

The Character of Disciple

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:3)

The biblical texts transcripts in this booklet are in the New King James Version.
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The character of a disciple

I once heard the phrase “we live in the western world accidentally called Christian”. We recognize Christianity in the so called Christian world on the signs, the people names, the city names, but won’t go beyond that. With the “lawlessness will be increased” (Mat 24:12) in recent times, we see a terrible reversal of values. The “ugly” turned to be “beautiful” and what is “beautiful” turned to be “ugly”:

- Hardly anyone gives up the seat to a senior in the bus;
- Men talk to women as if talking to men;
- To open the door, to make way for the other... no more;
- Whoever stands in line is silly, it is smart who cuts the line;
- Telling the truth? Stop with that!
- Loyalty, honesty ... don’t even think about it;
- Admit errors? What is it that you’re talking about?
- Well, the list goes on and on.



The life of the disciple of the Lord confronts the world with the image of Christ that he reproduces.

The world is like that, from bad to worse. And we're in it...

I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. (Joh 17:15)

... but we don't belong there.

They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. (Joh 17:16)

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. (Mat 5:13)

The life of the disciple of the Lord confronts the world with the image of Christ that he reproduces. There are powerful forces attacking us every day, trying to contaminate us with the wickedness of this world:

- Satan and his demons;
- Men with their minds perverted by sin;
- Culture trying to impose an anti-Christianism because we are not “common”;
- And the worst of all - ourselves.

Flesh vs. Spirit

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. (Gal 5:16-17)

Let's start thinking that our lives can manifest the works of the flesh or the fruit of the Spirit. We know that the works of the flesh are natural to the "old man", generated by sin and the absence of God. Moreover, in this world we are living the works of the flesh are encouraged and even worshiped.

Reading this text fills us with fear and faith.

- Fear because remember that the flesh is present and its fruits can be manifested in us.
- Faith because the Lord, through Paul, shows us the way to be victorious.

Therefore, I would like to highlight the following:

a) There is a war within us

"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh". You must be aware of this conflict and what is happening within us. It is because "these are opposed to each other" that the conflict exists. The flesh always wants to go the opposite direction of the Spirit. Then we need to make the decision: where do we seed? In the flesh or in the Spirit? Who to feed? The flesh or the Spirit? In Galatians 6:7-8 we read:

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

b) The key is to walk in the Spirit

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Gal 5:16)

I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! ... (Rom 7:25)

...which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:27)

To Walk in the Spirit. Develop fellowship with the Lord through prayer, praise, subjection to the body, giving thanks to God for everything, in fasting and in contact with the Word. Look at Jesus, that in a simple way, is to search the Scriptures everything that relates to

Jesus Christ and to dive in these truths until we are filled up with them. For example, when we read John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" we are looking at Christ the Word, who did not begin his existence in Mary's womb, but He is eternal, He was in beginning with God and He was God himself. Hallelujah!

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.(Eph 5:18-21)

c) Recognize the works of the flesh

At this moment is important to know better who we are. Often, some of these things (works of the flesh) become so common that we end up maintaining them as if they are pets. We might think that by putting a pink bow and fragrance will no longer be the work of the flesh. Open your eyes, remove the ornaments and see the works of the flesh as they are. The works of the flesh: "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like" (Gal 5:20-21).

Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.. (Rom 13:13)

Being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful. (Rom 1:29-31)

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds. (Col 3:8-9)

d) Manifest the fruit of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Gal 5:22-23)

It is important, after showing what this flesh that dwells in us is, to also show that those who are in Christ have received the fruit of the

Spirit from the Lord. All of us who have been placed in Christ have “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”. If we walk in the Spirit each of these qualities of the Spirit will be manifested in us as needed, otherwise the works of the flesh will be manifested.

Character of Christ

Character is the set of characteristics—good or bad—that distinguish a person.

- A person's character is manifested in the habitual manners of behaving in different situations of the everyday life.
- Character is revealed in family life, at work, in relationships, in dealing with our fellows, in our duties and responsibilities etc.
- The deepest aspect in the character of a person is known in how reacts when facing trials, against the temptation, adversity, misfortune, things hard to bear, when you suffer injustice, before someone in need and also when in success and prosperity.

However, the term “personality” is used to refer to what in our behavior is morally neutral. It is our individuality as God made each one of us. Each human being is unique and different from all the rest with the whole set of it's unique and permanent characteristics.

- For example: someone can be more effusive or quiet, more introverted or extroverted, more emotional or rational, without any of these types necessarily being better than the other.

There are things related to our temperament that we are born with and keep until we die. Persistence, for example. Is persistence good or bad? It depends. It is character that determines its value. In the world, it becomes stubbornness, which is bad. In Christ, it becomes perseverance, which is good.

Often, the very personal characteristics that we have and that help us become our own stumbling block. Thus, the soft person can be, positively comprehensive, but negatively not firm. The outspoken person can be positively a faithful friend, but negatively rude. The most lucid person, positively can be enlightening, but negatively annoying and boring. The strongest person, an excellent leader and at the same time heavy and without mercy. One who sees concepts well can be a master, but also a hollow theorist. Someone who is zealous to principles can be a pillar of truth, yet — on the other hand — inconveniently authoritative.

And in general, these characteristics usually manifest in our lives for both good and evil. How to be positive without manifesting a lot of negative things? What is the solution to this dilemma?

There's only one way out. Walking in the Spirit. To live through Jesus. For He is the sum of all the positive characteristics, and the most complete absence of evil.

(Marcos Moraes)

a) How character is formed

Repeating the same action by an individual, one, two, ten, a hundred times becomes a habit. If this habit has moral conduct aspects ends up incorporated as a defined characteristic of the character.

Such characteristics can be positive or negative, that is, they can be moral virtues such as:

- . Honesty, generosity, humility, etc.

Or moral defects such as:

- . Falsehood, wrath, arrogance, selfishness etc.

Obviously, many of these characteristics will be forging from the childhood.

b) The man was created in the image of God

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Gen 1:27)

In what consist this image of God in man? Obviously it is not physical but spiritual. This means, among other things, that God created man with the same moral character as His. With the same moral virtues of God. This reveals that the original plan of God is that all descendants of Adam and Eve had the moral character of God.

We were not only predestined to be children of God, but to be made according to the image of His Son.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom 8:29)

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2Co 3:18)

And have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him. (Col 3:10)



The repetition generates the habit that becomes a trait of character.

These texts reveal that although man has sinned and lost the God's image, the redemptive plan of God in Christ is to transform us back until forming in us the character of Christ.

c) Passing through the "Sermon on the Mount"

Humbleness

Blessed are the poor in spirit... Mat 5:3

- The poor in spirit are those who are aware that they have and are nothing.
- Humbleness of the heart is the cornerstone of the construction and development of the character.
- It started with pride, Lucifer, Adam and Eve's, and consequently brought the rebellion against God. They wanted to be like God.
- What are we? Earth dust, nothing. Everything that we are and have is a gift, grace from God. Humbleness is (should be) the most logical quality, more natural and inherent of human nature.
- Pride, presumption, vanity, arrogance, self-sufficiency are foolishness, although they are the strongest characteristics in men.

How do the prideful behave?

- The prideful despises, criticizes, mocks his neighbor. Argue, fights, he is wise in his own eyes. He does not like to ask for forgiveness, believe that has always reason, do not know how to lose, is difficult to live with.
- Prideful talks too much and listens too little, he is harsh, inflexible, monopolizes conversations, exaggerates, lies, hide his flaws, falls in hypocrisy.
- All the sons of Adam are prideful, this is our nature after the fall. But the prideful can humble himself. And the first condition for humbleness is to recognize what you are.
- Jesus said: "He who humbles himself will be exalted." (Mt 23:12) The prideful can humble himself and be transformed into the image of Jesus.

Brokenhearted

Blessed *are* those who mourn... Mat 5:4

- . It is not those who mourn in anger or self-pity, but for a legitimate brokenness.

For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (Isa 57:15)

- . God promises that those who mourn will be comforted.

Meekness

Blessed are the meek... Mt 5:5

- . Jesus said, “learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart”. (Mat 11:29). To be meek is the opposite of be rebellious. The meek obey in good-will, with peace and joy, they are submissive, patient, have self-control.
- . Rebellion may be violent, with screaming, fights, arguments, or it can also be a kind and quiet rebellion that in the end makes his own will.
- . Meek is the one who lives submissive to God, to His Word to his brothers, to the authorities.
- . Submissive children obey their parents, and the wife submits to her husband; and they all are submissive to one another..
- . Whoever is too meek accepts peacefully adversities and trials of life.

Justice

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness... (Mat 5:6)

- . Often this blessedness is not well understood. Does not refer to those who do require others to do justice at them, but to those that the most desire in life is to be righteous and holy before God and men.
- . Blessed are those whose greatest desire in life is to be righteous—that is, to be like Jesus..

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Mat 5:20)

- True justice is God's justice, which is inseparably linked to love and mercy. See Mat 6:1-4; 6:33, 2Co 8:14-15; 9:9-10.

Mercy

Blessed are the merciful... Mat 5:7

- The Portuguese latin roots for the word mercy is formed from two Latin words, one is the ***misery*** (miseris), and the other is ***cordia*** (cordia) which means heart. Meaning to have an open heart to the one who is in misery, to the one which is not well, suffering or in need.
- Mercy means treating others as God treats us.
- The merciful has a positive attitude towards everyone, is kind, good, forgiving, loving, serving, smiling, even to those that do not correspond at the same way.
- The more specific aspect is generosity and service to the ones in need or suffering.

Pure in heart

Blessed are the pure in heart... Mat 5:8

- What is to have a clean heart?
 - How can we have a clean heart if we have a corrupt and deceitful heart?
 - Only through Jesus, He is the only one who can change our hearts.
 - We must discard our heart's pretense, hypocrisy, deceit and lies.
 - If our heart is impure and dirty, it can be cleansed. The condition is to walk in the light, to live sincerely, transparency in confessing our sins, hiding nothing.
 - And on this condition of transparency, sincerity and repentance, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. (1Joh 1:7-9)
- Clean heart also means having pure desires.
 - Remember that the one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery in his heart.
 - Means rejecting in the heart every unholy desire.

- Having the right intentions, holy motivations in everything that we do.
- . Those will see God.

Peace

Blessed are the peacemakers... Mat 5:9

- . The disciples are men and women of peace.
- . It is hard to fight a peacemaker.
 - Someone offends him, and he forgives and loves;
 - Other attacks him and he does not react;
 - Another talks angrily at him, and he responds with serenity, he does not go into fighting or discussion,
 - The peacemaker forgives, yields, he prefers to lose, pays evil with good.
- . Peacemaker is an instrument of peace among men, a channel of reconciliation among those who are enemies.
- . Peacemaker does not gossip, does not speak bad things of a brother to another, it creates no strife, on the contrary, seeks peace and unity among the brothers and sisters.
- . They are called children of God.

The joy of been pursued and reviled for Christ

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you... Rejoice and be exceedingly glad... Mat 5:10-12

- . Finally, the last character quality Jesus highlights here is having joy despite enduring unjust suffering, persecution, insults, and slander for His sake.
- . Our joy is not conditioned by favorable circumstances;
- . Not obstructed by unfavorable circumstances;
- . Our joy does not depend on what happens around us, but what happens within us.



That is Jesus!

d) Training ourselves accordingly to Christ

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **training us** to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age. (Tit 2:11-12, ESV)

That you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:22-24)

Put Off

Sexual impurity

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God (Eph 5:3-5)

Greed (covetousness)

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: ...and covetousness, which is idolatry. (Col 3:5)

Anger, impatience, and aggressiveness

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. (Eph 4:31)

But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath... (Col 3:8)

Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm. (Psa 37:8)

Now the works of the flesh are evident,

Put On

Purity (chastity or marriage)

Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge. (Heb 13:4)

But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion. (1 Co 7:8-9)

Generosity (give)

‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ (Act 20:35)

...Freely you have received, freely give. (Mat 10:8)

Kindness, patience, respect, honor

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering. (Col 3:12)

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, ...peace, longsuffering, kindness, ... self-control. Against such there is no law. (Gal 5:22-23)

which are: ...contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions... (Gal 5:19-20)

Pride, self-sufficiency and rebellion

...Do not be wise in your own opinion. (Rom 12:16)

Everyone proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord... (Pro 16:5)

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. (Pro 16:18)

Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him. (Pro 26:12)

He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy. (Pro 29:1)

Lie

Therefore, putting away lying...(Eph 4:25)

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds. (Col 3:9)

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord... (Pro 12:22)

Partiality

You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor. (Lev 19:15)

Corrupting Talk (insults, slander, gossip, dirty jokes, idle banter, profanity, complaints, grumbles, whining, etc.)

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth... (Eph 4:29)

... nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting,

Love suffers long and is kind; ...is not provoked, thinks no evil; ... bears all things, ... endures all things. (1 Co 13:4-7)

See: 2Ti 3:14; 1Pe 2:17

Humbleness, meekness, submissiveness

...learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart... (Mat 11:29)

...Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly... (Rom 12:16, ESV)

...Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility... (1 Pe 5:5)

submitting to one another in the fear of God. (Eph 5:21)

Truth, honesty, integrity

..."Let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor".... (Eph 4:25)

...But those who deal truthfully are His delight. (Pro 12:22)

See: Heb 10:22; 1Th 4:6; Psa 15:2

Impartiality

I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. (1Ti 5:21)

Words that edify (thanksgiving, praise, prayers, teachings, songs, proclamations, etc. ...)

...but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. (Eph 4:29)

which are not fitting... (Eph 5:4)

Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle?... He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; (Psa 15:1,3)

Pessimism, incredulity

...for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (Jas 1:6-8)

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2Ti 1:7)

Addictions (drunkenness, gluttony)

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. (1Co 6:12)

Revenge

Repay no one evil for evil... do not avenge yourselves...(Rom 12:17-19)

Do not be overcome by evil... (Rom 12:21)

...but rather giving of thanks. (Eph 5:4)

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph 5:19-20)

Faith, courage, firmness

But let him ask in faith, with no doubting... (Jas 1:6)

Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1Per 1:13)

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life... (1Ti 6:12)

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. (Heb 2:1)

View: Jos 1:6-9, Eph 4:14

Self-control

Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. (Php 4:5)

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Gal 5:16)

See: 1Co 9:25-27; Eph 6:11

Overcome evil with good

Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink... (Rom 12:20)

..but overcome evil with good.

See that no one renders evil for evil...
(1Th 5:15)

Not returning evil for evil or reviling for
reviling... (1Pe 3:9)

Irresponsibility, neglect

He who is slothful in his work is a
brother to him who is a great destroyer.
(Pro 18:9)

But his lord answered and said to him,
'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew
that I reap where I have not sown, and
gather where I have not scattered seed.
27 So you ought to have deposited my
money with the bankers, and at my
coming I would have received back my
own with interest. (Mat 25:26-27)

(Rom 12:21)

...but always pursue what is good
both for yourselves and for all.
(1Th 5:15)

...but on the contrary blessing...
(1Pe 3:9)

Loyalty, diligence, responsibility

Not lagging in diligence, fervent
in spirit, serving the Lord. (Rom
12:11)

Moreover it is required in
stewards that one be found
faithful. (1Co 4:2)

His lord said to him, 'Well done,
good and faithful servant; you
have been faithful over a few
things, I will make you ruler over
many things. Enter into the joy of
your lord.' (Mat 25:23)

One who rules his own house
well, having his children in
submission with all reverence
(for if a man does not know how
to rule his own house, how will
he take care of the church of
God?) (1Ti 3:4-5)

That you also aspire to lead a
quiet life, to mind your own
business, and to work with your
own hands, as we commanded
you (1Th 4:11)

See: Pro 10:4; 13:4; 6:6-11; 2Th
3:7-12.