

*"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For **IF** these things be in you, and abound, **THEY MAKE YOU** that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:5-8 KJV*



Is your faith barren of obedience? Is there no “*Fruit of the Spirit*” in your character? Virtue is courageous determination to obey God. Without it, you can add nothing to faith! Knowledge is worthless in a fool’s possession. Knowing how to fire a gun doesn’t mean knowing when or when not to fire it. Without temperance, knowledge is dangerous. Temperance is best defined as abstinence from indulging our lustful feelings. “*Abstain from all APPEARANCE of evil.*” Our feelings lead us into temptation more often than not. Someone pokes fun, insults, or accuses us and immediately we are angry. Did you ever wonder why anger makes you say things you wish you hadn’t? Satan sits and waits for such opportunities to fill our thoughts with cruel and hurtful words to hurl back, but words, once spoken, are never yours again and the damage is irreparable! “*A soft answer turneth away wrath.*” Did you ever consider it’s God’s Wrath you are turning away? Temperance allows patience to endure offence. “*Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*” Godliness or “*the mind of Christ,*” keeps bitterness at bay while we endure the onslaughts of evil. Satan likes nothing better than to provoke discord in the Assembly and believers often inadvertently become his fifth-column in his effort to obscure the Light of the Gospel when they gossip about and murmur against one another. Charity in action, promotes kindness. “*Be ye kind one to another. Above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.*” Our enemy wants us to believe that a new war is beginning with each battle, but our Commander ended it forever on Calvary with three words; “*IT IS FINISHED!*” But evil still refuses to surrender, fighting to the death; as if it had a chance! Do you really want to be a Christian, or just have the fringe benefits? Do you really want to know Jesus or just talk about Him as if you did? Ask God to evaluate your life! “*Search me, O God; and see if there be any wicked way in me.*” God searches us as His Word dwells in our thoughts and readily identifies sin as soon as it surfaces. Do you sincerely obey, or is it all just a façade? Do you seek God FIRST, or only when needed? Does sin interrupt your obedience or does obedience irritate your sin? “*IF these things be in you, and abound, THEY MAKE YOU*” understand Truth and exhibit the “*Fruit of the Spirit. Let the WORD of Christ dwell in you (in your thoughts) richly in all wisdom.*” God reveals Himself through His Word to each of His children in intimate and secret ways, especially meeting their needs. God reveals things to you I might not see and vice versa. This is why fellowship around the Word of God with other believers is so important to our faith!

If you wish to please the Lord,
Trust completely in His Word,
Leave this evil world behind,
And to the brethren be kind. ~CGP

IF is a powerful word! It is a word of definition, condition, and separation. God either has your whole heart or He has none of it. “*A friend of the world is the enemy of God.*” Does your life prove your faith or deny it?

"Therefore IF any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV