**Character**

**Characteristics of a Great Leader**

**By Dr. T. Neil**

God gave Christians model of true leadership. Something that is lacking in many of our communities today. If we can apply the characteristics taught from a Biblical perspective, then we can become effective community leaders.

* **Character**
	+ Those entrusted in service should discharge those functions and regulate their conduct with character and not seek self-interest in respect to the performance of duties.
	+ Character is the only sure and secure foundation of indisputable conduct.
	+ Character is absent in one that promotes self-preservation, a byproduct of egoism.
	+ Character can sanctify power and authority, but power and authority cannot sanctify a flawed character.
	+ Character cannot be institutionalized or legitimized where conduct and practices are morally defective.
	+ Character cannot be placed in an office.
	+ The character is made evident by the manner in which legitimate power and authority are used against the defenseless or one that cannot further their own self-interest.
	+ God made men in His own image and likeness; therefore man should display the attributes of God’s character found in the Decalogue.
	+ Character can produce reputation
	+ The man with good character recognizes that the price of greatest responsibility is to one’s principles and integrity.
	+ Character can be sold-out.
	+ Character is made by what you stand for.
* **Creation of Man: Origin of True Ethics**
	+ Material man was created in the divine image and likeness of God.
	+ The image represents the uprightness of God, and the likeness represented the purity of God.
	+ Adam was created ethical
* **Distortion of Ethics**
	+ Satan destroyed ethics in the Garden of Eden when he implied God’s unethical practice against Adam and Eve (Gen.3).
	+ Cain became a rationalist by his open question argument for nihilism (Gen 4:1-26).
	+ Emotivism is expressive of God’s attitudes for or against things (Gen. 2:17)
* **Character**
	+ Jesus defines character as ‘what comes out of the heart of man.”
	+ The work of the flesh is represented in Galatians 5:19-2, the life of egoism.
	+ What a person does with trust defines their character.
	+ People will always move in direction of their most dominant thought.
	+ A flawed character tends to hide within a consensus so that it can be said, “everybody is doing it.’
	+ Character is what is in man
	+ Character is the image of the man, and his behavior is the shadow if that image.
	+ The worth of an individual is appraised based on character.
* **Good Character Traits**
	+ Self-praise is not a good recommendation.
	+ We define ourselves well, while living in the dark
	+ Others define us in the light as we live out the contents of our character.
	+ Talent and wisdom are inferior to character.
	+ The index of the quality of character bleeds out during interpersonal relationships with those who do not benefit our self-interest, verses those that do
	+ Displaying ability to advance, but not at the expense of others.
	+ Knowing, accepting, and applauding talents, skills, and attributes in others but not in our self without envy.
	+ Enumerated by the fruits of the spirit (Ga. 5:22-26)
	+ A blessed character meets and exhibits the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5,7), and forms into habits the nine spiritual graces of Peter (2 Peter 1:3-15)
	+ Saul had ability and charisma, but no character.
	+ God sought to give King Saul a new heart, but it became darkened (1 Sa 10; Ro. 1:21)
	+ David was the direct contrast of King Saul**.**
	+ God the king, became a peasant and saved the world; but Saul the peasant became king and destroyed the world (1Sa. 15)
	+ Politics vote based on race, culture, relations, and status.
	+ God seeks after the heart.
		- King David – warmth, obedience, humility, loyalty, trust, compassion, self-sacrificing, forgiving, and contrite.
	+ Left alone in delegation, opportunity knocks for disloyalty.
* Those without character are not kingdom-minded but are self-exalting, boastful, self-promoting, traitors, and eye servitude as men pleasers.
* Where there is an absence of ethics, there will be a deficit of morality.
* **Integrity**
	+ The action that comes from the life of good character.
	+ Action that places truth, honesty, and the fear of God above talents.
	+ A person with integrity cannot be bribed, does not practice partiality, prevent justice, or accept gifts (De. 16:19-20)
	+ Holding fast to righteousness (Jo 27:4-6) and is careful to act with equity, judgement, prudence, and uprightly giving a just weight and balance.
	+ Has greater value than money (Pt. 19:1, 28:6).
	+ Doing what is right regardless of the consequences (Mal. 2:6)
	+ Singleness of heart, obedience to truth, not with eye service, not walking in craftiness, not deceitful, and faithful.
	+ The express personification of the individual constituent and moral conduct in business, social, familial, and spiritual relationships
	+ Not behaving in dishonesty, deceit, extortion, vice, fraudulent, or breach of trust.
	+ Evidence of a present lively conscience
	+ Testimony of uprightness of a person’s conduct
	+ Highway to a person’s value system
	+ The priceless treasure of a man in His integrity
	+ A man’s best friend is his integrity,
	+ Integrity is witnessed by Chastity
	+ Integrity is a preservative
	+ Justice System of Integrity
		- Respect of person is a sign of absence of integrity.

The above article, “Character- Characteristics of a Great Leader” was written by Dr. T. Neil. This article is excerpted from “Mentoring for Future Leadership” Written by Dr. T. Neil.

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