

CHARACTER AND REPUTATION BY ROBERT NOTGRASS

Sometimes as Christians we may feel like we are living in a glass bowl. Everyone is watching you. What you wear, how you handle your children or if you handle them at all, and most important how you act. What people think of you (reputation) is based on what you are (character).

In II Peter 1:5-10 we find several characteristics of a Christian. We find that faith is the primary essential for all character and that virtue is the strength or moral courage of a trusting faith in God. Next, we find the word knowledge which is the general intelligence or understanding and that Christians ought to contain knowledge especially of that which is lawful and unlawful for us. Next, temperance means self-control or one who has the ability to master his desires. Patience means a calm endurance or steadfast waiting. Godliness means a spirit of reverence for things divine by which we grow more and more into divine likeness. Then there is brotherly kindness meaning that we have love of the brethren or an active good will towards all the saints in that we cherish each other as brethren or family. Next, charity means love or the heart element which gives brotherly kindness its power and sweetness. Now, all of these make up Christian



DID YOU KNOW?

The early church grew when:

Church discipline was practiced, causing Christians to live in fear of God.

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| Acts 5:1-11, 14 | 2 Thess. 3:6, 14 |
| Psalms 89:7 | 2 Cor. 2:9 |
| 1 Cor. 5:1-13 | Heb. 12:5-11 |

THOSE TO REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS TO GOD

Doris Pendleton, Verna Butler, Lynna Shanks, Elnora Shanks, Ethel Runge, Glenis McDonald and Tex Kinman.

Also remember: Richard Massey, Verma Long, Nelta Brock, Connie Gass, Grayson Castillo, Ruby Backus, Marvin Howard, Habermehl family, Cheryl Harris Evonelle Calkins, Dawn Tivoli, Brian Williams, Emma Stantliff, Pamela Robinson, Jim Murrell and the Martin Family.

Remember also: The lost, our leaders & those in our military.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There is a great deal of information on the back table. It was brought back from the lectureship at Freed Hardeman University. Please take.
- 20 attended last week's evangelism class even when it was snowing. This is such a great encouragement for us all. See you tomorrow @ 7pm!
- Item for Fairhaven Children home is: Canned Chicken & Canned Soup.
- Please check the schedule in the back for those who are serving today.

Times of Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study: 9:30am

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30am

Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm

Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm

Sermons are recorded for those who would like a copy.



Physical: 403 8th St.
Mailing: PO Box 381
Belle, MO. 65013

Tel: 573 859 6616
E-mail: bellecoc@bellecoc.com

Were on the Web!
www.bellecoc.com

TEEN CULT



character and by having one or two without striving for all of them, makes a Christian incomplete. Therefore, we want to strive to possess all of these things that Peter tells us about.

As we study our character, we may find that the hardest thing to deal with is self-control. This is mastered through prayer and studying God's Word. When we look at Eph. 4:23-32, we see Paul encouraging Christians to watch their reputation they displayed. He was telling them that since you were taught to put away falsehood and speak the truth, your character should be that which displays truth. He told them not to sin through their anger because that not only exhibits self control, it builds a good reputation. This is so vital because if there is a situation where you are outraged by something, do not be led astray by it and do not let it continue in your mind by cherishing it because a person under the dominion of anger is in a fit state to be tempted to evil deeds. When this happens, you lose self control. Thus, being patient is honest labor which is the best antidote against one who is against you. As Paul said, all that the Christian speaks, all that their character is, should be that which is good to the use of edifying, building the hearers up in Christ. This makes your reputation. Besides, to lose self control not only makes a situation worse, it grieves the Holy Spirit and I know we would not want to do that just like the Christians in the first century did not want to.

Therefore, we should impose upon ourselves the essentials of keeping "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" plain, every-day duties of life. It begins with what Peter said in 2 Pet. 1:5-10, adding to your faith: virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly love, charity. It continues with Paul in Eph. 4:31-32: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Now, how does your reputation define your character?

My Friends and I

Rosalie Carter has paraphrased Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees" with a lovely poem that begins:

"I think that God will never send
A gift so precious as a friend . . ."

Let us think of some of the basic Christian principles that have to do with our relations with friends.

First, Be yourself. Do not put on a mask. Do not try to be somebody else. When you do, you are false. You are important as an individual; you have talents and abilities, and you will make more friends and you will be a better friend, if you try to be yourself. Take off that mask!

Second, be positively friendly. There was a letter written about a boy who was a lifeguard at a camp for ten days. It said in this letter: "He made friends here with people of all ages." Do not stand around and wait for people to become your

friends, go out and make friends! I do not mean "push" your way around, but quietly and radiantly be interested in other people.

Third, maintain high ideals. There is a saying, "Never do a wrong thing to win a friend, or to hold one." You do not have to "let down the bars" to win friends. Indeed, if you lose respect for yourself, then you are not worthy of friendship.

Fourth, cultivate the friendship of the great friend. This is most important. "What a friend we have in Jesus." What a tremendous honor is ours for he says he no longer calls us servants, but friends. Throughout the day, wherever you are, we can have fellowship with our great friend—Jesus, our Savior and the Savior of the world.