



BUILDING CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

Clay Bond

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Since a person's character is shaped by their thoughts, we understand that to build Christian character we must apply Philippians 4:8 and learn to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praiseworthy.

True: God's ways are just and true (Revelation 15:3). We need to learn to meditate more upon the truth of God's word and allow it to be our guide for this life (Psalm 1:2; 119:105).

Honest, Honorable: To develop Christian character the Spirit says "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober" (1 Peter 1:13). The idea here is to think upon things that are dignified or noble and maintain sobriety taking spiritual matters seriously. We must fill our minds with that which is honorable and good and refuse entry to all that is deceptive and dishonorable. One who would have Christian character must take great care what is allowed into their mind whether by conversation, by reading or by watching. Those who persistently fill their minds with the profanity, foulness and filth of many movies and TV shows often wonder why they have such difficulty developing Christ-like character. The old saying "garbage in, garbage out" has great relevance to our discussion.

Just: Justice and righteousness are the very foundation of God's throne (Psalm 89:14). A life built on justice and righteousness is a life that

reflects Christian character. God "blesseth the habitation of the just" (Proverbs 3:33) but before a man can "walk in his integrity" he must learn to think upon those things that are just (Proverbs 20:7).

Pure: To build Christian character we must keep a pure mind. One person said "pornography, sexually explicit movies, etc. have paved the way for many an act of rape, adultery, incest, homosexuality, and other equally vile sins. One simply cannot feed upon the impure and remain pure." The Apostle Paul instructed young Timothy to keep himself pure (1 Timothy 5:22). Purity, which is the result of decency and moral uprightness of the mind, is another of those keys to Christian character.

Lovely, of Good Report: When one thinks upon things that are spiritually lovely and of good report it shows in their daily conduct. If your thoughts include these good qualities you are well on your way to developing the character of Christ.

When God searches your heart what does He see? Does He see a person who is striving to build Godly character by filling their mind with all that is good and holy or does He find a mind that is filled with carnality, sin and worldliness?

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