

Pursue Maturity

1. Jesus, the Son of God was born with no **character**, and during his lifetime He grew in **character** to become **perfect**.

Hebrews 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Hebrews 5:8–9 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

Luke 2:52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

2. We are born with no **character**, and God's desire for us is that we **grow** to become like Jesus in **character**.

Matthew 5:48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

3. God causes and uses **trials** and circumstances of life to **mold** and shape our character.

Romans 8:28–29 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also

predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

4. In order for the **trials** and events that God sovereignly brings into our life to work we must **cooperate** with Him.

James 1:2–4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

5. My all-consuming **motive** in **preaching** and teaching you all is that you would become **perfect** in character.

Colossians 1:28–29 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

1 Timothy 4:16 Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

6. As individual Christians we need to be super **committed** and diligent to doing anything we can do to **grow** our own **character**.

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity,

Philippians 3:12–14 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

2 Peter 1:4–11 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these

qualities is blind *or* short-sighted, having forgotten *his* purification from his former sins. Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

6. A key tool that God has given us to grow our character is His Word.

Hebrews 5:12–6:1 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who

because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity,

1 Peter 2:2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,

7. **Prayer** is a major force for **shaping** our **character** to be perfect.

Colossians 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully

assured in all the will of God.

Psalm 90:10–12 As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years, yet their pride is *but* labor and sorrow; for soon it is gone and we fly away. Who understands the power of Your anger and Your fury, according to the fear that is due You? So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom.

8. **Self-examination** is a great **tool** for those who really want to **accelerate** their personal growth.

Character Traits

- Honesty/truthful/Transparent/real

- Patient
 - Thoughtful/Gentle/Gracious
 - Deference
 - Humility
 - Diligence
 - Free from anger/speaks words that give grace always
 - Determination/endurance
 - Honoring of others/free from a critical spirit/non-judgmental
10. Orderliness
 11. Joyfulness
 12. Contentment
 13. Decisiveness
 14. Faithful/trustworthy/reliable
 15. Morally pure
 16. Teachable/wise/seeker of wisdom/discernment
 17. Forgiveness/ free from all bitterness
 18. Thriftiness/ good stewardship of money and possessions
 19. Flexible
 20. Initiative
 21. Gratefulness/positive

- 22. Self-Control
- 23. Resourcefulness/creative
- 24. Boldness/confidence/ strong sense of self-worth
- 25. Toughness/grit/strong/handles pain/handles disappointment well.
- 26. Peace/calm/not easily flustered