

PURPOSE OF STUDY: To help people to understand how a Christian should live in order to glorify God, win others to Christ, and experience true happiness; and to urge them to “purpose in their heart” to commit their lifestyle to Jesus.

TEXTS:

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| 1. PS 1:1-3 | 9. DT 7:26 |
| 2. 1JN 2:15-16 | 10. 1TI 2:9-10 |
| 3. HEB 11:24-26 | 11. MK 14:69-71 |
| 4. 1CO 15:33 (2CO 6:14-18) | 12. PHP 4:8 |
| 5. 1CO 7:1 (HEB 13:4) | 13. AC 19:19-20 |
| 6. PS 101:3-4 | 14. COL 3:8-10 |
| 7. MT 6:22-23 (2CO 3:18) | 15. DA 1:8 (PHP 4:13) |
| 8. COL 3:16 (AC 16:16-18) | |

THE STUDY:

1. What is God’s recipe for happiness? PS 1:1-3

The word translated “blessed” is a Hebrew word for “happy,” while the word translated “law” is the Hebrew word “Torah,” which means “instruction.” In other words, true happiness comes from shunning the counsel of those who don’t honor God, and choosing instead to follow God’s instruction found in His word.

2. What does the Bible urge us not to love, and why? 1JN 2:15-16

The world and all the temptations in it – desires of the flesh (physical pleasures arising out of the body including sexual immorality, drug addiction, food addictions), desires of the eyes (lust, greed, and other mental pleasures experienced without actual physical action), and the pride of life (love for attention, praise, and reputation). These carnal desires destroy the love of God out of the soul.

3. Do the pleasures of the world bring real lasting happiness? HEB 11:24-26

No. While the things of the world bring pleasure for a short time, they often bring sorrow, pain, depression and shame afterward, and ultimately the loss of eternal life.

4. What counsel does the Bible give about our interpersonal relationships? 1CO 15:33 (2CO 6:14-18)

“Bad company corrupts good character” (NIV). We are strongly influenced by our peers, and as such, we should be careful not to associate with and participate in the activities of the ungodly on a regular basis. We should choose friends that will support and encourage us in our spiritual decisions.

5. Does the Bible say anything about premarital sex? 1CO 7:1-2, 8-9 (HEB 13:4)

Yes. The Bible cautions that “it is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman” (ESV). Sexual relations outside the marriage relationship are condemned by the Bible as “fornication” and “adultery,” which will exclude a person from the kingdom of God (1 Co. 6:9-10). Sexual relations before marriage confuse the relationship and the pure principles that should guide it. Some assume that in God’s eyes, a person is technically “married” as long as they love the person they are having relations with. However, Jesus did not consider the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well “married” to the man she was living with (see Jn. 4:16-18). Although premarital sex has become very commonplace in our society, and even among some within the church, it is still condemned by the word of God.

6. What counsel does the Bible give about the things we look at? PS 101:3-4

David pledged before the Lord that he would put nothing wicked before His eyes.

- 7. What does the Bible say about TV, movies, video games and internet? MT 6:22-3 (2CO 3:18)**
Jesus taught that what we take in through our eyes will either make us more or less spiritual, depending on what we are watching. The Bible teaches the principle that we are changed into the same image we behold. If we behold immorality, we will become more immoral. If we behold holiness, we will become more holy.
- 8. What does the Bible say about the music we listen to? COL 3:16 (AC 16:16-18)**
We are urged to listen to Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs – songs that build up our Christian experience instead of tearing it down. Some fail to realize that Christian lyrics can't make worldly music Christian. When a woman with an evil spirit followed after Paul, she was using the right words, but that didn't make her chanting acceptable to God.
- 9. What happens when we allow worldly practices into our homes? DT 7:26**
We are not to take the abominable practices of those who don't love God into our homes, or we are in danger of becoming corrupted by them.
- 10. Is the way a Christian chooses to dress important? 1TI 2:9-10**
Definitely! There's an old saying that goes "You never get a second chance to make a first impression." That impression often has a lot to do with how we dress. Christian dress should be neat and appropriate, not extravagant or flashy, drawing undue attention to oneself. It should be modest, not seductive or revealing. The personal emphasis should be to please God with the inward character and not to please people with the outward display.
- 11. Is it acceptable for a Christian to use slang or foul language? MK 14:69-71**
After Peter denied Christ the second time, he was identified as one of Jesus' followers because He was "a Galilean" – a fisherman – and was told that his speech betrayed him. Galilean fishermen were known for their language much like men of the sea are known today ("He swears like a sailor!"). Peter, however, was a Galilean who didn't swear; and the only Galileans who didn't swear were the disciples of Christ, who were known for their purity of speech. Immediately, Peter tries to prove that He isn't a disciple by cursing and swearing. The words of a Christian should be pure, positive and uplifting, bringing glory to God.
- 12. What is a good general guideline for Christian entertainment and behavior? PHP 4:8**
We should train our minds to dwell upon things that are pure, true, virtuous, and uplifting.
- 13. What did the Ephesian believers do when they realized that certain lifestyle practices were displeasing to God? AC 19:19-20**
They burned them so they would no longer be a temptation for themselves, nor a stumbling block for someone else. Only when they were willing to get rid of those things that they had allowed to come between themselves and God did the word grow mighty and prevail in their lives.
- 14. In light of all these things, what does God urge us to do? COL 3:8-10**
To not act like the world around us, but to "put off" the "old man" – our former conduct, our unChristian way of life – and "put on" the "new Man" – the new way of life we have through Jesus.
- 15. How are we to accomplish these changes? DA 1:8 (PHP 4:13)**
We must purpose in our heart not to defile ourselves with the practices of the world, and put our trust in Jesus to give us the strength to overcome all of our weaknesses.

APPEAL:

God created us to be happy, joyful, and contented. So many of the things in this world that we think will bring us happiness bring only sorrow, discouragement and discontentment. Jesus wants us to have so much more! Not only does He show us the pathway to happiness, but also promises us the power to walk that pathway. Don't you want to choose to give Jesus your lifestyle today, and allow Him to give you His?