

It Begins with Diligence and Virtue!

- **What God Did For Us:**

- *his divine power has granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness,*
- *he has granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises;*

- **What is now possible:**

- *(1) through these you **may** become partakers of the divine nature, (2) having **escaped** from the corruption that is in the world by lust.*

- **What God Expects From Us:**

- *for this very cause adding on your part all diligence,*
- *in your faith supply virtue...*

What Is Virtue?

- Can't Diligently add what we don't know or understand!
- Spent time yesterday looking at what others say: Lexicons, Dictionaries Commentaries.
- In the midst of many different opinions and thoughts. One idea started shining through.
- Saw this many years ago, but wanted to add more diligence and reconfirm that I have been adding the right thing.

The Essence of Virtue

- “*arete*, ... word of **very wide signification** in Grk. writ.; ***any excellence of a person*** (in body or mind) *or of a thing, an eminent endowment, property or quality*... ” (Thayer, p. 73; 703).
- What does this mean? How do I add this to my faith?
- What kind of excellence, eminent endowment, property or quality do I add?

What is my Virtue Now?

- *arete*... can refer to **excellence of achievement**, to **mastery in a specific field**, on the one side, or to endowment with higher power on the other, or often to both together. ... The **subject of achievement** may be **lands, animals, objects, parts of the body**, but mostly it is **man**....” (Kittel, V. 1 p 457)
- What is my excellence of achievement?
- What is my field of mastery?

'Virtue/Moral Excellence'

- The attitude/efforts people put forth for
- excellence of achievement
- mastery in a specific field
- No one is born with these things!
- You have to choose something... sell all that you have... and buy it! Seek it First!!
- Sports – to be a pro athlete.
- Education – to master a field of learning.
- Hobbies – seek to be the best we can.
- Seeking a blue ribbon at the County Fair
- Where does our Virtue lie?

Virtue

- It is different for everyone! But unless we can identify it, we won't know what to sell.
- *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. Mt 13:44-46*

Virtue

- *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matt 6:19; 6:33*
- *Seek first His kingdom and righteousness*
- *“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.” 1Cor. 9:24-27*
- *I count all things to be loss Phil 3:7-8*
- *Forgetting what lies behind; stretching to what lies ahead. 3:12-14*

Virtue in the Olympic Games

- Always a story of sacrifice.
- *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 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. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1Cor. 9:24-27*

What Gives us Our Worth?

- *“Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me” Jer. 9:23-24*
- *“But far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Gal. 6:14*

The Dynamics of Virtue

- We have degrees of ability, intensity, enthusiasm, time or money
- 'Virtue' is bringing the first fruits to God.
- Made perfect sense to sell everything else.
- They had greater worth
- God's kingdom so precious worth every sacrifice.
- It our one hope(Eph. 4:4) worthy of every sacrifice(Rom. 8:18; 12:1-2).
- If we believe this virtue follows naturally
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Moses' Virtue

- *By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. Heb 11:24-26*

Joshua's Virtue

- Only be **strong** and very **courageous**, that you may observe to **do according to all** the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do **not turn from it to the right hand or to the left**, that you may **prosper wherever you go**. 8 This Book of the Law shall **not depart from your mouth**, but you shall **meditate in it day and night**, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For **then you will make your way prosperous**, and **then you will have good success**. Josh 1:7-9

Paul's Early Virtue

- *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ. Phil. 3:7-8*
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Paul's Mature and Fixed "Virtue"

- *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, **forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,** 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus Phil. 3:12-14*
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Paul's Encouragement for Our Virtue

- Therefore let us, **as many as are mature, have this mind**; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. 17 Brethren, **join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.** Phil 3:15-18

- NKJV

God Notices Virtue

- *“Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?” (Job 1:8)*
- *My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all my house: (Num. 12:7).*
- *I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who shall do all My will. (Acts 13:22)*
- *“O Daniel, man greatly beloved, ... from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard” (Dan. 10:11-13).*

What About Our Virtue?

- *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. 12:1-2)*
- All who gain virtue want to excel and find something to have self-esteem.
- If we are adding virtue to our faith, we are using the rewards, promises and opportunities to gain our in spiritual things.

● *exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 1 Tim 4:7-9*