



India
Christian
Fellowship
San Diego

Practicing Godliness

Ephesians 4.22-24. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Godly character comes from a great devotion and the greatest devotion of all is the love of god.

A life that grows in loving god becomes like god.

2 Cor.3.18 ¹And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect^[a] the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Paul not only wanted to know CHRIST, he wanted to be like HIM.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTER TRAITS THAT DISTINGUISH THE PERSON WHO IS INCREASING IN THE HABIT OF GODLINESS?

Remember the Christian character arises from

“Participation in the divine nature” **2Pet.1.14**

1. Right Motive.

Devotion to god is the only acceptable motive for actions that are pleasing to God.

Wrong Motives.

- Maintain a reputation before others.
- We want to feel good about others.
- Want to live decent moral life.

Right Motive

- Joseph – Genesis 39. 9
- Abraham – Genesis 22. 12.

It was by faith that Abraham was **ENABLED** to offer Isaac as a sacrifice, but it was the fear of god that **MOTIVATED** him.

1Cori.10.31 ³¹So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

1Pet .2.13 ¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority,

Colo. 3.22 ²²Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.

Ephesians 5.21 ²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

2. The source of power

The power of enablement for a godly life comes from a risen CHRIST.

Colo.1.29. ²⁹To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

2 Cor.3.5 “Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God” .

This is an amazing statement coming from Paul , a

brilliant man who was trained in the Old Testament, able to communicate in several languages, at home in Jerusalem, Athens and Rome, a Jew through and through and also a true follower of the Lord Jesus.

Surely if any man had reason to brag, it was Paul. But he says he is not even competent to make any claim for himself. Whatever good he has done, it all comes from God.

Christ's men are more apt at weeping than at bragging: they feel their inability rather than their ability. The man who does everything for the Lord is the man who cannot do anything without the Lord. The man that knows he is nobody, God will make somebody- C H Spurgeon .

Empowered By the Spirit

- “He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant-not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” **(2 Cori.3.6).**

The source of power for Christ like Character is Christ, so the means of experiencing that power is through our **RELATIONSHIP** with HIM.

John 15 – Abide = Remain.

Colossians 2.6-7 ⁶*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

This relationship is also maintained by **beholding** the glory of Christ in HIS WORD.

Heb.12.1. ¹*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

Relationship with CHRIST, Expressed by beholding HIM in His WORD and Depending upon Him in PRAYER that enables us to draw from Him the POWER essential for a godly Life.

John 15.4 ⁵*I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

3. Responsibility and dependence.

Though the power for Christ like character comes from CHRIST , the responsibility for developing that character is ours.

Balance of scripture

Bible teaches both total responsibility and total dependence in all aspects of Christian life .

John 3.16 – God gave the only begotten Son
We must believe for eternal life

Philippians 2.12-13 – ¹²*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.*

Work out – what god has working in you.

4. Put off and Put on

The development of godly character entails both putting off and putting on character traits.

Eph. 4: 22- 5:4,

Heb. 1:9 , *“You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.”*

Romans 12:9 *“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.”*

Balance of Scripture:

We not only put off sinful nature we also need to put on godly nature ...

We need to REACH OUT the sinners.

We must RESTORE the saints.

5. Balanced growth.

We need to pursue growth in all of the grace that is considered the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5.22-23. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

“gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

The fruit of the Spirit is not a matter of temperament; it is the result of the individual Christian seeking to grow, under the direction and aid of the Holy Spirit in every area of Christian character.

We are responsible for exhibiting all of the traits of godly character in a balanced fashion.

The “Fruit of the Spirit” is not a collection of unrelated traits that can be selected or neglected according to personal preference, but rather a composite description of what a Christian acts like.

It is a direct result of being filled with the Holy Spirit!

6. Growth is progressive

- Growth in all area is progressive and never finished.

Philippians 3.12 *“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”*

- **I am not perfect – I am progressing.**

Paul told the Thessalonians to love one another – they did. However, he tells them again to do more and more.

1 Thess.4: 9 -10 *“Now about brotherly love we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other.”*

- Growth in Christian life is not only progressive and always unfinished. It will continue until we reach Heaven.

1 Tim. 4.7 - ⁷*Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.*

TRAIN – 4 times in NT . Heb 5.14, 12.11. 2Pet 2:14 , 2 Pet.1: 5-6.

7. The benefits of Godliness.

It values both this world and the next.

1Tim. 4.8 ⁸*For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.*

It presents blessings. Titus. 3:8 ⁸*This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.*

The promise of the future blessings. Titus. 2:11-13.

¹¹For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.