



*From Where I Sit . . .*

## **“Characteristics Of Character ”**

A few weeks ago a friend called who was gathering ideas for a work he’s producing on character. In response to some of his questions, I want to share with you some badly needed thoughts both within our nation, our homes, and in the church. We are badly in need of individuals of great character.

Andrew Card, former chief of staff to Pres. George W. Bush was interviewed on Bill O’Reilly’s show on 7-12-08 at the time of the death of former Press Secretary, Tony Snow. Andy gave a most fitting description of the life of Tony, and in doing so he used words that are most descriptive of characteristics of people with “Character.” Speaking of Snow, he said **“.....he was nice when he didn’t have to be. .... He did good when no one was looking.”**

I’ve often stated that “character” is what you are when you’re alone and no one is looking. It’s what’s on the inside that consistently controls our choices even when there’s no one who knows whether we’ve made the right moral or ethical choice.

Several years ago when Brett White was a young teenager in our youth group at Forrest Park Church of Christ in Valdosta, GA., his sister had won an opportunity with the local radio station to compete at an appliance store in Valdosta to win a Hi-Fi Stereo (that was several years ago!). The rules allowed it so Brett agreed to go for his sister. The competition was to see who could keep their hands on the tv screen the longest – winner take all. Late into the night the competition had narrowed down to Brett and one other person. They had been at this grueling ordeal for hours now. Brett’s hands were still glued to the set, but sweat was running down his face and getting into his eyes. In a flash and without thinking about it he took his hand off and reached up, wiped his brow, and then put the hand right back on the set. No one saw the split second reaction. Brett went on to win the contest, but being who he is down deep inside, Brett couldn’t accept the award. The world would never have known, but **his character spoke louder than his sister’s desire for a hi-fi.**

A few years ago (mid 90’s), a child at our Lads to Leaders Convention came up to me to confess that she had not won the art first prize we had just awarded her. She knew that the names had mistakenly been written down wrong and that another student should have received the trophy. **Her character caused her to return the trophy.** Only she and God would have ever known the difference. Now we all know that this young lady has “character.”

These illustrations represent characteristics of people all over the world who live by a built in code of conduct that supersedes the law of “survival of the fittest,” or “survival of the shrewdest.” This code is what we call “character.” Character doesn’t consider “getting ahead at any cost” to be the way to live life. We are so badly in need of individuals of character to lead us in all the dimensions of our lives. May we in turn be able to follow their excellent examples.

**Romans 5:3 - 5 (NKJV) <sup>3</sup> “And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that *tribulation produces perseverance*; <sup>4</sup>*and perseverance, character*; and *character, hope*. <sup>5</sup>Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”**

**. . . . Terry Broome**