

Generosity - Testimony

Testimony – any evidence in support of a fact or truth... in this case the truth of who we are and the reflection of Christ through us.

God's Generosity

2 Peter 1:3-4 (New Living Translation) By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. ⁴ And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

Our Responsibility

2 Peter 1:5-7 (New Living Translation) In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.

2 Peter 1:8-9 (New Living Translation) The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.

2 Peter 1:10-11 (New Living Translation) So, dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away. ¹¹ Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

God's Generosity and Our Responsibility

Acts 1:8 (NLT) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Jesus was arrested convicted and crucified

Would there be enough evidence to convict us

Our responsibility

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NLT) So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!"

As ambassadors it is important that we represent Jesus well and live as a person of character and integrity. Simply stated, we pay careful attention to guarding our character and integrity.

Character and Integrity take a lifetime to build and can be lost in a matter of moments.

Character - The total quality of a person's behavior, as revealed in his habits of thought and expression, his attitudes and interests, his actions, and his personal philosophy of life.

Character develops as a combination of personal sacrifice and spiritual reliance.

Only your character can keep you where your gifts lead you.

"Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are, to some extent, gifts. By contrast, good character is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece—by thought, choice, courage, and determination. This will only be accomplished with a disciplined life-style."
- John Maxwell

- ***Your character is who you are when no one is looking and what you are willing to stand for when everyone is looking.***
- ***Character is who you are striving to be and what you can be trusted with.***

Integrity - Rigid adherence to a code of ethics.

Proverbs 10:9 (NLT) "People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will slip and fall."

"A person of integrity is one who has established a system of values against which all of life is judged."

- V. Gilbert Beers

- ***I believe our tendency to hide is the greatest enemy we face in the development of integrity.***

- ***Our problem is this: We know a gap exists between our ethic and our behavior. Nobody, except Jesus, was a moral “perfect ten”. And that’s the rub; we feel we should be a “ten” and therefore we are desperate to give that impression.***
- ***You must control your destructive inclinations by staying away from “little sins”, because in reality they aren’t so little-and they can and often do lead to destruction.***

- Bill Perkins

- ***Integrity of character occurs when there is consistency between actions and inner convictions over time.***
- ***If you are a man of little integrity or questionable character, do not expect God to reveal much of Himself to you or to use you significantly for His kingdom.***

- Blackaby

God’s Generosity

Colossians 2:13-15 (NLT) You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

Power of our Testimony

Revelation 12:11 (NLT) And they have defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by their testimony. And they did not love their lives so much that they were afraid to die.

Supernatural Character Development – God desires to help!

“All significant battles are waged within the self.”

- Sheldon Kopp

No passage in the Bible draws a clearer contrast between the lifestyle of the Spirit-filled believer and that of the sinful human nature than Galatians 5:16-26.

Galatians 5:16-26 (NKJV) "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders,

drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

Paul not only discusses the general difference in lifestyles by emphasizing that the Spirit and the flesh are at war with each other, but he includes a specific list both of the works of the flesh and of the fruit of the Spirit.

The flesh develops naturally and unattended and must be continually put to death. The Fruit of The Spirit develops supernaturally and must be yielded to.

Romans 8:13 (NKJV) "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live."

Colossians 3:5 (NKJV) "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

"Make the mind run the body. Never let the body tell the mind what to do. The body will always give up."

- George S. Patton

Where do we begin?

Testimony. As we think about this passion week; Jesus was arrested, tried beaten and crucified for being who He said He was.

If we were arrested for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict us.

Psalm 51:10-13 (NKJV) "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You."

1 John 1:9 (NLT) But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

Generosity