

Reading: Ephesians 4:11-32

Topic: Developing The Christ-Like Character

INTRODUCTION: After we have recognized the strengths and _____ of our character then we need to begin _____ on the weaknesses to overcome them.

I. GOD'S CURE FOR OUR WEAKNESSES:

A. The Cause – Selfishness:

1. The basic cause of human's weaknesses since the _____ of man is selfishness – wanting our own way and doing what pleases _____ instead of thinking about God or our fellow man.
2. The ten commandments that God _____ in the Old Testament are the behavior patterns that God desires to see in an _____ individual – however, no one was able to keep the law and commandments.

Rom. 7:14-18

B. The Cure – The New Birth:

1. The only way for God to change the _____ human race was to change individuals on the _____ by the process of the New Birth. Jn. 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:17
2. After the New Birth has taken place in the life of an individual, the process of _____ growth needs to take place in order to overcome the _____ nature and its weaknesses. Rom. 8:13

II. OVERCOMING OUR WEAKNESSES:

A. Facing Our Weaknesses:

1. If we continue to offer _____ for our weaknesses, such as, "That's just the way I am" or "That's just my nature," then we will never _____ to overcome them.
2. A maturing Christian is one who has _____ both his/her strengths and weaknesses and has a planned _____ for overcoming the weaknesses. Phil. 3:12-16

B. Building Up the Spiritual Life:

1. Prayer – this is the _____ of our Spiritual life and without it, the Spiritual man will _____ out and the old nature will take _____ again. Gal. 5:16 Prayer will give us answers to overcome _____ and the world. I Jn. 5:14
2. Word of God – every believer needs to establish a _____ daily Bible Reading habit for the Word of God is our spiritual _____, our _____, our _____ and more. I Pt. 2:2; Eph. 6:17, Ps. 119:105
3. Fasting - the process of self-denial in fasting will deal with the _____ man, as the flesh is disciplined and the inner _____ in strengthened. 2 Cor. 4:16, Lk. 9:23
4. Church Attendance – because we have been baptized into a _____, we must stay in contact with that _____ in order to survive. I Cor. 12:13-15, Heb. 10:23-25

C. Refuse To Fall Prey To Old Habits:

1. Habit is defined as the tendency to _____ an act over and over again, and the _____ of habit is strong, but the _____ of Christ in us is stronger and will help us to overcome bad habits. Ph. 4:13
2. With God's help, one can turn the _____ of Habit in life from _____ habits to the good _____ that are listed in B above.

III. CHOOSE TO OVERCOME:

A. The Power of Choice:

1. The greatest power that God put into the hands of the _____ beings that He created is the power to make _____ for good or bad.
2. Man has been given the _____ to choose between _____ and death, _____ and cursing, good and _____, etc. Deut. 30:15,19

B. Spiritual Choices:

1. In the Parable of the Sower, the _____ fell on good ground and brought forth a harvest – some _____, some _____, and some, one _____ fold. Mk. 4:8,20
2. Even after we are _____, we still have the power to _____ whether we will grow _____ in the Lord or remain as immature and _____ believers.
3. We must choose to have _____ and choose to overcome our _____ or we will forever be falling prey to the _____ of our soul and could be someday devoured by the adversary. I Pt. 5:8

CONCLUSION: Every Christian has weaknesses to _____ within his/her life but God has made a way to have _____ and to overcome if we _____ to do so. I Cor. 10:13