



"Pump Up Your Passion For God"  
A Series In 2 Timothy

Part 6

Constructing Your Character

2 Timothy 2: 14-17a, 22-26

**Weekly Devotional**



# Devotional Day 1

## How Many Times Did You Fall?

*“Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

*And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:12-17*

Christian character is not something that comes automatically in the life of a believer. It's not as if you accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and your character magically snaps into proper alignment! No, it's something that has to be put into **practice** everyday. The Christian will have to put others and Jesus first. This won't come naturally at first; but as we learn to surrender our own wills for the benefit of others; it becomes easier and easier.

Also, we have the tremendous gift of the Holy Spirit who literally works inside us to develop this character. God helps us to develop a character that is pleasing to him!

Remember, there's a lot of grace in practice. To practice means:

- to do something, especially exercises, repeatedly in order to improve performance
- to do something as an established custom or habit
- to act according to the beliefs and customs of a religion

We cannot assume that Christian Character will come by magic. We must practice. And as in learning any new skill, we mostly learn by making mistakes. If we're not making mistakes we're probably not trying to acquire any new depth of character.

When I was a child I did a lot of ice skating. When I would come home from the rink my Dad would ask me how many times I fell. If I told him I didn't fall he would respond with what I now see as sage advice; “Danny, if didn't fall, then you didn't try anything new or try to get better at something. Everybody falls when they are learning new things.” Build your character; your falls will make you stronger. No need to be embarrassed!

# Devotional Day 2

## Worthless Words

*"Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen."  
(2 Timothy 2:14)*

Today, I'll use some great, on target by the author noted below. I'll put my editorial comments in [brackets]!

By Christopher Lyon:

<http://www.planetwisdom.com/devotional/2008/10/worthless-words.php>

The idea in today's verse seems odd to me coming from a writer and a teacher. Under the inspiration of God, Paul wrote a serious chunk of the New Testament. I'm sure he was very careful about the words he chose (and the ones he skipped).

But words are not so important that they're worth arguing about, he said. In fact, arguments about semantics (word meanings and choices) are a waste of time with the power to do real damage to listeners caught in the cross-fire. Focus on understanding

and communicating the truth and the words will take care of themselves. [There is the real key; focusing on understanding will solve most issues regarding semantics. Understanding works two ways; make sure you are understanding someone else; and take efforts to make sure they are understanding you. How many arguments have you experienced where you found yourself responding, "But that's not what I meant!?" You can make sure people know exactly what you meant proactively instead of reactively.

**Think:** Do you ever get caught in arguments about words? Things like: "I said this, and you said that!" "That's not what I said; I said this!" Arguments that become about splitting the hairs of fact instead of revealing real truth. Why are those so dangerous, especially between Christians?

**Pray:** Thank God for His truth. Ask Him to help you to avoid arguing about words.

**Do:** Look for examples this week — in and out of church — of people arguing about words.

# Devotional Day 3

Can You Handle The Truth?

*“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”*

*2 Timothy 4:8*

“CORRECTLY HANDLES THE WORD OF TRUTH”! Sounds intimidating doesn't it? Who wants to mess with that! Well, we should.

If you want to handle the Word of Truth; there's a few things you'll have to do.

First of all, you have to accept God's Word as we have it, the Bible, is the Word of Truth. If you don't have that as a baseline, foundational belief, you will be doing unnecessary mental and spiritual gymnastics trying to make sense of and justify all of it. If you think some scripture is inspired and other scripture is not; you'll spend a lot of time trying to decide. In that decision process, it would be easy to discount scripture that doesn't “fit” you or just plain makes you uncomfortable.

Secondly, you must work at it, and work at it energetically. Have you noticed what a large book the Bible is? It literally can (and should be) studied for a lifetime. To work at it energetically you'll need to have a plan for studying it. Just like when you build a building; you just can't start anywhere. You'll have to build a wall before you paint it. You'll have to finish the structure before you put in the landscaping. You'll have to do the plumbing before using the “washroom”. Random study can lead to disaster.

Thirdly, you'll need to commit to it over a long term. Understanding comes as we begin to see the continuity of the entirety of God's message. The scripture may seem random at first. But over time, you begin to see the beauty and continuity of its message. You also begin to see the unchanging character and qualities of God.

Get to work! It will help you, it will help your church and it will help those you love the most.

# Devotional Day 4

## Gangrenous Teaching

“Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. – 2 Timothy 2:16-17

Gangrenous! Give you self an extra point if you can work this word into a conversation this week without batting an eyelash and without someone saying, “What?” But gangrene is a disease that causes decay of your body’s tissue. It is especially appropriate in Paul’s conversation with Timothy.

Bad teaching about God can spread like wildfire. Always be careful whom you accept as you teachers. A good teacher of the Word will be the best gift you can ever receive in this life. A heretical teacher can literally destroy your personal and spiritual life. Bad teaching about God creates gangrene of the Church. It diseases it; sometimes beyond any hope of repair. Sometimes bad teaching is accepted because people are young in the faith or have simply been lazy in studying God’s Word themselves. Other times it is tolerated because it is “easier” than the real truth.

I have a friend who loves the following quote: “A lie will go around the world seven times before truth has had a chance to put its pants on!” To a large degree, that pithy saying has a lot of merit to it. Heresy (false teaching about God) is a tremendous danger to the life of a believer and the life of a church. It can literally run a life right into a ditch. If our understanding is wrong; it will cause our decisions to be wrong. If our decisions are wrong it will cause our actions to be wrong. If our actions are wrong our character will be destroyed. If we’ve lost our Godly character, we’ve become an eyesore in God’s kingdom. Everybody loses when it comes to heretical teaching.

Know what you believe and believe what you know.

What do you believe?

# Wednesday Night Bible Study

“A Character Study On King Asa”

*In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa became king of Judah, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty-one years. His grandmother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done.*

*He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his fathers had made. He even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother, because she had made a repulsive Asherah pole. Asa cut the pole down and burned it in the Kidron Valley. Although he did not remove the high places, Asa's heart was fully committed to the LORD all his life. He brought into the temple of the LORD the silver and gold and the articles that he and his father had dedicated.*

*There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel throughout their reigns. Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah to prevent anyone from leaving or entering the territory of Asa king of Judah. Asa then took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasuries of the LORD's temple and of his own palace. He entrusted it to his officials and sent them to Ben-Hadad*

*son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, the king of Aram, who was ruling in Damascus.*

*"Let there be a treaty between me and you," he said, "as there was between my father and your father. See, I am sending you a gift of silver and gold. Now break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so he will withdraw from me." Ben-Hadad agreed with King Asa and sent the commanders of his forces against the towns of Israel. He conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel Beth Maacah and all Kinnereth in addition to Naphtali. When Baasha heard this, he stopped building Ramah and withdrew to Tirzah.*

*Then King Asa issued an order to all Judah--no one was exempt--and they carried away from Ramah the stones and timber Baasha had been using there. With them King Asa built up Geba in Benjamin, and also Mizpah. As for all the other events of Asa's reign, all his achievements, all he did and the cities he built, are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah? In his old age, however, his feet became diseased.*

*Then Asa rested with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of his father David. And Jehoshaphat his son succeeded him as king. - 1 Kings 15:9-24*

## **Questions for Study and Discussion**

1. What would you say are the top two or three positive character qualities of King Asa?
2. What other areas of the scripture do you find those positive qualities commanded or lived out?
3. What would be the opposite of those positive qualities?
4. What other areas of the scripture do you find those negative qualities commanded or lived out?
5. It said King Asa did not tear down, "The High Places". Do you think this was acceptable? Why or why not?
6. Did King Asa's character affect the quality of his life? How?
7. Together, find a memory verse or two that could apply to the positive qualities of Asa's character.
8. Do you have a personal illustration of how these character qualities have been demonstrated in your life?
9. Is there something you need to do this week to put one of these character qualities into practice?