

## MORAL CHARACTER

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Character is the force of a man's moral constitution, his pattern of behavior which is a result of his virtuous choices. Conduct is character in action. Our character is the way we are morally; our reputation is the way we are perceived.

Christianity demands the whole heart; for out of the heart are the issues of life, and the ruling disposition of a man's heart (either love or hate) forms the essence of his character.

Our moral status is of much greater importance than our social status, economic condition, intellectual endowments or physical beauty. While few of us will ever attain great wealth or fame, a spotless character is the privilege of us all.

Out of our thoughts are born deeds. Out of our deeds we develop habits. Out of our habits grow our character. On our character we build our destiny. Practical experience and good examples are indispensable helps in forming a noble character.

Be thankful for life's struggles and trials. These are what can make a man. Ease and idleness will ruin those with the strongest natural endowments and social advantages. Faith uses the difficulties of life to generate fiber, resolution, resources and provide opportunities for winning success and developing good character.

For man to develop an acceptable character he must first have a true conception of the character of God. All character development starts here. Instead of a cold passionless deity watching unmoved the actions he has decreed from all eternity, we have in the heavens a Father who looks with intense interest on his struggling children, helping them by benign influences, yearning for their final triumph, and rejoicing in that perfection of character which is the outcome of every victory over temptation.

A good or bad character is acquired, not innate. Man is born with all the necessary endowments to be Christlike in character. Man who refuses to be like Him sins against his Creator and his own soul. Even though he might outwardly manifest all the social graces, if he is inwardly living for the wrong end, self rather than God, then he deserves Hell.

Too often the development of intellect has been made the end of education, instead of the development of character. More recently politically correct attitudes and self-esteem have become the goal. The emphasis of the churches is usually not much better than the schools. Many ministries have been built around the supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit (some real, some contrived). Others concentrate on meeting the needs and healing the hurts of humanity without dealing with the problem of sin. Few concentrate on character building.

Money, power, cleverness, fame, liberty, even health is not the one essential, but

character is the one true thing that can save us. If we do not have a righteous character our labor in this life is fruitless and our soul is lost.