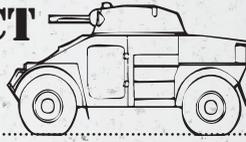


PRACTISE MAKES PERFECT**WARM UP**

Do you like sports? I do. I used to play rugby and cricket at school, but indoor basketball was my game. But now I like golf. Am I good at it? Well, not really. My handicap is 18, and I'm trying to improve, but I doubt that I'll turn pro.

In today's world there are great opportunities at sport, but being good at sport does not necessarily mean that you are good or successful at life. It's the same in business, acting, or in fact in any endeavour in life. Some guys may have more talent or make a lot of money, but in reality, we are all very similar. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that there is no temptation which has overtaken man except such that is common to man. We all have a propensity towards sin. Outward appearances do not necessarily mean we have inner strength or character. Just take a look at some of the so-called celebrities and their lifestyles. Strength is developed and tested by resistance to pressure. That's why Paul says to train.

BACKGROUND

It would be ridiculous to call your team a winning team if you never experienced opposition – and this is also true of life. When a team or individual trains, they train against “opposition”. The opposition might take the form of weights, it might be another team, or it might be the clock. The point is that without training and testing we have no growth, no strength development, and no preparation for the game. The difference between people who succeed or fail, is their ability to handle pressure. Character is more important than talent or outward appearances. 1 Samuel 16:7

**READ Psalm 119:49-56
1 Timothy 4:7-8**

**QUESTIONS**

1. When have you been tempted and how have you resisted? How has this made you a better man?
2. What discipline did you receive as you were growing up? How has this helped you as a man?

3. What is your greatest skill? How did you develop this in your life and what did you have to sacrifice to achieve it?

4. If you have children, how do you help them in the development of character?

CONSIDER THIS

Failure to prepare is preparation for failure. The lowest level of knowledge is assumption. So get knowledge; then understanding; then wisdom (the application of knowledge); then skill; then practice. Ed Cole says “personal philosophy determines public performance... A person who honours God privately will show it with good decisions publicly”.

WRAP UP

If we want to become a better man we must train ourselves and to do this we need to live a life that involves sacrifice. Through sacrifice character develops and through character gifts are harnessed.

**IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER****MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER**

As a Promise Keeper I will seek to put aside instant gratification so that I can discipline myself to be the man God has created me to be.

