

**P508**

**Grace Notes Radio Program**

**SERIES: Why trials?**

**SET 08: Character Construction underway- Part 3**

**INTRO: God created man in His image and likeness. His likeness is His Glory, or His character. Because of sin, we've lost our glory, but once we receive Christ into our lives by faith, Romans 8:29 says that God works to conform us into the likeness of His Son – and give us back the glory we've lost. Today on Grace Notes, Barbara Sandbek will explain how God works His character trait of self-control in us as she shares some of her own experiences.**

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**Once God got my attention, He had a lot of work to do. The first thing He did was clean house. After my prayer of surrender, I did as I promised and began reading the Bible. For the first time in my life, I didn't want to put it down – even when I got nauseated reading in the car. I asked God to keep me from being tempted by anything while I was learning about Him. I believe He led me to pray that way, because for three months I was temptation free. Then came a traumatic test. It was so intense I remember saying, "Lord 90% of me wants to give in, but I can hear that still small voice of yours calling... "There's no turning back my daughter." God allowed only what I could bear, and with His strength, I met that challenge and permanently rid myself of a besetting problem.**

**2 Corinthians 5:17 says...**

**If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.**

**I believe there's a period of time between where the old things pass away and the new things take over. We may feel a bit of a struggle as our 'comfortable self' calls us back into our old ways, but, this is when God says "Do you really mean business?"**

**In the parable of the sower in Mark Chapter 4, Jesus talked about the responses of four types of people who hear the Word –**

**no root – in one ear and out the other...they do nothing with it  
shallow root – flashes in the pan...they can't take the heat  
shriveled root - fence sitters..they won't commit**

**flourishing root - fruit bearers – they're the recipients of the prize. The key to getting to the 'new things' and 'fruit-bearing' stage is the continual study of the Bible – and that takes discipline.**

**Self-control follows knowledge in the list of character traits we've been discussing in 2 Peter chapter 1. This is how we put into practice what we've learned about God. It's the trait that moves us from 'self' preoccupation to 'caring about others'. I believe this to be the catalyst by which we begin to bear fruit.**

**Philippians 2:3 says...**

**Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves.**

**When Jesus lived among us, He served God first, then others, and Himself last. Jesus said he only did what He saw His Father doing. Serving God is surrendering control of ourselves to Him for His use. Ultimate self-control is really God-control.**

**God hadn't been controlling the order of things in my life at that time. My priorities were myself, my job, my family, and then God. God not only had to remove some of my habits, He had to change my priorities. I needed to give Him control to do this.**

**Only God can change our hearts. People can nag all they want but it isn't until GOD convinces us of our need that we're willing to change. God had shown me that being 'clean' was freeing (that's GOODNESS), and that learning about Him was exciting (that's KNOWLEDGE), but I was so used to looking for fulfillment in what I accomplished that it was hard to even realize I needed to change. But once again, God showed me the void inside and assured me that He had a better way. Listen to the poem I wrote...**

**FULFILLMENT  
By Barbara Sandbek**

**Longing to fulfill my dreams...**

**Seeking to achieve my schemes...  
I'm longing...and I'm seeking.**

**Days are filled with busyness...  
Working to achieve success...  
I'm busy...and I'm working.**

**But I'm not feeling peace inside  
There's an emptiness I try to hide.  
Achievements, fame are soon consumed  
And nothing is left in my lonely room.  
I'm searching...and I'm yearning  
I'm longing...and I'm seeking.**

**Oh God, You said You have a plan.  
I've tried all things that are known to man.  
Please take control, take all of me  
And help me, Lord, to watch and see  
Your working while I'm resting,  
Your loving hand of blessing.**

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**\*\*\* SEEKERS OF YOUR HEART \*\*\***  
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**My priorities didn't change overnight.**

**I was a workaholic. I based 'who I was' on 'what I did'. I needed the 'fix' I got from my accomplishments – or so I thought. Though I loved my family, I'd often choose my needs over theirs.**

**I wasn't used to following God's direction, so He had to teach me how. Unlike His initial wooing of me with pleasant things and successes, He chose a different method this time - He made life difficult.**

**I had had good, reliable baby sitters, but in one year I went through seven sitters. It was a nightmare. I began to see the effects on my kids. One Sunday, we went to a birthday party. Our younger son was almost two. He fell off a toy and busted his gums. On the way home, I looked down at his little face and saw some caked blood on the side of his mouth. I realized that couldn't stay home with him the next day and that**

**I WANTED to. It really hit me. I honestly cared more for him than myself for a change. Now I was ready for another change and God didn't have to force me into it.**

**Within a few months, God worked out an almost impossible work situation to allow me to work part-time and be with my family more. It wasn't easy, but slowly I began to enjoy serving others. I continued to work, but it was no longer for my source of fulfillment.**

**Philippians 2:13 says...**

**It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.**

**Matthew 19:26 says...“With God, all things are possible”.**

**Never underestimate God's ability to make things happen when He tells you to do something.**

**No man is an island. We are all made to be used. I was just thinking this past week, what a waste it would be to live your entire life just for yourself. You'd have nothing to show for it – no legacy to leave behind – no memory to warm someone's thinking.**

**I stopped to talk with a man who was giving out Gospel tracts in a parking lot. His reason for doing it was because he watched his friend just wait around to die. He didn't want to check out like that – He wanted to do something for the Lord.**

**Philippians 2:4 says...**

**Look not every man on his own things. But every man also on the things of others.**

**Where are your priorities? No one ever saw a u-haul truck attached to a hearse. You can't take it with you. Somebody needs you to be a part of their character construction. Maybe that somebody is right in front of you.**

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**\*\*\* LORD SOMEBODY NEEDS YOU \*\*\***

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**For more information about this ministry write to**

**Sandbek Ministries**

**P.O. Box 581**

**Fallston, MD 21047**

**or email us through our web site at [sandbekministries.com](http://sandbekministries.com).**

**If God leads you, please send along a gift to help us stay on this station.**

**Join us again on our next program as Barbara continue her series “Why Trials”.**  
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