

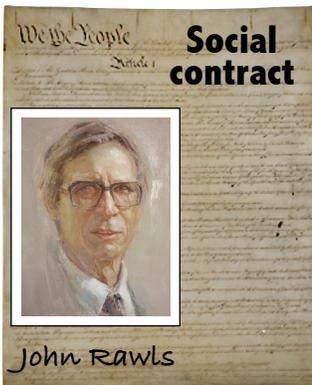
Where are we going?

1. Character and Christianity
2. Character and the image of God
3. Character and the Body of Christ
4. Challenges that shape and show character.
 - Vision - expectations
 - Relationships - community
 - Fear - faith
 - Conflict - differences
 - Success & Failure - stress
 - Change - growth
 - Private life - the heart

In a search for a definition of character we must look at something other than a mirror.



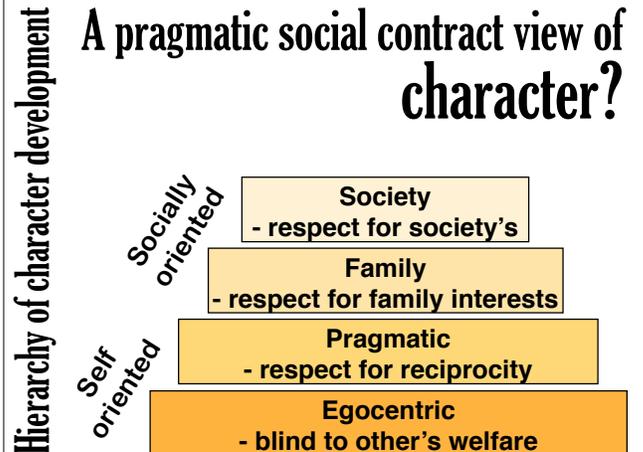
The pragmatic social contract view of character?



That which works best.

A social agreement reflecting the will of the majority.

A pragmatic social contract view of character?



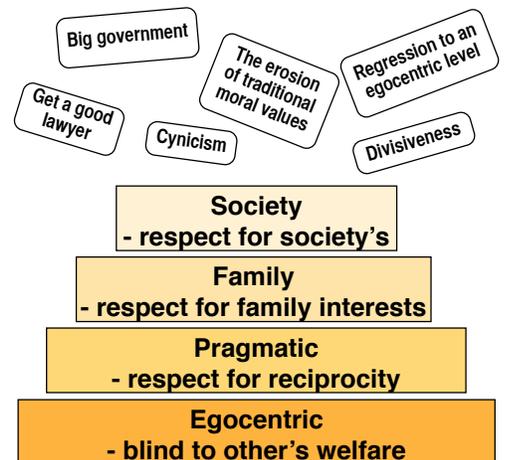
Hierarchy of character development (A modern American model?)



(too much to live with and not enough to live for?)

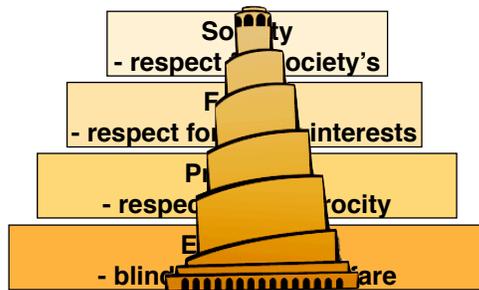


Hierarchy of character development (A modern American model?)



Hierarchy of character development
(A modern American model?)

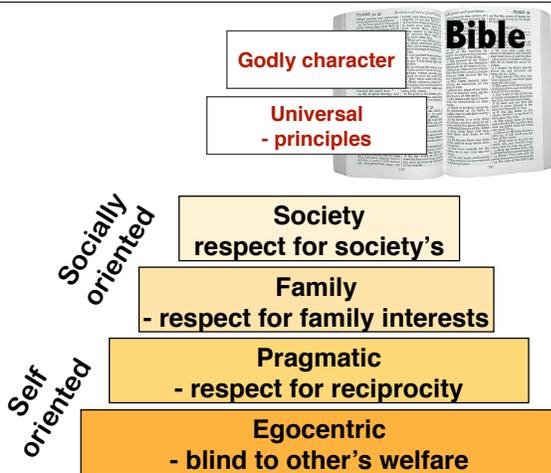
The problem with all towers of Babel is that they are never high enough.



Karl Barth

“I have learned two things.
1. There is a God.
2. It is not me.”

Hierarchy of character development



Genesis 1:26-27

“²⁶ Let us make man in Our **image**, according to Our **likeness**; and let them rule over . . . all the earth. ²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Genesis 1:26
“image” “likeness”

What is it?

1. The immaterial part of humanity.
2. The capacity for human dominion over creation - fire, art, reason, language, etc.
3. The capacity to commune with God.

4. The capacity to reflect certain attributes of God.

Today's lesson

Character and the image of God

1. **Jesus** - a revelation of character.
2. **Grace & Truth** - the content of character.
3. **Faith, hope, & love** - the heart of character.
4. **Shalom** - an indicator of character.

1. **Jesus** - the revelation of character

John 1

“9 There was the true **light** which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. . . . 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of **grace and truth**. . . . 17 For the Law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** were realized through Jesus Christ. 18 No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has explained Him.**”

Jesus enlightens every man in that he shows us what we are called to be as image bearers of God’s glory.



Jesus is the image of God

Colossians 1:15

“He is **the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation.”

Hebrews 1:3

“He is . . . **the exact representation of His nature,**”

Incommunicable attributes of God **not grasped by the man Christ Jesus**

Philippians 2:6-7

Self-existence
Infinite
Perfect
All powerful
All knowing
Everywhere present

“although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **emptied** Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.”

2. **Grace and Truth** - the essence of character

John 1

“¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of **grace and truth**. . . . ¹⁷ For the Law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** were realized through Jesus Christ.”

Grace (show) Truth (tell)

**winning the right
to be heard
with our life**

**having words of
light to express
with our tongue**

Grace

- Compassion
- Humility
- Generosity
- Respect
- Forgiveness
- Forbearance
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness

Truth

- Courage
- Understanding
- Wisdom
- Integrity
- Trustworthiness
- Discipline
- Discernment
- Vision
- Consistency

1 Peter 3

“¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being **ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope** that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; ¹⁶ and keep a good conscience so that in the things in which you are slandered those who revile your **good behavior** in Christ will be put to shame.”

**Lead with
a life of
grace**

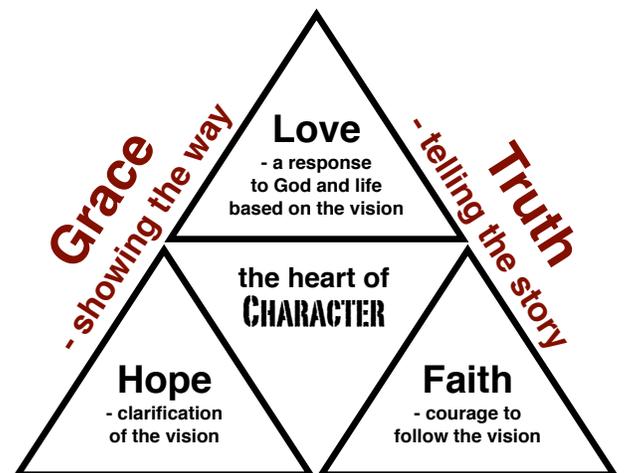
**Follow up with
words of
truth**

3.

Faith, Hope, & Love
**- the essence of
character**

1 Corinthians 13:13

“But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”



3. **Shalom** - the indicator of character

SHALOM שלום peace
is the O.T. pinnacle of blessing
accessible through Godly
character.

- ✓ **Wholeness** - complete, fulfilled, prosperous
- ✓ **Harmony** - legal, emotional, and social peace with God and creation
- ✓ **Success** - fruitful in fulfilling one's calling in life

SHALOM and Jesus

Isaiah 9:6

“And the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called . . . **Prince of Peace.**”

John 14:27

“**Peace** I leave with you; My **peace** I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

SHALOM and Paul's Gospel

Ephesians 1:2

“Grace to you and **peace**, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Ephesians 2:14

“For He Himself is our **peace**,”

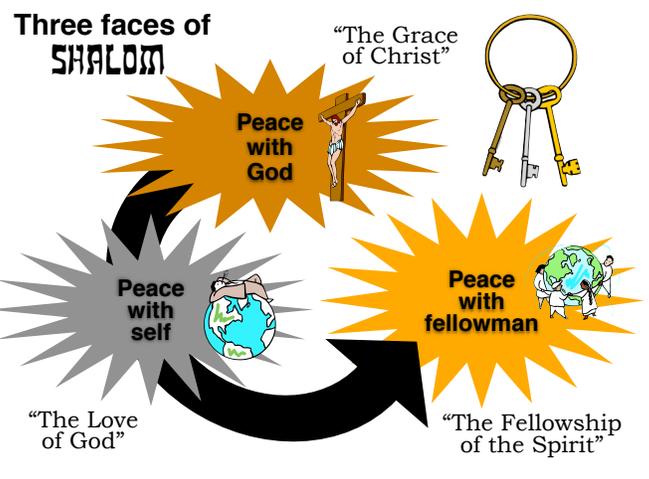
Ephesians 6:15

“and having shod your feet with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**,”

Three faces of SHALOM

2 Corinthians 13:14

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.”



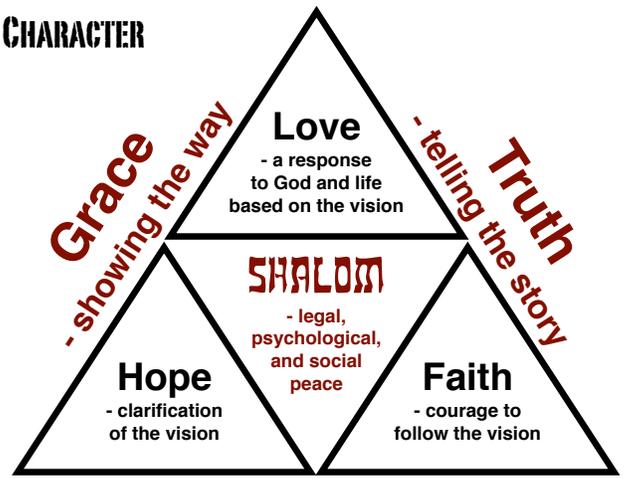
A person of Godly character:

- ✓ **Is confident**
- they have courage to do what is right without selfish defenses.
- ✓ **Is a peacemaker**
- they resolve conflicts rather than create them.

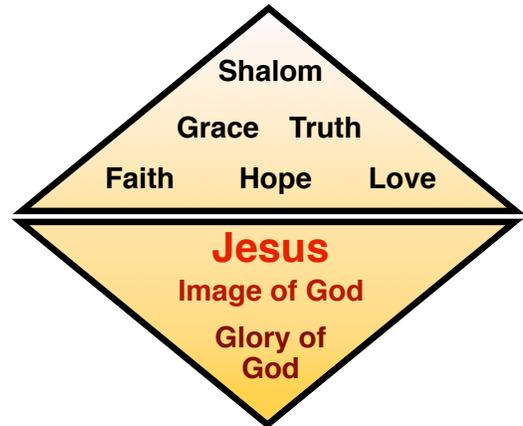
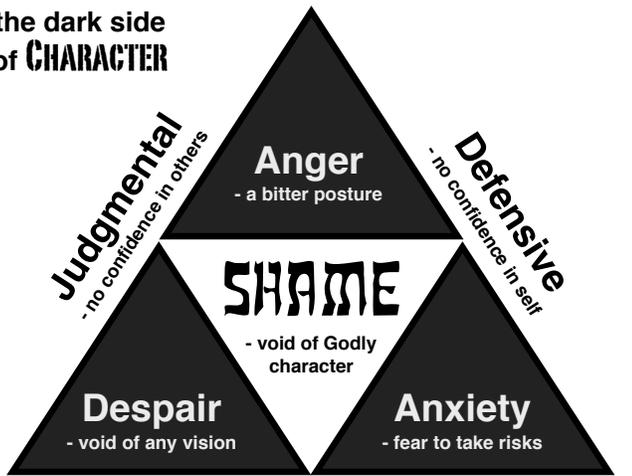
- ✓ **Sleeps well**
- they experience a deep soul rest.



CHARACTER



the dark side of **CHARACTER**



GODLY CHARACTER

is the image of God in **Jesus** radiating through his disciples as **shalom** expressed in **grace & truth** from a heart of **faith, hope, & love.**

Take home points

Study the ways of Jesus so as to better understand character.

Pray for shalom in your life.

Every day - worship, learn, & give.