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 He would kick, scream, run away, hide, become withdrawn, disrupt classes, and make everyone disgusted with him.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?**
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 _______________, 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.
Christian Behavior

Read the following Bible texts and with the help from the lesson above, answer the following questions by circling "T" if the statement is true or "F" if the statement is false. (Hint: there are 8 true and 2 false)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY TEXTS</th>
<th>Rom. 12: 1, 2</th>
<th>Gal. 5:13</th>
<th>1 Cor. 6:19</th>
<th>Eph. 5:1-21</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Cor. 3:18; 6:14-7:1; 10:5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Phil. 4: 8</td>
<td>1 John 2:6, 15-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 John 2</td>
<td>Lev. 11:1-47</td>
<td>1 Pet. 3:1-4</td>
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</tbody>
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1 t or f We are called to be a holy people who think, feel and act in harmony with the principles of heaven. (see pg. 311).

2 t or f Alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies and we are to abstain from them (see pg. 311).

3 t or f Christian’s should adopt a different lifestyle simply to be different from the world (see pg. 312).

4 t or f While our behavior and our spirituality are closely related, we can never earn salvation by correct behavior (see pg. 313).

5 t or f God’s law, which include the laws of health, are not arbitrary but are designed by our Creator to enable us to enjoy life at its best (see pg. 313).

6 t or f Exercise, sunlight, and drinking water and fresh air are nice but not important in maintaining health (see pg. 314).

7 t or f Visual and audio media are not evil themselves (see pg. 316).

8 t or f God’s original diet for men did not include flesh foods (see pg. 316).

9 t or f The development of Christian behavior is progressive, involving a lifelong union with Christ. It involves daily surrender (see pg. 322).

10 t or f Because we mature at different rates, it is important that we refrain from judging weaker brothers or sister (see pg. 323).