

Faith in Action

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Epic Faith

Text: 2 Peter 1:5-10

One of the first things that we realize about people of faith is that they are always **growing**. In the life of a disciple faith is **not enough**. Peter tells us we are to **add** to and supplement our faith. He tells us we are to make every **effort** to add to our faith. There are several things Peter reminds us that we are to develop in our life in order to be victorious and fruitful. If we lack these things the Bible says we are short sighted even to blindness. This would mean that our faith is ineffective. This means that a life of faith will have godly qualities that are evident in the life of a true disciple beyond faith itself.

By instructing us to “Make every effort” we are reminded that as believers must be actively involved in our own spiritual growth. Growth and maturity require **action** just as much as praying for a miracle or sharing the gospel. Godly characteristics don’t just happen, we must diligently cultivate them in our life. **James 4:14& 17**

The first quality we are to add to our faith is **virtue**. This seems like an old fashioned word but it describes exactly the next step that our faith leads to as far as character is concerned.

Virtue - goodness, moral excellence (honesty, truthfulness, sexual integrity) clean, purity, holiness (fully submitted and set apart for God), honor, dignity, righteousness.

When Jesus healed the women with the issue of blood He felt virtue leave Him. Virtue is directly connected to the power of God and His anointing. It is out of purity, holiness and genuine goodness that the power of God flows. You cannot flow in the power of God without virtue because, without purity, the waters of God’s goodness would be tainted. He said out of our belly would flow rivers of **Living** water. **John 7:38**

Virtue keeps us from the fascination with the workings of the power of God and realizes that the power of God through our lives is the result of the love. We have to see **purity** overcome the hurt, pain and sickness in the lives of others. Power is released by faith that is the **overflow** of love.

Virtue is not something that a person naturally is. A virtuous person has been forgiven and cleansed of their sins and has been made righteous by the blood of Jesus.

They are actively living and developing a life of **holiness**.

2 Corinthians 7:1, 1 Peter 1:15-16 (AMP) Hebrews 12:14

We are made holy by the blood of Jesus and we **live** holy by the decisions we make. To be holy means to be “set apart”. This means that our life is dedicated to God and separated from the world. Many Christians do not realize the role they play in developing a life that is holy to the Lord.

Virtue deals with both the body and the spirit. We are to be virtuous inside and out. When Jesus rebuked the Pharisees it was because they put the emphasis on appearance and not on holiness. **Matthew 23:25-28** We are to deal with our inside life first. What Jesus is saying is that if the inside is clean the outside will be clean. **James 3:13, Proverbs 9:10 (AMP)**

The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the overflow of wisdom results in a life of holiness. This is reflected in a life of virtue and the result of this goodness is a life of power; power over sin, power to make good decisions and power that brings the healing, freeing life of God to others.

Remember, wisdom is the Fruit of Righteousness. **James 3:17-18** When we are living a life of faith and adding to our faith, our life will naturally produce spiritual fruit anywhere we apply our faith. This includes the area of virtue.

It is important to understand that virtue is not developed by our works. We do not have it in ourselves to work a life of holiness. **2 Peter 1:3**

Virtue is developed by a life that is fully submitted to the Holy Spirit. Our walk of faith means that we are choosing to walk by the Spirit of God. As we walk in the Spirit we are choosing not to walk in the flesh. Walking in the Spirit produces the Fruit of the Spirit which is seen as “goodness” or virtue in our life. **Galatians 5:16-25** The way you have a virtuous life is to choose a life of faith that is Spirit led. The Spirit of God will lead you into a fruitful life and into life of power.

The character of God, or the Divine nature, is only produced in our lives when we submit to the Spirit of God. To Sub-mit means that we are under (sub) or put the leading of the Holy Spirit over our own inclinations. His will over our will. This means that we submit ourselves to do whatever He says.

When we live by the Spirit it will impact every area of our life and affect the trajectory of our life.

- How we speak; our virtue and goodness will be clearly seen in how we talk first. **Ephesians 4:29-32 (AMP), James 3:2-12** Notice that our speech produces fruit, what kind of fruit depends on if we are walking by faith or by sight.
- What we watch, participate in and listen to. **2 Corinthians 6:17-18, Galatians 6:7-9** Notice again how our faith and virtue are directly connected to our harvest or fruitfulness.
- How we spend our money. **Matthew 6:24** You cannot be both profit driven and Spirit led. **Mark 8:36-38** True increase is a result of Spirit led, Biblically applied principles.
- How we spend our time. **Ephesians 5:15-17, James 4:13-17**
- How we treat people. **James 2:6-9, 3:14-16**
- What we live for. **1 John 2:15-17, Matthew 22:36-39, James 4:4-10**

You cannot develop a life of virtue without action and training. As we grow closer and closer to God we grow in faith and in turn we become more like Him (Virtuous) pure and powerful.