

A Study of Character Development

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What is Character?

Character is the way you portray (live out and act upon) your values by your intimacy, sensitivity, emotions, sympathy, empathy, presence, listening, thoughts, statements and actions. Are you loyal to your values? Are you sincere in attempting to think and behave according to your concepts of righteousness (Godlikeness)? Are you courageous enough to stand for truth, beauty and goodness when this is unpopular and even dangerous to your physical, professional or emotional welfare? Fruits of the Spirit are outer expressions of inner character. Spiritual weapons are the positive, aggressive techniques Jesus wants us to use to establish the kingdom as a social reality by [loving] assault on the hearts of our fellows.

Why is character important?

Character is what the Thought Adjuster counterparts into the soul. The weaker the character, the less there is to build the soul. Developing a noble character like that of our Father is the goal of this life and the entire afterlife. We can put this off in our mortal existence, but not in the morontia phases of our afterlife. Putting off developing noble character simply assures that you arrive in the Mansion Worlds as an underdeveloped soul with extra handicaps to overcome.

How do you get character?

You develop it by moral decisions; worship; experience; exploring truth, beauty and goodness; wisdom and by releasing yourself and the Spirit within to express the noble character of God through your thoughts and actions. Fruits of the spirit are the outward consequences of having followed the teaching of the Spirit within and they are divine character traits.

Make Jesus your human hero of righteousness and sincerely seek to understand and simulate the way he lived [his character]. His life is the way, the truth and the inspiration. Follow it. Puzzle over it. Sincerely seek to achieve what he achieved. A lot is possible.

We can achieve in this life a unification and coordination of our talents of body, mind and spirit to recognize, value and act upon spiritual goals above all other goals. We can identify what is important via experience and insight (Adjuster revelation) and use our physical, mental and spiritual talents aggressively and positively to pursue what is important. What is important is living our life acting on love, mercy and service—Deity character qualities. Appropriating them and making them our character qualities is why we are given the gift of time and experience.

From the references below, you can extract a long list of character qualities, mostly positive but also some negative. We are, after all, each a mixture of strong and not-so-strong character qualities. If you believe you are a child of God because the Spirit within teaches and leads you; and if you believe you have all the time sincere effort requires, then you can believe that you can eventually achieve a noble and loyal character like Jesus and our Father.

Claiming your spiritual character may feel beyond your reach at first if you discern only by physical or even intellectual reality. Spirit is a separate reality and has its own rules of practicality. Do you trust Jesus to have given you practical spiritual tips? If so, keep trying to implement them in your character.

References for a Study of Character Development

The real purpose of all universe education is to effect the better coordination of the isolated child of the worlds with the larger realities of his expanding experience. When truth, beauty and goodness are coordinated in personality experience, the result is a high order of love conditioned by wisdom and qualified by loyalty. Courage is loyalty to ones values in the face of risk of loss or danger. (43:5 / 2.7.12)

Strong character demonstrates loyal adherence to values. Since strength of character is desirable, man must be reared in an environment which necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments – temptations to default or rebel give opportunities to make choices loyal to our values. (51:5 / 3.5.6)

The Eternal Son is the source of the adorable attributes of mercy and service which part of his divine character is unfailingly transmitted to the Paradise Sons. (87:7 / 7.6.2)

Everlasting ministry to mind is the essence of the Spirit's divine character. All Spirit offspring partake of this desire to minister – divine urge to serve. (94:3 / 8.4.1)

God is love. The Son is mercy. The Spirit is ministry. (94:4 / 8.4.2)

The soul is a gradual and certain building up in the material and mortal mind of a spiritual and potentially immortal counterpart of character and identity. This evolution of an immortal soul within the mind of a mortal and material creature is one of the most perplexing mysteries of the universe. (147:3 / 13.1.3)

Cosmic mind unfailingly responds on three levels of universe reality:

1. Causation: The reality domain of the physical. Scientific realm of logical uniformity. Factual versus nonfactual. Mathematical form of the cosmic description.
2. Duty – the reality domain of morals in the philosophic realm. The recognition of relative right and wrong.
3. Worship – spiritual domain of the reality of religious experience.
 - The recognition of spirit values
 - The personal realization of divine fellowship
 - The assurance of eternal survival
 - The assent from the status of the servant of God to the joy and liberty of a son of God (192:6 / 16.6.10)

These scientific, moral and spiritual insights; these cosmic responses, are innate in cosmic mind. The experience of living never fails to develop these three cosmic intuitions. They are constitutive of the self consciousness of reflective thinking.

When these three basic factors in reflective thinking are unified and coordinated, they produce a strong character consisting in the correlation of a factual science, a moral philosophy and a genuine religious experience. It is these three cosmic intuitions that give objective validity, reality to man's experience with things, meanings and values. (192:6 / 16.6.10)

It is the purpose of 1) education to develop and sharpen all three of these endowments of human mind 2) the purpose of civilization to express them 3) the purpose of life experience to realize them 4) the purpose of religion to ennoble them 5) the purpose of personality to unify them. (192:7 / 16.6.11)

Moral acts are human performances characterized by the highest intelligence, directed by selective discrimination in the choice of superior ends as well as the selection of moral means to attain these ends. Such conduct is virtuous. Virtue is righteousness – conformity with the cosmos. (193:9 / 16.7.10)

Trustworthiness is the true measure of self-mastery, character. Character defines the limitations of your ability to discharge responsibility, execute trust and fulfill missions. (315:6 / 28.6.13)

It is the plan of your superiors to advance you by augmented trusts as fast as your character is sufficiently developed to gracefully bear these added responsibilities. (316:2 / 28.6.15)

The mind, personality and character are unchanged as we acquire real spirit identity just before leaving the local universe. (342:3 / 30.4.20)

The fruits of the Spirit constitute divine character. (381:7 / 34.6.13) They arise from the work of the Spirit within. They are:

- * Love
- * Peace
- * Gentleness
- * Faith
- * Joy
- * Long-suffering
- * Goodness
- * Meekness
- * Temperance

It requires up stepping by material sons before animal origin beings are well prepared for the Spirit of Truth to cooperate with the indwelling Adjuster to bring forth the beautiful harvest of the character fruits of the Spirit. (382:1 / 34.7.1)

The adjutant spirit of courage – the fidelity endowment – in personal beings is the basis of character acquirement and the intellectual root of moral stamina and spiritual bravery. (402:5 / 36.5.8)

...the keynote of the whole educational system is “character acquired by enlightened experience”. Teachers provide the enlightenment while the universe station and the ascender’s status afford the opportunity for experience. The wise utilization of these two augments character. (412:3-4 / 37.6.3-4)

By the 5th mansion world, study is becoming voluntary, unselfish service natural and worship spontaneous. A real morontia character is budding; a real morontia creature is evolving. (537:5 / 47.7.5)

A display of special skill does not signify spiritual capacity. It is not a substitute for true character. [Acquired by enlightened experience?] (556:3 / 48.7.3)

In physical form nonbreathers differ radically from atmospheric types but in mind and character they are the same. (564:1 / 49.3.5)

The post bestowal Son age lasts from 10,000 to 100,000 years and human character undergoes tremendous transformations and experiences phenomenal development. It becomes possible to put the golden rule into practical operation. Dispensations of prebestowal Sons in normal sequence would have provided for character development and culture augmentation on Urantia. (596:6 / 52.5.8)

The time interval between seed sowing and harvest provides for the testing and up building of character. (616:5 / 54.4.6)

Character qualities of Van which enabled him to remain unshakably loyal to the universe government: (756:7 / 67.3.6)

- * Clear thinking
- * Wise reasoning
- * Logical judgment
- * Sincere motivation

- * Unselfish purpose
- * Intelligent loyalty
- * Experiential memory
- * Disciplined character
- * Unquestioning dedication of his personality to doing the will of his heavenly Father

The love of service – character – is one of the highest levels of mortal wisdom. (806:11 / 71.7.11)

Abel had an ideal inheritance, and heredity lies at the bottom of all character; but the influence of an inferior environment virtually neutralized this magnificent inheritance. Abel's superb inheritance would have shown itself if he had lived to be 25 or 30 years of age. While a good environment cannot contribute much toward really overcoming the character handicaps of a base heredity, a bad environment can very effectively spoil an excellent inheritance, at least during the younger years of life. Good social environment and proper education are indispensable soil and atmosphere for getting the most out of a good inheritance. (848:6 / 76.2.6)

The ideals of one generation carve out the channels of destiny for immediate posterity. The quality of the social torchbearers will determine whether civilization goes forward or backward. The homes, churches and schools of one generation predetermine the character trend of the succeeding generation. The moral and spiritual momentum of a race or nation largely determines the cultural velocity of that civilization. (909:7 / 81.6.26)

Prayer as a feature of deity worship leads to the cultivation of divine ideals. As our concept of our prayer hearer becomes supreme and divine, our ideals are elevated toward supernal and divine levels and the result of all such praying is the enhancement of human character and profound unification of human personality. (998:4 / 91.5.1)

Man has been profoundly influenced not only by his concepts of deity but also by the character of the heroes he has chosen to honor. Jesus should be looked upon as a human hero and venerated as such. (1013:7 / 92.7.12)

True religion is a meaningful way of living dynamically face to face with the commonplace realities of everyday life. But if religion is to stimulate individual development of character and augment integration of personality, it must not be standardized. If it is to stimulate evaluation of experience and serve as a value lure, it must not be stereotyped. If religion is to promote supreme loyalties, it must not be formalized. (1089:11 / 99.4.3)

Real educational growth [character development] is indicated by enhancement of ideals, increased appreciation of values, new meanings of values and augmented loyalty to supreme values. (1094:5 / 100.1.3)

Children are permanently impressed only by the loyalties of their adult associates; precept or even example is not lastingly influential. [It is interesting that loyalty impresses God too.] Loyal persons are growing persons, and growth is an impressive and inspiring reality. Live loyally today – grow – and tomorrow will attend to itself. (1094:6 / 100.1.4)

Jesus exhibited the following character qualities: (1101:6 / 100.7.2)

- * Unfailing kindness
- * Stalwart strength of character
- * Truly sincere – no hypocrisy
- * Refreshingly genuine; no pretense; no shamming.
- * Lived the truth even as he taught it
- * Unquestioningly loyal to all truth even though such sincerity sometimes caused pain
- * Reasonable
- * Approachable
- * Practical in all his ministry
- * Free from freakish, erratic and eccentric tendencies
- * Never capricious, whimsical or hysterical
- * In all teachings and doings, always had an exquisite discrimination associated with an extraordinary sense of propriety

- * Well-poised personality – enemies respected and even feared him
- * Unafraid
- * Surcharged with divine enthusiasm but never fanatical
- * Emotionally active but never flighty
- * Imaginative but always practical
- * Frankly faced realities of life but never dull or prosaic
- * Courageous but never reckless
- * Prudent but never cowardly
- * Sympathetic but not sentimental
- * Unique but not eccentric
- * Pious but not sanctimonious
- * Well poised because perfectly unified
- * Did not overlook gems of truth in the teachings of his predecessors and contemporaries
- * Free from all narrow mindedness – inclusive
- * Most original of his teachings was emphasis of love and mercy in place of fear and sacrifice
- * He trusted God even as a little child trusts an earthly parent
- * Immune to disappointment
- * Impervious to persecution
- * Untouched by apparent failure
- * Loved men as brothers
- * Went about doing good
- * Cheerful but not blind, unreasoning optimist
- * Constant word of exhortation was “be of good cheer”
- * Unswerving trust in God and unshakable confidence in man
- * Touchingly considerate of all men
- * True to his convictions
- * Firm in his devotion to doing his Father’s will
- * Always generous but never wasteful or extravagant
- * Taught you must believe to receive salvation and everyone who seeks will receive
- * Candid but kind
- * Frank but friendly
- * Outspoken in love of sinner and hatred of sin
- * Unerringly fair
- * Fearlessly faced realities of existence
- * Filled with enthusiasm for the gospel of the kingdom
- * Controlled his enthusiasm – it didn’t control him
- * Unreservedly dedicated to the Father’s business
- * His divine enthusiasm led the unspiritual to think him beside himself but the universe viewed him as the model of sanity and the pattern of supreme mortal devotion to high standards of spiritual living
- * His controlled enthusiasm was contagious
- * He was a soul of gladness but was willing to walk courageously through the valley of the shadow of death.
- * Gladsome but humble
- * Patient – “My hour has not yet come.”
- * Never in a hurry
- * Composure was sublime
- * Often indignant at evil and intolerant of sin
- * Often moved to resist that which was inimical to the welfare of his children on earth
- * His indignation with sin never led to anger at the sinner
- * Magnificent courage but never foolhardy
- * Bravery was lofty and courage often heroic but courage was linked with discretion and controlled by reason.
- * Courage born of faith, not reckless and blind presumption.
- * Truly brave but never audacious
- * Reverential of true holiness but willing to attack religious traditions or errors of human beliefs
- * Great (because he was good) but still fraternized with little children
- * Gentle and unassuming in personal life

* The perfectly unified human personality

It is altogether possible for every mortal believer to develop a strong and unified personality along the lines of the Jesus personality. The unique feature of the Master's personality was not so much its perfection as its symmetry, its exquisite and balanced unification. (1101:5 / 100.7.1)

Possession of a righteous character is the prerequisite for mortal admission to the spiritual realities of the morontia worlds. The coordination of idea decisions, logical ideals and divine truth [revelation?] constitute the possession of a righteous character. (1112:3 / 101.6.7)

Experiential religionists live as if already in the presence of the Eternal. Believers react to temporal life as if immortality were already within their grasp. They have a valid originality and a spontaneity of expression that distinguishes them. They exhibit a stabilization of personality and a tranquility of character not explained by the laws of physiology, psychology and sociology. (1119:8 / 102.2.3)

The pursuit of the ideal – the striving to be Godlike – is a continuous effort before and after death. The task now and later is to evolve a noble character by righteous living. Death does not cure our faults, effort does. (1134:5 / 103.5.7)

Man is ennobled and mightily energized when he learns that his altruistic impulses and higher urges of his soul emanate from the spiritual forces that indwell his mind. (1134:6 / 103.5.8)

It lifts man out of himself and beyond himself when he once fully realizes that there lives and strives within him something which is eternal and divine. A living faith in the superhuman origin of our ideals validates our belief that we are sons of God and makes real our altruistic convictions, the feelings of the brotherhood of man. (1134:7 / 103.5.9)

Intellectual capacity and spiritual perception are supposed to be associated – combined to produce strength of character and contribute to the evolution of an immortal soul of survival value. [They are to be unified and coordinated in pursuing the supreme value of Godlikeness.] (1186:4 / 108.1.6)

Adjusters are the careful custodians of the sublime values of creature character. (1203:4 / 110.1.2)

The Thought Adjuster's objective is thought adjustment and character transformation in the almost limitless arena of the evolving human intellect. [Adjustment from what to what?] (1217:3 / 111.1.8)

Inner creativity contributes to ennoblement of character through personality integration and selfhood unification. The past is unchangeable; only the future can be changed by the ministry of the present creativity of the inner self. (1221:1 / 111.4.12)

During the times immediately following survival, the ascending personality is in great measure guided by the character patterns inherited from the human life and by the newly appearing action of morontia mota. (1236:3 / 112.6.5)

Character when energized by the returning Thought Adjuster provides active memory [of the mortal life?] (1236:5 -6 / 112.6.7-8)

We shall someday serve throughout the universes in our true characters – children of the Supreme God of experience and divine sons of the Paradise Father of all personalities. (1240:1 / 112.7.19)

It is on the Supreme that the Adjuster-mortal ascender draws for the creation of the immortal and divine character of a finaliter. It is out of the very reality of the Supreme that the Adjuster, with the consent of the human will, weaves the patterns of the eternal nature [character] of an ascending son of God. (1284:4 / 117.4.8)

The great [character] challenge that has been given to mortal man: Will you decide to personalize the experiential value meanings of the cosmos into your own evolving selfhood? (1284:5 / 117.4.9)

Creatures merely utilize the quantities and qualities of the finite as they ascend to the Father; the impersonal consequences of such utilization remain forever a part of the living cosmos, the supreme person. (1287:3 / 117.5.12)

What man himself takes with him as a personality possession are the character consequences of the experience of having used the mind and spirit circuits of the grand universe in his paradise ascent. When man decides, and when he consummates this decision in action, man experiences, and the meanings and values of this experience are forever a part of his eternal character on all levels, from the finite to the final. Cosmically moral and divinely spiritual character represents the creature's capital accumulation of personal decisions which have been illuminated by sincere worship, glorified by intelligent love and consecrated in brotherly service. [unified reality] (1287:4 / 117.5.13)

Human life experience is the cosmic cocoon in which are evolving the morontia soul of time and the human-divine finaliter character of universe destiny and eternal service. (1289:1 / 117.6.8)

Grow a spiritual character like the divine Spirit within your soul. Righteousness and truth are the foundations of spiritual character. (1474:6 / 133.4.6)

Human mind suffers conflict when called upon to serve both good and evil. This puts a severe strain on the soul. The supremely happy and efficiently unified mind is the one wholly dedicated to doing the will of God. Unresolved conflicts destroy unity and may terminate in mind disruption. Nevertheless, one must not seek peace by surrendering noble aspirations or compromising spiritual ideals. Peace is attained by stalwart assertion of the triumph of that which is true and this victory is achieved in the overcoming of evil with the potent force of good. [Evil within oneself as well as evil in others.] [The peace of Jesus which he left us is the peace of being supremely committed to doing our Heavenly Father's will. There is no conflict in our souls when that is our value and our goal.] (1480:4 / 133.7.12)

He burned to give vent to the declaration of the real truth about his Father's loving character and merciful conduct in the universe. (1494:6 / 134.9.3)

It had always been Jesus' practice, when facing any new or serious decisions, to withdraw for communion with his own Spirit that he might seek to know the will of God. (1515:4 / 136.4.10)

Jesus desired to reveal the Father and show forth his divine character of love. (1515:7 / 136.4.13)

Those who first seek to enter the kingdom, thus beginning to strive for a nobility of character like that of my Father, shall presently possess all else that is needful. But I say to you in all sincerity: unless you seek entrance into the kingdom with the faith and trusting dependence of a little child, you shall in no wise gain admission. (1536:5 / 137.8.8)

Goodness and friendliness were notable features of Jesus' character. (1541:2 / 138.3.8)

Andrew was a man of clear insight, logical thought and firm decision. His great strength of character was his superb stability. His temperamental handicap was his lack of enthusiasm; he many times failed to encourage his associates by judicious commendation. His reluctance to praise grew out of his abhorrence of flattery and insincerity. Andrew was even-tempered and self-made. Andrew admired Jesus because of his consistent sincerity, his unaffected dignity. (1550:1-2 / 139.1.10-11)

Peter was a man of impulse, an optimist. He permitted himself to indulge in strong feelings; he was constantly getting into difficulties because he persisted in speaking without thinking. This caused problems for his friends too. (1550:6 / 139.2.3)

Peter was a fluent speaker, eloquent and dramatic. He was a natural and inspirational leader of men, a quick thinker but not a deep reasoner. He asked more questions than all the other apostles put together. The majority of his questions were good and relevant. He didn't have a deep mind but he knew his mind fairly well so he was a person of quick decision and sudden action. (1550:7 / 139.2.4)

Jesus' trait most admired by Peter was his supernal tenderness and forbearance. (1551:1 / 139.2.5)

Peter was distressingly vacillating: he would suddenly swing between extremes. He was one of the most inexplicable combinations of courage and cowardice that ever lived on earth. His great strength

of character was loyalty, friendship. Peter could withstand persecution and any other form of direct assault, but he withered and shrank before ridicule. He was a brave soldier when facing a frontal attack, but he was a fear-cringing coward when surprised with an assault from the rear. (1551:2 / 139.2.6)

Peter was not so much a dreamer, but he disliked to descend from the clouds of ecstasy and the enthusiasm of dramatic indulgence to the plain and matter of fact world of reality. (1551:4 / 139.2.8)

James possessed two natures. He was particularly vehement when his indignation was fully aroused. He had a fiery temper when adequately provoked. He always attempted to excuse his anger under the pretense that it was wholly a manifestation of righteous indignation. He was a good public orator. (1552:5 / 139.3.1)

James was not moody but sometimes he would talk very little for days at a time. His one great weakness was these spells of unaccountable silence among the 12. His outstanding personality feature was his ability to see all sides of a proposition. He got along well with the versatile Andrew, the impetuous Peter and the self-contained John. He was headstrong, determined and intolerant. James was a well balanced thinker and planner. He was a vigorous person but never in a hurry. Modest and undramatic, a daily server, an unpretentious worker, seeking no special reward when he once grasped something of the real meaning of the kingdom. Often quiet and silent but also brave and determined when his convictions were aroused and challenged. He bore himself with such grace and fortitude at his execution that his accuser and informer converted. (1552:7-12 / 139.3.3-8)

James most admired Jesus' sympathetic affection. Jesus' understanding interest in small and great, rich and poor, made great appeal to him.

John had many lovely traits of character. He was also inordinately conceited but kept this well concealed for the most part. John's strongest character trait was his dependability. He was prompt and courageous, faithful and devoted. His greatest weakness was his characteristic conceit. John most admired Jesus' love and unselfishness. This transformed John into the apostle of love and brotherly devotion. John was a man of few words except when his temper was aroused. He thought much but said little. He never overcame his disinclination to talk. He was gifted with a remarkable and creative imagination. He was quiet and introspective but also somewhat bigoted and inordinately intolerant. He had a cool and daring courage. He was thoroughly dependable. He stayed with Jesus throughout the trial and crucifixion. He traveled much and labored incessantly. (1553:6 / 139.4)

Philip was always wanting to be shown. He never seemed to see very far into any proposition. He wasn't so much dull as he was lacking in imagination. Lack of imagination was his great character weakness. He was a common place and matter of fact individual. He was a good steward. His strongest characteristic was his methodical thoroughness. He was both mathematical and systematic. Philip couldn't be expected to do big things but he could do little things in a big way; do them well and acceptably. He managed the apostolic commissary department intelligently and efficiently. He was seldom unprepared for even the unexpected food demands. (1556:1 / 139.5.2-4)

Jesus learned from Philip much about the way some [unimaginative?] human minds function. Philip most admired Jesus' unfailing generosity. He could never find anything in Jesus that was small, niggardly or stingy and he worshiped this ever-present and unfailing liberality. Philip was almost without discerning vision; he was unable to grasp the dramatic possibilities of a given situation. He was not pessimistic, simply prosaic. He was greatly lacking in spiritual insight. (1556:6 / 139.5.6)

Jesus never reprimanded Philip for his thoughtless interruptions to ask foolish questions. Jesus was patient with him and considerate of his inability to grasp the deeper meanings of the teachings. Jesus was more interested in Philip's foolish questions than in the sermon Jesus might be preaching because Jesus was supremely interested in people, all kinds of people. (1557:1 / 139.5.7)

Philip was not a good public speaker but he was a very persuasive and successful personal worker. He was not easily discouraged. He was a plodder and very tenacious at anything he undertook. His approach was come with me and I will show you the way. That is always the effective technique in all forms and phases of teaching. Not go and do but come and we will show you the way. (1557:2 / 139.5.8)

Nathaniel's great virtue was his honesty and sincerity. Pride was his character weakness. He was proud of family, city, reputation and nation. All commendable if not carried too far. He was inclined to go to extremes with his personal prejudices. He was inclined to prejudge people according to his personal opinions. He was not obstinate; he would quickly reverse himself. He was the apostolic philosopher and dreamer; the odd genius of the 12. He was a good story teller when in the mood. He alternated between profound philosophy and rare and droll good humor. He reliably looked after the apostolic families. Nathaniel most revered Jesus for his tolerance. He never grew weary of contemplating the broadmindedness and generous sympathy of Jesus. (1558:2 / 139.6)

Matthew Levi was a good business man and a good social mixer. He was gifted with the ability to make friends and to get along smoothly with a great variety of people. He was a keen judge of human nature and a very efficient propagandist. He was a very earnest disciple. Levi's strong point was his wholehearted devotion to the cause. His weakness was his shortsighted and materialistic viewpoint of life. He most admired Jesus' forgiving disposition. Matthew was a shrewd politician but was intensely loyal to Jesus and supremely devoted to the task of seeing that the messengers of the coming kingdom were adequately financed. (1559:5 / 139.7)

Thomas was logical and skeptical but he was not a doubter. He had a form of courageous loyalty. He had little education but a keen reasoning mind. His was the one truly analytical mind of the 12. He was the real scientist of the group. He grew up having a disagreeable and quarrelsome disposition. He was pessimistic and suspicious. He was superbly honest and unflinchingly loyal, entirely sincere and unquestionably truthful and a natural-born fault finder. He was a good executive and excellent businessman but handicapped by his many moods. Thomas revered Jesus for his superbly balanced character. (1561:1 / 139.8)

- * lovingly merciful yet inflexibly just and fair
- * firm but never obstinate
- * calm but never indifferent
- * helpful and sympathetic but never meddling or dictatorial
- * strong but gentle
- * positive but never rough or rude
- * tender but never vacillating
- * pure and innocent but virile
- * aggressive and forceful
- * truly courageous but never rash or foolhardy
- * lover of nature but free of any tendency to revere nature
- * humorous and playful but free from levity and frivolity

Thomas counseled caution but moved fearlessly to execute the program decided upon. He was a good loser. Did not hold grudges nor nurse wounded feelings. Suffered from depression but whatever happened in his emotional life, he kept on being an apostle. He had a keen and sure sense of fact. At the first sign of fraud or deception, Thomas would have forsaken them all.

James Alpheus especially loved Jesus for his simplicity. He could comprehend the sympathetic bond between himself and the heart of Jesus. Judas Alpheus was most attracted by Jesus' unostentatious humility linked with personal dignity. The Alpheus twins were little but also were faithful. They were simple and ignorant but also bighearted, kind and generous. (1563:6-7 / 139.9-10)

Simon Zelotes was a fiery agitator. He spoke much without thinking. His strength was his inspirational loyalty. In 15 minutes his enthusiastic advocacy of salvation through faith in God could remove indecision about entering the kingdom. His great weakness was material-mindedness. Simon most admired Jesus' calmness, his assurance, poise and inexplicable composure. He was a great debater. He liked to argue. He was very effective with the legalistic minds of educated Jews and with intellectual quibblings of the Greeks. He was a rebel by nature and an iconoclast by training. A man of intense loyalties and warm personal devotions and he profoundly loved Jesus. (1564:6 / 139.11)

Judas Iscariot had no outstanding trait of personal strength but he had many outwardly appearing traits of culture and habits of training. He was a good thinker but not always a truly honest thinker. He did not really understand himself and was not really sincere in dealing with himself. He was an honest, faithful and efficient apostolic treasurer. He criticized in his mind both his Galilean associates and many things about Jesus. He was self satisfied. He thought Jesus was timid and afraid to assert

his own power and authority. He was a good businessman. He had tact, ability and patience in dealing with apostolic financial affairs. He was a great executive, farseeing and able financier and a stickler for organization. The apostles loved Judas and never criticized him. He believed in Jesus but didn't really love him. (1565:9 / 139.12)

As Judas grew up he was pampered, petted and spoiled. He had exaggerated ideas about his self-importance. He was a poor loser and had loose and distorted ideas about fairness and was given to the indulgence of hate and suspicion. He was expert at the misinterpretation of the words and acts of his friends. All through his life Judas had cultivated the habit of getting even with those whom he fancied had mistreated him. His sense of values and loyalties was defective. Judas grew intellectually regarding Jesus' teachings about the kingdom, but he did not make progress in the acquirement of spiritual character as did the other apostles. He failed to make satisfactory personal progress in spiritual experience. He was a brooder over personal disappointment, was abnormally suspicious of his best friends, was a victim of resentment and became obsessed with the idea of getting even. He would do anything to avenge himself. (1566:5 / 139.12.6)

Personality is basically changeless; that which changes – grows- is the moral character. While inherited urges cannot be fundamentally modified, emotional responses to such urges can be changed; therefore the moral nature can be modified, character can be improved. In the strong character, emotional responses are integrated and coordinated, and thus is produced a unified personality. Deficient unification weakens the moral nature and engenders unhappiness. Education should be a technique of learning [discovering] the better methods of gratifying our natural and inherited urges. [integration and coordination? – find the positive aspect and use for good?] (1572:7 / 140.4.7)

Faith and love strengthen moral character and create happiness. Fear and anger weaken character and destroy happiness. (1573:8 / 140.5.6)

It is Jesus' life and not his lessons or sermons that will assist most in revealing the Father's divine character and loving personality. (1582:0 / 140.8.19)

The Master came to earth to teach something additional to what great human teachers had taught; the voluntary conformity of man's will to God's will. What Jesus aimed for in his life appears to have been a superb self respect. The humility he aimed at was true humility toward God. He placed great value on sincerity – a pure heart. Fidelity was a cardinal virtue in his estimate of character, while courage was the very heart of his teachings. "Fear not" was his watchword and patient endurance his ideal of strength of character. The teachings of Jesus constitute a religion of valor, courage and heroism. (1582:1 / 140.8.20)

Jesus had little to say about the social vices of his day; seldom did he make reference to moral delinquency. He was a positive teacher of true virtue. He avoided the negative method of imparting instruction. He refused to advertise evil. He was not even a moral reformer. He well knew and so taught his apostles that the sensual urges of mankind are not suppressed by either religious rebuke or by legal prohibitions. His few denunciations were largely directed against pride, cruelty, oppression and hypocrisy. (1582:2 / 140.8.21)

Jesus did not vehemently denounce even the Pharisees as John the Baptist did. He knew many of the scribes and Pharisees were honest of heart; he understood their enslaving bondage to religious traditions. Jesus laid great emphasis on first making the tree good. He valued the whole life, not just a certain few special virtues. He sought to allow each soul to develop in its own way, a separate individual before God. The heart of Jesus' religion was acquirement of a compassionate character coupled with a personality motivated to do the will of God. Jesus' gospel really is a fresh beginning for the whole human race. Jesus wants his children on earth to live as though they were already citizens of a completed heavenly kingdom. Jesus always insisted that true goodness had to be unconscious. (1582:3 / 140.8.22)

Jesus' religion made no provision for spiritual self examination. This shocked Peter, James and John. Jesus' philosophy of life is without religious introspection [self criticism]. Jesus never taught character building [forced conformity to standards]; he taught character growth. But Jesus said nothing which would proscribe self-analysis as a preventive of conceited egotism. (1583:1 / 140.8.27)

Jesus did not teach that religion is man's only earthly pursuit. Jesus taught nothing to deter his believers from the pursuit of a genuine culture. He only detracted from the tradition bound religious schools of Jerusalem. He was liberal, big hearted, learned and tolerant. Self-conscious piety had no place in his philosophy of righteous living. (1583:4 / 140.8.30)

Jesus wished to foster spiritual insight into eternal realities and to stimulate initiative in the originality of living. He concerned himself exclusively with the underlying and permanent spiritual needs of the human race. He revealed a goodness equal to God. He exalted love – truth, beauty and goodness – as the divine ideal and the eternal reality. (1583:5 / 140.8.31)

The Master came to create in man a new spirit, a new will - to impart a new capacity for knowing the truth, experiencing compassion, and choosing goodness – the will to be in harmony with God's will coupled with the eternal urge to become perfect, even as the Father in Heaven is perfect. (1583:6 / 140.8.32)

The courage of the flesh is the lowest form of bravery. Mind bravery is a higher type of human courage but the highest and supreme bravery is uncompromising loyalty to the enlightened convictions of profound spiritual realities. And such courage constitutes the heroism of the God knowing man. (1608:4 / 143.1.7)

The twelve continued to acquire the spirit of positive aggression in the new gospel of the kingdom. (1609:1 / 143.1.9)

Jesus was the perfected specimen of human self-control.

He was reviled, but reviled not.

He suffered but uttered no threats against his tormentors.

He was denounced by enemies and simply committed himself to the righteous judgment of the Father in Heaven.

(1609:2 / 143.2.1)

John the Baptist's way was religion of self-examination and self-denial. Jesus' way is self-forgetfulness and self-control. Old way was to fast and pray. New way of the Spirit is to believe and rejoice. Old way was to suppress, obey and conform. New way is first be transformed by the Spirit of Truth [armed with spiritual weapons] and thereby be strengthened in your inner soul by the constant spiritual renewing of your mind. It is your personal faith in the exceedingly great and precious promises of God that ensures your becoming partakers of the divine nature. (1609:3 / 143.2.2-3)

The Spirit dwells within you by virtue of your faith, making you sons of God. The Spirit will transform you from within. You are no longer bond slaves of the flesh, but free and liberated sons of the Spirit. The new law of the Spirit endows you with the liberty of self-mastery in place of the old law of the fear of self-bondage and the slavery of self-denial.

Salvation is by the regeneration of the Spirit and not by the self-righteous deeds of the flesh. (1610:1 / 143.2.6)

It is the very goodness of God that leads men into true and genuine repentance. Your secret of the mastery of self is bound up with your faith in the indwelling Spirit which ever works by love. [Transformation by trusting and following the Spirit.] Even this saving faith is the gift of God. (1610:2 / 143.2.7)

Fruits of the spirit are the essence of the highest type of enjoyable and ennobling self-control, even the heights of terrestrial mortal attainment—true self-mastery. (1610:3 / 143.2.8)

You earn righteousness – progressive character development – but you receive sonship by grace and through faith. (1621:2 / 144.4.3)

The most astonishing and revolutionary feature of Michael's mission on earth was his attitude toward women. Jesus dared to take women along as teachers of the gospel. Rabbinic teaching declared it was better the words of the law should be burned than delivered to women. (1671:3 / 149.2.8)

In one generation, Jesus lifted women out of the disrespectful oblivion and the slavish drudgery of the ages. (1671:4 / 149.2.9)

Jesus mingled with the people. He was entirely free from superstitions. Free from religious prejudices. Never intolerant. No social antagonism. Complied with the good in traditional Judaism but did not hesitate to disregard man-made traditions of superstition and bondage. He dared to teach that catastrophes of nature, accidents of time and other calamitous happenings are not visitations of divine judgments or mysterious dispensations of Providence. He denounced slavish devotion to meaningless ceremonials and exposed the fallacy of materialistic worship. He boldly proclaimed man's spiritual freedom and dared to teach that mortals of the flesh are indeed and in truth sons of the living God. (1671:5 / 149.2.10)

Jesus did not engage in destructive criticism or manifest an utter disregard of the religious, social, economic and political usages of his day. He was not a militant revolutionist; he was a progressive evolutionist. He engaged in the destruction of that which was only when he simultaneously offered his fellows the superior thing which ought to be. (1671:6 / 149.2.11)

Jesus inspired hope and confidence in the hearts of all who came under his ministry. Only those who had not met him feared him. (1672:2 / 149.2.13) Multitudes would follow Jesus for weeks just to hear his gracious words and behold his simple life. (1672:3 / 149.2.14)

Jesus on well-balanced character (1673:3-4 / 149.4.3-4):

- * Deplored over-specialization in vocation.
- * Cautioned against becoming narrow-minded and circumscribed in life's activities.
- * Any virtue carried to extreme can become a vice.
- * Preached temperance and taught consistency—proportionate adjustment of life problems.
- * Overmuch sympathy and pity may degenerate into serious emotional instability.
- * Enthusiasm may drive on into fanaticism.
- * Warned of the dangers of visionary and impractical undertakings as well as dangers of dullness of over conservative mediocrity.
- * Courage and faith can lead to recklessness and presumption.
- * Prudence and discretion carried to far lead to cowardice and failure.
- * Exhorted his hearers to strive for originality while shunning all tendency toward eccentricity.
- * He pleaded for sympathy without sentimentality, pity without sanctimoniousness.
- * Reverence free of fear and superstition.

Jesus lived in midst of stress and storm but he never wavered. His enemies continually laid snares for him, but they never entrapped him. The wise and learned endeavored to trip him, but he did not stumble. They sought to embroil him in debate, but his answers were always enlightening, dignified and final. When he was interrupted in his discourses with multitudinous questions, his answers were always significant and conclusive. Never did he resort to ignoble tactics in meeting the continuous pressure of his enemies. (1674:1 / 149.4.5)

It is only by making your appeal to the spirit which lives within the human mind that you can hope to achieve lasting success and accomplish those marvelous transformations of human character that are presently shown in the abundant yielding of the genuine fruits of the Spirit in the daily lives of all who are thus delivered from the darkness of doubt by the birth of the Spirit into the light of faith—the kingdom of Heaven. (1705:3 / 152.6.3)

Jesus taught the appeal to the emotions as the technique of arresting and focusing the intellectual attention. He designated the mind thus aroused and quickened as the gateway to the soul, where there resides the spiritual nature of man which must recognize truth and respond to the spiritual appeal of the gospel in order to afford the permanent results of true character transformations. (1705:4 / 152.6.4)

Make sure that your intellectual and moral foundations of character (philosophy of living?) are such as will adequately support the superstructure of the enlarging and ennobling spiritual nature which is thus to transform the mortal mind and then in association with that mind is to achieve the evolvement of the soul of immortal destiny. Your spirit nature—the jointly created soul—is a living growth, but the mind and morals (character?) of the individual are the soil from which these higher manifestations of human development and divine destiny must spring. (1738:1 / 156.5.2)

The measure of the spiritual capacity of the evolving soul is your faith in truth and your love for man. But the measure of your human strength of character is your ability to resist the holding of grudges and your capacity to withstand brooding in the face of deep sorrow. Defeat is the true mirror in which you may honestly view your real self. (1740:4 / 156.5.17)

...becoming more tactful in dealing with troublesome mortals and more tolerant in living with stubborn associates. Tact is the fulcrum of social leverage and tolerance is the earmark of a great soul. (1740:5 / 156.5.18)

Avoid dishonesty and unfairness in all your efforts to teach truth and proclaim the gospel. Seek no unearned recognition and crave no undeserved sympathy. Love, freely receive from both divine and human sources, regardless of your deserts and love freely in return. In all other things related to honor and adulation seek only that which honestly belongs to you. (1740:6 / 156.5.19)

The God-conscious mortal is certain of salvation; he is unafraid of life; he is honest and consistent. He knows how bravely to endure unavoidable suffering; he is uncomplaining when faced by inescapable hardships. (1740:7 / 156.5.20)

The true believer does not grow weary in well-doing just because he is thwarted. Difficulty whets the ardor of the truth lover, while obstacles only challenge the exertions of the undaunted kingdom builder. (1740:8 / 156.5.21)

Rodan said when experiences of worshipful communion are frequently repeated, they crystallize into habits, strength-giving and worshipful habits, and such habits eventually formulate themselves into a spiritual character and such a character is finally recognized by one's fellows as a mature personality. (1777:3 / 160.3.2)

[The art of living is the art of developing strong character.]

Nathaniel and Thomas talked to Rodan about the character of Jesus. Jesus is the ideal friend. Truly unselfish. A friend even of sinners. Dares to love his enemies. Loyal to us. Truly loves us. Charming, unswerving devotion. Treats all with equal kindness. Invariably tender and compassionate. Shares his life and everything else with us. (1785-86 / 161.2.1-12)

Never does wrong. Wisdom is extraordinary. Piety is superb. Lives day by day in accord with Father's will. Does not repent because he never transgresses. Prays for us and with us but never asks us to pray for him. His piety is never obtrusive or ostentatious. Both meek and fearless.

He unfailingly responds to the spectacle of human need. Suffering never fails to touch him. He is moved to compassion by all kinds of suffering, anguish and sorrow. Quick to recognize and acknowledge the presence of faith or any other grace in his fellow men. Just and fair. Merciful and considerate. Grieves over spiritual obstinacy and rejoices when the people consent to see the light of truth.

Always sympathetic with our troubled spirits. Strongly loves goodness and equally hates sin. Kind but also brave and courageous. Never falters in doing his duty.

He is assertive, positive and authoritative. Indifferent to the opinions of men. Does not crave the support of the multitudes. Brave and yet free of pride.

Constantly talks about God as an ever-present associate in all that he does. Goes about doing good. God seems to be in him. Professes to be in partnership with God. He seems to be so sure about God and speaks of these relations in such a matter-of-fact way.

In his prayer life he appears to communicate directly with his Father. He appears to talk to God as though it were face-to-face.

The religion of the kingdom is personal, individual; the fruits, the results are familial, social. Jesus never failed to exalt the sacredness of the individual as contrasted with the community. But he also recognized that man develops his character by unselfish service; that he unfolds his moral nature in loving relations with his fellows. (1862.7 / 170.3.10)

In visiting with John Mark on Wednesday before the crucifixion Jesus had a lot to say about the reliability of John Mark's character and the reasons for it. His remarks had to do with John's home life during his first eight years. Material factors were his parents' affection and respect for each other and their wisdom in loving John but not over loving him and not using him to manipulate the other. They counseled him but did not deprive him of opportunities to have his own experience. A human being's entire afterlife is enormously influenced by what happens during the first few years of existence. (1921 sec 2 / 177.2)

It takes a great and noble character, having started out wrong, to turn about and go right. (1981:6 / 184.2.12)

Jesus had acquired that type of human character which could preserve its composure and assert its dignity in the face of continued and gratuitous insult. He could not be intimidated. He simply refused to be less than Godlike. (1999:5 / 186.2.5)

Throughout the trial ordeal, Jesus bore himself with simple dignity and unostentatious majesty. (1999:8 / 186.2.8)

Jesus said enough during his trial to show all mortals the kind of character man can perfect in partnership with God. (2000:1 / 186.2.9)

Fruits of the Spirit are: [Pay attention to the modifiers.] (2054:3 / 193.2.2)

- o Loving service
- o Unselfish devotion
- o Courageous loyalty
- o Sincere fairness
- o Enlightened honesty
- o Undying hope
- o Confiding trust
- o Merciful ministry
- o Unfailing goodness
- o Forgiving tolerance
- o Enduring peace

Judas' fatal tendencies and character flaws: (2056- 57 / 193.4.5-14)

- o Isolated type of human being.
- o Highly individualistic.
- o Chose to grow into a confirmed shut in and unsociable sort of person.
- o Bitterly resented thwarting. Always expected to win. Was very poor loser.
- o Never acquired philosophic technique of meeting disappointment. Did not accept disappointment as regular and commonplace.
- o Given to holding grudges. Always entertaining the idea of revenge.
- o Did not like to face facts frankly. He was dishonest in his attitudes toward life situations.
- o Disliked to discuss his personal problems with his immediate associates. Never once went to Jesus with a purely personal problem.
- o Never learned that the real rewards of noble living are, after all, spiritual prizes, which are not always distributed during this one short life in the flesh.

Judas' main difficulties were: (2057:1 / 193.4.13)

- * In personality, he was isolated.
- * In mind, he was suspicious and vengeful.

- * In temperament, he was surly and vindictive.
- * Emotionally, he was loveless and unforgiving.
- * Socially, he was unconfiding and almost wholly self-contained.
- * In spirit, he became arrogant and selfishly ambitious.
- * In life, he ignored those who loved him.

The Spirit of Truth is concerned primarily with the revelation of the Father's spirit nature (love) and the Son's moral character (mercy). When man yields the fruits of the Spirit in his life, he is simply showing forth the traits which the Master manifested in his own earthly life. As the indwelling Spirit of the new teacher, the Master since Pentecost has been able to live his life anew in the experience of every truth-taught believer. (2062:10 / 194.3.1)

At Pentecost the Spirit of Truth returned to Earth and brought a spiritual endowment of abilities enabling Jesus' followers to achieve superhuman levels of character development [like that of Jesus] including abilities to:

- * Overcome evil with good
- * Vanquish hate by love
- * Destroy fear with a courageous and living faith in truth
- * Be active and positive in ministering mercy and in manifesting love
- * Forgive personal injuries
- * Keep sweet in the midst of the gravest injustice
- * Remain unmoved in the face of appalling danger
- * Challenge the evils of hate and anger by the fearless acts of love and forbearance
- * Love and trust ones fellows
- * (2064:3-4 / 194.3.11-12)

Even secular education could help the coming spiritual renaissance if it would pay more attention to teaching youth how to engage in life planning and character progression. The purpose of all education should be to foster and further the supreme purpose of life, the development of a majestic and well balanced personality. There is great need for the teaching of moral discipline in the face of so much self-gratification. (2086:3 / 195.10.17)