category of Christian can achieve.
    - ii. No doubt, the standard of the Scriptures is unquestionably high, but by the grace of God it is also possible.
  - b. Normal Christianity is a call to discipleship – to hearing the words of Jesus and doing them in order to be like Him.
    - i. See Matthew 7:24-17.
    - ii. Also see Matthew 28:19-20 (esp. vs 20).
  - c. Full Christian maturity is built upon a foundation that begins with a wholehearted pursuit of Christ and His ways.
  - d. Without this commitment to follow Christ, the rest of the Christian's character will remain underdeveloped.
  - e. Question: Can you say that this is your constant, daily pursuit?

#### APPLICATION:

- ⇒ The most fundamental question before us today is, “Who has your heart?”
  - Whom do you desire to become like?
  - Whom do you imitate?
  - What is it about their lifestyle that you find attractive? Is it their money, fame, looks, etc.?
  - Whose “excellencies” are you showing forth to the world as you go throughout your week?
- ⇒ How do we begin to show forth the excellencies of Christ?
  - Spending time with Christ in His Word.
  - Soaking up preaching and teaching in the local church.
  - Seeking the fellowship and friendship of other Christians that are seeking to do the same as you.
  - Diligently seeking to bring every area of life under the Lordship of Christ.

Remember to encourage your class members to work at memorizing our text for this series.