

CHARACTER

Lesson One

INTRODUCTION

Burden to Impart:

In this series of lessons we want to stress the matter of building up a proper character. Although we greatly desire the children to love the Lord and know His Word and His will, we also want to help them to be proper persons so that they may be useful to the Lord and serve Him to their greatest capacity. This depends on their character. The extent of their future usefulness to God depends on the extent of the building up within them of a usable character today. Character is not mainly the disposition we receive by birth; it is even more the product of our acquired habits. What we daily and habitually practice eventually becomes our character. Therefore we should never neglect our daily living, for it is here that we build up both our habits and our character.

Memory Verse: "If therefore anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared unto every good work" (2 Timothy 2:21).

Facts to Teach:

1. The Bible tells us that God made man as a "vessel." God is the potter and we are the clay (Rom. 9:20-23). A useless lump of clay is not suddenly formed into a beautiful waterpot; it takes time, patience, and a lot of repetitive handling to produce a nice and useful shape. The clay goes around and around on the potter's wheel and is gradually shaped by his hand. So also our character is formed by our responses to God, our parents, and others.
2. While the clay is fresh and soft it can easily be shaped. As it sits out and gets dry it is harder to work with or shape. Once it is fired in the kiln its shape can never be changed; it can only be broken.
3. This is why the Bible tells us to love and remember our Creator in the days of our youth (Eccl. 12:1). While we are young we should allow the Lord to mold us and make us into a vessel of honor that can be useful to Him. As the years go by we develop old habits which are very hard to change. It is better to learn good habits, even the best habits, while we are young.
4. Most of the people that became very useful vessels to God began to have a good character shaped in them from their youth: Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, Peter, John, Paul, Timothy, etc.
5. One example of a person who became useful to the Lord in His service is Timothy. Timothy's grandmother and mother (2 Tim. 1:5) taught him the Scriptures even while he was a babe (2 Tim. 3:15). Eventually he believed in the Lord Jesus and was saved. However, in order to become a man of God who was "complete, fully equipped for every good work" he needed much nourishment, as well as dealing, with his character by the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
6. Various types of vessels have various functions. But all vessels have one thing in common, they hold or contain something. God wants us to be persons who: a. hold Him, b. express Him to others, and c. dispense Him to others.

CHARACTER

Lesson One (continued)

- a. Hold Him--A proper vessel holds water (a paper cup). A useless vessel leaks water. (Punch a hole in the bottom of the cup with a pencil.) We should hold the Lord and the knowledge of His Word in our heart; like the prophet Samuel, who did not allow one word from the Lord to fall to the ground (1 Sam. 3:19); not like King Saul, who heard the Lord's word but later rejected it (1 Sam. 15:26).
- b. Express Him--A proper vessel expresses its contents (like a clear glass). A useless vessel gives a distorted expression (like tinted glass), or even worse, hides its contents completely (an opaque vessel).
- c. Dispense Him--A proper vessel has depth and a good spout (like a measuring cup). A useless vessel is shallow and cannot pour (like a flat plate).