



An undenominational publication
devoted to the teachings of Jesus and
His apostles and dedicated to those
who want to know more about the Bible

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WHY BE GOOD?

What does the Bible teach about “being good”? Showing good behavior is a decision everyone must make for himself. In the book of **Titus** the Scripture gives instructions on being good: *“I want you to insist on these things so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works”* (Titus 3:8).

Older men are taught to be *“sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love and in steadfastness”* (Titus 2:2) Mature men of God must practice moral purity and ethical fairness.

Older women are instructed to be *“reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine, but to teach what is good”* (Titus 2:3). They are to be interested in the next generation and train younger women how to be good.

Younger women are to *“love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their husbands”* (Titus 2:4-5). Consistency in living is vital so that *“the word of God will not be reviled.”*

Younger men are encouraged to be *“self-controlled”*. When young men exercise self-control they develop *“integrity, dignity and sound speech”*. They have good morals, and godly relationships with others. (Titus 2:6)



Scripture says **Bond-servants** (much the same as **Employees**) are to be *“submissive to their masters (employers), well-pleasing, not argumentative. They must not steal from their employers, but show they can be fully trusted.* This kind of living will draw people closer to God (Titus 2:9-10).

Both believers and non-believers have their reasons for morality. But we must ask why the Apostle Paul pointed his readers to Christian morality.

It can be argued that moral people are happier people. Some say good people

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are healthier, too. Morality makes for wholesome living in community. It is the answer to crime, corruption and over-crowded jails. Even from a secularist perspective it makes sense for people to be good to one another.

What is the motivation for being good? One who says “I am good because being good brings me the good life,” will find himself hard-pressed to continue to be good in difficult times, when the “good life” is lost in unwanted pain and disappointment.

In reality, the decision to be a good person needs to be built on the foundation of what God has done for us in Christ. The Bible says: *“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age”* (Titus 2:11). Christians are motivated to be good because God has been good to them! His grace and forgiveness teaches them to say “No” to misbehavior, and “Yes” to good behavior. Believers are what they are because God is what He is. This is the foundation of conduct that will sustain believers during personal, family and economic crises, when compromise with ungodliness promises short term pleasure.

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Scripture says we wait for the *“blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ”* (Titus 2:13). Christians know where they are going and are preparing themselves for what lies ahead! The worldly minded have lost their way; they have no clear purpose for living and no certain hope for tomorrow.

Christians want to be good because they have been redeemed by the cross. The Bible says Jesus *“gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good”* (Titus 2:14).

The reasons for “being good” are different for believers and unbelievers. Unbelievers are good when being good benefits them; when it’s in their best interest to be good. Believers are good because of what God has done in extending His grace upon them.

It is not always easy to do the right thing. Sometimes it’s inconvenient and difficult. Believers are good because they feel accountable to the “Higher Power”— the Father in heaven.

— DT

Scripture quotations from
English Standard Version



A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

What's That?

The noun “disciple” occurs almost 300 times in English translations of the New Testament. It is one of the most important concepts to understand and practice. It is at the very heart of being converted to Jesus. He said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20).

ORIGIN OF THE WORD. In the Old Testament the word indicated a “**learner**”, discovering how to obey the Lord. One could be a “learner” only if he had a heart that truly desired to do what pleased God. The psalmist prayed: “*Give me understanding that I may **learn** your commandments*” (Psalm 119:73).

In the 400 year period between the close of the Old Testament era and the coming of Jesus to bring the New Testament, Jewish rabbis developed rabbinic schools where students sat at the feet of Master Teachers to learn the scriptures and the traditions of Judaism. The rabbi’s were the Master Teachers; the students were the “Disciples.” The students had an obligation to accept a rabbi’s interpretations as final and absolute. Sometimes rabbis would put a “spin” on Scripture and tradition that placed heavy burdens on the students producing spiritual enslavement. Jesus exposed these man-made interpretations for what they really were -- distortions of the scriptures. On one occasion, Jesus said: “*In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the*

commandments of men” (Matthew 15:8-9). On the other hand, Jesus “*opened their minds to understand the Scriptures*” (Luke 24:46).

Jesus had every right to teach His disciples the true meaning of the scriptures because He came directly from the Father in heaven, and taught what He had received from His Father. He said: “*I declare to the world what I have heard from Him*” (John 8:26). Indeed, Jesus was the “*Word of God*” who was “*with God*” in the very beginning; shared the very nature and essence of God Himself. He “*was God*” and came to earth to “*dwell among us*” (John 1:1-3,14).

Jesus will not entangle you in man-made traditions. He will teach you the truth, and the truth “*will make you free*” (John 8:31-32).

Submit your heart and mind to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Become His disciple. He has the ability to answer your questions, clear up your confusions and give you the spiritual freedom your heart longs to embrace.

A close-up photograph of a man's face, focusing on his eyes. He has dark hair and is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of his skin and the intensity of his gaze.

TEMPTATIONS OF THE EYES

Jesus said: *“If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell”* (Matthew 5:29). Many enticements to sin come through the eye. The things we read, the movies we watch, the clothes (or lack of clothing) we notice can live on and on in our minds. Some people have moved to a different city to get away from what pulled them down in the last location, but temptations of the eyes followed them to the new location. Some have promised God they would never fall for visual temptations again, but these promises are easily broken. Here are some practical steps to protect ourselves from the temptations that come through our eyes.

First, we need to make deliberate decisions to stay away from circumstances where we will be likely to slip into old habits. If we have a weakness for lust we need to avoid being around sexually graphic images. *“I made a covenant with my eye not to look lustfully at a girl”* (Job 31:1, New International Version)

Second, we must devote our lives to good deeds and acts of kindness. When we start doing good things for God and others we do not have much time or energy to get into spiritual trouble. Imitate our Lord Jesus who *“went about doing good”* (Acts 10:38)

Third, deliberately focus on wholesome thoughts — things that are *“true, honorable, just, pure, lovely and commendable”* (Philippians 4:6). The scriptures are full of healthy words and images that re-enforce our resolve to overcome things that ensnare.

Finally, our prayers must be filled with thanksgiving for blessings we have received, rather than simply confessing weaknesses and guilt. Confession of sins is important but if failure is the primary focus of prayer it is not sufficient to build us up. Counting our blessings helps us be humble and instills a positive mind-set that helps grow spiritually. *“In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:6-7).

When Jesus spoke about tearing out one’s *“right eye”* and *“throwing it away,”* He did not intend for us to inflict pain and harm on our bodies, but to make serious efforts to overcome temptations of the heart. It was not a casual resistance to temptation but a definite resolve not to fall. Living in a way where *“the whole body will be throw into hell”* is too great a price to pay for taking enticements of our eyes lightly. —DT

LIVING FOR THE “PRAISE OF GOD’S GLORY”



God wants everyone -- adults and children -- to bring glory to Him by the way they live. The Bible calls this living for the “*praise of His glory.*” In this time of spiritual confusion, political conflict, economic uncertainties and the collapse of moral absolutes, we need to get back to the basic and fundamental understanding of God’s purpose for our lives. The Scriptures tell us God chose His people before the foundation of the world to be “*holy and blameless,*” “*to the praise of His glorious grace.*” Those who hope in Christ should live “*to the praise of His glory,*” hope to acquire a heavenly inheritance “*to the praise of His glory*” (Ephesians 1: 3-24).

In a nutshell, the reason for staying alive and getting up every morning is that God has a purpose for us. He made us live to praise Him to bring glory to Him.

When we fail to focus on God’s plan for us life gets out of focus. Priorities get mixed up. The things we should value the most we value the least. Preparations we need to make for eternity we fail to make. We become vulnerable to all kinds of spiritual deceptions, and end up hurting ourselves and others. The goal of life should be to make God happy with us, not to make ourselves happy with ourselves; to serve the Lord, not to serve ourselves. Rather than to ask “How can I get the most out of life?” we should ask “How can God get the most out of me?”

The call to follow Jesus is to die to self. As one person put it: “*It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me*” (Galatians 2:20). Christ teaches us to center our hopes and dreams on the will of God, not on selfish desires. Jesus died “*that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him*” (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Everyone needs to know the right question to ask. The most important question is not “How can I make more money? How can I get a bigger house? How can I have more fun?” but “How can I bring glory to God by the way I live?” When all is said and done that’s what matters. *That’s all that really matters.*

It’s time to re-examine what is most important in your life, and decide to live for “*the praise of God’s glory*”! We can help you make this decision.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR ME

Part One: "God and Man"

- 1:1 **Genesis 1:1.** "In the beginning God _____ the heavens and the earth."
- 1:2 **Genesis 1:26, 27** True-False: God made man in His own image.
- 1:3 **Genesis 2:16, 17** Yes - No: Did God give mankind instructions to live by in the beginning?
- 1:4 **Genesis 3:1-7** Yes-No: Did man choose to disobey God?
- 1:5 **Genesis 6:5, 6** Yes-No: Did mankind become wicked early in history?
- 1:6 **1 John 3:4-8** Sin is _____. Those who continue in sin are of _____.
- 1:7 **Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Isaiah 59:2** Yes-No: Does God let our sins separate us from Him?
- 1:8 **Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8** True-False: Very few people sin.
- 1:9 **Matthew 25:41-46** What will happen to unforgiven sinners? _____
- 1:10 **Jeremiah 10:23; Proverbs 14:12** True-False: Man doesn't need help in living a godly life.
- 1:11 **John 3:16; 1 John 2:2; 1 Peter 2:24** Yes-No: Did God love us enough to provide a way for our salvation? What did God do? _____

The remaining parts of this study will tell you about God's plan for us and what He expects from us as His children.

SEND YOUR FIRST LESSON FOR GRADING TO:
Christ for Today, P.O. Box 755, New Milford, Connecticut 06776,
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PICK 3 BOOKLETS YOUR CHOICE!

- Copy of the Bible (easy to understand)
- Is the Bible God's Word?
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- Why So Many Denominations?
- Why Does God Allow Suffering?

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