

ESSENTIAL VIRTUES

	Loving God with My Whole Heart	Loving Neighbors as Myself	
	THE GROUNDWORK FOR CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER (v. 5)	THE BACKBONE OF CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER (v. 6)	THE TRADEMARK OF CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER (v. 7)
ESSENTIAL VIRTUES	<p>Saving FAITH</p> <p>Being a “partaker of the divine nature” through the righteousness of Jesus Christ</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Pursuing the EXCELLENCE of Christlikeness</p> <p>Cultivating a God-mandated purpose to develop and display the excellencies (character) of Jesus Christ</p> <p>↓</p> <p>KNOWLEDGE</p> <p>Cultivating a God-taught understanding of the person, the work, and the ways of Jesus Christ</p>	<p>SELF-CONTROL</p> <p>Cultivating a God-empowered mastery of my internal desires</p> <p>↓</p> <p>ENDURANCE</p> <p>Cultivating a God-sustained faithfulness under external pressure</p> <p>↓</p> <p>GODLINESS</p> <p>Cultivating a God-honoring devotion to Jesus Christ that promotes righteousness and opposes evil</p>	<p>BROTHERLY KINDNESS</p> <p>Cultivating a God-engendered affection for and service to those in the “household of faith”</p> <p>↓</p> <p>LOVE</p> <p>Cultivating a God-imitating mindset that scripturally and sacrificially meets the spiritual needs of others</p>
	CORE VALUES	<p>COMMITMENT to Christ</p> <p>These traits produce a whole-hearted disciple who chooses the appeals and ideals of Christ and rejects the appeals and ideals of the world.</p>	<p>COURAGE for Christ</p> <p>These traits produce a brave-hearted disciple who advances Christ and His ways and opposes evil in himself and others regardless of risk to himself.</p>

Book: 2 Peter
Series: True Faith vs. False Teaching: Add To Your Faith, Knowledge
Lesson 5: Our Productive Faith, Part 3 (The Backbone of Christlike Character)
Text: 2 Peter 1:6-7
Date: Sunday, September 23, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Last week, we began to “work the farm” of our sanctification. Having “explored the farm” or scrutinized our salvation by faith (i.e., “being a ‘partaker of the divine nature’ through the righteousness of Jesus Christ), we now begin to cooperate with God in its production. In lesson 4, we studied the groundwork for Christlike character and its virtues of excellence and knowledge:

- *Excellence* – “capturing the heart for Christ,” or “cultivating a God-mandated purpose to develop and display the excellencies of Jesus Christ”
- *Knowledge* – “informing the heart about Christ” or “cultivating a God-taught understanding of the person, the work, and the ways of Jesus Christ”

In this lesson, we’re going to build on that foundation and consider the backbone of Christlike character.

THE BACKBONE OF CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER (v. 6)

1. _____

Application:

- Is your life characterized by order or chaos?
- In your thinking, do you allow yourself the opportunity to die to self in order that Christ's will might be accomplished in the moment of temptation?
- How do you view God's "orders"—as burdens that weigh you down and ruin your fun, or as divine revelations of God's nature and privileged will?
- Do your choices reflect that the particulars of life are regulated by revealed universal principles?
- Do you find yourself constantly dealing with the consequences of disorder (e.g., Late penalties, parental scoldings and spankings, traffic points, fines, suspensions, prison sentences, etc.)?
- Are you burdened about the disorder in the lives of other believers (e.g., your children)?
- Where does this world assault God's order, and where are you being negatively affected by those assaults?

2. _____

Application:

- Do I stop being kind when another person offends me in some way or there is something about the person that does not appeal to me?
- Do I stop being obedient just because I don't agree with the policy or because it inconveniences me?
- Do I stop exercising self-control because I'm discouraged at the moment and want to do something that will make me feel better or because my friends are indulging sinfully in something and I don't want to be left out or thought of as a coward?
- Do I stop seeking God in my Bible and praying daily just because my schedule gets full or something doesn't go the way I want it to go and I'm upset with God?
- Do I stop maintaining pure thoughts and actions when I'm given the opportunity to feed my lusts undetected through the Internet, movies, or television or when I'm alone with a member of the opposite sex who is not my spouse?

- Do I stop being honest when shading the truth would keep me from being held responsible for wrongdoing or would bring me praise I didn't earn?
- Do I stop sacrificing for people when they don't seem to appreciate it or when no one seems to notice?
- Do I stop taking hope in the promises of God and become discouraged when I don't see circumstances working out the way I want them to or as fast as I want them to?
- Do I stop being a diligent worker when no one is present to hold me accountable for my work or when the work situation isn't what I had expected?

3. Godliness

Application:

CONCLUSION

Illustration: William Wilberforce said:

However, at home the progress of irreligion and the decline in morals is enough to alarm every thoughtful person and to fill us with foreboding about the growth of evil. We can only depend upon true Christians to give some remedy against its decline....Singleness of purpose [i.e., excellence], consistency of behavior [i.e., self-control and godliness], and perseverance in effort [i.e., endurance] are needed. Only true Christians can provide these qualities.

Will you be a "true Christian" who professes and practices "true faith" and "cultivates the conditions" in which God can produce the character of Christ in you?