

To Faith Add... Virtue

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There is just something about 2 Peter 1:1-11 that draws me like a bug to a night light. I suppose it is because it starts by saying I have the same “*like precious faith*” as Peter, and ends with saying I will be ushered into “*the everlasting kingdom.*” My faith leads to heaven! That’s worth talking about.

It is those seven “graces” (as they are often called) that make up my faith that most intrigue me. ***Virtue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, Love.*** Count them. Seven. That means if I will just take one per day and work on it, then my faith will become “*neither barren nor unfruitful,*” and I will make my “*calling and election sure.*” If I but work on these seven traits I will “*receive the end of the my faith, the salvation of my soul*” (I Pet. 1:9). Okay, that’s a worthy pursuit. For today (day 1) let’s take ***Virtue.***

ARETE’. That’s the Greek word for virtue. It is accurately translated in the NASB as “moral excellence.” A Christian’s faith leads beyond average effort or mediocre goals, to rise as much as humanly possible to the level of God Himself. I do not compare myself to others, but to Jesus Christ, who is “*the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person*” (Heb. 1:3). The immoral standards of our world are left behind and I now sing, “nearer my God to Thee.”

VIRTUE is the first foundation stone of faith. I must ever say with the father of the challenged demon-possessed son, “*Lord I believe, help my unbelief*” (Mk. 9:24). This is but another way of saying, “I do believe, but want a greater faith.” Virtue demands excellence, the very best I can give. I will not be content with a faith like the lukewarm, but instead will be like those “*who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens*” (Heb. 11:34). Do you have such a faith? Let’s spend today working on our Virtue.