

LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

1 When seeking salvation, how large a sacrifice will be needed?

MATTHEW 13:45-46 “Again, the _____ of heaven is like a _____ seeking beautiful _____, (46) who, when he had _____ one pearl of _____ price, went and _____ that _____ had and _____ it.”

2 What does Jesus require of those following Him?

LUKE 9:23-24 “Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him _____ himself, and take up _____ cross _____, and _____ Me. (24) For whoever desires to _____ his life will _____ it, but whoever _____ his life for _____ sake will _____ it.’”

Many become Christians but continue to include things in their lives that were there prior to accepting Jesus. But surrender to Jesus and accepting Christianity is not only membership but also discipleship. Discipleship makes Jesus our Savior and our Lord. Lordship goes beyond membership. It is the point where we allow Jesus to shape us. That shaping develops when we “deny” ourselves of the things He asks us to surrender. Self-denial is the key to full surrender. Jesus taught Peter that self-denial gives Christ full permission to shape our lives. Peter surrendered to Christ. See John 21:18.

3 How does Isaiah compare obedience with disobedience?

ISAIAH 1:19-20 “If you are _____ and _____, You shall _____ the _____ of the land; (20) But if you _____ and _____, You shall be _____ by the _____; For the _____ of the _____ has _____.”

The aim of the Christian should be a willing heart. God is not looking for a perfect heart but for a listening and obedient heart. Shaping such a heart for the glory of God would be far easier than a rebellious heart.

4 To what degree did Jesus reveal our cost of obedience?

PHILIPPIANS 2:8 “And being found in appearance as a _____, He _____ and became _____ to the _____ of _____, even the _____ of the _____.”

By giving His life, Jesus showed that death was preferred above disobedience. His example revealed the denial of self that we must follow.

5 Whose pattern should we follow in the Christian walk?

1 JOHN 2:6 “He who _____ he _____ in _____ ought _____ also to _____ just as _____.”

Responding to the invitation to follow in the footsteps of Jesus brings abundant life. Christians experience abundant life through surrender. As our example, it was Christ’s surrender to His Father’s will that gave us life.

6 What should the standard of the Christian be?

1 JOHN 2:15-17 “Do not _____ the _____ or the _____ the world. If _____ the world, the _____ of the _____ is not _____ him. (16) For _____ that is _____ the world; the lust of the _____, the lust of the _____, and the _____ of _____; is _____ of the _____ but is of the world. (17) And the _____ is _____ away, and the _____ of it; but he who _____ the _____ of _____ abides _____.”

Every sin falls into one of three categories—the lust of the flesh—the lust of the eyes—the pride of life. These three areas challenged Eve in the Garden of Eden. These also were the three categories Satan used to tempt Christ in the wilderness. And we are told to avoid these three areas. If we make decisions to indulge any of these categories, the result is sin.

7 On what should Christians focus their thoughts?

PHILIPPIANS 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____, whatever things are _____ report, if there is any _____ and if there is anything _____; _____ on _____ things.”

Far too often we fail because of our focus. That is why the Bible directs us to make choices upholding the principles listed in this passage. We should not allow our minds to stray into areas that erode virtuous behavior. When principles of truth, justice, and virtue shape our thoughts, we will develop godly lives.

8 What does the Bible reveal about God’s right to our bodies?

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20 “Or do you not know that your _____ is the _____ of the Holy Spirit who is _____ you, whom you have _____ God, and you are _____ your own? (20) For you were _____ at a _____; therefore _____ God in your _____ and in your _____, which are _____.”

Glorifying God includes more than singing and praying. It includes the decisions we make about our bodies. We are stewards of God’s property. As such He requires us to treat our bodies in a way that glorifies Him.

9 What is the consequence of defiling our bodies?

1 CORINTHIANS 3:17 “If anyone _____ the _____ of God, God will _____ him. For the temple of God is _____, which temple _____ are.”

God promised the Israelites that if they would follow His plan they would be blessed. He also promised them freedom from the diseases that plagued the Egyptians.

10 To what ceremonial act does God direct our bodies and how can that act conform to the will of God?

ROMANS 12:1-2 “I _____ you therefore, brethren, by the _____ of God, that you _____ your _____ a _____ sacrifice, _____, acceptable to _____, which is your reasonable _____. (2) And do not be _____ to _____, but be _____ by the _____ of your _____, that you may _____ what is that _____ and _____ and _____ will of God.”

In understanding that our body belongs to God, Satan seeks to lead us into defiling our bodies, thus hindering our worship of God. Therefore Jesus warned us not to conform to the world’s pattern concerning the use of our bodies.

11 What should the motive be behind our style of living?

1 CORINTHIANS 10:31 “Therefore, whether you _____ or _____, or _____ you do, do _____ to the _____ of _____.”

12 What are we instructed to do to preserve spiritual purity?

2 CORINTHIANS 6:17 “Therefore ‘Come _____ from _____ them and be _____, says the Lord. Do not _____ what is _____, And I will _____ you.’”

God looks at us as exclusively His and we are not to allow our body temple to be an abiding place for “idols.” The world has chosen to keep the “idols.” The invisible God is to dwell in us and to walk among us. In order for this to be accomplished we must choose to remove all idols from God’s temple.

13 What choices should we make in our entertainment?

PSALM 101:3 “I will set nothing _____ before my eyes; I hate the _____ of those who _____ away; It shall not _____ to me.”

ROMANS 13:12 “The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us _____ off the _____ of _____, and let us put _____ the armor of _____.”

14 Are there any Biblical examples of false gods that have been used to defile us, as God’s abiding place?

GENESIS 35:2,4 “And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, ‘Put away the _____ that are _____ you, _____ yourselves, and _____ your _____.’ (4) So they gave Jacob all the foreign _____ which were _____ their _____, and the _____ which were in their _____; and Jacob _____ them _____ the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.”

Jacob's household removed their "foreign gods." They knew that God meant it to mean jewelry.

15 When Moses went to receive the Law of God what did he tell the Lord that Israel had done?

EXODUS 32:31 "Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, 'Oh, these people have committed a _____, and have made for themselves a ____ of _____!'"

16 What did the Lord instruct Moses to tell the Israelites?

EXODUS 33:5-6 "For the LORD had said to Moses, 'Say to the children of Israel, "You are a _____ people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and _____ you. Now therefore, _____ your _____, that I may know _____ to do to you.'" (6) So the children of Israel _____ themselves of their _____ by Mount Horeb."

After being delivered from 400 years of slavery, the Lord gave the wealth of Egypt to the Israelites. In the Egyptian's wealth was gold, precious stones, ornaments, and jewels. God intended for this treasure to be used in building the tabernacle of worship, but the Israelites instead clothed themselves. God became angry with Israel and instructed them to remove their ornaments. God could not use them when they adorned themselves like the Egyptians.

17 What did Israel understand about the role of these ornaments and how did they react to God's command?

EXODUS 35:22 "They came, both _____ and _____, as many as had a _____, and brought _____ and _____, and _____, all _____ of _____, that is, every man who made an _____ of _____ to the _____."

The Israelites knew God was referring to their jewelry. Those who were willing complied with God's command and removed all their jewelry. God's standard is not like the world's standard. When we willingly comply with God's standard, we become useful to him. The people of the world display their allegiance by their outward ornaments. God wants His people to display their allegiance by their inward ornaments. That is why the apostle Peter wrote, "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:4 (KJV).

18 What does Jesus ask us to reveal?

MATTHEW 5:16 "Let your _____ so _____ before men, that they may see your _____ and _____ your Father in heaven."

In Matthew 5:16 the words of Jesus are opposite to the ways of the world. The people of the world receive glory from their shining ornaments. But,

God receives glory from the shining works revealed through the lives of His children. Following the clothing patterns of the world robs God of His glory. The message of Revelation 14:7 is, "Fear God and give glory to Him." The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." Make it your aim to adorn yourself to God's glory.

19 What pattern in dress does the Bible call us to adopt?

1 TIMOTHY 2:9-10 "In like manner also, that the _____ adorn themselves in _____ apparel, with propriety and _____, not with braided hair or _____ or _____ or costly clothing, (10) but, which is proper for women professing _____, with good works."

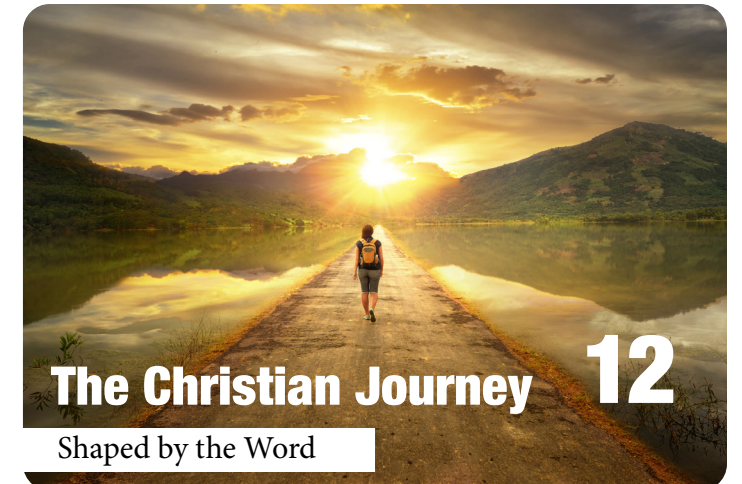
The apostle Paul addressed a custom from the Greco-Roman period when women were categorized by the way they dressed. There were regulations for single women, married women, adulteresses, and prostitutes. Drawing lessons from these cultures, the apostle Paul instructs women to dress as those professing godliness. Braiding of the hair was a process of interweaving decorative elements with the hair. The apostle Peter also recorded the practice as, "plaiting the hair." He said, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on apparel." 1 Peter 3:3 (KJV). Thus, Christians should reveal their allegiance to Christ by their deportment. We are called to "Come out from them and be separate." 2 Corinthians 6:17. In a previous lesson we learned that our bodies are the temple of God. Thus, our eating, drinking, and choices should glorify Him. This lesson teaches us that God is as concerned about the outside of our bodies as He is about the inside.

20 What prophetic contrast does Jesus use to illustrate the differences between His church and the churches of the world?

REVELATION 12:1 "Now a great sign appeared in _____: a _____ clothed with the _____, with the _____ under her feet, and on her head a _____ of twelve stars."

REVELATION 17:4 "The _____ was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with _____ and _____ stones and _____, having in her hand a _____ cup full of abominations and the _____ of her _____."

In the book of Revelation Jesus paints a vivid picture of two women. One reflects God's glory by being clothed with the sun, moon, and stars. The other woman reflects her inner character by being clothed with gold, precious stones, and pearls. Jesus identifies the first woman as His church. He identifies the second woman as being in opposition to Him. In both instances their outward adorning identifies them. God calls us to declare allegiance to Christ by recognizing our bodies as His. May it be your desire to glorify God, internally and externally in all that you do.



The Christian Journey 12

Shaped by the Word

The Christian life is a journey from natural to spiritual living. The challenge comes when we attempt changes without being guided by God's Word. However, the Bible enlightens us, guiding our choices on living a spiritual life in a natural body.

In a previous lesson titled, "Abundant Living," we learned that God is particular about what we put in our bodies. We also discovered certain foods, drinks, and practices that prevent healthy living. The instruction to avoid those things is not based solely on health, but also on the fact that our bodies are the temple of God.

In this lesson we will discover what God's Word teaches about the things we put in our thoughts and on our bodies. These spiritual changes can only be accomplished when our natural thoughts are changed. In Philippians 2:5 the apostle Paul revealed the key to these changes. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." To "Let" means to be willing to allow God's Word to be our guide.

When we follow God's Word we unlearn the old and learn the new. That is why the apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." This is called Sanctification. In John 17:17 Jesus said, "Sanctify them by Your Truth, Your word is Truth." Preparation for eternity begins when we are willing to be Shaped by the Word.