SERMON

BY

NO. August 10 - 1939, 1934

Text, Luke 2:52

Subject, Characteristic

"Jesus advanced in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man."

Jesus was a perfect character - yet He grew, as all perfect characters do, in wisdom, in stature and in favor with God and man. This is the way every character ought to grow - mentally, physically and spiritually.

The word character comes to us from the French, who took it over from the Latin who in turn had accepted the word from Freke’s Hippocrates.
meaning to engrave. Character is then an engraving, a picture literally cut into something, and that something is the soul. The soul of man is the canvas on which time, making our experiences, develops a picture, which we call character. The picture is not fully completed even at death. The development proceeds by two forces, the inside power of nature which shapes the personality into a cold or a warm, into a deliberate or reckless
tend of mind. How these are the exterior forces at work in the formation of character. These shape the personality into a negative or positive, into what we call a disagreeable and an agreeable person; a degrading or an elevating life, according to how the natural forces of the soul react to the unexpected experiences of the physical world in which we live.

In general character is a combination of endowed and acquired qualities distinguishing
individual or a race. For example, the character of the present generation of Porto Ricans is an intelligent restlessness according to law, that of the previous generation was ignorant submissiveness to authority. The character of the people as a people has changed and is changing, and we trust will change with the years, as is that of any progressive people.

Character is what we are, reputation is what others think we are. Character is marked by wrong thinking and wrong doing, reputation by...
Character comes out victorious over slanders and lies while reputation may be ruined by a mere suspicion. A reputation may endure long after a character has been destroyed by unknown (to others) acts of wrong. Your reputation may survive many transgressions and personal sins, but character cannot. You need do no evil to lose a mere suspicion often does the work your reputation while your character is destroyed and can be destroyed only by you yourself.
see new visions, new heights to scale and you decide to climb, to overcome the precipitous and fatiguing path of stones to reach the higher plane. Or you see the easy level path, apparently level with carpets of grass and requiring no effort to walk and you decide to go down that path to a steady and finally a dark ending. In both cases you are the one to decide, to choose, which way you go. You have to go up or down. There is no fixed character. You
Character is changing for the better or for the worse all the time. We cannot appreciate the mathematical measurement of a moment. If we could we could see the gross growing. Character develops so gradually we cannot see it grow except by comparison. A girl affirmed that her character was the same as it was six years ago. Many think their character was what they were years ago. You have to compare your life not with others but with your
own life in the past, to estimate its growth.

The Prodigal son, with a sack of golobos on his back, recalls his early days at home. It is true he thought first of the good food in his father's house. But he also recalled his character at home. He was then pure and clean, but he saw he is an outcast. "I will go and say I have sinned." The Prodigal wept in sorrow as he compared his present with the past and reviewed the years in which he chose to do his own will, to follow his own desire.
He was like the student who said "I like any thing that does not go against my ideas." But the trouble lay right there, the prodigal's ideas were all wrong.

Great characters on seeing

Their character are both happy and humiliated, happy to see how they have been kept and developed for greater service to man and God, but humiliated by their failure to accept all He means that were clues for the development of their lives. 

No one but God knows your true character. Judas
Socorist was considered a man of good character. He was made an apostle of the twelve disciples. He was the treasurer of the 12. A story is told that Jesus and Judas knew that he was a thief from the beginning. Judas failed to react rightly to the precepts and advice of Jesus. He followed Jesus but held to his own way of doing things. He persisted in having his own way even to the last. When all discouraged he sought out a tree and hanged himself. In a physical way Judas typifies what happens spiritually to a great many people. They want no laws, they
persist in doing as and how they desire. At the end of their lives they are discouraged and spiritually long themselves. Jesus was a tiny baby, then a boy with all the potentialities of a human being of clean pure parentage. He increased, advanced, grew into a man of perfect character, perfect in intellectual development, wisdom, perfect in physical completeness - stature, and perfect in spiritual grace in favor with God and man, in the same way every
your person ought to grow, and what all can be of the watchman where he goes, what he does and thinks. This is what Peter meant when he said "make it your whole concern to furnish your faith with salvation; resolution with intelligence, intelligence with piety; self-control, self-control with steadfastness, steadfastness with piety; piety with brotherliness, brotherliness with Christian love. For these qualities exist and increase with you. They make you active and fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Remember this—it takes years to produce a
really great character.
It is steadily doing in a
noble way your every day
duties as a child of God.
That is the pathway to real
that wins.
greatness. It is the one
who realizes the value of
small and even trivial
things and does them.
It is the little insignificant thing that builds up all
of us eat, drink and
to marry is the creed of
some. When we are old
we will think of higher and
better things. They will
then think of them but
they will not then be able
to attain those higher things.
It is too late. Their wings
for soaring high have
been broken. They have to content themselves with a lower place in life. In saying this I do not forget the enviable grace and mercy of God. God stands ready to lift a man up and make use of whatever qualities he may have. Samuel Hadley was of noble birth. He cut loose and went down to the depths of a drunkard and gambler. God saved him. But Hadley could be used by God only among the down and out huns. His ancestor Jonathan Edwards preached to the most select of the intel-
Frederic, was made President of Princeton and is now recognized as the greatest metaphysical of his age. Right-thinking and doing made Edwards a great character in God's kingdom. Wrong-thinking and doing limited God's ability to do in and for man. Your character is what you make it.

A character is not formed by dreaming. It is made by deliberate, clear thinking, laws and rules must be followed. No character like that of Jesus Christ can be developed without
following, obeying well defined laws.

Some say that the character is an indefinite thing and is developed unconsciously, that no laws can govern its development. A river does most very thing. The river is the land, the more crooked is its course and the most wasteful and destructive its waters. It is when the engineers harness the waters of the Niagara and force them through tubes according to laws, it is hum fits waters generate light and power. A character that
grows up without definite effort to obey rules and laws will become a failure. You cannot become a musician, an artist, a scientist or a lawyer without following rules and getting someone to help you to attain. You cannot become a good character unless you obey the rules governing character. The purpose that Jesus said "I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me" (Jno. 6:38). Obedience is the first step toward character building. The 2nd step is to act
your affections on things above, not high, not on the things of the earth. This does not mean that you are not to prize highly the things of this world. It does mean that the spiritual things are to be above all other things. Affections set on God make you more appreciative of the things of this earth—His creation. The soul is the subject on which life is engraved, the result of which we call character. When we allow God to take the experiences of our lives into His hand, the trials and troubles,
that would otherwise tear gashes and cut, bring out characters in God's likeness and beauty. A likeness to God is what we desire, above all else. The ideal character is the one whose life was made perfect through the things he suffered. If we want to grow into a perfect Character we must watch our model, the painter who from time to time looks again at the primal colors, so we too must keep our vision of right-corrected by comparing, measuring
Our lives by His life of Jesus.

Our characters are changed to higher characters by measuring ourselves by our model, Jesus Christ, and shaping our lives by His example. To grow physically, mentally, and spiritually into a perfect man, should be the aim of every true follower of Jesus. Jesus grew advanced in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. This should be our aim—to grow like Jesus.