

# VIRTUE vs. IMPURITY

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## ***THE POWER OF A LIFE THAT IS IN HARMONY WITH THE HOLY STANDARDS OF GOD.***

*“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” II Peter 1:3.*

### **THE DEFINITION OF VIRTUE**

The Hebrew word for virtue is chayil. It is translated only four times as virtue but over 200 times as valor, valiant, strength, power, might, strong, army, host, forces, riches, wealth, substance, and other similar words.

There are two Greek words translated as virtue: dunamis and arete. Dunamis is only translated three times as virtue but over one hundred times as power, might, miracle, strength, mighty, and mighty work. Virtue is the Godly influence of a life that is in a right relationship with the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **THE POWER OF VIRTUE**

Virtue is like static electricity that builds up in a person’s body after walking on carpet in a dry atmosphere. If someone touches that person, there will be an electrical shock. In a similar manner, Christ was filled with the Holy Spirit and then led into the barren wilderness, where He was tested and tempted. He returned “in the power [dunamis] of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14) and began to minister to the multitudes. The people soon realized that the power of God was in Him; therefore, “the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue [dunamis] out of him, and healed them all” (Luke 6:19).

It is the will of God that every believer would experience this same power of virtue and use it to benefit others, causing them to glorify God.

“Who can find a virtuous woman, for her price is far above rubies” (Proverbs 31:11). This woman demonstrated God’s power as she ministered with her hands and words to her family and community.

- “The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power [dunamis]” (I Corinthians 4:20).
- “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power [dunamis] that worketh in us” (Ephesians 3:20).
- “According as his divine power [dunamis] hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (II Peter 1:3).

### **HOW IS THE POWER OF VIRTUE LOST?**

When virtue is defiled through lust and immorality, there is a loss of power. Thus Scripture warns young men, “Give not thy strength [chayil] unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings” (Proverbs 31:3).

Solomon warned his son: “The lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword. . . . Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house: Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel: Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labours be in the house of a stranger; And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed” (Proverbs 5:3–11).

### **HOW IS THE POWER OF VIRTUE GAINED?**

When Peter wrote to all those who have “obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” he stated, “add to your faith virtue.” (II Peter 1:1, 5).

Paul explains the process by which virtue is added to faith. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power [dunamis] may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you” (II Corinthians 4:6–12). The more Paul successfully responded to trials and tribulations, the more power he had to give the life of Christ to others.

In this same letter, Paul describes how he discovered the source of this power. “There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power [dunamis] of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong” (II Corinthians 12:8–10).

This sequence of rejoicing in suffering in order to experience the power of virtue is repeated several times in Paul's epistles. He said to the believers in Philippi, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Philippians 3:10).

To the believers in Colossi he said, “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Colossians 1:10–11).

## **THE REQUIREMENT OF FAITH FOR THE POWER OF VIRTUE**

“A certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment” (Mark 5:25–27).

Jesus immediately knew in Himself that the power of virtue had gone out of Him, so He turned around in the press of the throng and said, “Who touched my clothes?” This question amazed the disciples, and they pointed out that the multitude thronged around Him and many had touched Him.

Yet one touched Him in faith that she would receive the power of healing from that touch. “For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague” (Mark 5:28–29). It is therefore not enough just to touch Jesus but rather to touch in faith. It is on this basis that Jesus often said, “Thy faith hath made you whole.”

## **HOW MUCH VIRTUE DO YOU HAVE?**

- Do people apologize for profanity or rudeness when you are around?
- Do others ask you for counsel for the problems they are facing in their lives?
- Are you able to help others conquer guilt, anger, fear, lust, and bitterness?
- Do others want to follow your example in living out the Christian life?
- Do you have the power to conquer temptations Satan brings you?
- Do you thank God for times of suffering and rejoice in them?
- Do you acknowledge to the Lord your weakness in order to experience His power?
- Does your life demonstrate the qualities of a virtuous man or woman?
- Do others tell you of how you have helped them in their walk with God?