

Character Choices That Can Set You Apart From the World

I am a people-watcher. Are you? I find it fascinating to watch common men and women go about their daily lives and observe the character choices they make.

My soul soars with absolute honor and applause when I see a foible-ridden human determine to make a decision with great virtue. My heart swells when I realize that an ordinary person has chosen to live an extraordinary life without the glare of media or publicity. This humble man or woman has determined to live a life of character with no visible accolades or no worldly recognition. They chose to do the right thing simply because it was the right thing to do.

I find it incredibly interesting and much more disheartening to watch those in the public eye as they make character choices for the world to see. From some celebrities, I have learned how to do life well and how to ensure that my character outlives any fame that I may acquire. From other lifestyles of the rich and famous, however, I have certainly learned what choices *not* to make on a daily basis.

As a people-watching addict, let me just say that observing the candidates who are currently running for POTUS has been a character study of the most riveting kind. It has been a vivid surveillance of the depreciation of human beings who are hungry for power and will do anything at all to achieve it.

They will lie their way into power; they will buy their way into importance; they will bully their way into platform; and they will exaggerate their way into prominence. They will blame their way into visibility; they will compromise their way into a forward position; and they will mock others with whom they disagree. Perhaps the saddest choice of all is that

they often use their tongues as a weapon far more devastating than nuclear weapons will ever be.

So that this current presidential campaign is not a total waste of time and money, I have determined to live differently than those who are running for public office. I have decided to do the right thing even when others may think that it is the wrong thing to do. I have determined that my life will smack of integrity and honor rather than of power and platform.

Will you join me in this determination?

1. I will not lie even when it is hard to tell the truth. I will tell the truth. Even when the fault is mine and I have failed, I will still tell the truth.

2. I will not mock others. I will not make fun of people whose education is less than mine, whose looks are different than mine are or whose belief system is different than mine. I will honor each individual I meet or talk about as a person made in the image of God.

3. I will not blame others for the problems of today. The truth is, we are all to blame for the mess America is in. I will not blame Democrats, Republicans, the Left, the Right, the Media or someone whose skin is a different color than mine. I will be part of the solution on a daily basis and never cast blame in someone else's direction.

4. I will do one act of uncommon kindness every day. I will say "thank you" often and with enthusiasm.

5. I will listen before I speak and endeavor to understand before I answer.

6. I will not be a smart-mouth. I will not be sarcastic or make a joke at someone else's expense. Even when I disagree, I will try not to be unkind.

7. I will understand that politics and therefore politicians are actually not the answer to any problem that we face today.

The answer to any human dilemma is heartfelt prayer. The solution to any schism is to love others in the same manner as Jesus loved.

8. I will encourage others day after day while it is still called today.

9. I will love my family in word and in deed. I will stay committed to my marriage vows even when we disagree. I will make sure that the atmosphere at my home address is one of peace and kindness. The truth is that what happens in my home on any day of the week is more important than what happens at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

10. I will pray for America. I will vote. But more importantly, I will pray. And I will try to always do the right thing just because it is the right thing to do. {eo}

Carol McLeod is an author and popular speaker at women's conferences and retreats, where she teaches the Word of God with great joy and enthusiasm. Carol encourages and empowers women with passionate and practical biblical messages mixed with her own special brand of hope and humor. She has written five books, including *No More Ordinary*, *Holy Estrogen!*, *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart* and *Defiant Joy!* Her most recent book, *Refined: Finding Joy in the Midst of the Fire*, was released last August. Her teaching DVD *The Rooms of a Woman's Heart* won the Telly Award, a prestigious industry award for excellence in religious programming. You can also listen to Carol's "A Jolt of Joy" program daily on the Charisma Podcast Network. Connect with Carol or inquire about her speaking to your group at .