

11-2017

## The Character of Jesus Christ

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### Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "The Character of Jesus Christ" (2017). *The Second Person File*. 73.  
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## THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST

What kind of man was our Lord? What were some of His characteristics? Consider:

- His zeal

*"And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"* (John 2:17).

A. His zeal forced Him to remain behind in Jerusalem as a boy

*"And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* (Luke 2:49).

B. His zeal led Him to become the first circuit preacher

*"And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them. And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent. And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee"* (Luke 2:42-44). *"And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him"* (Luke 8:1).

C. His zeal caused His friends to think him mad

*"And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself"* (Mark 3:21). The words *"He is beside himself"* may be paraphrased, *"He has gone crazy over religion."*

D. His zeal prompted Him to risk His life in purifying the temple

*"And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"* (John 2:17).

E. His zeal gave Him no rest until He accomplished His mission

*"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"* (Luke 12:49-50).

- His compassion

*"Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity"* (Heb. 5:2).

A. Upon the shepherdless multitudes

*"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd"* (Matt. 9:36).

B. Upon the sick multitudes

*“And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (Matt. 14:14).*

C. Upon the hungry multitudes

*“Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way” (Matt. 15:32).*

D. Upon a widow

*“And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not” (Luke 7:13).*

E. Upon a leper

*“And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean” (Mark 1:41).*

F. Upon a father

*“And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth” (Mark 9:22-23).*

G. Upon a demoniac

*“Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee” (Mark 5:19).*

It did not take a sinner long to know that, while Jesus hated sin, He loved the sinner. Our Lord was very compassionate. People instantly knew this about Him. That’s the great secret in winning people to Christ or in ministering to the saints—the manifestation of a real, genuine love for those being ministered to.

- His meekness and gentleness

*“Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you” (2 Cor. 10:1). “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Pet. 2:21-23).*

A. In dealing with our infirmities

*“Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory, And in his name shall the Gentiles trust” (Matt. 12:18-21). “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord*

*pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust” (Psa. 103:13-14).*

B. In washing the feet of the disciples

*“He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded” (John 13:4-5).*

C. In His own words

*“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:28-30).*

D. In His sufferings and death

*“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth” (Isa. 53:7).*

- His courage

A. As seen in his hometown proclamation (Luke 4:16-30)

During this, His first recorded sermon in Nazareth, He boldly pointed out Israel’s historical unbelief which prompted God even back in Old Testament times to bypass, on occasion, the chosen people and bless believing Gentiles instead. A murderous attempt was made on His life at the end of the message.

B. As seen in His two cleansings of the temple (John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12-16)

The first of these took place at the beginning of His ministry and the second during the final week. Both took great personal courage.

C. As seen in His fearless ministry to a madman (Mark 5:1-9)

No coward would have dared confront (as did our Lord) this raging lunatic who doubtless possessed superhuman and satanic strength.

D. As seen in risking His life to raise Lazarus (John 11:7, 8, 16, 53)

He was fully aware (as were His frightened disciples) that a trip to Bethany at this time would simply invite the enraged Jews to attempt to stone Him again (see John 11:8). But He went anyway.

E. As seen in denouncing the wicked Pharisees (Matt. 23)

Never in written history was a group of religious hypocrites so soundly and severely rebuked as were the wicked Pharisees by the Savior here in Matthew 23. Furthermore, He condemned this powerful and perverted group to their face.

F. As seen in his approach to Calvary

*“And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again” (Mark 10:32-34). “And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51). (See also Matt. 26:46.)*

- His obedience

*“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38).*

A. The demonstrations

**In the temple** – *“And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49).*

**In the garden** – *“And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:41-42).*

B. The declarations

**By Paul** – *“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19). “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8).*

**By Hebrews** – *“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:8-9).*

- His love

*“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13).*

As a member of the Trinity, Christ naturally loves that which His Father loves.

However, while He was on earth, He especially loved:

A. His Father – *“But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence” (John 14:31). “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:10).*

B. His disciples (John 13:34, 17:2, 9, 12; 19:25-27) – *“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another” (John 13:34).*

C. Little children – *“And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such*

*is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:13-16).*

- D. Certain close friends (John 11:1-3; 13:23) – *“Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23).*
- E. The city of Jerusalem – *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matt. 23:37). “And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it” (Luke 19:41).*