

Reading: Romans 12:9-21

Topic: Building Character

INTRODUCTION: Any individual who desires to be involved in _____ of any kind must understand how important it is to _____ character in order to be effective in the work of God.

I. PERSONALITY vs. CHARACTER:

A. Personality:

1. Personality is the outer shell of a _____, the physical, emotional and mental behavior that is seen by those around them – family, friends, classmates and co-workers who _____ with them.
2. Personality implies who an individual _____ to be in front of others, a set of personal qualities that mark the person and set them apart from _____, which may be for better or for worse.

B. Character:

1. Character is the deeper and inner _____ of an individual, which is the real person and not the superficial shell that is seen by those around them.
2. Character is the sum total of inner principles upon which one _____ their life, which eventually reveals who the real _____ is, for what is internal will come out. Lk. 6:45
3. Someone has said that personality is the person that other people _____ you are while character is the person that God _____ you are.

II. BUILDING CHARACTER:

A. Background:

1. Early in life our character is somewhat shaped by our environment and the _____ of family, friends and companions that we _____ with.
2. As we grow older and _____, we begin to make decisions and choices on our own, some of which will be _____ or _____ depending upon the influences we have had from others. I Cor. 15:33
3. Out of all of this, our character is _____ either for _____ or for _____ and we become known as a certain type of person based on our behavior.

B. God Influence:

1. All of us are born in sin and we are guilty of doing many _____ things even from a young age, but when we are _____ again, there comes a new and powerful _____ in our lives. 2 Cor.5:17
2. God uses the power of the Gospel and the process of the New Birth to _____ us from sinners to saints, thus providing us an opportunity to _____ our character and reputation. I Cor. 6:9-11
3. The process of becoming a good saint takes _____ and it requires effort on our part to allow the Spirit of God to _____ in us to overcome the bad behavior that we have learned in our past.

Phil. 2:12,13

III. GOD'S WORKING IN US:

A. The Testing Times:

1. The process of building our character to one that _____ God has been described as a potter that is working on a lump of _____ upon the potter's wheel. Jer. 18:3,4
2. In ancient times if an artist wanted to do a _____ on a metal plate, he would take a very sharp tool and repeatedly etch the metal plate until a groove was formed in the _____. After many repeated strokes an image would begin to take _____ and a beautiful work of art was formed.
3. The name of the _____ that was used to do the etching in the Greek language is the same word as "character" in the English language.
4. Every time we make a _____, we are cutting a groove, every time we react to a crisis, we are cutting a groove; every time we hold our _____ and practice self-control, we are cutting a groove; every time we let the _____ run loose and speak our mind, we are cutting a groove; every time we resist temptation to do wrong, we are cutting a groove; every time we cave in to temptation, we are cutting a groove, etc. – all for either the _____ or the _____.

B. Repeated Workings:

1. The Lord permits situations and tests to come into our _____ to reveal to us what kind of character that we really _____. Ps. 11:4
2. The Lord does not test us so that He can _____ out what we are made of, for He knows all things and He already _____ what we are made of, but the testing is so that we will _____ out what we are really made of.
3. When the testing times come and we _____, then we realize that we still have a lot of _____ for the Lord to do in us, and we need to humbly fall before God and cry out to him for _____. Mt. 26:75

C. The Ultimate Goal:

1. The ultimate goal of God building character in us is to _____ us into the _____ of Christ in this world that we _____ in and deal with daily. Gal. 4:19
2. God's will is for us to have the character of _____ and respond accordingly to the situations that we find ourselves in and react as if it were Jesus in that position. Ph. 2:5

CONCLUSION: Someone has said that we are really are three _____ - the one that others think we are, the one that we think we are and the one that God _____ that we are. God desires to shape and _____ our character so that we reflect Jesus in everything that we do. Phil. 1:6