

Character Doesn't Count?

The statement, "Character doesn't count" is heard often enough recently to make all but the most hardened nitwit nauseated. Character does count in every aspect of life. If character does not count, then it is utterly impossible to trust anyone or anything that anyone says. Character counts in the civil arena. God has granted governments the responsibility to "bear the sword," that is to exercise just authority in governing and enforcing law (Rom. 13:1-7, esp. vs. 4). If leaders are of immoral, untrustworthy character, if they cannot be counted upon to obey the same ordinances that they are empowered to enforce, and if they refuse to hold one another accountable, then they have violated God's trust as well as that of their subjects and are no longer fit to govern. Historically and Biblically, no nation (including ancient Israel - Amos 9:8-10) that has suffered an immoral, ungodly leadership has survived. Whether corrupt leaders produce a corrupt nation or a corrupt people produce corrupt leaders, the results are the same. We are not so special that we are exempt from accountability to God.

Character counts in the family. Husbands are to love their wives (Eph. 5:25) and dwell with them in understanding, honoring them (1 Pet. 3:7). Wives are to be submissive to their own husbands (1 Pet. 3:1-6). Infidelity, failure to assume and fulfill God-given responsibility, untruthfulness, untrustworthiness, all lead to the destruction of the family. Godly character will not lead to the breaking of marriage vows, will not starve children spiritually, provoking them to disobedience (Eph. 6:4) but will present a positive image in word and deed, and will help assure a respect for honor, integrity, truthfulness, virtue and honesty in future generations. Godly character will not perpetuate sins that plague many families generation after generation, such as slothfulness, drunkenness, divorce, and sexual immorality. Like it or not, we must decide what we will pass on to our children, for pass it on we will.

Character counts in religion. Christianity is the only world religion that presents an infallible, sinless, perfect founder (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 5:8-9; Jn. 1:17). The character of Jesus Christ, although it has been attacked countless times by countless infidels, remains impeccable and unimpeachable. Christians, after Christ's teaching, are to always speak the truth (Eph. 4:15; 1 Tim. 3:15), even if it means going against the will of society (Acts 5:29). Our word is to be inviolate (Mat. 5:37; Jas. 5:12; Mat. 12:34-37), our speech and our deeds are to be uncorrupted (Titus 2:1-3:3) and serve as examples for others to follow (1 Tim. 4:12). The church of Christ must always provide a safe haven for all those weary and heavy laden, oppressed souls who are in search of truth, sanity and a Savior in a sin-afflicted world. Character counts. Don't let anyone fool you. The only place character doesn't count is in Hell.

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