

# MARKS OF HIGH CHARACTER

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There is something in us that longs for the solid. In a world of curated personas, fleeting reputations, and digital masks, we find ourselves weary of the superficial. We crave people who are real—people whose yes means yes, whose presence is a refuge, whose character holds weight when the winds shift.

But we rarely ask the deeper question: What actually makes a person solid?

The world defines character by reputation—what others think of you. But the Bible defines character by what is true of you when the applause fades, when the pressure mounts, and when no one is there to hold you accountable. The word character in the biblical sense is not about personality; it is about provenness. The Greek word *dokimē* speaks of metal that has been tested and found genuine.

Character, then, is what emerges after the fire.

## **PROVERBS 10:9**

**Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.**

Notice the promise is not fame, not ease, not applause—it is security. A person of good character walks securely because their foundation is not shifting sand but the unchanging nature of God Himself.

Good character is not something we manufacture through grit. It is something that is formed in us as we behold the One whose character is perfect: Jesus Christ, the flawless embodiment of all we are about to describe.

## **I. INTEGRITY: Wholeness and Consistency**

A person of good character does not have a “public” self and a “private” self. The word integrity comes from the Latin *integer*, meaning whole or complete. Such a person’s life is integrated—their beliefs, words, and actions align. They are the

same in the boardroom as they are in the living room, the same in adversity as in prosperity.

Integrity is the non-negotiable foundation of character. Without it, all other virtues become performances. The biblical picture of integrity is not flawlessness but undividedness—a heart wholly devoted to God. This creates spiritual security because there is no fear of exposure.

#### **PSALM 15:1-2 NIV**

**Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy hill?**

The one whose walk is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart.

#### **PROVERBS 11:3 NIV**

**The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.**

#### **JOB 2:3 NIV**

**He maintains his integrity, though you incited me against him to ruin him without any reason.**

**Quote: “Character is what you are in the dark.” — Dwight L. Moody**

Application: INTEGRITY is not the mask you wear on stage; it is the person you become when the lights go out. A person of high character does not perform—they are. And because they are whole in the dark, they have nothing to fear when the light comes.

## **II. HUMILITY: Rightful Self-Regard**

A person of good character does not think of themselves more highly than they ought.

Humility is not self-deprecation but self-forgetfulness—a posture of dependence on God and regard for others. The humble person acknowledges their gifts as from God and their sins as their own, making them both teachable and quick to serve.

Humility is the soil in which all other character traits grow. Pride is the root of every sin, while humility is the root of every virtue. A person of high character is secure enough to wash the feet of others because their identity is rooted in God, not in their reputation.

#### **PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4 NIV**

**Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.**

#### **MICAH 6:8 NIV**

**He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.**

#### **JAMES 4:6 NIV**

**God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.**

**Quote: "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less." — C.S. Lewis**

Application: HUMILITY is the freest person in the room. They are not shackled by the need to be noticed or the fear of being overlooked. Because their worth is anchored in God, they can bend low to serve without losing their sense of dignity—for their dignity is not self-given, it is God-given.

### **III. FAITHFULNESS: Reliable and Covenant-Keeping**

A person of good character keeps their word, even when it costs them. They are dependable in small tasks and faithful in relationships. This mark reflects God's own character—He is a covenant-keeping God who never fails. The faithful person does not abandon their commitments when difficulty arises or when a better option appears.

In a culture of expedience and disposable commitments, FAITHFULNESS is a radical testimony. High character is revealed in long-term consistency: staying in a

marriage, remaining in a church, finishing a task, and honoring promises. Faithfulness is not glamorous, but it is the weight that proves the reality of one's character.

**PROVERBS 20:6 NIV**

**Many claim to have unflinching love, but a faithful person who can find?**

**LUKE 16:10 NIV**

**Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.**

**PSALM 15:4 NIV**

**Who keeps an oath even when it hurts, and does not change their mind.**

**Quote: "The most glorious moments in your life are not the so-called days of success, but rather those days when you keep your promise to yourself and to God out of sheer stubbornness and unyielding integrity." — Eugene Peterson (paraphrased from A Long Obedience in the Same Direction)**

Application: In an age of easy exits, FAITHFULNESS is the forgotten glory. But God Himself is a covenant- keeper, and when you reflect that, you reflect His very nature. The world may not applaud your staying, but heaven takes notice.

## **IV. SELF-CONTROL: Mastery Over Appetites**

A person of good character governs their passions rather than being governed by them. They exercise restraint in speech, anger, sexuality, and consumption. SELF-CONTROL is the fruit of the Spirit that enables a person to say "no" to immediate gratification for the sake of a greater good or a higher calling.

A person without SELF-CONTROL is like a city with broken walls—vulnerable to every enemy. High character is not the absence of desire but the proper ordering of desire under the lordship of Christ.

Self-control is not repression; it is the freedom to choose what is best over what is

urgent.

**PROVERBS 25:28 NIV**

**Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.**

**GALATIANS 5:22-23 NIV**

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.**

**TITUS 2:11-12 NIV**

**For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.**

**Quote: "I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is the victory over self." — Aristotle**

Application: Anyone can win a battle against an external foe. But to master the war within—to govern your tongue, your temper, and your appetites—that is the victory that proves the Spirit's reign. SELF-CONTROL is not restriction; it is the freedom to say yes to what lasts.

## **V. LOVE: Sacrificial Action for Others**

The capstone of high character is LOVE—not mere sentiment, but sacrificial action for the good of others. A person of good character is patient, kind, not envious or self-seeking.

They forgive freely, serve willingly, and seek the welfare of others even at personal cost. This is the distinguishing mark of a disciple of Christ.

All other marks of character—INTEGRITY, HUMILITY, FAITHFULNESS, and SELF CONTROL—find their purpose and fulfillment in LOVE. Without love, they become mere moralism. Biblical love is the engine of character; it moves a person out of self-focus and into the image of Christ, who gave Himself for us.

### **1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 NIV**

**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.**

### **JOHN 13:34-35 NIV**

**A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.**

### **ROMANS 5:8 NIV**

**But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

**Quote: "The Christian's character is not finished until it is finished into love. Love is the summit, the attic, the topmost story of the soul's building." — Alexander MacLaren**

Application: INTEGRITY, HUMILITY, FAITHFULNESS, and SELF-CONTROL are not ends in themselves. They are the scaffolding that holds up the final, glorious form: LOVE. For love is the very character of God made visible in flesh. And when love has the final word, you have become what you were always meant to be—an image-bearer of the One who is love.

A person of high character, biblically defined, is not merely one who avoids evil but one who actively embodies INTEGRITY (wholeness), HUMILITY (dependence), FAITHFULNESS (reliability), SELF-CONTROL (mastery over appetites), and LOVE (sacrificial action). These marks do not develop through sheer willpower but through the transformative work of the Holy Spirit, as a person abides in Christ and submits to the sanctifying power of God's Word.