

## YOU'RE THE BEST!

2 Peter 2:5-7 *"For this reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self control; and to self control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love."*

God is speaking to us about walking in the godly nature that he has given us. He is also calling us to use the wonderful gifts, talents and potentials that he has given us. Recently I attended a meeting for pastors and church leaders who were interested in Ed Cole's ministry. Ed was a man who had a huge burden to see men grow in Christ-like character. He is in heaven now and his nephew, who was effected by his ministry, is now leading it. As I was listening to the presentation, Ed's nephew said, "Talent will take you where your character cannot sustain you." He began to give a few illustrations about men who did not really complete what God had intended for them. They crashed and burned because they did not grow in the areas that you read in the verses above.

I have goals and challenges in my life. Right now I am on a journey with God to improve my "serve." But all of my goals must be subject to one ruling factor. There is no real success if I'm not living right. Righteous living is the most honorable thing we can do. Paul says in Romans 12:17, "Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody." Right living comes from right attitudes which come from right principles. We must build the foundation before we can build the house. That foundation is godly character. We must sow the word of God into our own lives and live it. Jesus said, "If you hold to my teachings, you are my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free" John 8: 31-32. Notice that Jesus said that freedom and knowledge came from holding to his teachings. That means that real liberation and knowledge that goes way beyond the information stage come from persevering in truth. For character to be formed truth must be tenaciously applied.

Liberation is not so that we can be free to do our own thing, but that we become freed to do His thing. As truth frees us from our old mindset, we can begin to serve the Lord with fewer hang-ups. So, keep on keeping on. Ah, it's so worth it to fight the good fight of faith. Good character looks good on you! You may not have it all together right now but you're getting there, just persevere. Good days are in store for you. You will see wonderful things happen as you work out your salvation. You may not be perfect but you're growing and that's all the Lord asks for.

There was a man who loved to sing opera. The only problem was that he couldn't sing well. He practiced and worked on his voice and technique, but he just wasn't that good. One day he brought his daughter and wife to an event that he was singing in. Dad got up there and sang his little heart out. The audience endured. At the end of his performance his little girl yelled out, "Dad, you're the best!" The audience erupted in applause. That's what's happening in heaven for you right now. As you strive to be a Christ-like man or woman of God, you may not have the song perfected yet but the Lord is applauding your effort and yelling out, "You're the best!"