

Being a More Christian Christian: God's Part and Our Part in Formation of Christian Character
Leader: Ev Worthington

God has done so much in my life, saving, redeeming the mistakes and sins I commit, empowering, and sanctifying me. But I so often fail to do my part to return a small fraction of the blessing by living a life worthy of my calling. I want to be a more Christian Christian. But I fail too often. Scripture, the Christian community (including Christian community worldwide, city-wide, family-wide, and Christ Presbyterian-wide), and psychology can play a part in helping me. If I know about what resources each can provide and if I discern the Holy Spirit's leading in employing those resources.

In this 13-week adult Sunday School course, we look at some very hard questions about formation of Christian character. Here are some of the things I'd like for us to address. But I'd like to get people's input on other topics you'd like to cover as well (and also which of these topics you don't think are worthwhile). Together we can shape a course that we can each learn from and want to attend on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 in the Manse.

Potential Topics

- Is Christian character formation all up to God? Or do we have a part to play? What are our parts?
- Can we learn from psychology? Or is it just worldly knowledge? How do guidance and knowledge from Scripture, Christian community, non-Christian people, society, and academic disciplines like psychology fit together? Or do they?
- What is Christian virtue? Is it different from what the world thinks of as virtue? (A quick study of virtue theory and the book of James)
- What do psychology, Scripture, and Christian community tell us about the following virtues—not just in an academic sense, but what do they tell (practically) that helps us be more virtuous?
- Training children to be more moral, virtuous, and spiritually sensitive
- Many if not most virtues show up only when we are tested (for example, we don't know whether we will be courageous until we face a test that requires courage). How can we face life's tests and remain virtuous—humble, loving, forgiving, just, compassionate, self-controlled, etc.?

How the Course Would Be Conducted

Ev will prepare something each Sunday to stimulate discussion and application. The first part of the class would involve a mini-presentation/lecture. Then we would interact around the material.

Weekly Schedule

Here is my tentative weekly plan. This can shift depending on the desires of the class and what we cover each week.

Date	Topic
October 5	Course starts next week, Oct 12 (Ev is out of town this week)
October 12	Themes of the Course:
October 19	Virtue: The Book of James and Classical Virtue Theory
October 26	Can We Be More Humble? The Difficulty of Having a Humble Character Versus Acting Humbly in Particular Relationships
November 2	Being More Loving (of Those Close, Those in Need, and Those Hard to Love) in the Frame of the Fruit of the Spirit
November 9	Being More Forgiving (including Forgiving Yourself)
November 16	Personal Justice, the Justice System, and Social Justice
November 23	Compassion toward Others and Yourself
November 30	Self-control, Ego Depletion, and Patience
December 7	Virtue in the Family: Practicing It with Loved Ones, Teaching It to Children

December 14	Personal Peace and Public Peace (Ev is in New York)
December 21	Courage: When Circumstances Test Us Unexpectedly and When We See Tests Coming a Mile Away, Such as Can You Commit Yourself to Being a More Christian Christian
December 28	Summary and Lessons from the Course: What Have You Learned that Will Stick with You?