

VIRTUE

- I. Here is every text that uses the word *virtue* or *virtuous(ly)*:
RUTH 3:11; PRO 12:4; 31:10, 29; MAR 5:30; LUK 6:19; 8:46; PHI 4:8; 2PE 1:3, 5.
- II. Consider the definitions relevant to this study.
 - A. Virtue: (ad. L. *virtus* manliness, valour, worth, etc. f. *vir* man) - 1. The power or operative influence inherent in a supernatural or divine being. 2. Conformity of life and conduct with the principles of morality; *voluntary* observance of the recognized moral laws or standards of right conduct; abstention *on moral grounds* from any form of wrong-doing or vice.
 - B. Moral: Of or pertaining to character or disposition, considered as good or bad, virtuous or vicious; of or pertaining to the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil, in relation to the actions, volitions, or character of responsible beings; ethical.
 - C. The Hebrew word translated *virtuous(ly)* in the Old Testament is *chayil* and means force, whether of men, means, or other resources. It is variously translated *army, host, riches, wealth, power, strength, valiant, valour, worthy*.
 1. Valiant Having or possessing courage; esp. acting with or showing boldness or bravery in fight or on the field of battle; bold, brave, courageous, stout-hearted (**2SAM 17:10**).
 2. Valour The quality of mind which enables a person to face danger with boldness or firmness; courage or bravery, esp. as shown in warfare or conflict; valiancy, prowess.
 - D. Two Greek words are translated *virtue* in the New Testament.
 1. One is *dunamis*, which means power, and is variously translated *power, strength, mighty works, miracles, virtue*.
 - a. It is found in **MAR 5:30; LUK 6:19; 8:46**.
 - b. It accords with the first English definition of *virtue*.
 2. The other is *arete*, which means manliness (valour), i.e. excellence, and is translated *praise* (**1PE 2:9**), *virtue*.
 - a. This is the word found in **PHI 4:8; 2PE 1:3, 5**.
 - b. It accords with the second English definition of *virtue*.
- III. In order to conform to principles of morality, which is virtue in action, there must be a standard of right and wrong or a law.
 - A. The lawgiver is God. **JAM 4:12; ISA 33:22**.
 - B. The Scriptures are God's law setting the standard for right and wrong.
PSA 19:7-9; 119:104, 128; 2TI 3:16-17.
- IV. The two Greek words defining *virtue* in the New Testament and the two English definitions blend together in the fact that it is God's divine power that enables believers to conform to God's principles of morality. **2PE 1:3; PHI 2:13; HEB 13:20-21; EZE 11:19-20**.
- V. God calls His people to glory and virtue. **2PE 1:3**.
 - A. Glory is associated with virtue.
 - B. A virtuous life brings glory to God and exalts a man.
 - C. By contrast, Satan and sin debases a man and brings him to shame.

- VI. According to the definition and Scripture, a virtuous man:
- A. Conforms to the principles of morality as given in the word of God.
PSA 119:1, 9, 11; ROM 12:1-2.
 - B. Voluntarily does what is right rather than doing so grudgingly or of necessity.
ISA 1:19; 1CH 29:5-6, 9, 17; 2CO 8:12; 9:7.
 - C. Abstains from wrong-doing *on moral grounds*.
 1. That is, he refrains from wrong, not because of personal considerations such as comfort, popularity, or expediency; but ONLY on the grounds that it is wrong - PERIOD!
 2. Consider these examples: **GEN 39:9; DAN 3:15-18; ACT 4:18-20.**
 - D. Is valiant or is characterized by valour; that is, he is courageous.
 1. It takes courage to obey God.
JOS 1:7-9; 2CH 26:16-21; MAT 10:16-39; 1CO 16:13.
 2. The Christian life is a warfare calling for courage.
1TI 6:12; 2TI 4:7; EPH 6:10-13.
 3. Strength flows from God to those who are courageous to do His will.
PSA 27:14 w/ ISA 40:31 w/ 1CH 19:13.
 4. Times are dangerous and very evil when men are not valiant for truth, when men of virtue are not to be found. **JER 9:1-9.**
 - E. Is born again by the power of God. **1JO 2:29.**
- VII. Virtue is the first thing Peter instructs believers to add to their faith. **2PE 1:5.**
- A. Virtue is added to faith which receives the word of God, which provides the standard of right and wrong necessary to virtue and the promises necessary to encourage virtue.
HEB 13:5-6; 2PE 1:4.
 - B. Faith in God is necessary to achieve virtue. **HEB 11:33-34.**
 - C. Virtue is necessary to add the following things that Peter mentions in **2PE 1:5-7**.
 1. Without the courage to obey God, knowledge that comes through obedience will not be added. **JOH 7:17.**
 2. It takes virtue, strength of character, to add temperance which is the denial of our passions and appetites.
 3. It takes courage to be godly in this present ungodly world.
 4. It takes courage and commitment to do what is right to exercise brotherly kindness to a brother when it personally costs money, time, convenience, or laying aside feelings of resentment when offended by that brother.
 5. It takes virtue to add charity as described in **1CO 13:4-7.**
 - D. A virtuous life will result in making our knowledge of Christ productive, in assuring our calling and election, and in gaining an abundant entrance into Christ's everlasting kingdom.
2PE 1:8-11.
- VIII. All the references to virtue in the Old Testament refer to women.
- A. A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband. **PRO 12:4.**
 1. She makes her husband feel like a king.
 2. She is contrasted with a woman that makes ashamed. **PRO 12:4.**
 - B. **PRO 31:10-31** describes in detail a virtuous woman.
 1. She is trustworthy.
 2. She is industrious.

3. She conforms to right in word and deed.
 4. She has strength of character; she is courageous.
- C. Ruth is specifically said to be virtuous. **RUTH 3:11.**
1. Her virtue shines forth in her decision to leave her people and go with Naomi.
RUTH 1:8-21.
 2. All the elements of virtue appear in Ruth.
 - a. She voluntarily chose to do the right thing although she was urged by Naomi to go back to her people and her gods.
 - b. She turned from her people and their idolatry on moral grounds.
 - (1) Naomi had nothing to offer her in the way of worldly advantage.
 - (2) Ruth believed in Naomi's God and acted on the basis of that faith.
RUTH 2:12.
 - c. She thus demonstrated great courage.
 3. Ruth was committed even unto death. So Christ calls His followers to renounce life itself for Him. **MAR 8:34-38; ACT 20:23-24; REV 2:10; 12:11.**
 4. In the end, Ruth was greatly honoured. **RUTH 4:13-17.**
- IX. Paul exhorts us to think upon any virtue. **PHI 4:8.**
- A. We are what we think. **PRO 23:7; 4:23.**
 - B. "Sow a thought; reap an act. Sow an act; reap a habit. Sow a habit; reap a character. Sow a character; reap a destiny."