

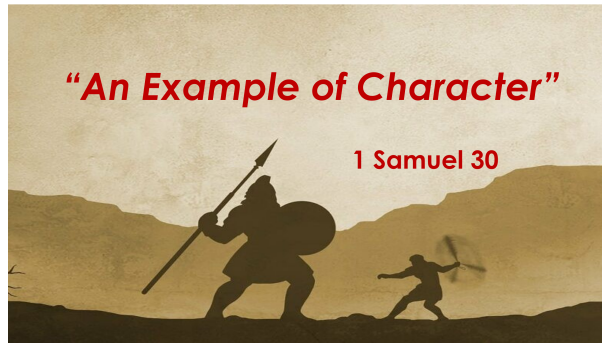
Life under pressure...

Romans 5:1-10

"We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom [Jesus] we have access by faith into this grace..."

So, we glory in tribulations...!

Because: Tribulations work patience, patience works experience [character]. Character works hope. This hope doesn't disappoint; because God's love has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.



Character is:

- Doing what you are supposed to, bearing up under trials, difficulties, and not quitting!!
- Doing right when you don't feel like it!
- Bob Jones Sr. used to say: "The test of your character is what it takes to stop you"
- Do what is right not what is easy!

Definition of character:

- Character is defined as strength of moral fiber.
- A.W. Tozer described character as "the excellence of moral beings."
- As the excellence of gold is its purity and the excellence of art is its beauty, so the excellence of man is his character. People of character are noted for their honesty, ethics, and charity. Descriptions such as "man of principle" and "woman of integrity" are assertions of character. A lack of character is moral deficiency, and people lacking character tend to behave dishonestly, unethically, and uncharitably.
- A person's character is the sum of his or her disposition, thoughts, intentions, desires, and actions. It is good to remember that character is gauged by general tendencies, not on the basis of a few isolated actions. We must look at the whole life. And then excuses are made, justifying wrongdoing...

In 1 Samuel 30:

- David is a good example of character:
- Not only does he continue to do right, follow the Lord;
- In the midst of a horrible trial... [somewhat of his own making]
- He also reaches out to others in love and compassion.
- Even people who you'd think we're just getting in the way. He does right by them.

David had learned & practiced; through his great trials,

- Like running from Saul,
- That there is never an excuse to quit on God!
- Character is what keeps you going.

Let's look at David's character through 3 episodes in this text:

- I. When tragedy strikes (vs.1-7)
 - A. Remember, God had just intervened.
 - B. They came home, 45 mile trip, only to find (v.1)
 - C. A natural response to tragedy (v.4)
 - D. The anger at their leader (v.6)
note what David does... encourages *himself*...
How can any person do that? A man of character can!
He could not ask the Philistines for help, he could not ask Saul or Judah for help, all he had was 600 already exhausted men. What does he do? Where does he turn? HE TRUSTS GOD!
- II. When he meets a stranger (vs.11-20)
 - A. They find an alien, [foreigner] half-dead (v.11).
 - B. The surprise attack because of the Egyptian.
- III. When it comes to being generous with God's provision (vs.18-25)
 - A. The spoil is now David's (vs.18-20)
 - B. The 400 return to the 200 (v.21)
 - C. But, not all shared David's attitude (v.22)
 - D. David's statute – he intervened (vs.23-25)
 - E. Shares the spoils with areas of Judah (vs.26-31)

Conclusion:

- If you're in the Lord's army, you need to learn character!
- God wants folks that will be faithful,
 - That will stop thinking of themselves
 - And focus on the Lord!
- Folks that will reach out to others:
 - To encourage, To meet needs
 - And honor the Lord.
- What is your character? What does it look like?