

Qualities of Character

Reclaiming endangered qualities in your life

Introduction

There are qualities in our life, which take a lifetime to develop. These are qualities, which money can't buy, but they are qualities, which God can provide for us. God is committed to forming a noble character in which he lives of those who decide to follow him. God has the power to both deepen and develop character within each one of us. In this study we shall take a look at qualities, which we may have admired in others, and would like to grow within our own life. Here are qualities, which offer us a radical God empowered way of living in the world today.

Session 1

Courage

Introduction

The truth is that the older we become, the more we begin to understand just how much courage it takes to face the ordinary challenges of life. We either choose to take a risk or crawl into a shrinking shell of safety. Every day we make choices to either trust God, or second-guess God and hide away in corners of fear and doubt. We need to concentrate on how to learn to reclaim the quality of courage.

The big picture

1. Describe an act of courage you have witnessed

2. What are some of the ordinary, day to day acts of courage that people perform without ever being noticed?

The biblical picture

Read 2 Timothy Ch 1 vs. 7-12

3. The apostle Paul exhibits a spirit of courage and deep commitment in this passage. What seems to drive or motivate him to remain courageous?

4. How does the example of Paul challenge or move you to want to be more courageous?

5. The passage says that God does not put a 'spirit of timidity or cowardice' in His followers. Illustrate what you think a spirit of timidity looks like in the following

a marriage

a friendship

in the workplace

in raising children

6. How do you respond to the statement that 'Christianity is a crutch for the weak, and is for cowards'?

7. How did you exercise courage when you first became a follower of Christ?

8. How does living as a fully devoted follower of Christ demand courage from you in the following areas?

In your work

Where you live

In your friendship with non Christians

In your family

Being in the picture

9. What does moral courage look like in the following areas?

When you're tempted to bend the truth to avoid conflict

When sexual temptation lurks at your door

When you have given into a temptation and been caught

10. How have you seen courage build a healthy relationship?

11. Describe a time you saw cowardice undermine and destroy a relationship

12. What is one relationship you need to strengthen by exercising more courage?

13. What is one thing you will need to do to courageously strengthen this relationship?

Session 2

Discipline

Introduction

The challenge for many of us is not that we don't want to be disciplined; it's just that we are not too sure what being disciplined actually means. We need to grow into discipline. We need to identify the areas that we need discipline in and then begin to concentrate on that area of our life.

The big picture

1. Give your self a score from 1-10 in the following areas of your life. 1 is very undisciplined, 10 is highly disciplined
 - a. Spiritual discipline- personal time with God, attending church service, cell time, serving Christ
 - b. Physical discipline- eating habits, exercise, sleep habits, care for your body
 - c. Financial discipline- using money wisely, paying bills on time, saving responsibly
 - d. Relational discipline- spending time communicating, being honest, keeping appointments
2. In which areas are you strongest?
3. What do you think helps you stay strong in this area of discipline?
4. In which area do you need to grow the most?

The biblical picture

Read Proverbs Ch 1 vs. 1-7

5. what characteristics mark the life of a person who is growing in wisdom?
6. How does Proverbs connect discipline with wisdom?
7. How would the writer of Proverbs respond to the following?
 - a. a disciplined person is wise person
 - b. an undisciplined person is a fool

8. If delayed gratification is the essence of discipline, what would delayed gratification look like in the following areas?

- a. Spiritually committing yourself to deeper growth
- b. physically getting in better shape
- c. financially planning responsibly for the future
- d. relationally growing closer to a specific person in your life

Being in the picture

9. What advanced, specific, measurable decisions will you have to make if you are going to exercise discipline in the following areas of your life?

- Your spiritual life
- Your physical health
- Your personal finances
- One specific relationship

10. What are some of the rewards you have experienced when you have exercised discipline in your life?

Session 3 Confidence

Introduction

here is a difference between confidence and arrogance. We are talking about a deep personal conviction that says, 'I have some God given gifts, skills, talents, and abilities, and I'm learning how to use them'. Confidence is a growing awareness of personal competency that comes through challenging ourselves out of our comfort zone, and being willing to grow in areas in which we never thought we could grow

The big picture

- 1. If you can tell your group about an area in which you lacked self-confidence as a child?

- 2. If you have overcome your lack of self-confidence in this area, what helped you gain confidence?

The biblical picture

Read Psalm 139 vs. 1-14

3. This Psalm gives us a window to see our relationship with God more clearly. What do you learn about God's relationship with you from this Psalm?

4. Read vs 14. Finish the statement; 'I know I am fearfully made because.....

5. What is one talent, ability, or spiritual gift that God has given you?

6. How have you developed and used it?

7. How have you seen one of your group members develop and use a God given talent, ability, or gift?

Being in the picture

8. What is one God given ability, talent, spiritual gift that you need to develop and start using?

9. What can you do to start developing greater levels of competency in this area of your life?

10. What is one area of your life in which you need your group members to pray for you, and to be a confidence builder for you?

11. Who could you be a confidence builder to in the life of the Church?

12. What will you need to do to be a confidence builder in this person's life?

Session 4 Patience

Introduction

Patience is something which all of us need to grow into more and more. We live in a world of microwave ovens, e-mails, computers which seem to get faster on a daily basis. We no longer want things now we want them

yesterday. We need to recognise the danger and damage that impatience produces in the world. When we recognise this we begin to understand just how important patience is in our life and development.

The big picture

1. What are some of the moments in your life when you wish you could take a patience pill?

The biblical picture

Read Luke Ch 15 vs. 11-24

2. If you had been the father in this story, what are some of the possible responses you would have had ready for your son when he finally arrived home?

3. Describe the father in the story in one sentence

4. How does this story communicate God's incredible patience?

Being in the picture

5. When patience usually runs out it produces a verbal attack. If you can tell of a time when someone launched a verbal attack on you?

6. If that person had been patient, how could that moment in your personal history been different?

7. If you take the life of Peter, the disciple of Jesus, you can look and see how patient Jesus was with him. Jesus showed patience with Peter in the middle of all his inconsistency. What is one inconsistent area of your life in which God is extending patience today?

8. What needs to happen for you to grow more consistent in this area?

9. What is one situation in your life in which you are struggling with impatience?

10. How can the members of your cell/ group seek to support you as you allow the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to help you become patient?

Session 5

Endurance

Introduction

In our world today we are often looking for over-night solutions, success, growth, and marital bliss. If our expectations are not met easily we tend to look at how to quit. We don't seem to understand the quality of endurance. Endurance provides staying power, it gives reality, the value of endurance is seen in what it develops over the years.

The big picture

1. As you look back over your life, what is one thing you wish you hadn't quit?

The biblical picture

Read James Ch 1 vs 2-4, 12

2. In this passage James walks us through the process of growing in maturity, what are the elements of this process?

3. Why is endurance an essential part of this process?

4. James invites us to consider it 'pure joy' when we face demanding struggles. How is it possible to experience deep joy while persevering through difficult experiences?

5. Look at the areas below and identify some of the quitting points you face.

Physically

Relationally

Morally

Educationally

Spiritually

Professionally

6. What is a critical quitting point you are facing in your life right now?

7. What is pushing you to the point of quitting?

Being in the picture

8. If you can recall a time when you endured and crashed through a quitting point in your life?

9. What did it take to persevere to the point of breaking through this quitting point?

10. How do you respond to the following 'almost every quitting point we face looks like a brick wall, after we crash through it we discover it was a façade, it was really made of tissue paper.'

11. What is one area in which you want to develop endurance in your life?

Session 6 Contentment

Introduction

We live in a culture that believes in the myth of more. We are all driven by the promise of gaining more money, power, awards, fame, and success. The only problem is that such things really do not satisfy, they don't really fill the void. We search continually for contentment in our life. True contentment is not about what we have or accomplish, it is rather about who has us and what He has accomplished for us.

The big picture

1. Describe if you can the consequences you have seen arise in the lives of people who can't ever seem to say 'enough'

The biblical picture

Read Psalm 103 vs 1-13.

2. According to this Psalm what does God provide for his children?

3. How have you experienced the truth of this Psalm in your life?
4. After reading this Psalm closely describe the heart and character of God?
5. How does a discontent person who is always seeking more look in the light of this picture of God?

Being in the picture

6. In your opinion what fuels the constant surge of discontentedness in people's hearts and lives?
7. How have you seen yourself believing in this myth?
8. How has your life changed since the void in your heart has been filled with the presence of God?
9. What is there that still needs to be changed or challenged?