

THE RESPONSIBILITIES TO SEEK VIRTUES And CERTAIN PERSONAL QUALITIES—Part I

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I-1. ALTRUISM: The word (altruism) is not used in the Bible. Thus I can only conclude that it is a man-made word. The word does however appear in the New Thesaurus, Third Edition, by Roget p.32. Even so, the defining words or expressions used for that purpose is, as often said, top-of-the-line words. Note some of them which are listed. Altruism (*noun*) is expressed as: Kindly, benevolent, good, good-hearted, kind, kind-hearted. The adjective of the word is Altruistic. I point this out to show the beauty of the expression of words in defining altruistic, and if the principal of meaning is manifested in one's life in seeking virtue, and [certain personal qualities] it is good for learning. In developing one's life manifesting these principles it can be said to be a life which would be acceptable to God. Thus one would be doing His will. And note also how much or how closely the descriptive adjectives are synonymous to the word love.

In scripture we are given guarded (cautious) admonishment to *"Let no one seek his own good, but each one the other's well-being (1 Corinthians 10:24) ...just as I (Paul) try to please everyone in everything I do not seek my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved"* (1 Corinthians 10:33).

While these scriptures were given by inspiration in the context of teaching us to do all to the glory of God, the lesson for us today is the same, and we must know that. We must at the same time grow in and exercise all attributes to which we are responsible and accountable.

In seeking virtues it is true that responsibilities develop into personal qualities which are required in all matters. Note what is said of love. *"...love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful..."* (1 Corinthians 13:5). Dear one(s), it just has to be as said that virtues are personally developed which we are to seek from God's word and His will. And your personal and my personal responsibilities are set forth in His word. Exercising our virtues in concert is the responsibility of the congregation.

When one becomes knowledgeable of what their responsibilities are, they become obligated to duty. They become your task, your job, your pleasure and blessing of joy. By the grace of God, your faith and diligence in performance to duty will result in your hearing "Well done." Not doing or accepting one's duty and responsibility, whatever it is, does not however nullify or void duty and responsibility. This principle remains all of one's life. I will say again, accepting duty and manifesting it in love is the only accepted way to live life. Life and the way one lives belong to God who created everything.

I am referencing additional scriptures for your note, enjoyment and blessing. They have reference to the subject of this study. Please read and give thought to (Hebrews 6:10-11; 13:5-66; 1 Timothy 6:13; 1 John 3:17). Dear one(s) we are responsible to seek virtues and personal qualities and the ones which we have been

giving thought thus far is identified by saying let us not seek our own good but seek others well-being. Doing good to others is the bottom line! That is the will of God and Christlikeness that must be manifested in our lives. It is the only way that I know for us to serve God our creator.

I-2. BLAMELESS and PURITY: *"Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD"* (Psalm 119:1). *"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God"* (Matthew 5:8). *"God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love that you showed for His sake in serving the Saints, as you still do"* (Hebrews 6:10) *"And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure"*. (1 John 3:3) *"Since we have these promises beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God."* (2 Corinthians 7:1). *"He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully, he will receive righteousness' from the God of his salvation"* (Psalm 4:4-5).

Responsibility is a blessing and it is an obligation to duty. It is explained, for the most part, by three words. Let it be known that those who are blessed by God are those who seek walk, and keep all virtues (qualities) which are responsibilities vested (according) to our loving care and dedication of doing God's will.

Greater strength of understanding will be a blessing to each who look for (who seek) the deep meanings of each of the words, seek, walk and keep. Please give emphasis in your heart to the following identifying word(s) and word phrases: [*Law of the Lord, blameless, pure in heart, hopes in Him, cleanse, from defilement, hope, fear of God, righteousness and salvation*]. There are more which are brought to mind as you study and give thought to these which are cited. However give thought as to the desire of our heart must be "Blameless and Purity."

It can be summarized by the assuring words which address spiritual blessings in Christ, *"...even as He chose us (Saints/Christians) in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love"* (Ephesians 1:4). In this we can see that God chose that who believe in Him, are obedient to His Will, and are called (Christians, His children), by a loving choice on His part. This being His will according to His good pleasure; according to the riches of His grace and according to His purpose who works all things according to His will.

"Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He (Christ) appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself as He is pure" (1 John 3:3).

Should you be asked, "How does one purify one's self? Yes, that is a good question and the subject is a needed and continual process. Stay with me and I will give you an answer to the question! But to finish this paragraph I-2 we can benefit by taking note of the definition of pure/purify as used in the Bible thus helping us to give thoughts in answering the question.

Here it comes again! *"As we think in our heart (mind) so are we"* (Proverbs 23:7). Note also what Psalm 12:2 says. There the Psalmist, David, says to God that the faithful have vanished, and that everyone utters lies to his neighbor with flattering lips

and a double heart they speak. This writer says to gain knowledge and grow in wisdom there are heaps of thinking and doing required. The two words, blamelessness and purity are synonymous...in ways. I favor the explanation for blameless which implies or signifies that which cannot be called to account or nothing laid to one's charge or accusation against one.

When Proverbs 23:7 was referenced another scripture came to my mind which is Philippians 4:8. Therein is a list of virtues, personnel qualities, or thought processes to which we are commanded to give thought and attention. In that list of 8 numbers, "pure" is the fourth quality listed.. The number one quality listed is LOVE...and that is where it should be. Anyway Philippians 4: 8 completes the thought by saying to us to "*think about (or think on) these things.*" My question is, "What should our attitude be toward the admonishing effort required of our thoughts. Thoughts are to be imbedded in all truth and knowledge, accepted and acted upon as required in wisdom, and to the Glory of God in our fulfilling our duty... our walk with God. Is an AMEN in order here?

I said above that we were commanded to give thought or attention to the items listed. Does giving thought to an apostolic statement give pause to our thinking process? My 'O my, what all comes to mind and what should be our reaction? All studies are good when you are thinking on things which are good and right in the sight of God.

Now, I am requesting that we look at (Philippians 4:6-7) and please read and consider, (think about and yea count); the great blessings and rewards afforded us as result of our thinking and prayers to God. Here are the referenced scriptures: "*...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication (plea) with thanksgivings let your request be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 4:6-7).

To define or explain the word and principle of pure, it is said of pure to be: "free from defilement, not contaminated and as cleansed. It is said of Christ, our example, that He is morally pure (1 John 3:2) and our hope of seeing Christ and being like Him is the blessing of realization that helps us pursue purity even more (1 John 3:3).

Other scriptures to read and study which address purity are: (Matthew 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:5; 1 John 3:3; 2 Timothy 2:22; Titus 1:15; Hebrews 10:22; James 1:27; 1 Peter 1:22... powerful). There are more and you can, if you desire, check them by the reference column in your Bible. It will result in more blessings if you study them. One's harvest-blessings are equal to their studies-planted. The study field is white unto harvest!

I-3. BOLDNESS: Am I wrong to say that we, children of God, are more shy than bold in teaching, preaching and manifesting our personal qualities of boldness? I confess to not having boldness to the degree as exemplified in scriptures of first century Christians. Or am I out in left field? Should it be taught? I cannot remember ever having been in a Bible class or heard a sermon that the subject was on boldness. Or does "longsuffering" negate that?

The outline that I am following for this study is a prepared outline that I borrowed and am following. The outline lists 61 subparagraphs for study under an overall paragraph that is worded as set forth in the title of this lesson. Boldness is the 3rd subject under the outline for discussion. Don't fear! I am not going to do study writing on all 61 of the subparagraphs at this time. However, I may address more in study from time to time because I am convicted that each subparagraph is a needed subject for study. Any thought on that by feed-back from you will be appreciated.

In my opinion, any study subject whether it is restricted to one word or an explanatory sentence have many thought pursuits and are limited only (maybe) to the desire of depth of one's examination or detail. I submit that this could be said of most studies i.e. courage, compassion, devotion, fear, etc.

With the above said the first time boldly was used in the Bible it was used in describing a tragic act. You can read about it in Genesis (34:25 KJV). Courage was used in the NKJV for boldly in the same scripture. In a way and for the purpose of greater understanding we need to define and look to akin words used today to describe and explain bold or boldly.

There is no problem, as I see it, to realize and agree that the akin word courage is a good word to describe bold/boldness (cf. Acts 13:46). Here then are more defining words and expressions for bold/boldly: [Willingness to be adventuresome, daring.] [Having or showing courage, stout-hearted, unafraid, and valorous].

In study of boldness it is suggested to note some of the akin words and expressions of fearless/ fearlessness. They are in many ways synonymous to boldly. If you choose to check these out you will agree they are synonymous and are good and strong personal qualities if one chooses to add to their account. There is however the other side of the coin, as often said. It is very true that the acts of boldness can be used and is sometimes expressed in rudeness, disrespectful, pushy, or sassy. This is where attitude kicks-in. We know that attitude is a mind thing. It is true that the mind controls all that we think, say, and do. It is true that training is vital to how the mind is trained; that is a continuous process, and that it is a dedicated part of our life in walking hand in hand with Jesus. Well, how about an AMEN here!?

Please give study to the following and you will gain insight on the subject at hand (boldness), and they are not all the scriptures that guide us in the subject: (Acts 4:28, 31; 13:46; 2 Corinthians 5:8; 7:4; 10:1-2; 11:21; Ephesians 3:12). It is my prayer that we all use the blessing and strength in boldness, and that we never are rude but we give place to exercise our vision to whatever, if it is the correct and right time to do so.

I-4. CHARACTER: Yes the responsibility to seek virtues and certain personal qualities is a think-tank for building one's character. It has been such for this writer anyway. It is that sometime forgetfulness comes and remembrance is not reactivated soon enough. And it could be that it is not known the different blessings that come into our lives and yes, *"from whom cometh them."* This however can be brought to our attention through the knowledge of the scriptures.

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulations produce perseverance; and perseverance, character and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (that is through the word) who was given to us" (Romans 5:5). Have you ever read a more adoptable need than that?

Please read, study, accept and adapt to your character the additional character building qualities given in these cited scriptures: (Philippians 1:20; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13). Please also note in our continued study herein other character building qualities which will be named and discussed. They are God blessed for our benefit.

I-5. CHASTITY: Let's look to some defining words in our analysis of our need to be "chaste", the adjective of the noun chastity. Chastity is explained or defined as the condition of being chaste. It has to do with: decency, innocence, modesty, purity, virginity (*male or female*), virtue and virtuousness (Roget's, The New Thesaurus, Third Edition, page 152).

Please look with me at Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary, page 97. Therein references are made as follows: chaste, (Greek *hagos*) signifies: "pure from every fault; immaculate (ref. 2 Corinthians 7:11; Philippians 4:8; 1 Timothy 5:22; James 3:17; 1 John 3:3). The RV rendering is "pure" and 1 Peter 3:2 "chaste", pure from carnality, and modest. It is noted that (Greek *hagios*) for chaste is, "holy, as being free from admixture of evil." (The Greek word *hasios*, signifies, "holy, as being free from defilement".

One more thought to present and that is, we need to know/realize that the definition for chasten, chastening, chastise, and chastisement primarily denotes: to train, and or education, cf. Acts 7:22; 22:3; see also Titus 2:12. The meaning is correcting with words, reproof, and admonishing (1 Timothy 1:20, "be taught" 2 Timothy 2:25, or by "chastening" by the infliction of evil and calamities, 1 Corinthians 11:32; 2 Corinthians 6:9; Hebrews 12:6; 6:7, 10; Revelation 3:19. The Greek word *paideia* is identified to chastening, chastisement as "the training of a child, including instructions." It is the Christian discipline set forth in God's word that regulates character, (cf. Hebrews 12:5, 7-8; 2 Timothy 3:16). (Ref. Vine's Expository Dictionary.)

We must know that if we, by our actions, are decent, and if we live the *obedient life* which is up right, straight and respectable in accordance to God law. It is then we will be innocent, modest, pure, and virtuous. All of these are to be manifested in lives of all God's children. If you are not a child of God, please read again (2 Timothy 3:16-17), then read vv. 1 through 8 of 2 Timothy and act accordingly. Great admonishment!

I-6. COMPASSION: Permit me a definition of the word and then we can readily see where we need to go with our thoughts and actions. As known, compassion is defined as: Sympathetic, sad concern for someone in misfortune: condolence, empathy, pity. If one is compassionate (*adjective*) there would be the feeling or expression of pity, concern with humanitarian acts i.e., charitable human welfare and the alleviation of suffering of others (cf. Matthew 9:35-38). Please note the action requirements (or duty) that Christ asked of His disciples explaining in v. 37 and in v. 38 their duty of prayer.

The referenced scripture is the blessed example to the compassion of Jesus. Are we not today duty bound to be Christlike? The answer you know and the answer I know. It is a rhetorical question! The point is to be Christlike, and becomes duty bound to do unto others. Christ's' purpose while He was here on earth was doing His Father's will, and that was doing good for the good of others. CAN WE DO LESS?

We must, when we begin a plan, realize with a dedicated mindset and say to self... "To whom much is given much is required." Knowing and realizing that God blesses us so richly, and really it is His possession to begin with, it is His creation. The acquiring or achieved satisfaction, as one's i.e., fulfilled, gratified, happy, or satisfied. Having accomplished these blessings are we then allowed to say, "I've got it made?" The answer is, no, no, no! When we have attained the blessings as their accomplishment and gratifications we must realize from whence it comes, then let love abound more with knowledge and all discernment so that you may approve (attest) to what is excellent and so, be pure and blameless for (until) the day of Christ (cf. Philippians 1:9-10). Note what the apostle Paul had to say, "*And I am sure of this, that he who begins a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ*" (Philippians 1:6).

Is not contentment a good work? There are many things which disturb our contentment and we may as well admit it. One such weakness, and yes it is sin, is the love of money...of which we are warned in the Bible, (1 Timothy 6:10). Current events of our times expose many instances of high dollar love and to what extremes men/women go to in order to satisfy their love for money. Praise the Lord for the warning to Christians in (Hebrews 13:5). There the apostle Paul said, "*Keep your life free from love of money, for He has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you'*" (cited from Joshua 1:5; also cf. Psalms 37:25; 2 Corinthians 4:9).

True Christians are children of God, and true children of God must be content. We are commanded to so be. Our contentment must be as a resolve in fulfillment of our stewardship responsibility in the care and use of the talents (capabilities) which God has given (provided) us to use in doing His will in dedicated love to performance. Amen!

The scriptures and commentary that have been set forth in this study have been of great benefit to me. The wonderful scriptures and principles which we studied have been motivating to my conscience. It is my prayer that you who read and study more of what was presented here and that you will accept all truth which was presented herein and that it will be a conscience server to you motivating you to obedience to God's will.

God bless you, I love you. Keep me in your prayers. Be faithful in serving all the days that God gives us. Look forward to Part II, I promised it to you.

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