

OF GOOD CHARACTER 4 THE ARENA OF PEACE

GALATIANS 5:19-23

The fruit of our character

A good character is not judged by how good it is but by how much it honors God.

Flesh: World focussed values and selfishness
(Gal. 5:19-21)

Spirit: Jesus focussed conscience
(Gal 5:22-23)

Against these qualities there is no law
Freedom from bondage and strongholds
(Gal. 5:23b)

Another word for strongholds is habit

Our life is the sum total of all the small decisions, responses and habits that we take, make or have.

Habitual responses, thoughts, or behavior.

Are you bound to a way of thinking?

Are you held by excuses or unexplained responses?

Are you imprisoned by bad habits, addictions or thoughts?

To change our character we need to change its source.

CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK

ROMANS 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

SYSTEMATIC CHANGE

We need to make this change a priority, noting daily, incremental progress to having a character that honors God.

We don't have time to quibble, make excuses, create comfortable theologies to accommodate our lack of good character, blame others, or justify our current status

because we are simply too lazy to work out how to change our thinking.

THE URGENCY TO CHANGE MINDS, CHARACTER AND SOURCE

1 PETER 5:8-11

Be well balanced and always alert, because your enemy, the devil, roams around incessantly, like a roaring lion looking for its prey to devour. Take a decisive stand against him and resist his every attack with strong, vigorous faith. For you know that your believing brothers and sisters around the world are experiencing the same kinds of troubles you endure. And then, after your brief suffering, the God of all loving grace, who has called you to share in his eternal glory in Christ, will personally and powerfully restore you and make you stronger than ever. Yes, he will set you firmly in place and build you up. And he has all the power needed to do this —forever! Amen.

WE NEED TO DO THIS WITH ROMANS 12 DILIGENCE AND CONSISTENCY

Successful people do consistently what other people do occasionally.

The Johari Window provides us a system of self-observation that removes fear, the unknown and shame-based thinking and helps us step into the arena of peace.

The devil roars in some of these quadrants, but we have the vigilance and the diligence to push back.

THE JOB AT HAND

JAMES 1:21

So this is why we abandon everything morally impure and all forms of wicked conduct. Instead, with a sensitive spirit we absorb God's Word, which has been implanted within our nature, for the Word of Life has power to continually deliver us.

What delivers us? - The Word of Life

What delivers us? Jesus and our faith in Him

To be delivered from the fear, shame, and the unknown that keeps us in a constant state of anxiety, we have to diligently be increasing our arena of peace.

We need to readily seek the balance from the Holy Spirit, resist the temptations of our fallen flesh, receive restorations and deliverance by Christ, settle in the strength of our true identity and start walking out the power that comes from being free of laws that we create that hold us back from having peace.

THE LAWS WE CREATE

We create laws, theologies, and ideologies that seem appropriate and good but that are not always beneficial
(1 Corinthians 10:23)

The laws of shame and guilt.
The laws of justification.
The laws of blame.
The laws of excuses.
The laws of complaint.

BREAKING THE LAWS THAT HOLD US BACK

We can't submit to the law of joy while we submit to the law of complaining
Peace -> Shame
Temperance -> Temper

GALATIANS 5:23B

Never set the law above these qualities, for they are meant to be limitless.

A limitless state of the fruit of the Holy Spirit creates an unsurpassed state of freedom and an enlarged arena of peace.

1. HAVING THE HABIT OF PEACE PHILIPPIANS 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

If peace surpasses human understanding then it can not be based on logic but rather on expressing our true identity in Christ.

The habit of peace comes when listening and co-operating with the accomplished work of Jesus, becomes our default.

FROM SUBCONSCIOUS TO CONSCIOUS AND BACK AGAIN

Consciously address thoughts, responses, habits and decisions

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-16

Live a cheerful life, without complaining or division among yourselves. For then you will be seen as innocent, faultless, and pure children of God, even though you live in the midst of a brutal and perverse culture. For you will appear among them as shining lights in the universe, holding out the words of eternal life.

Choose to be cheerful

Take 3 opportunities every day to refuse to complain even when that would be your normal response

Take every opportunity every day to speak hope.

Choose your words

Choose to be chosen by God and not governed by the enemy

2. THE HABIT OF VULNERABILITY

Maybe just maybe your way is not the only way!

Ask more questions and make less statements

3. THE HABIT OF TRANSPARENCY

Maybe just maybe, something you have experienced, however painful and shameful, can genuinely help someone else and can help change the trajectory of their eternity.

Keeping things hidden because of shame is selfish.

4. THE FEEDBACK HABIT

Kicking the habit of EXCUSE

“I didn’t know:

“I do know and I know better.”

“I got this!”

Thinking that only what you think is right creates an immediate imbalance in your character.

1 PETER 5:8

Be well balanced and always alert...

Setup regular opportunities to discover ways you could have improved, even when you think you knocked it out of the park.

Setup regular opportunities to discover ways you could have improved in your responses, decisions, and habits.

WHY IS IT SO TOUGH?

Good character - flawless and holy...???

Why is it so tough to have these habits and anchor our character in the spirit and not the flesh?

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23

Now, may the God of peace and harmony set you apart, making you completely holy. And may your entire being—spirit, soul, and body—be kept completely flawless in the appearing of our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One.

How your body, soul, and spirit interact dictates your character.

Satan caused the rift between your spirit (place of worship), your thought life (soul) and your flesh.

Before Satan disrupted man's vulnerability, transparency, and revelation with God, all three were in agreement, unity, and harmony.

After the disruption, the soul (mind) has been tasked with adjudicating the direction you take, or the source of your character.

And that soul is what has the authority to make decisions to source your life's path from the flesh or the spirit!

Our soul has been disrupted by this roaring lion through shame, guilt, and condemnation. He distracts us into making laws that hold us back from having a good, spirit-based character.

To act on instructions from the spirit of instructions of the flesh.

The original cause of this disruption was devious, cunning, insidious, and deceptive (Satanic).

The decision to allow the bickering in our minds to continue (the disruption of our peace) is our choice (Adamic).

If Satan had been removed because of his deception in Eden, sin would still have existed in the world.

ROMANS 5:12

When Adam sinned, the entire world was affected. Sin entered human experience, and death was the result. And so death followed this sin, casting its shadow over all humanity, because all have sinned.

**CHOOSE FLESH - CHOOSE DEATH
CHOOSE THE SPIRIT - CHOOSE LIFE**

The soul-based decisions, the thoughts, and the habits that display good character are formed from following the Holy Spirit.

**BUT WE FIND ANY REASON NOT TO PUT THE
DISCIPLINE IN**

1 CORINTHIANS 9:27

I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.

EXCUSES AND BLAME

We blame others as an excuse for our poor behavior or thought life.

GENESIS 3:12

And the man said, The woman YOU gave to be with me, she gave me THE FRUIT of the tree, and I did eat.

We even blame Satan and his minions

GENESIS 3:13

And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that YOU HAVE done? And the woman said, The serpent TRICKED me, and I ATE.

WHAT IS SATAN?

HE IS DEFEATED

He is not able to control your thoughts
He cannot dwell in the true source of your character - your spirit.

He does not cause or create sin.

He cannot put thoughts in your head.

STOP GIVING SATAN SO MUCH CREDIT

WHAT IS JESUS

HE IS VICTORIOUS

He has sealed you to
himself

He prevents the devil's control in your life
He gives us the power and the source to resist the devil's
temptation.

He heals our relationships with our Father
He releases the Holy Spirit to heal us from the
consequences of any time we spend away from the
Father.

He is the true deliverer

DELIVERANCE

Many have sought that deliverance from the demonic or
evil spirits as a way of acquiring a good character or
ridding themselves of bad habits or thoughts.

True deliverance is having no prevention, barrier, or law to
the growth of your arena of peace.

Torment is the complete opposite of peace.
Satan has tricked you into torment by bringing disunity
between your spirit, soul, and body.

He has robbed you of peace.
He has not infested you or possessed you.

NEED FOR DELIVERANCE

There is a need for the ministry of deliverance in the church but it must be in balance with all the ministries of the Holy Spirit.

There is a need for deliverance, but not when we use it as an excuse for our poor behavior, responses, habit and thought lives. We already have the authority to take control of those.

In scripture, deliverance was always preceded by the preaching and teaching of the Gospel.

Deliverance can truly be found by submitting to the work he has **ALREADY** achieved in your spirit.

In a believer, the spirit that needs casting out cannot be a demon but rather a bad attitude, habit response or decision. That can be any instant release due to an immediate conviction or a journey towards a better character.

We don't need to cast out demons to get rid of bad habits. We work them out through the power of Jesus governing our character.

We don't look for quick fixes or immediate relief alone. We start a journey of having a Christ-oriented character.

A believer in Jesus has already been delivered by nature of a person having their spirit completely healed and sealed. We don't need anything more!

Satan and his demons can no longer get in.

WHAT PREVENTS YOU?

What needs to be overturned and broken open in your life to release you even more. Peace must continue to expand and grow.

Have you adopted the habit of peace, transparency, vulnerability, and revelation?

EPHESIANS 4:17-19

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ! — assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

The source of good character is found not in human efforts, incantations or strategies, but in the completed work of Jesus in our spirit.

HEBREWS 10:14

For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

*****CLOSING PRAYER*****

Ephesians 1:17-19

I pray that the Father of glory, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, would impart to you the riches of the Spirit of wisdom and the Spirit of revelation to know him through your deepening intimacy with him. I pray that the light of God will illuminate the eyes of your imagination, flooding you with light, until you experience the full revelation of the hope of his calling—that is, the wealth of God's glorious inheritances that he finds in us, his holy ones!

I pray that you will continually experience the immeasurable greatness of God's power made available to you through faith. Then your lives will be an advertisement of this immense power as it works through you! This is the mighty power that was released when God raised Christ from the dead and exalted him to the place of highest honor and supreme authority in the heavenly realm!

EXTRA SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9-16

But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—

these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.

For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.