

Virtue, Moral Excellence, Integrity of Character

[New Testament Greek word "*arete*"]

1. Referring to God - his power, his excellencies or perfection; the manifestation of his divine power.

- 1 Peter 2:9 - He chose us and made us his own special people, so that we could proclaim his *excellencies* (his wonderful qualities or acts, his goodness - the things which give us reason to praise him). [Among these things is the fact that he called out of spiritual darkness and into his wonderful light.]
- 2 Peter 1:3 - He called us by his own glory and *goodness*: [It is because of these, that he called us to salvation. (It wasn't because of goodness in us.) The purpose of all this is so that we will be able to "partake" of his moral character - v. 4.]

2. Referring to People - a virtuous course of thought, feeling or action; moral excellence or integrity; virtue.

- Philippians 4:8 - Focus your thoughts on things that are *virtuous/excellent* and praiseworthy - *anything* that is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, commendable.
- 2 Peter 1:5-7 - Add to your faith *goodness of character*, add to your *goodness* knowledge, (etc.).

In reference to God...

It is the reason we can be saved (and the basis for our lifestyle, once we are saved)
It is something we can boast about!

In reference to people...

It *must* be a part of our character.
It *must* influence what we think about.

**If we want to be his people, we must reflect his moral character.
God has virtue/moral excellence/integrity of character... so must we.**