

Character – Lesson 2

Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School

Character

- Character is what you are in the dark. Dwight Lyman Moody
- Character in a saint means the disposition of Jesus Christ persistently manifested. Oswald Chambers

Those of mature character exhibit the qualities listed in 1 Tim 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Character is developed by disciplining ourselves for the purpose of godliness; by making much effort (taking pains and being absorbed (1 Tim. 4:7-15) in the maturing process. That process involves the Holy Spirit as He uses the word of God to bring about the will of God in the child of God's life – as we learn what is pleasing to the Lord (Eph 5:3-10).

The overarching character quality in mature believers is that they are above reproach (blameless) – they are free from even the appearance of evil and no charge of evil could be brought against them let alone sustained. The next quality we looked at was that the mature believer pursues purity – in thought, motive, and action they are free from sexual immorality.

	1 Timothy 3:2-7	Titus 1:6-9
1	<i>above reproach (v2)</i>	<i>above reproach (v6)</i>
2	<i>husband of one wife (v2)</i>	<i>husband of one wife (v6)</i>
3	temperate (v2)	
4	prudent (v2)	sensible (v8)
5	respectable (v2)	
6	hospitable (v2)	hospitable (v8)
7	able to teach (v2)	able to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (v9)
8	not addicted to wine (v3)	not addicted to wine (v7)
9	not pugnacious (v3)	not pugnacious (v7)
10	gentle (v3)	
11	uncontentious (v3)	
12	free from the love of money (v3)	not fond of sordid gain (v7)
13	manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (v4)	having children who believe and are not accused of dissipation or rebellion (v6)
14	not a new convert (v6)	
15	must have a good reputation with those outside the church (v7)	
16		not self-willed (v7)
17		not quick-tempered (v7)
18		loving what is good (v8)
19		just (v8)
20		devout (v8)
21		self-controlled (v8)

3. Temperate (1 Tim 3:2)

Thayer's Greek Definitions:

Adjective: 1) sober, temperate; 1a) abstaining from wine, either entirely or at least from its immoderate use; 1b) of things free from all wine, as vessels, offerings

Verb: 1) to be sober, to be calm and collected in spirit; 2) to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect.

From the context and since another character quality concerning alcohol is also listed it should be best understood as a metaphor for having a clear-headed proper focus – someone with sober judgment and action.

In a metaphorical sense, *νε/πηαλιος* means “alert,” “watchful,” “vigilant,” or “clear-headed.” That may be its primary sense in this passage. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: 1 Timothy

Paul is describing a man who has a clear focus on life. Practically speaking, a temperate man doesn't lose his physical, psychological and spiritual orientation. He is stable and steadfast, and his thinking is clear. Gene Getz in *The Measure of a Man* page 55

Several passages speak of being temperate (sober):

¹³Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep **sober** *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 1:13

⁸Be of **sober** *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹But resist him, firm in *your* faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. 1 Pet. 5:8-9

⁸But since we are of *the* day, let us be **sober**, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. ⁹For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. 5:8-9

1 Thess 5:8-9 speaks of being temperate because we have properly clothed ourselves for battle.

Faith: The complete trust in God's promises and plan which moves us to action in obedience (Hebrews 11; 12:1-2).

Love: Love for God which drives us to obedience (John 14:15; 21; 23-24; 15:10) and service (Heb 12:28-29).

Hope: A complete and unwavering conviction in our position before God – past, present, and future that serves as an anchor for our soul (Heb 6:19).

4. Prudent (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8)

Thayer's Greek Definitions:

1) of a sound mind, sane, in one's senses; 2) curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate

... a sure and steady mind. He is not rash in judgment, but thoughtful, earnest, and cautious. ... His mind will be controlled by God's truth, not the whims of the flesh. Jesus Christ will reign supreme over every area of his life. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: 1 Timothy

This quality describes a person who acts from temperance – he is wise. Wisdom begins with a healthy and proper view of God (Psa 111:10; Prov 1:7; 9:10).

²³Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; ²⁴but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD. Jer 9:23-9:24

And ourselves (humbly).

³For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think **more highly** of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have **sound judgment**, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. Rom 12:3

Prudence (wisdom) moves us to righteousness:

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹²instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live **sensibly**, righteously and godly in the present age, ¹³looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, Titus 2:11-13

5. Respectable

Thayer's Greek Definitions:

1) well arranged, seemly, modest

It is translated as "of good behavior" in the KJV and is as modestly in 1 Tim 2:9.

⁹Likewise, *I want* women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, **modestly** and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, ¹⁰but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. 1 Tim 2:9-10

The verb form can also mean to adorn:

⁹*Urge* bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, ¹⁰not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will **adorn** the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. Titus 2:9-10

So this character quality concerns a well ordered and arranged life and testimony that adorns the Lord, His word, and Gospel message with honor in every respect. Do we walk in a manner worthy of the Gospel (Phil 1:27; Eph 4:1; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 2:12)?

What are some ways to live respectably?

Summary: A mature(ing) believers live their lives in such a way that they are above reproach (blameless). They are striving for sexual purity in thought, word, and deed. They are temperate – they have a clear unwavering spiritual focus. They are prudent – they live their life based in wisdom. And they are respectable – they adorn the doctrine of God and make Him look good.