

A Catechism of Character (Continued).

(Rev. Ernest R. Hull. S.J.)

Is it of great importance to be a man of character? Yes; and to be a man of good character. For such a man can regulate his whole life according to reason, right and duty, and is not tossed about either by impulse from within or by influences from without. Such a man can steadily work his way towards his final happiness; whereas in case of a man of no character, his whole life and future destiny becomes a matter of chance.

Mention some other practical advantages of character. Character helps a man in the general management of life. The grasp of principles causes him to realize his defects and imperfections, and makes him prompt and energetic in rooting them out. It rids him of many faults which spring from weakness and want of grit. A man of character will be prompt in keeping his appointments, true to his promises, accurate and efficient in his work, clear in his decisions and firm in keeping to them. He will be the same to your face and behind your back; and will not give you away or leave you in the lurch. In short everybody will find him satisfactory to deal with in every department of life.

A man of weak character or no character will be quite the contrary: a creature of impulse, neither at harmony with himself or with others; unstable and unreliable, so that no one can be knowing what he will be doing next. Such a man is altogether unsatisfactory to deal with, a nuisance to himself and to everybody else.

What connection has character with carrying out the law of life? A very close connection, because the law of right and wrong is the foundation of every good character, the one general rule which guides the whole of life. All other good principles are merely detailed applications of this one. Having a firm grasp of his first principle, a man of character will always be ready to carry it out; whereas a man of weak character or no character will forget it half the time, and take no notice of it unless it happens to appeal to his fancy.

Will character help a man to resist temptations and void sin? Yes; character strengthens a man both against evil impulses from within and evil influence from without.

Explain this more fully.

When a man's intellect is filled with good principles and his will is always ready to apply them, he will be quick to notice the first rise of his passions and to check them as soon as they rise. So also he will be on his guard against bad example and the evil influence of others, and will have enough grit and backbone to stand against them.

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