

## Upcoming Events...

1 Corinthians Class: Every Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.

Barnabas Group Meeting: April 25

### Growing as a Christian

*"...like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation..."* 1 Peter 2:2

*"...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* 2 Peter 3:18

### April Birthdays

1 Daniel McKnight    11 Dolly Cashion    23 Shannon Hudson  
3 Amanda Hoffman    16 Alana Hudson    26 Stori Rose Hoffman  
6 Susan Hudson        17 Belva Meanor

### April Anniversaries

19 Bill & Kena Brown

#### Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

#### Preacher:

Mike McKnight

#### Church of Christ

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# Indio Informer

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## The Right Kind of Virtues

By Bob West

*"Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in {your} moral excellence, knowledge; and in {your} knowledge, self-control, and in {your} self-control, perseverance, and in {your} perseverance, godliness; and in {your} godliness, brotherly kindness, and in {your} brotherly kindness, love." - 2 Peter 1:5-7*

In this familiar passage, we find one of several Bible lists of "qualities of character" or "virtues" that Christians should strive to attain in our lives. But have you considered that some of those virtues seem "natural" with some folks, yet completely contrary to the disposition of others? For example, some people just seem "naturally" to be able to exercise "self-control" with much less effort than others, perhaps because of some inherited traits or the environment in which they were raised. Some seem to have an easier time with "brotherly kindness." Others seem more disposed toward "patience" or "perseverance." Do you see what I'm saying?

What is often not fully understood, is the fact that the virtues enjoined upon the people of God are to be products of the will - not products of our genes, or the results of circumstances over which we have no control. Let's try to illustrate this important principle by looking at the virtue of "patience" (translated in some versions as "perseverance" or "longsuffering").

I like the definition of "patience" given in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia:

"'Patience' implies suffering, enduring or waiting, as a determination of the will and not simply under necessity."

I especially like that last part: "...as a determination of the will and not simply under necessity." It may well be that a convicted criminal is forced to endure his confinement - to suffer the loss of his freedom, - to wait through the long months or years until his release. His waiting may indeed have the outward appearance of patience. But, in fact, it may well be only the symptoms of a will broken by the State or, worse, just simple hopelessness. This is not the patience of which the Bible proscribes for Christians. This kind of patience is the end result of making up our minds to 'suffer, endure, or wait' in direct response to submitting to God's will. If we have been "gifted" in some area of our lives so that we are naturally inclined to be more patient, more loving, more generous, etc., that is well and good. Use that "gift" to the glory of our Lord by submitting it to His will (see Romans 12:4-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

That's the key! As we develop and possess the various "virtues" in our lives, we must never lose sight of the importance of exercising them, not out of habit or necessity; but rather as acts of our will which is completely surrendered to the Will of God.

## **Thinking about Thinking**

By Mark Stinnett

Sometimes we need to take a step back and think about things. It may sound a little strange, but I am thinking about thinking. Peter writes: *"Be of sound judgment and sober for the purpose of prayer."* (1 Peter 4:7) Together, the two terms, sound judgment and soberness, carry the idea of clear thinking and mental calmness.

These two follow in contrast to a series of terms that include drinking, sensuality, lust, and idolatry. Intoxication by alcohol and drugs affects the mind by physically interfering with the operation of thinking. The latter three terms refer to a muddling of the mind, yet without introducing a foreign physical substance. In all of these, the mind is unable to think clearly and calmly. Godliness is pushed out of the way. Can you remember a time when an important event was being shown on the news? Perhaps it was the series of events on 9-11, or the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; the presidential

election returns or the report of the threatening weather. Whatever the case, do you remember having an intense desire to listen? You were focused on the television or radio. You probably leaned in closely and may have turned your head slightly to hear better. Small insignificant noises were completely blocked out. Anyone not interested (kids) were asked to leave the room or "Shush!" If you had been feeling tired, you were suddenly wide awake...focused, but calm...mentally alert! That is the mind that God wants: wide awake; focused, but calm; mentally alert. And the object of our focus is following Christ.

The following passages show the importance of the sober mind that is focused on God: *"Prepare your minds for action, keep sober."* (1 Peter 1:13) *"A natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised."* (1 Corinthians 2:14) *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."* (Romans 12:2) *"Walk no longer just as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind."* (Eph. 4:17) *"Let no one deceive you with empty words."* (Ephesians 5:6) *"With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."* (Eph. 6:18)

God desires for us to have a clear mind. When our mind is muddled by chemicals, passions, or just the distractions of the day, we will be drawn away from God and will miss out on His gracious help. A calm and clear mind requires genuine intent and constant effort. Is our mind clear and calm so we can pray? Think about thinking...calmly and clearly.

***"Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."*** (Philippians 4:8)