### Keep Your Love On – Character

**INTRODUCTION**

Romans 8:29 says, “*For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”* God has decided that you, as part of His family, will become like Jesus. Your identity is who God says you are but your character is who your actions say you are. Your identity speaks of who God calls you to be, while your character speaks of who you are in this moment. So our goal in life is for our character to flow out of our God-given identity, so that in our character – how we live each day – we live up to our identity (Philippians 3:16).

**KEY POINTS**

1. Character changes over time – it has a trajectory
2. Character can open or close doors to our future
3. Christ-like character is the key to fruitfulness
4. Character development can be inconvenient at times

**KEY SCRIPTURES**

**Matthew 4:18-19** – “As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ‘Come, follow me,’ Jesus said, ‘and I will make you fish for people.’

**Luke 6:40 -** “The student/disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.”

**Isaiah 64:8** “Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the **potter**; we are all the work of your hand.”

**Further reading:** Acts 15:36-40, related to point 2 & 3, how Mark’s character affected his ministry.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Q. Who do these passages say will develop Christ-like character in you? What do they suggest your responsibility is in that?

Q. How can the spiritual disciplines (e.g. Fellowship, Prayer, Bible Study, Worship, Giving, Serving, Fasting) help develop character? Do you find any of these inconvenient?

Q**.** Consider these 4 important characteristics for a ministry role; **Character, Competency, Chemistry** (with the team) and **Calling**. How does a person’s **character** influence one’s fruitfulness in the other three areas? How might this open or close doors in our life?

Q. Is there a specific area in your life you sense God asking you to attend to in order to develop Christ-like character? What is the next step you can take in obedience to Him?

(Adams comments: By developing good habits of thought & action, through much effort, discipline & perseverance, over time a person forms Christ-like character. **The intentional becomes the instinctive, and the instinctive flows from the intentional.)**

**PRAYER POINTS**

* That we would ‘keep our love on’, toward God no matter whatever life throws our way (reactive)
* That we would ‘keep our love on’, toward God, proactively, by habitual practice of spiritual disciplines
* That we would continue to develop Christ-like character through the work of the Holy Spirit

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

* **Christmas Touch:** Every year we create gift baskets for those in our community who are in need at Christmas. This includes over 400 inmates at Milton Prison, Women’s Refuge, Dunedin Hospice, & Dunedin Night Shelter. If you know someone or a family who needs help please contact Tony Pantel with a name and address.