



Christian Behavior

*“Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy,
at thy right hand are pleasures forever more” (Psalm 16:11).*

When ships leave port, sailors must determine three things: first, they must know how to keep from bumping into one another; second, they must know how their ships can remain seaworthy; and third, sailors must decide where the ships are going.

In our Christian journey, all the questions boil down to just one: Do I really want Jesus to be my pilot, or do I want to take over?

Preview

Aaron was 11. His behavior was horrible. He would kick, scream, run away, hide, become withdrawn, disrupt classes, and make everyone disgusted with him. His psychiatrist, Dr. William Glasser, in his book *Reality Therapy*, describes Aaron as the most obnoxious child he had ever met. But the pity is that “no one had ever told him that he was doing wrong.” No one had ever set limits on what he could do and not do.

The psychiatrist decided to try a new tactic. The boy would have to behave—to act reasonably—or be punished. The boy responded remarkably—“probably because he had been anxious for so long to be treated in a realistic way.” Thus he became courteous and well-behaved, and his grades climbed to straight A’s. For the first time Aaron began to play constructively with other children, to enjoy honest relationships with others, and to stop blaming his troubles on his mother or other people. Dr. Glasser calls this “reality therapy.” According to him, one of our greatest needs is to realize that we are personally responsible for what we do. In other words, right performance accomplishes more than wrong behavior.

As we study the lifestyle God has planned for us, we must remember that His plan for us is a result of His love. God wants the very best for us.

Points to Ponder

If you were on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? Yes!

Christians are called to be like Jesus, and like magnets, to draw others to Him. Since we are not saved by works, why should we be concerned about our behavior? As members of God’s family, we want to honor the family name, the family reputation. Why is it important for me to be careful about what I watch and what I read?

Whether we realize it or not, the things we read, the things we look at, and the things we talk about are influencing us. If my choices have been poor, these things will soon seem commonplace, and very soon, not very wrong. We are changed by what we behold. The things we think about every day are what we are becoming. Anything that weakens our relationship with Jesus is wrong and inappropriate.

People looking at us should know that we are Christians by what we do, where we go, what we wear, and how we act and react.

Every Christian occupies a pulpit for someone else and preaches some kind of sermon every day. What kind of a sermon is your life preaching?

Many times in life we wonder why things aren't going the way we want them to. Often we are causing our own problems. In the verses that we are going to read we will learn what behavior pleases God.

Nuts & Bolts

1. What is God's desire for all His children?

3 John 2: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest _____ and be in _____, even as thy _____."

2. What is God's appeal to all Christians?

Romans 12:1: "I beseech you, Therefore, by the mercies of God, that ye _____ your _____ a living _____, holy, acceptable unto _____, which is your _____ service. And be not conformed to this _____: but be ye _____ by the renewing of your _____, that ye may _____ what is that _____ and _____ and _____ will of _____."

3. One who loves Jesus will avoid extremes in lifestyle and maintain balance.

One extreme is believing we can earn salvation by what we do or don't do. Another extreme is thinking that it doesn't make any difference what we do or how we live.

Galatians 5:13: "Ye have been called unto _____ [to be free]; only use not _____ for an occasion to the _____ [to indulge your sinful nature], but by _____ serve one another."

4. What difference does it make to anyone how I take care of my body?

1 Corinthians 6:19: "What? Know ye not that your _____ is the _____ of the Holy _____ which is in _____, which ye have of _____, and ye are not your _____? For ye are _____ with a _____: therefore glorify _____ in your _____, and in your _____, which are God's."

5. What is the biblical position on alcohol?

Proverbs 20:1: "Wine is a _____, strong drink is _____: and whosoever is _____ thereby is not _____."

6. Does God give any guidelines about what we should eat?

Name some clean animals listed in Leviticus 11:1-8:

_____.

Name some unclean animals listed in the same verses:

How do we distinguish between clean and unclean animals?

How do we distinguish between clean and unclean fish? (Leviticus 11:9-12).

7. What principle should govern our eating and drinking?

1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye _____ or _____, or whatsoever ye do, do _____ to the _____ of _____."

8. What kind of guidelines can you think of about television, videos, music, and other forms of entertainment? List a few:

9. What general guideline does the bible give to govern our conduct and lifestyle?

Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are _____, whatsoever things are _____, whatsoever things are _____, whatsoever things are _____, whatsoever things are of good _____; if there be any _____, and if there be any _____, think on these things."

10. What type of dress honors God the most?

1 John 2:15, 16: "Love not the _____, neither the things that are in the _____... For all that is in the world, the _____ of the flesh, the _____ of the _____, and the _____ of life, is not of the _____ but is of the _____."

1 Timothy 2:9, 10: We are to wear "_____ apparel, with shamefacedness [propriety] and _____ [decency and propriety]; not with _____ hair, or _____ or _____ or costly _____, but (which becometh women professing _____), with _____ works."

Words to Remember

Behavior: One's conduct.

Caffeine: A stimulant found in coffee or tea—harmful to health.

Character: Moral or ethical quality.

Nicotine: A habit-forming, addictive substance, harmful to health, commonly found in tobacco.

Stimulant: Any food or beverage that stimulates, such as coffee, tea, alcohol, or narcotic drugs.

Temperate: Avoidance of all harmful substances and moderate use of good things.

The Difference Between

Amusement: Something that amuses.

Entertainment: A plan or program to engage one's interest.

Recreation: Activity that helps re-create the body and mind.

I Truly Believe

Studying how birds learn to sing, an ornithologist raised young bluebirds in isolation from all bird sounds. The birds would give distress and alarm calls, but they never attempted to sing.

After six months the researcher played a recording of a robin song for the bluebirds. They totally ignored it. A Baltimore oriole song received the same treatment.

Finally, a bluebird song was piped into the cage. The birds hunched down and listened intently. One and then another tried to imitate the recording. Within five minutes they were singing a recognizable bluebird song.

Satan pipes into us all kinds of evil things in an attempt to trick us into sinning. But we can be as unresponsive to sin as was Jesus—2 Peter 1:4 gives us courage: “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”

Bluebirds are controlled by bluebird natures. They will not respond to the robin's or any other non-bluebird songs. When Christ dwells in you, you will be controlled by His divine nature. By His grace you will not listen to Satan's temptations.

Think through each statement carefully. Check the statements with which you fully agree.

I believe in living the lifestyle that will produce Christ-like purity, health, and joy.

I believe that true beauty does not consist in outward adornment but in the ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit.

I believe in the laws of health and will do my best to follow them.

I believe that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

My Prayer

Dear Father,

Thank You for what the Bible has revealed to me about me. Give me a desire to make necessary changes. May Your Holy Spirit give me a willing heart to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. In His precious name I pray. Amen.