



# **LIVING LIFE & BEING GODLY**

## ***A STUDY OF 2 PETER 1***

We often believe that being godly means that a person can not live a productive or practical life. The view we have is that life demands compromises that either make life a drudgery or godliness useless. Peter who struggled with the realities of these issues, tells us that a meaningful life and a godly life are not mutually exclusive.

Second Peter was written shortly before Peter's death. He references in this book his impending death. Christian tradition places the death of Peter and Paul in the winter of AD 67-68. This corresponds to Paul's request in 2 Timothy for his winter coat when Timothy visits him in Rome. This would place their deaths sometime from December through February. The persecution of Christians ended with the suicide of Nero in June of AD 68.

Sunday School Illustration: Peter and John heal the lame man in the temple.



## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

Peter's calling is a fascinating study in the Gospels. In Matthew [Chapter 4] and Mark's [chapter 1] accounts Jesus is walking by the Sea of Galilee and sees Simon and Andrew casting nets and calls them. In Luke's [chapter 5] account Jesus hires their boat when he sees them washing their nets and takes them fishing. In John's [John 1] account they are at John the Baptist's ministry when Andrew 1<sup>st</sup> encounters Jesus and brings Simon to him. While Matthew and Mark could be a condensed version of Luke's account, it is clear John indicates that the process of calling Peter was a longer process that stretched over several weeks or even months.



Calling of Peter and Andrew by James Tissot



## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

Simon and Andrew were not originally from Capernaum. They were from Bethsaida, a fishing village on the north of the Sea of Galilee. We know at the time Herod Antipas was building up Capernaum as a major fishing port and trying to attract fishermen. Simon and Andrew had entered a partnership with Zebedee, James and John's father. Simon was a rising businessman in a difficult occupation. He struggled with his own integrity and character. Jesus gave him the nickname “Peter” or “Rock” as a reflection of his intention in Simon's life. He was going to turn Simon into a man of integrity and courage, but it would take time and life's struggles to do it.



Calling of Peter and Andrew by James Tissot

## 2 PETER 1:5-9

5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

8 For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.



## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

The word for diligence is used widely in the New Testament and means anything from “hasty” to “diligent” depending on the context it is used in. Basically, it reflects and intense attention to a task at hand. Peter tells us that in our Christian life we must be intentional about building our Christian character. The word translated “add” can also mean “supply”. The implication is that we add or supply depth to our character by the decisions we make throughout life.



Calling of Peter and Andrew by James Tissot

## MATTHEW 16:17-19

17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 “And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”



## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

George Washington's father died when he was 11 years old. He was forced to leave school at this time to help run the estate. Of all the Founding Fathers he was the least educated. He had only 5 years of elementary education. This was a source of embarrassment to him and a source of derision by his better educated associates. He was often looked down upon because of his lack of higher education. This tended to make him shy, quiet and reserved in public settings. He worked very hard to develop a code of conduct that he could live by. By age 16 he had copied and modified 110 maxims of civility from a 1641 manual on civility.



Portrait of George Washington, 1780.



## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

These became his guide for proper conduct through out his life. Though some are dated, most are still applicable for public conduct. The one thing George Washington strove for was integrity and honesty in his life and actions. He stunned the world in 1783 when he stepped down from his position as Commander of the Continental Army after Yorktown. This type of action was unheard of by a successful military commander. Then after being elected as President of the USA in 1789 he voluntarily left office at the end of his 2<sup>nd</sup> term in 1797. Most expected him to declare himself a type of king, but his selfless view of public service inspired a nation. Numbers 12:1-15



Portrait of George Washington, 1780.



## NUMBERS 12:1-4

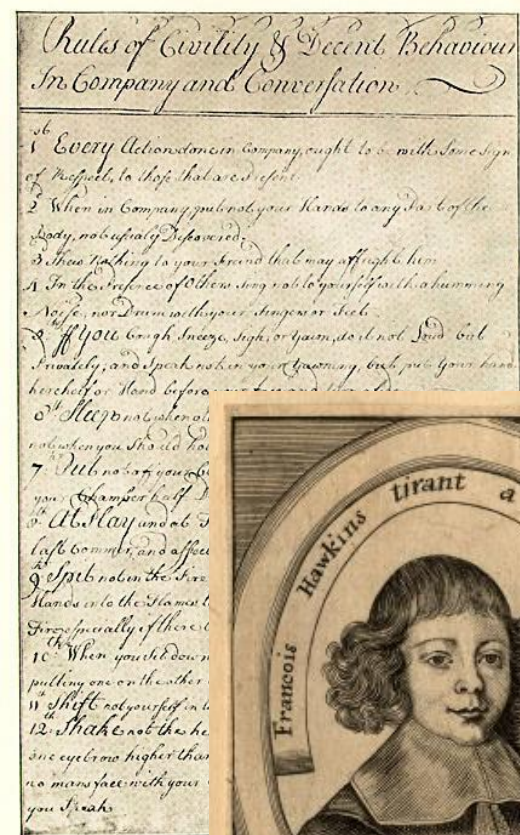
1 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

2 So they said, “Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?” And the LORD heard *it*. 3 (Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth.)

4 Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!” So the three came out.

# “A QUALITY OF LIFE” 2 PETER 1:5-9

George Washington sometime between the age of 11 and 16 copied out and modified 110 maxims on “civility of conduct”. Many of them were taken from the 1641 translation by the 13 year old Francis Hawkins of a Jesuit manual on civility. Many of Washington’s maxims spoke to the issue of personal integrity and honor. The mid-1700s were not noted as a time of tremendous personal integrity. As Washington studiously applied these concepts in his life he developed a reputation as a man of integrity and honesty. He also developed a reputation for resolute determination and unflinching courage.

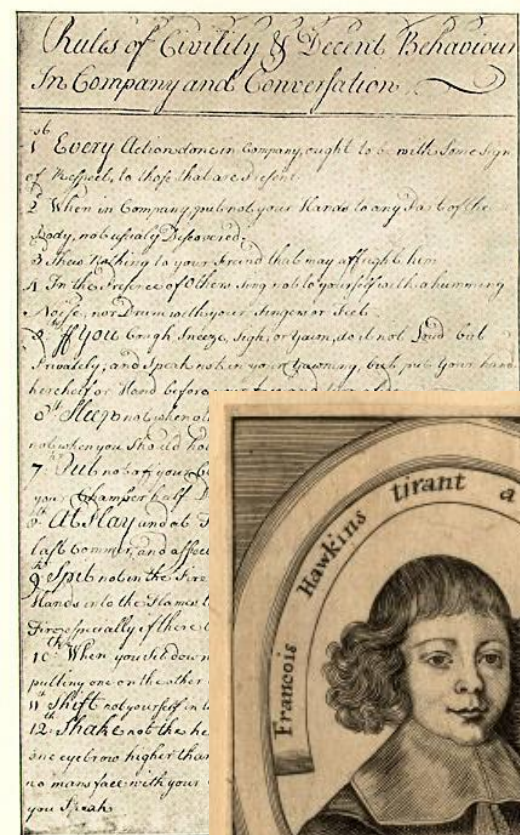


Above, a page from George Washington's 110 Rules for Civility. Below, Francis Hawkins at 10 years old.



# “A QUALITY OF LIFE” 2 PETER 1:5-9

Throughout his life George Washington added to his reservoir of character. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson served in the cabinet of the 1<sup>st</sup> Administration. Both men would lead the 2 factions that would form the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 parties. Adams would lead the “Federalists” while Jefferson would lead the “Anti-Federalists” which would become the Democratic Republicans. Both would have severe criticisms of Washington’s leadership from their own perspectives. Both agreed he was not a man of great idealism, nor political prowess, nor pragmatic realism or even brilliant insight. The men he served with Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton and Monroe had these virtues but Washington’s was character.

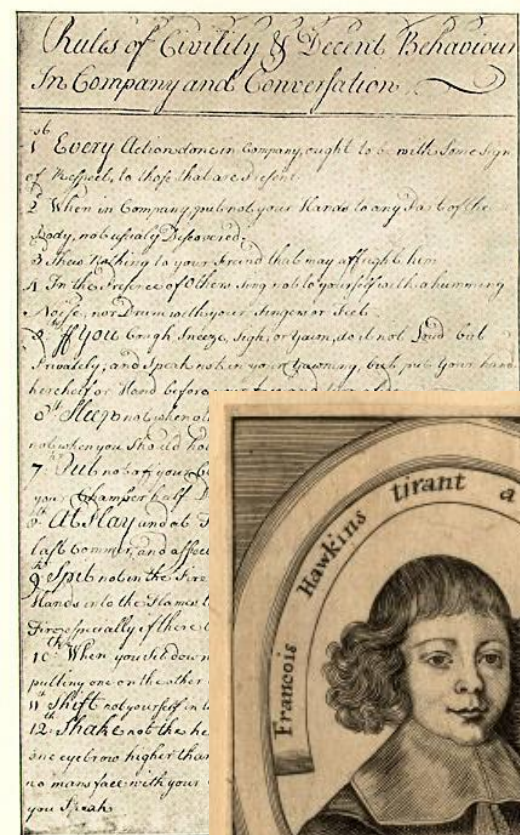


Above, a page from George Washington's 110 Rules for Civility. Below, Francis Hawkins at 10 years old.



# “A QUALITY OF LIFE” 2 PETER 1:5-9

He steered a course of integrity and self-giving service through the competing views of these men. And most historians now agree that we have a Democratic Republic now because of the character of George Washington. His 2 critical decisions came to characterize our view of leadership. He stepped down willingly from Commander of the Continental Army even when his men wished to make him king. He decided not to continue as President after his 2<sup>nd</sup> term in order to avoid making the Presidency a King like office. Without his example most believe America would have either went like England after the Round Head Revolt or France following the French Revolution. **Romans 12:10-13**



Above, a page from George Washington's 110 Rules for Civility. Below, Francis Hawkins at 10 years old.



## ROMANS 12:10-13

10 *Be* kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; 11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; 13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.



## “A QUALITY OF LIFE” *2 PETER 1:5-9*

Christian Character requires the building up of these character traits:

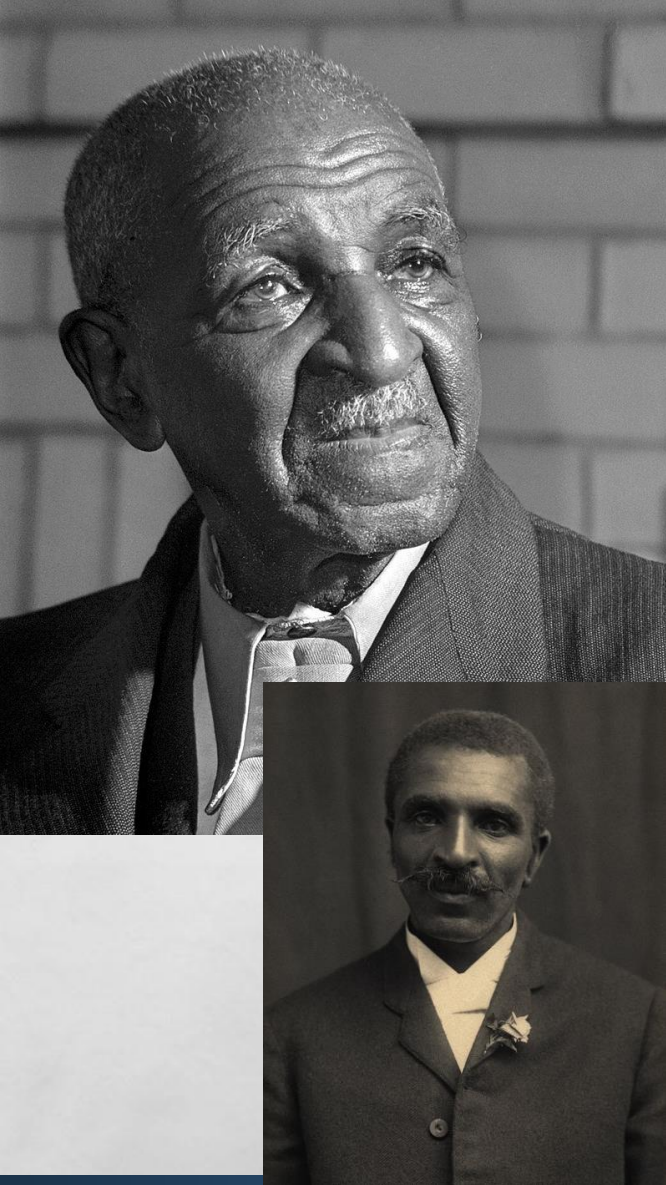
1. **Faith** – believing and trusting God.
2. **Virtue** – a reputation for living honorably.
3. **Knowledge** – learning and development.
4. **Self-control** – mastery of one’s desires and passions
5. **Perseverance** – steadfast endurance.
6. **Godliness** – living worshipfully toward God.
7. **Brotherly kindness** – treating others kindly.
8. **Love** – selfless service.

4<sup>th</sup> Century representations of Jesus and Peter in the Catacombs in Rome



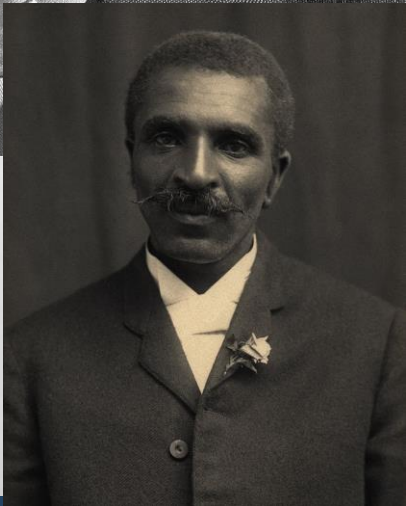
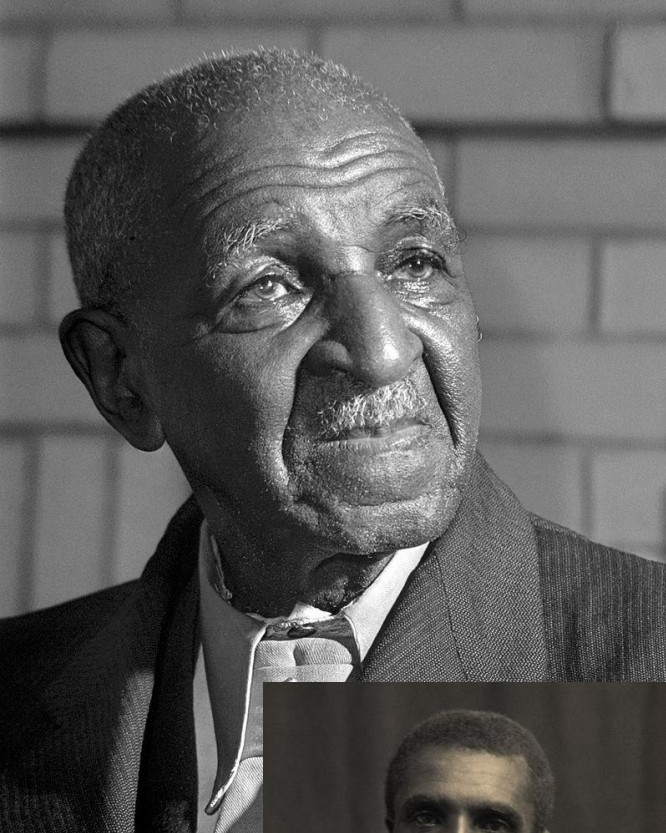
## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

George Washington Carver was born a slave in Missouri in 1864. He was a sickly baby. His mother was Mary and had been purchased by the Carvers with her older son to help out on their farm. They were treated more like family. When Southern raiders kidnapped Mary and George. Moses Carver sent a neighbor after them in an attempt to buy them back. George because he was sickly was abandoned along the way and was recovered, Mary was never found. Georges’s father also died when he was just a child. The Carver family raise George as one of their own. He decided to become a Christian as a Child when discussing Sunday School with a white neighbor boy.



Above, George Washington Carver in 1942 when he was testifying before Congress. Below, in 1910.





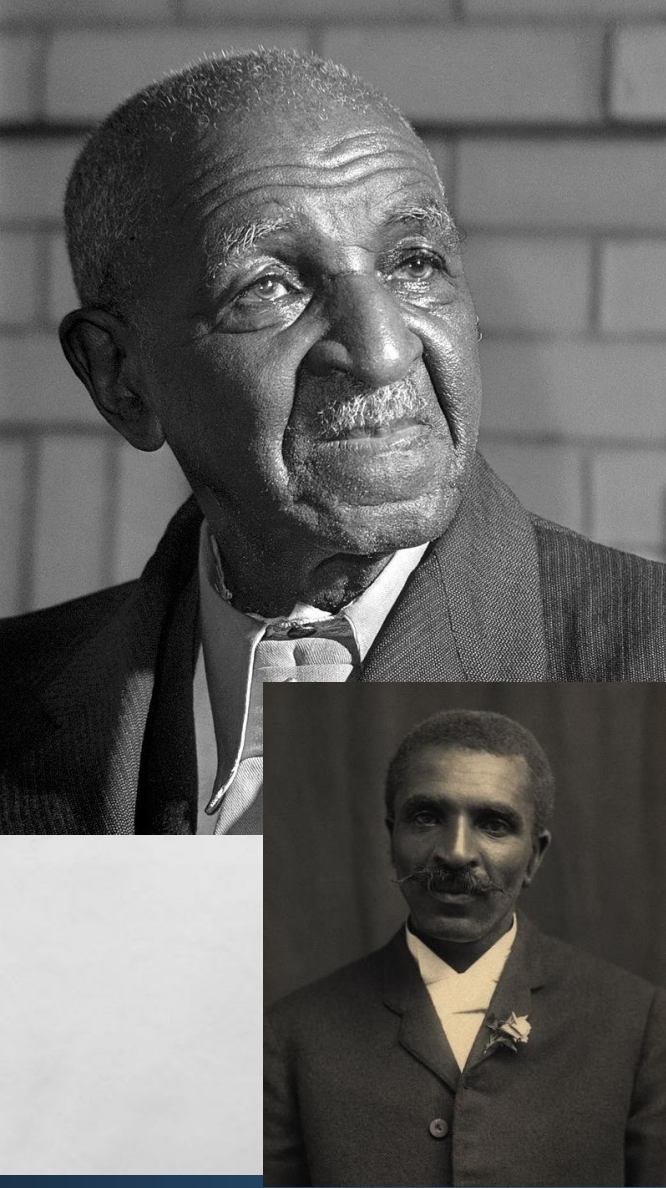
## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

When I was out fishing with my dad quite a few years ago we became involved in a discussion about integrity. To my surprise one of the men my dad deeply admired because of his integrity was George Washington Carver. Carver would have died when my dad was just a boy in 1943. I found it strange that this man so impressed a white Montana ranch kid.

Yet his life is impressive and worth emulating. He lived his life as a man of integrity, deep Christian faith and scientific curiosity. Following his death in 1944, FDR made a National Monument of his birthplace. Only Washington’s and Lincoln’s were so designated at the time.

Above, George Washington Carver in 1942 when he was testifying before Congress. Below, in 1910.





## **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

His work as a scientist, agriculturalist and educator at Tuskegee Institute had monumental impact on American culture and the well being of humanity.

Yet he was recognized as a man of uncompromised integrity, honor and self-sacrifice. He left a good salary and promising future at Iowa State as the 1<sup>st</sup> black science faculty member to teach at the newly formed Tuskegee Institute. He would spend over 40 years there. **1 Peter 2:9 and 1 Peter 4:8-10**

Above, George Washington Carver in 1942 when he was testifying before Congress. Below, in 1910.

## 1 PETER 2:9

9 But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the **praises** of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;...

## 1 PETER 4:8-10

8 And above all things have fervent **love** for one another, for “**love** will cover a multitude of sins.”

9 *Be* hospitable to one another without grumbling.

10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.



# **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

George Washington Carver's 8 Cardinal Virtues that he taught his students:

- Be clean both inside and out.
- Neither look up to the rich nor down on the poor.
- Lose, if need be, without squealing. [be a good loser]
- Win without bragging. [be a gracious winner]
- Always be considerate of women, children, and older people.
- Be too brave to lie.
- Be too generous to cheat.
- Take your share of the world and let others take theirs. [do not covet what belongs to others]

Above, George Washington Carver's 1943 gravestone.



# **“A QUALITY OF LIFE”** *2 PETER 1:5-9*

The Inscription on George Washington Carver's grave stone:

**“A life that stood out as a gospel of self-forgetting service. He could have added fortune to fame. But caring for neither he found happiness and honor in being helpful to the world.”**



Above, George Washington Carver's 1943 gravestone.