

CHARACTER COUNTS

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER

BIG IDEA: God equips us for Christlike character.

DATE: Sunday, August 16, 2026

SCRIPTURE: 2 Peter 1:1-11

OPENING QUESTION

Who are some positive role models in our culture today? What qualities do they possess that you admire?

BACKGROUND

One of the earliest followers of Jesus during His earthly ministry was Peter, the author of two books in the New Testament bearing his name. He was unpredictable, at times rising to the occasion with spiritual understanding, then turning right around and failing to grasp even the most basic truth about Jesus. Peter believed he was above ever being disloyal to Jesus even though others might be (Matt. 26:33). However, after stating boldly that he would never betray Jesus, within hours he denied Jesus and declared he never knew Him (vv. 69-75).

SCRIPTURE READING

2 PETER 1:1-11 (CSB)

Simeon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ: To those who have received a faith equal to ours through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. ² May grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³ His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

⁴ By these he has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, ⁶ knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, ⁷ godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being useless or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ The person who lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten the cleansing from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election, because if you do these things you will never stumble. ¹¹ For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

DISCUSSION

READ: 2 PETER 1:1-3

How does it change your outlook if you realize you've been given everything you need to live a godly life?

Do you feel guilt-tripped or called to building your character? How does each stance affect your attitude?

How have you seen grace and peace multiplied in your life?

READ 2 PETER 1:4-9

How would you define the following ingredients of our divine nature:

goodness

knowledge

self-control

endurance

godliness

brotherly affection

love

Which of these means of supplementing our faith do you find most challenging?

When it comes to growth in character, how can we balance reliance on God with diligent effort?

How can our diligence in spiritual growth make us useful for God's kingdom?

READ 2 PETER 1:10-11

How can our group help one another develop godly character?

How can looking back at God's forgiveness keep us from stumbling in the future?

RESPONSE

If character matters so much and God has equipped us for growth in it, how does that actually come to pass? Choose one of the following applications this week:

Determine. Before anything else, decide if you really believe that a change of character is possible. Don't give verbal assent to something you're not quite ready to accept as possible.

Develop. Examine the virtue catalog in 2 Peter 1:5-7. Seek the Holy Spirit and pick one quality on which you need work. Come up with an action plan to grow in that area. After you've made progress there, select a second one and do the same.

Dialogue. Have a conversation with someone close to you. Consider someone who doesn't have anything to lose by telling you the truth. Ask them to identify some growth areas in your character traits.