



The Christian Journey

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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 to guide 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 there are certain foods, drinks, and practices that prevent healthy living. The instruction to avoid those things is not based solely on health, but 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.

THE CHRISTIAN JOURNEY

- 2 Corinthians 5:17** - Our past is replaced by the new life in Christ.
- Philippians 3:13-14** - We leave our past behind and pursue Christian living.
- John 17:17** - The changes that take place in us by applying God's Word.
- Luke 9:23-24** - Following Christ is a daily sacrifice.
- Isaiah 1:9-10** - The Christian life is one of willingness and obedience.
- Philippians 2:8** - Christ is our example of obedience.
- 1 John 2:6** - We must walk as Jesus walked.
- 1 John 2:15-16** - Christians withdraw from a love of worldly things.
- Philippians 4:8** - We are called to focus our minds on good things.
- 1 Corinthians 6:19** - Christians recognize their bodies as Christ's property.
- 1 Corinthians 3:17** - We must keep our bodies from being defiled.
- Romans 12:1-2** - Christians recognize their bodies as holy to the Lord.

MAKING CHRISTIAN CHOICES

- 2 Corinthians 6:17** - We must separate ourselves from worldly influences.
- Psalms 101:3** - Make godly choices for your viewing habits.
- Matthew 5:16** - Allow our lives to be a reflection of God's glory.
- 1 Corinthians 10:31** - Our decisions should bring glory to God.
- Revelation 14:7** - We recognize the need to glorify in this judgment hour.
- John 21:18** - Our lives are shaped by allowing Christ to lead.
- Matthew 16:24** - As Christ's disciples we commit to self-denial.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF DRESS AND ADORNMENT

- Genesis 35:1-4** - Jacob's household changed their dress and removed jewelry.
- Exodus 32:2-4** - Israelites wore jewelry when in rebellion against God.
- Exodus 33:5-6** - God told Israel to remove their jewelry in obedience to Him.
- Exodus 35:22** - Those who were willing removed their jewelry and ornaments.
- Hosea 2:13** - Israel wore earrings when they were in rebellion.
- 1 Timothy 2:9-10** - Modesty in clothing and abstinence in jewelry is God's ideal.
- 1 Peter 3:4** - The hidden ornament is of greater value than jewels.
- Revelation 12:1** - Reflecting natural beauty is a sign of allegiance to God.
- Revelation 17:4** - Reflecting a substitute beauty is a sign of allegiance to self.
- Revelation 19:7-8** - The redeemed will be clothed by the righteousness of Christ.
- Revelation 21:10-21** - The New Jerusalem is clothed in precious stones and jewels.

SUMMARY:

The standards of the world are not Christian standards. When we follow Christ we adopt godly standards. The Bible teaches modesty in clothing but abstinence from wearing jewelry. Both the inside and outside of our bodies belong to God. The Holy Spirit resides in us and our body temples are to be preserved as holy. The righteousness of Christ is our adornment, not the jewels and immodest dress of the world. We will also glorify God in all our media entertainment. The transformation from natural to spiritual living can only be accomplished as we are shaped by the Word.