

Chappelle Memorial AME Church

Step by Step

LESSON TWO

EXCITE THE SUBJECT

This lesson teaches the importance of perseverance and patience. Even mature Christians should press on in the Holy Spirit's power, remembering that one day they will be made perfect - when they see Christ face-to-face.

1. When have you been frustrated with your spiritual progress in a certain area of your life?
2. How did you deal with your frustration?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Philippians 1:3-6

When God starts a project, he completes it! His work in us begins when we first believe in him and continues until his Son, Jesus Christ, returns. He has given us his Holy Spirit, who lives in us and shapes our character to be more like Christ's every day. When you feel incomplete, unfinished, or distressed about your weaknesses, remember that God will not stop helping you until he has completed his work in your life.

1. When have you felt as though you were on a plateau in your Christian growth?

2. What future hope motivates you to persevere in your struggle to develop Christlike character?

3. The next time you feel discouraged about your character growth, how could you remind yourself of the promise in this passage?

Philippians 3:13-14

Paul said that his goal was to know Christ, to be like Christ, and to be all Christ had in mind for him. This goal absorbed all of Paul's energy, allowing him to forget his past. We have all done things of which we are ashamed. We live in the tension of what we have been and what we want to be. Because our hope is in Christ, however, we can let go of past guilt and look forward to what God will help us become.

1. What can interfere with our character growth?

2. What is holding you back from allowing Christ to develop your character?

3. In light of Paul's advice, how can you eliminate this hindrance from your life?

Joshua 14:8-11

Caleb's life reveals the rewards of perseverance; he was a man of strong character. Because of his faith, God promised him a personal inheritance of land. Forty-five years later, the land was given to him. Caleb remained strong from the start to the finish! Likewise, we must be committed to God and be open to his continuing work in us, not only at the start of our walk with him, but through our entire lives.

1. What revealed Caleb's strength of character?

2. What do you think kept Caleb going?

3. What causes some Christians to give up the struggle to grow in character?

EXAMINE YOURSELF

Developing character takes time - a lifetime! God will complete the work he has begun in your life when you meet Christ face-to-face, but until then you must be patient and persevering. With the single-mindedness of an athlete in training, you must forsake anything that distracts you from becoming a person of strong character.

How can you be sure you are doing all you can to strengthen your character?

What steps can you take this week to begin a lifetime of developing Christlike character?

Remember, God will not give up on you, so do not give up on him!