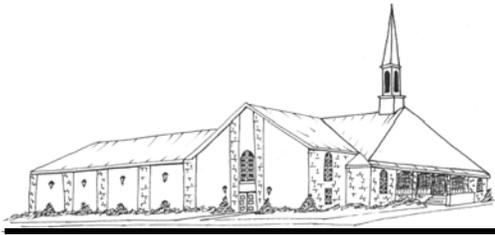


# BROAD STREET

## BANNER



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### *From Where I Sit . . .*

#### **“Characteristics of 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. Mr. Card gave a most fitting description of the life of Tony Snow, 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 if we fail to make the choice in a moral and ethical way or not. The word is *dokime*, and is defined as **“proof by testing.”** It speaks in the Greek of the process of proving, or the result of being tested. It is **“Tried Integrity.”** People of “character” are people who, under the temptation to behave otherwise, are simply unable to defy their inner nature – thus they have character, integrity. There are several references in the New Testament that show us this English rendering of *dokime*. See: **2 Cor. 2:9; 8:2; 9:13; 13:3; Phil. 2:22** – all rendered the word as **“the proof.”** Other synonyms for “character” help us understand it’s meaning: Honesty, Honor, Integrity, Decency, Principle, Moral Excellence.

Our nation has experienced a major shift in “world view” that has affected every aspect of our lives. Tragically, the old days of “A man’s word was his bond,” and “A handshake seals the deal” are gone. Along about the time I started preaching in the late 1960’s many movements came out of the closet. Among them were: **Situation Ethics, Moral Relativism, and Values Clarification – Redefining in the schools.** Formerly held values of life were thrown out and students were taught to “think for themselves.” Unfortunately this ushered in an era where things once sacred were now targeted as the enemy. A concerted effort by Humanist advocates and many others have weakened the foundation of America’s value system. Unfortunately, the public school systems in more liberal parts of these United States have been a targeted avenue for the advancement of all these new “world views.” We’ve been fortunate in the “Bible Belt” where God is still believed in. Many of our teachers have not bowed the knee to liberalism.

Somewhere along the way, the home structure weakened. Somewhere along the way people began making jokes about **“Ozzie and Harriett” “Leave It To Beaver” “Andy Griffin Show” “Donna Reed Show” and many other tv week night shows** where family values were extolled and the home was the haven from all that was evil in the world. Instead, Archie Bunker, Maude, Three’s Company, ad infinitum replaced these values-oriented homes with a very liberal agenda. When this happened, the resistance to these outside forces went with it. We’re left with a broken political structure, a liberal judicial system, a weakened concept of “home, and family,” and “social gospel” churches. Advocates of inclusiveness and political correctness all wreak of the conviction that there are no absolute standards. Along with all this, “character” became less the “rule of thumb” and more an “accidental meeting once in a while.” Store owners are in absolute shock with a customer who mistakenly gets out the door with a product they didn’t pay for but comes back inside to pay. Jaws drop when someone comes back inside the store to return excess money given to the shopper while merchants were making change. Character has become the exception and not the rule.

Character is something we must cultivate. Our responses and our choices must be so second nature that people will already know what we will do, just based on our character. I leave you with this challenge: Watch your thoughts...they become your words; Watch your words...they become your actions; Watch your actions...they become your habits; Watch your habits...they become your character; Watch your character...It becomes your destiny.

. . . Terry Broome