

## CHARACTER BASICS

### What is Character?

#### I. Character is doing what's right because it's right and doing it right every time

- A. Character's motive for doing right is because it's right
  - 1. Character doesn't do right because it's comfortable, popular, because it feels like it, or because it's fun
    - a. If what's right is hard, uncomfortable, and not easy character will do it anyway
    - b. Character is not seeking out the comfortable or the easy, it's seeking out the right
    - c. We got to stop being feelings led and start being spirit led
      - 1) Feelings will take you to what's easy and comfortable the spirit will take to what's right
  - 2. Our primary motive in doing right is because it's right
    - a. Character doesn't need any other reason to do something other than it's right
- B. Character's frequency is all the time; character does it right every time
  - 1. Charm is who you are for the moment, character is who you are all the time
  - 2. Every time character has the opportunity to do wrong or to do right character does what's right no matter who's looking
  - 3. Character does turn on and off, character is on all the time

#### II. What is right? What's the standard of right?

- A. God is right. His judgments and His ways are right.
  - 1. Psalm 119:137
    - a. NIV – Righteous are you, O LORD, and your laws are right.
    - b. MSG – You are right and you do right, GOD; your decisions are right on target. You rightly instruct us in how to live ever faithful to you.
    - c. ESV – Righteous are you, O LORD, and right are your rules.
    - d. NCV – Lord, you do what is right, and your laws are fair.
  - 2. Psalm 129:4
  - 3. Psalm 145:17
    - a. MSG, NCV – Everything God does is right
    - b. NIRV – The Lord is right in everything that he does
  - 4. Because God's the same all the time, He's right all the time (Hebrews 13:8)
- B. If God is just and right, then whatever he says is right. The word of God is the standard of doing right (Psalm 33:4 – NIRV – What the Lord says is right and true Hebrews 5:13, Psalm 119:123)
- C. God and His Word are right and apart from God and His word you cannot do right

1. To think, talk, or act in away that's in opposition to God and His word is to think wrong, talk wrong, and act wrong.
  - a. There's no other word for it, it is WRONG; It doesn't matter how you feel about it or what you're opinion is
  - b. You can't do what's right and be doing something that's in opposition to the Word
    - 1) Character is not determined by a sociological set of standards, a denominational set of standards
2. Right and wrong is black and white; Believers have to begin to call wrong, wrong instead of calling wrong okay
3. Character then is doing what the word says because the word is right
  - a. If you don't do what the word says then you aren't doing what's right and if you're not doing what's right then you are not operating as a person of character

**III. It's vitally important that in every situation we start with THE STANDARD of God's word first because it is right. Too many believers aren't starting with the Standard of God's word and their just making up Christianity as the go along.**

- A. Add to your character, the knowledge of what God said (2 Peter 1:5)
  1. WMS – Now for this reason you must do your level best to supplement your faith with moral character
  2. MON – For this very reason do your best to add to your faith manliness
  3. NASB – For this reason also, applying diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence
  4. WEY – With your faith exhibit also a noble character
  5. To Walk in character you have to know what's right and to know what's right you have to find out what God said
- B. One of the most important things that a believer must do if they are going to develop in character, is they must always start with the standard of God's word
  1. Check everything you think and do with the standard of God's word
    - a. Why do you do what you do? The answer should be, "Because the Word says so."
    - b. Many times we think we know what's right only to find out that it was wrong
  2. Many believers are deceived about what's right because they haven't started with the standard
    - a. Proverbs 4:6 – Be willing to pay the price to get understanding
- C. Too many people don't start with THE STANDARD and then it leads to them setting their own standard. Then they're a character person and a person of integrity where THAT standard is concerned, but that standard wasn't set by God.
  1. Integrity & character without knowledge just leads to integrity in the wrong thing

- a. What did God say about this? Then I'm a character person about doing this what God said because this is right.
- 2. When you don't start with the standard of his word, you become a law unto yourself and rebellion is the result
- D. THE STANDARD has been set and you can't reset the standard, lower the standard, or adjust the standard
  - 1. We must stop trying to conform this word to fit our lifestyle and start conforming our lifestyle to fit this Word
  - 2. I'm wrong and the Word is right. The only to be right is to line myself up with the Word.
- E. When knowledge of right comes the discussion is over (Galatians 1:16)
  - 1. CEV – I didn't talk this over with anyone.
  - 2. NCV – When God called me, I did not get advice or help from any person
  - 3. NIV – I did not consult any man
  - 4. Phillips – I did not talk it over with any human being
  - 5. Once you know what's right, you don't ask man about, you don't ask your flesh about it, you don't ask your mind about it, the word says this and that's what's right and there's no way out of it

#### **IV. There is no good excuse for not doing what's right**

- A. An excuse is a false way out of doing what's right. It appears to lead you to a place where it's okay to not do what the Word says. In reality that place does not exist. Even though the way of an excuse appears to lead you to that place, in reality it's leading you deeper into the pit of rebellion and the end of it is death.
  - 1. There is no excuse that's a good excuse for not doing what God said
  - 2. Once you know what's right there's no excuse for sin (John 15:22 AMP)
    - a. WE-I came and spoke to them. If I had not done that, then what they did would not have been a wrong thing. But now they have no excuse for doing it.
- B. Making excuses is one of the most serious indictments against the church because it is an unrepentant and prideful attitude. Being prideful and unrepentant is the character and nature of the devil.
  - 1. Making an excuse is being unrepentant – Instead of repenting for what's wrong you're trying to excuse what you did and make it right. You're saying that you are excused from doing what's right because you have this excuse for why you did wrong.
    - a. Proverbs 28:13 – When you try to cover your sin with an excuse you will not prosper
      - 1) SPRL – Whoso excuses his transgressions shall not prosper
    - b. 1 John 1:9 – The way to get the mercy and cleansing is to confess it, not make excuses for why you did it

- 1) GSPD – If we acknowledge our sins
- c. An excuse is attempt to make wrong, right (or okay)
  - 1) You can't make wrong right and when you're wrong there's only one thing to do, repent
- 2. Making an excuse is being prideful – God told you what to do, but now you're smarter than God because you had something that you believe the better thing to do in that situation.
  - a. People who makes excuses for doing wrong always really wise in their own eyes (Proverbs 3:7)
    - 1) An excuse will always reveal that you believe you know better than the Word
      - a) EX: We don't go to church on the week nights because our kids have to go to school and they can't be up late
      - b) If you don't know better than God, then stop making excuses and do what He said
  - b. Proverbs 8:13-God hates pride and arrogance and there's nothing more prideful and arrogant than making an excuse
    - 1) NCV – If you respect the LORD, you will hate evil. I hate pride and conceit and deceitful lies.
    - 2) There's nothing that encompasses an excuse more than pride, arrogance, and deceitful lying
  - c. Proverbs 16:18-Believers see destruction when they continue to make excuses instead of repenting
    - 1) They continue to go the WRONG way making excuses and they won't repent and they end up destroyed
- 3. Making an excuse will keep a person from developing in character (doing right) because they're still accepting wrong as okay
  - a. Your situation is not the exception to the Word; The word is right and if you're not doing what the Word says you're wrong
- C. God hates excuses and he will not accept them
  - 1. Luke 14:16-23 – You will never be excused from doing what the master said, what's right
    - a. Notice what the master did not do; he did not accept their excuse and say that's okay that you don't come
    - b. He replaced them with people who weren't too busy for him and with people who wouldn't make excuses
- D. Don't make it more complicated than it is; you really don't have a choice to not do what the word says
  - 1. Daniel 3 – They didn't need him to play the music because they already knew what was right
    - a. Exodus 20:3-The standard has been set, this is right (character), and to do anything else is wrong
  - 2. Genesis 2,3 – They're discussing eating of that tree, when God already told them that doing that is wrong

- a. We don't discuss eating that tree; that's not an option because that's wrong
- 3. Matthew 4 – What's written is right so it doesn't matter what you say because I do what's right

**V. When you're walking in character you're walking in integrity of heart (1 Kings 9:4)**

- A. Integrity – Completeness, fullness, innocence, simplicity
- B. Completeness, Fullness (of heart) – A person who walks in character, God has all of them
  - 1. Luke 14:26-33 – Whoever does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple
    - a. Disciples are learners and followers of Jesus and therefore people of character
    - b. You can't be a disciple or a person of character if you not willing to forsake all that you have
- C. Innocence (of heart) – A person who walks in character believes in their heart that they are doing what God told them to do and what they are doing is right (That person could be in deception and that's why it's important to start with the standard of God's Word)
  - 1. Character is doing what you do believing that with all your hear that's right and okay
    - a. Genesis 20:5-6 – If you'll do what you do out of the integrity of your heart, believing that God told you to do it, if you're wrong and he didn't tell you to do it, the Holy Spirit will caution you and tell you're going the wrong way
    - b. Many people know in their heart that what they are doing is wrong and they aren't doing it because they believe it's right and that's not character
  - 2. Character is innocence of heart, not stupidity of mind
    - a. People of character have prayerfully and slowly checked it over with God before they just do something and then what they do, they do believing it's right because they checked with God
    - b. It's character because I prayerfully sought the Lord, I checked what I heard with His word, I even sought the counsel of spirit-filled mature people, and believe in my heart after those things that this is what God would have me to do
- D. Simplicity (of heart) – Uncomplicated, ease, straightforwardness, plainness
  - 1. For a person who walks in character it's not complicated: God said do this so we do it, no ifs, ands, or buts
  - 2. There's a military approach that a person of character takes towards the Word of God
  - 3. There's a submission to authority in a person of character that makes the choice of obedience an easy one
  - 4. The flesh will try to complicate things with feelings, the spirit simplifies things with faith

**VI. Character is swearing to your own hurt and changing not where doing what's right is concerned.**

**Character is doing what's right no matter what the cost. (Psalm 15)**

- A. Character is, if it hurts to do what's right I'll still do what's right
  - 1. Hurt – Displeasure, Broken

- a. If it displeases me to do right I won't change; If it breaks me to do right I won't change
- b. No thing, not even physical pain can get me to change where my character is concerned
- 2. I'm going to do what the word says even if it hurts me, if it makes me uncomfortable, if my flesh doesn't like it, I don't care. I can endure hardness as a good soldier and do what the word says.
  - a. This is where the church has missed it; the moment it gets uncomfortable the church has quit
  - b. It might look to negatively effect you, but character is you do it right anyway
- B. The reward always comes with the doing right and there is no reward for disobedience
  - 1. They guy that lives like this will never fail

#### **VII. Psalm 26:10-11**

- A. I'm going to walk in integrity and character and do what's right even if nobody else does
- B. What others are or are not doing does not effect what I do because other people aren't my standard, my standard is the word and I do what the word says because it's right
- C. One major things that leads to lack of development where character is concerned is when people hold themselves to the standard of what other people do and instead of the standard of God's word