

Christian Character

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Since Christians are to be followers of Christ Jesus and the ultimate goal for a Christian is to become Christ-like, we should learn what is Christ's character and strive to develop that character. Here are a few characteristics of how Jesus lived a human life on earth and continues to live today. This list of characteristics comes from "God the Son" section of "Index of Bible Doctrine" in The MacArthur Study Bible – Revised & Updated Edition (copyright 1997). Most of the definitions of these characteristics came from The Global Concise Bible Dictionary – Lawrence O. Richards (editor) published in 1999.

Holy – This is the essential nature of God – to be separated from what is worldly and impure. God's holiness is intimately linked with righteousness.

Righteousness – This is being conformed to the moral and ethical norms revealed in God's Law. Being righteous is acting in harmony with one's obligations to God and to other people. Absolute righteousness is the inner moral conformity of one's character to the character of God.

Good – This is being morally right, loving, useful, profitable, merciful, and being just and walking humbly with God.

Loves – Jesus has a deep affection for us and is committed to a caring relationship with us.

Merciful – This is a compassionate response to help others who are in need even though they don't deserve help. Mercy is the deep emotion of concern aroused by suffering, despite the sufferer's feelings toward you.

Obedient – Jesus did everything that was commanded by God the Father.

Humble – This is being free of pride, self-importance and arrogance, and having a personal dependence on God and having honest concern for others. To be humble is to be totally dependent on God and thus in right relationship with Him. (See Philippians 2:3,4)

Just – This is showing actions in harmony with moral and ethical norms, being honest and fair in dealing with disputes.

Faithful – Jesus can be trusted because He is completely trustworthy, reliable and loyal. Deuteronomy 7:9 says that God is the faithful God, keeping His covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love Him and keep His commandments. Therefore, since God is completely loyal to us, it is very appropriate that we are to be loyal (faithful) to Him. God does not evaluate us by how much we have, but rather how faithfully we use what we have in His service.

Sinless – Jesus did not deviate, fall short or rebel against any of the standards established by God.

Zealous – Jesus had a passionate devotion to what He taught about God and His kingdom to come.

Patient – This is the capacity to remain self-controlled despite difficult circumstances or actions by others that might be expected to cause anger or upset.

Compassionate – This is having pity or loving concern for others, which often moves a person to provide help. Knowing that God has compassion for us, should bring us comfort and hope.

Forgiving – This is the ability and desire to pardon or absolve the wrongdoing of someone, or to cancel a debt owed by someone, or to give up resentment for what someone has done wrong.

Eternal – This is living forever. Knowing that life is everlasting beyond the grave, Jesus taught much on the Kingdom of God. We need to live Kingdom-minded, becoming Christ-like in preparation for our eternal kingdom life.

Micah 6:8 says "[God] has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." So, to reach the ultimate goal for a Christian, we must do our best to develop these many aspects of Christ's character.