

CHARACTER

Lesson 18

STRICT--TAKING MATTERS SERIOUSLY

Burden to Impart:

In this lesson we see that we need to build up a character that is strict, with an attitude that takes matters seriously, not carelessly or loosely. We should not simply take the most convenient way of doing things. We should do things in the proper way, even though it may require more effort and carefulness. This requires strictness. Strictness is the secret of the best students. Strictness is the necessary character in every soldier if his army is to win the war. Because of looseness Samson told the secret of his great strength to Delilah and was then defeated by his enemies (Judg. 16:4-21). Because of strictness the Israelites were able to completely defeat their enemies and destroy the great walled city of Jericho (Josh. 6:1-5, 12-16, 20).

Memory Verse: "Not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians 6:6).

Facts to Teach:

1. The secret of a strict person is that he takes things seriously. Anything we count as important and take seriously will not be handled in a careless, loose, or irresponsible way. It will be handled very carefully and strictly.

2. By nature we are "loose." By practice and training we may become tightened up in our character and in our way of doing things. Our shoestrings become loose with no effort. To keep them tied and tight requires strictness and watchfulness.

3. Without training people are "easy-going" and do things in whatever way seems to be the most convenient and easiest. Because they are loose, and not strict, they consider their convenience to be more important than the effort that is required to do their job in a strict way. Some hospitals require the surgeons to scrub their hands and forearms for ten minutes before surgery, even though they wear sterile gloves and gowns which cover their hands and arms during the operation. A good doctor is one who is strict, who does things properly. He would never scrub for nine minutes just to "save time." He would always scrub the full ten minutes to thoroughly remove all the germs from his hands and arms.

4. To fight a war, the soldiers must be trained to be strict in everything they do, from shining their shoes to not even saying one word concerning secret information they may know about. They must be trained to handle everything seriously, for many lives depend upon how seriously and strictly they do their job. Some examples are:

- a. The night guard must not become drowsy or sleep.

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- b. Those with top secret information must not speak a word about what they know to anyone, neither family, wife, or friend.
 - c. Orders must be strictly followed.
5. The best student is not usually the smartest student in the class, it is the strictest student in the class.
- a. They will study when they are supposed to and will stop when they have finished the assignment, not when they feel bored or tired.
 - b. A strict student will not consider that he has finished studying just because he finished the homework. He considers he has finished studying when he *understands* the subject thoroughly.
6. Some examples of looseness and strictness are:
- a. Samson became loose and told the secret of his great strength to Delilah, the woman he loved (Judg. 16:421). After she discovered that his long hair was the secret to his strength, she cut his hair while he slept. His enemies then came, bound him, put out his eyes, and led him away captive.
 - b. The children of Israel were given very strict orders how to fight the strong walled city of Jericho. Due to their strictness they fought and defeated Jericho.