

June 27, 2014

Introduction to Virtue

⁵ For this very reason, ^[e]adding your diligence [to the divine promises], employ every effort in ^[f]exercising your faith to develop virtue (excellence, resolution, Christian energy), and in [exercising] virtue [develop] knowledge (intelligence)... **II Peter 1:5, Amplified.**

What an interesting way the Amplified Version presents it! There are two words that are main terms for the gymgoers in our group: exercising and develop. We go to the gym to develop our bodies by means of doing exercises. Each part of the body we wish to develop requires a certain exercise. In order to see any growth in that area, we must do repetitions of that exercise over a period of time. One may look on this scripture (Galatians 6:9, Amplified Version) which speaks to a spiritual point, and see how a physical point can be applied. ⁹ ***And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.*** When you begin your exercise program, you see no muscle growth on the first day. You feel tired. You're sore. But no growth is present. You go the next day and the next, and you experience the same tiredness and soreness. You look hard in the mirror the gym has set up for the purpose of reflecting your muscle growth and toning. All you see is the body you came in with. You shake your head from side to side, whispering a sigh of disappointment, and head for your car. For the next week, you throw in the same diligent effort, pushing your body to its max. You head for the mirror for a visual analysis, and what you see is pretty much the same. Disappointment is knocking hard on the door of your mind. Anxiety is trying to open a window to your spirit. You are about to open both door and window until a tiny voice catches your attention. The trainer at the gym told you that changes would occur in about six weeks from the starting point. The voice also said not to quit or become discouraged. Finally, the voice said (in louder mental volume), though changes could not be seen on the outside, numerous changes were happening on the inside that were beneficial. The voice was enough to chase disappointment and anxiety away. The same zeal you directed toward exercising your body to develop physical muscle and toning in the first five weeks, you decided to do the sixth week. During the midpoint of the sixth week, you dared to look into the mirror. The change was not miraculous but it was evident! The trainer was looking at you from a distance. Smiles and nods were exchanged. What he had said regarding the evidence you have validated. Now nothing can stop you from diligently exercising because you have waited long enough to see the result!

The same is true spiritually. Let that faith of yours become aggressive enough to cross the line of what belief is required to do and be. Set the resolve in yourself to prove what an activated faith should look like. If you don't succeed at first, keep at it! You'll get there! You'll taste the victory of crossing that finish line! You'll hear all of the shouts! But they will be coming from inside you! And, Oh yes! Virtue will be there to reward you. The reward will be virtue itself! The act of exercising faith to its potential caused you to look in the mirror and see virtue. It is as though the Holy Spirit looking from a distance smiled and nodded His head as your spirit did the same.