

## LIVING A VIRTUOUS LIFE

Introduction – In the first century world, people were concerned about living a life full of virtue. The 21<sup>st</sup> century world seems more concerned with perception than the reality of one's character.

A. God has given us everything needful in Christ.

2 Peter 1:3-4

1. Unless God had taken the initiative in Jesus to save us and fill us with His Spirit, we would be powerless and lost.
2. God wants us to participate in His Divine nature and experience the fulfillment of His great and precious promise.
3. First we must escape the corruption in the world that is caused by evil desires.
4. God has faith in us, and we must have faith in Him.

B. It takes human effort in combination with God's power to develop Christian character.

2 Peter 1:5-7

1. Christian character begins with faith and ends with love.
2. Easy believism leads to a momentary emotional feeling followed by continual disappointment.
3. Faith must be translated into the practical actions of goodness.
4. Knowledge from the Word of God enables us to grow in self-control.
5. Perseverance allows us to remain faithful over time through trials and temptation.
6. Godliness means we are in a right relationship with God and others.
7. These virtues lead to love. Both affection and unselfish concern for people are the aim of Christ-like maturity.

C. Confirm your calling and election in Christ.

2 Peter 1:8-11

1. We are either growing or deteriorating in our spiritual walk.
2. If you fail to grow in Christian virtue, then you will end up ineffective and unproductive.
3. We must never forget God's gracious cleansing of us from sin. If we do, then we will become spiritually blind or nearsighted.
4. If you concentrate on maturing in Christ-like character, then you do not need to fear that you will fall from God's grace.
5. Our hope in Jesus is that we will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Conclusion – It is not how strong a start you make in your spiritual life, but how you finish it that counts. Christian character comes when faith and persistent effort are combined with God's power to transform us.