

Positive Christian Living

I'm bringing a lesson on Positive Christian Living from... J.J. Turner in his book, *Positive Christian Living*,

Chapter Three — Being the Best for God

Brother Turner begins with a story from when his son was young.

Among the many gifts his son received one Christmas was a model car with what seemed like thousands of parts that needed to be glued together. He watched as his son began separating the parts and seeing it was designed for older children couldn't help wonder if his son would be able to complete it.

He worked with his son for about an hour then left him alone to work on it, wanting it to be his car.

He returned about 30 minutes later, he says, and found a frustrated little boy. He asked him what was wrong and his son said, "I can't do it, it just won't stay together."

"Don't worry about it. Just do your best," he told his son. He stayed a few minutes more to help his son then left him alone again.

When he return a second time to see how his son was doing, he found an odd looking car. "Son!" he said, "what in the world have you done to your car?"

With tears coming into his eyes his son said, "Well Dad, I'm just doing the best I can... just like you told me to do."

He son detected the sound of disapproval in his voice that broke his son's heart, he was doing the best he could.

JJ says he hadn't disapproved his actions, but his unguarded reaction caused his son to think so.

This is a great lesson to learn, because when someone does their best, especially when we've encouraged them, that's all that they can do. Accept it, without rebuke or question. A person's best is **always** good enough.

There are TWO **extremes** in this matter of doing your best:

1. One is the lazy, do nothing, just-get-by attitude.
2. The other is the legalistic concept that we can work for God's approval.

Both are frustrating and wrong.

Everyone has had the experience of feeling their best is not enough. I have had that feeling and I know you have too.

Here's the good news.

Jesus Christ makes you the best through His blood and imputed righteousness. (Romans 3,4). Not our righteousness, we have none! but through Jesus righteousness that God gives us. That's what makes us righteous. The challenge we face daily, however, is to live our lives in subjection to His will; to mold our minds into His mind (Philippians 2:5-8) and to be the best possible servant we can be for our Master. We must try to live in harmony with what He has made us — the best!

It is in this context that we should want to **be** and **do** the best for God. Not for salvation, but **BECAUSE** of salvation. This is what positive Christian living is all about: doing our best!

JJ has some more ideas about this:

Why Some Don't Do Their Best

Someone has said, "More people would do their best if they had to put their name on the products they have produced."

JJ Turner says, "That in God's economy that's exactly what happens and it's an incentive to do our best."

Romans 14:12 (NIV)

So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

see also, Matthew 12:36; 1 Peter 4:5

Many Christians do not do their best, Why?

1. Some have the habit of laziness
2. Some are content to live a mediocre life.
3. Some might not know how to do any better than they are doing.

Why Do Your Best

How would you answer that question?

1. It's all that we CAN do. God hasn't asked us to **be** more or **do** more than we can.
2. Because we are made in His image. God gives His best and so should we.
3. Because it brings happiness and joy. There's a good feeling in knowing you've done your best.

How to Do Your Best

1. Resolve to do your best, say, "I will always do my best for the Lord," and develop a plan for doing you best. It won't just happen.
2. Pray for wisdom in every situation (James 1:5), and study God's word for guidance and strength (Psalm 119:97-105).
3. Try, try, try, and try again. Know that sometimes, try as you might, you will fail to do you best, don't give up or get discouraged. (Romans 7:15-25).

Applications

Some examples from JJ Turner by way of application of areas we should strive to be the best we can for the Lord.

1. Be the best **example** you can be. (1 Timothy 4:12)

1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV)

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.

2. Be the best **in love**. (John 13:35)

John 13:35 (NIV)

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

3. Be the best **forgiver** you can possibly be (Luke 17:1-4)

4. Be the best **steward** with your possessions (Acts 5:4)

Acts 5:4 (NIV)

Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."

5. Be the best in your daily **prayer life** (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NIV)

pray continually,

6. Be the best **student** you can be for the Lord (2 Timothy 2:15)

2 Timothy 2:15 (NIV)

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

7. Be the best **optimist** you can be (Romans 8:28)

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

8. Be the best **friend** you can be (Proverbs 17:17)

Proverbs 17:17 (NIV)

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.

...

(no scripture given for points 9-14)

15. Be the best in every trial that comes upon you (James 1:2-7)

16. Be the best **employee** or **employer** (Ephesians 6:5-9)

Invitation

We are extending the invitation, now, to anyone who is subject to it. Come,... while we stand and sing.