



Course Name: Character Development (Improving our Character)

By Dr. Bob Turner

Course description:

This course continues to discuss the necessity of godly character. Specifically, our time in this lesson is designed to look at how we can improve our character by the choices we make. It is essential to understand the impact of our choices on our character.

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Reviewed the three components of character, as discussed in last week's lesson.
- B. Listed three ways we can improve our character as Christians.
- C. Considered the implications of the *10-10-10 Principle* on decisions we make that factor into our character development.

Outline of the class:

- A. Take the first five minutes of class and ask everyone to share what they remember about the three components of character discussed last week in Psalm 15.
 - 1. The three words: integrity, righteousness, and truth.
 - 2. Remember to highlight that the three most important words from the text are *walks*, *works*, and *speaks*. These describe not just what someone does, but who they are on the inside.
- B. Divide the class into groups of three or four and ask the groups to take 10 minutes to make a list of 3 ways we can improve their character.
- C. Once the lists are completed, ask each group to share one from their list until all the ideas are shared by the each group. Write their responses on a whiteboard.
- D. From this point, introduce the class to the book *10-10-10 Principle* by Suzy Welch. The idea behind the book is summed up in how we make decisions that often affect our character. The three questions are below.
 - 1. Can I live with this decision in 10 minutes?
 - 2. Can I live with this decision in 10 months?
 - 3. Can I live with this decision in 10 years?
- E. Often times our vision is blurred in the moment and we think that we would have no problem living with our decision in 10 minutes or even 10 months. However, the long-term assessment of a decision needs to be considered. The thought here is not literally 10

minutes, 10 months, or 10 years, but assessing the implications of major decisions in the short-term, mid-range, and long-term development of our character.

- F. There is more behind this thought than just asking these three questions, because the book explains the following process.
1. Start with a question:
 - a. What is the issue surrounding the need for a decision?
 - b. What about the situation makes this a pressing issue?
 - c. How will this decision impact the lives of those connected to the issue?
 - d. Feel free to add any questions that might relate to the development of the point here.
 2. Data collection:
 - a. Be sure to collect as much information as possible before making any decision that involves other people and our character.
 - b. Consider the pros and cons of the decision as it relates to the people most closely associated with the situation.
 3. Analysis:
 - a. Compare the data collected with our values.
 - b. Once this comparison is made, if the outcome of the decision does not align with our values, we may need to make a different decision. We may also need to go back to the beginning and start the process over.
- G. At this point, if class time permits, it would be good to ask everyone to do a “character audit.”
1. Take a few minutes and write down our core values. What are those fundamental beliefs or guiding principles that dictate our conduct or understanding between right and wrong. Examples: integrity, accountability, diligence, perseverance, discipline, work ethic, honesty, etc.
 2. Evaluate our life over the last 30 days at home, work, school, etc.
 3. Are there areas where we see inconsistencies? Then, do not make excuses, deny, neglect, or try to cover it up. Take ownership, responsibility, and develop a plan to address these inconsistencies and correct them for the future.

Conclusion:

- A. One of the most precious pieces in the armor of our leadership is character. We must guard and protect it; we must develop it; and we must never lose sight of the impact it has on our leadership.
- B. Taking time to consider the short- and long-term impact of our decisions can help us make the kind of decisions that will improve and strengthen our character.

C. Next week, we will build on this discussion and consider additional lessons that look at improving our character.

Recommended Reading:

Welch, Suzy, *10-10-10 Principle Leadership*