

to let Christ's Word dwell in us richly, making us wise (Colossians 3:15).

What Is The Chief Challenge?

We don't naturally think God's thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). As a matter of fact, we have many ideas and thoughts that do not correspond to reality or to God's Word. Our chief challenge is to tear down the barriers (unbiblical ideas) that are erected against God's truth and to bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

What Are The Chief Building Blocks Of Character?

We are to take steps to discipline ourselves for the purpose of godliness—Christ like character (1 Timothy 4:7a). These godly disciplines or habits include assimilating God's Word, prayer, submission to the Spirit, service, stewardship, public and private worship, confession, guidance, accountability.

How Can We Define Success In Terms Of Character?

Success is when: "those who **know you the best**, love and respect you the most" (John Maxwell). Others will see Jesus in you!

What Are Some Practical Applications We Can Make?

1. Make mature decisions. Realizing the process of developing Christian character is something we cultivate in line with the Holy Spirit, we must decide to actively seek to read and obey God's Word. This will involve regular Bible Studies, Church services, and

other means of Biblical intake, whereby we are instructed in God's ways.

2. Make ourselves accountable. The Christian life is lived in association with other Christians as well as in the presence of unbelievers. We need to develop close friends who lovingly inform us when we are not thinking or acting as Christians should. We will need to be willing to accept their critical input. We should not feel free to take into our lives the non-Christian values of foul language and careless living.

3. Make Jesus our Lord. It is easy in a Western society to conform to a selfish materialistic lifestyle. We must place the Lord above all else in our lives and endeavour to please him in all we do. This involves inner integrity and a willingness to be faithful to the Lord.

Your life's a book before their eyes,
They're reading it thru' and thru'
Say, does it point them to the skies,
Do others see Jesus in you?

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So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. - John 8:36 ASSOCIATION

Developing Christ-like Character



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Developing Christ-like Character

Sometime ago I read a fantastic article on developing Christ-like Character. I'm not sure who wrote it, but it was a real blessing to me. I'd like to share some of it with you.

What is Character?

Character is the person God knows us to be. It is who we are when no one else is looking. We are what we have been becoming. The test of character is what we would do if no one ever knew. Character is in large measure a function of our integrity, convictions and moral fortitude.

What Is Christian Character?

Christian character is very simply the life of God living within you. Paul refers to Christians as new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17) and Peter says that we partake of the divine nature (2Peter 1:4). It is grounded in our personal relationship with Christ and in our commitment to godly values.

How Is God's Plan For Us Related To The Development Of Christ-like Character?

God has predestined us to be conformed to the image (or the character) of His Son (Romans 8:29). His plan is that His Spirit transform us so that we can become like His Son (2 Corinthians 3:18). We are more conformed to the character and conduct of Christ as we grow in His grace and knowledge.

How is Christian Ministry Related to Character Development? What

is our primary character goal?

Our primary goal, according to the Apostle Paul is to bring everyone up to his or her full maturity in Christ—helping others to be more conformed to Christ-like character and conduct (Colossians 1:28, 29).

What Is Our Primary Motivation?

Our primary motivation: to please and glorify God out of gratitude in response to His grace. We learn to please God by reflecting His attributes through Christ-like character (1Corinthians 10:31).

What Are Some Basic Principles And Core Values Regarding Character Formation?

Character formation is not optional but essential in the sanctification process. It is a life-long process of sinning less—putting off the old man and putting on the new. It is a function of God's Word and Spirit—knowing, desiring and doing God's will. It is uniquely tailored to the individual's needs, temperament, gifts and personality.

It requires conscious cooperation with God's Spirit as He works in our lives. It involves radical self-examination and genuine repentance—a change in thinking and attitude.

It involves our personal responsibility/accountability and it takes others to bring out the best in us. It involves loving service/gift related ministry and unselfishly meeting the basic needs of others. It involves being an agent of God's grace and passing on to others the grace God has given us. It involves being a vessel of God's truth and speaking and living God's

truth in love.

What Is The Chief Tool In Character Development?

The chief tool that God uses to transform my character is His Word - the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16,17). Through assimilating God's Word, I learn to think God's thoughts as He thinks (Isaiah 55:8-9).

What Is The Chief Agent In The Transformation Process?

The chief agent of character formation is God's Holy Spirit. Our lives gradually become brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like Him (2 Corinthians 3:18). This transforming activity is the work of the Spirit. It takes the Spirit to bring about the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

What Is The Correct Context For This Transformation Process?

It's not, "Jesus and me," it's "Jesus and we!" It takes other believers to bring out the best in us. Just as iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another (Proverbs 27:17).

The proper context for character transformation is a Christ-centered, Bible-believing, faith community (Hebrews 10:24, 25).

What Is The Chief Method?

As we sacrifice our personal desires and actions to serve the Lord, we are transformed by the renewing of our minds into true Christians (Romans 12:1-2). God wants us to assimilate His written word so that it becomes living in our lives. We are