

From My Bible

Sermon Notes
& Outlines

Godly Principles

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Introduction

These messages are compiled from study notes and outlines of my own and many others. I hope they are a help to you.

I'm sure that all of us have at times "borrowed" or "used" a sermon we heard or read somewhere along the way. A thought, a word, or an idea jumped out to us from another preacher and we took that thing and ran with it. You have probably used an outline from a preacher brother but ended up preaching something that was uniquely different. Same idea, it just came out differently when you preached. Using your own thoughts, experiences, and illustrations.....the message became your own.

I heard an old-time preacher once say, "*Any message worth preaching ought to be worth preaching again!*" Well, I have certainly preached some sermons again and again. I have borrowed from others to preach theirs again too. Please use these messages as the Lord leads and preach His Word over and over again!

I make no claim of complete originality for this material. Also, please remember that these messages are not expected to substitute for your own personal study of the Word of God! The thoughts and ideas are given as a catalyst to help begin your ideas on a given passage of Scripture or trigger a seed thought to get you going. It is my prayer that the "stuff" contained here will further kindle the fire of God's message that is already in your heart. Your own thinking, praying, and studying will be necessary to guide you into the delivery of His Word to your own people.

May these sermons become *messages* from the Lord that He uses in your own life as He has used them in mine.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
A Godly Homemaker	5
A Godly Man.....	10
A Not-So Godly Teacher	21
A Godly Vision	23
A Godly Work Ethic	24
A Godly Character	27
A List of Character Quotes	30
A Godly Behavior For Teens	35
A Godly Influence.....	37
A Godly Living Plan	41

A Godly Homemaker

Text - Proverbs 31:30

Introduction: A "*homemaker*," according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is *one who manages a household especially as a wife and mother*. What we need today isn't necessarily more homemakers but better ones, godly ones.

The key part of our text is verse 30b. The entire picture here is one of a woman who "*fears the Lord*." One commentator states that this passage is closely tied to the beginning of Proverbs - specifically 1:1-7, which speaks of the blessing on a life that fears the Lord.

It is interesting that we have had so many frightening stories about mothers who abuse, leave, or murder their children in recent years. It is a sad commentary on our times. It is a good thing that we praise godly motherhood and godly homemaking. Let's note some things out of this passage about the godly homemaker.

I. Looking For A Godly Homemaker

The passage begins with a question, "*Who can find a virtuous woman?*" It is apparent from the passage that it's about a wife and mother. She is praised because she is a godly homemaker. So much has been said in a disparaging way about women who believe that home is the most important place on earth for them. Yet, we can look around and see what has happened to the family and also see the decline of American morals and religious life. The two go hand in hand. *As goes the home, so goes the nation*.

Someone said two of the most important decisions a man can make in life are...

First, the Lord you will serve. Second, the Lady you will marry. First will determine heaven or hell in life to come. Second will determine heaven or hell in this life!

“If Mamma ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy!”

I read somewhere recently that a survey was done among teenage girls and over 70% of them said they would rather be regarded as sexy than intelligent. Well, that means 70% of them have proven already their lack of intelligence. Beauty is a fleeting thing, but virtue can last an entire lifetime.

II. Laboring Of A Godly Homemaker

It takes a lot of work to be a godly homemaker. Ditch digging is easier than being a godly homemaker, especially if a woman is married to a man who doesn’t appreciate the difficulty involved in homemaking!

A man is blessed if he has a wife who is a virtuous woman. He should realize that and give her the praise she is due.

She buys land, plants on it, then sells the goods for a profit. Not many families buy land to plant items and sell them these days, though they was a common thing during the days when this text was written. The point of this passage is that a godly wife and homemaker knows how to work and invest!

She puts her hand to the spindle, meaning that she learns how to do her tasks well. She develops herself with improvements for the sake of God and her family.

Her heart goes out to others who are less fortunate. She seeks to share with those who are suffering. Her concern is not just for “me and mine.” She has a missionary heart!

She thinks about her children and husband, and she anticipates their needs before they arise. I watched my wife plan out the children's school clothes and my clothes for Sundays all those years when our children were growing up. What a blessing to have a wife that thinks ahead and cares for her family before the need arises.

Susannah Wesley spent one hour each day praying one of her 17 children. In addition, she took each child aside for a full hour every week to discuss spiritual matters. No wonder two of her sons, Charles and John, were used of God to bring blessing to all of England and much of America. Here are a few rules she followed in training her children: "(1) Subdue self-will in a child and thus work together with God to save his soul. (2) Teach him to pray as soon as he can speak. (3) Give him nothing he cries for and only what is good for him if he asks for it politely. (4) To prevent lying, punish no fault which is freely confessed, but never allow a rebellious, sinful act to go unnoticed. (5) Commend and reward good behavior. (6) Strictly observe all promises you have made to your child."

Husbands, you need to listen to your wife's instructions on occasion, as well. Your wife will sometimes tell you to watch out for a certain woman. When she does that, you best listen. Wives are given a special, invisible antenna just to scope out dangerous situations. And if you try to tell her a lie, that same antenna can read you like a book. One man said, "*Have you ever seen one of those machines that can tell when you're lying?*" The other replied, "*Seen one, I married one!*"

Mothers are consummate workers. "*A man works from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done.*" We must appreciate the exertion a godly homemaker puts into her work for the family.

A godly woman seeks to stay fit and healthy. Of course, beauty is much deeper than the outward appearance and we should remind ourselves that man looks on the outside but God looks on the heart. Keeping your heart fit before God is first and foremost in life!

There is absolutely nothing wrong with a woman seeking to look her best, to dress in clothes that are fashionable for her times or for her to desire to look beautiful.

Homemakers can be truly feminine, dignified and ladylike without sacrificing personhood or success in this world!

III. Lifting Up A Godly Homemaker

A godly homemaker is to be lifted up and honored. She deserves the praise she gets. Some men criticize their wife's judgment in matters. You shouldn't do that, look who she married! One fellow said the reason every man needs a wife is that too many things go wrong that you just cannot blame on the government!

Actually, it is fitting that we have a day to honor godly wives, mothers and homemakers. They get little praise outside the house of God and the Christian family. The world mocks godly women and places ungodliness on the stage for applause. Let us give honor to the godly homemakers!

When you have a godly woman in your home, you owe it to her and to God to praise her!

The virtue of a godly mother and homemaker does not wear out with time. In fact, godliness in womanhood grows more beautiful as the years go by. In reality, no woman can live up to all that is found in this passage. This is the ideal! The

nearest any woman will come to this kind of womanhood, and motherhood, is with a deep, lastly and consistent commitment to the Lord. The woman in the passage before us “feared” the Lord. The word fear can be translated as trusting with faith and following with faithfulness!

Conclusion: It's time for women, mothers, wives to renew their commitment in life, family and spiritual labor to the Lord. It also a good time for those of us who have had wives and mothers who have blessed us through godly living to show the Lord we are grateful.

A Godly Man

Text - Ephesians 5:21-6:4

Introduction: When you study the Scriptures, you will find that God puts the primary responsibility for having a godly, biblical family on the man. I think that may be why men and husbands and fathers have been under such severe attack in American culture. Very often, in the media, the husband and the father is portrayed as some kind of bumbling, stumbling fool.

We are aware that men are going through all kinds of pressures in our society. Men have tremendous job pressures today. The economy is tight, and there is more pressure than ever upon men to provide for those they love.

Men face tremendous temptations in our society today. There is the temptation of pornography. There is the temptation of alcohol. There is the temptation to cut corners in order to make more money. All these pressures and many more, are against men today.

The Feminist Movement puts pressure on men. Dr. Paige Patterson said that one of the greatest problems in American life today is the feminization of men. There is an effort by some to try to make men like women.

The Feminist Movement tried to sell America on the idea that there was no difference between a man and a woman. But the stubborn facts of biology refuse to go away. Their brains are wired differently. For example, for a woman, shopping is a social event. But for a man, he just finds out what he wants, finds a store that has it, runs in, hopes nobody sees him, and runs back out.

Men and women are different! You could see it on the playgrounds around schools. Boys and girls are different. Boys choose sides for their games on the basis of ability. Girls choose sides on the basis of relationships.

When the boys play and somebody gets hurt, they just drag him off the field so he won't interrupt the game. But when a girl gets a boo-boo, they all gather around to encourage and support her. Men and women are just different.

Let's talk about the role of a man in the family. I have been encouraged in recent years, as there has been a renewed emphasis on manhood in America and the responsibility of men. Yet, a lot of guys in American culture have never been taught. They have never had a role model. They have never had an example in their home. We need some godly men who can help other men become the men they ought to be for the glory of God.

We are aware of the fact that we have single parent families. I don't want what I say to be discouraging to you. I don't want you to be disappointed by it because if you are trying to bring up a family in a single-family household, God is going to help you in a special way. Psalm 68:5 is a Scripture you can claim if you are a single parent. "*A father of the fatherless, a judge of the widows is God in His holy habitation.*" That verse is saying that God will help you. We are not trying to say anything that will make single parents feel bad today, but God's ideal for the family is that there be a man and a woman, a husband and a wife. That's God's ideal.

Scripture particularly is directed toward the husband and wife relationship. But I believe I can extend what we are going to say beyond that relationship to the entire relationship of a man in his family. What is said about the husband's *responsibilities*

to the wife can also be said about his *responsibilities* to the family.

Love Your Family

You say you didn't have to come to church today to know that. You know you are supposed to love your family. We are sure you do love your family. There are some illustrations given to us in Ephesians 5 which tell a man how he is to love his family.

Three times in these verses it tells a man to love his wife. Verse 25 says, "*Husbands love your wives.*" Verse 28 says, "*So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies.*" Verse 33 says, "*Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself.*"

Then he illustrates it. In verse 25 he says, "*Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church.*" Men, love your family like Jesus loved the church.

How did Jesus love the church? The love of Jesus for His church was a selfless, sacrificial love. Jesus loved the church. He loved sinners. He loved you and me so very much that He was willing to sacrifice His very life on the cross of Calvary. That's how much He loves us and that's how much a man is supposed to love his family.

It is a sacrificial kind of love. It is not trying to buy the love of your family by giving them things. It is not a bartering with them for your love, you do this and I'll love you. It is not a *conditional* love, I will love you if. But it is a *sacrificial* love.

Love is primarily a verb. Love is not just something you feel. *Love is something you do.* Love is a decision. You decide to

love your wife. You decide to love your children. It is a conscious decision. A sacrificial love!

A lot of men have this whole thing wrong. A lot of men have the idea that to be a real man in the family means that you just have to be a dictator or a tyrant. “*Go get my slippers*” kind of guy! “*Serve me! Do all this for me!*” But when you study the Bible, you find that God commands men to love their families like Jesus loved His church. It is a sacrificing, a giving kind of love.

Not only does the Bible says that the man is to love his family *like Jesus loved the church*, but in verse 28 it says to love *as you love your own bodies*. Now we men love our bodies. We take care to see that the body is fed. We take care to see that the body is clothed. No man in his right man is going to double up his fist and beat up his own body. The man is to love the members of his family as he loves his own body. He is to nourish it. He is to cherish it. He is to take care of it. That's the way God wants a man to love his family.

That's the illustrations of it. Now there are some applications of how a man is to love his family. Turn to I Peter 3:7. Remember that what is said about husbands is also said about fathers and the members of the family. We are extending the application. “*Likewise ye husbands (and dads), dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.*”

First of all it says you are to “*dwell with them according to knowledge*”. That means that there must be some *understanding* on the part of the father. It means that the husband and the father is to do his best to understand the members of his families. Every member of your family is

distinct. Every child is different. Every single person in the family requires special observation and special care.

I have seen this in children. They have the same parents and they had the same upbringing, but they are totally different. I see it in my sister and me. We had the same upbringing, but we are different. If you have a dozen children, you will have a dozen different personalities.

That's an amazing thing. They have the same dad and the same mom, and they are as different as day and night. You have to study your wife. You have to study your sons. You have to study your daughters and learn to dwell with them according to knowledge.

You don't discipline all children the same. We had one child you could spank and that child would never drop a tear. That child would just give you that stubborn stare. We had another child that all you had to do was frown and that child was brokenhearted and repentant and cried and carrying on. They are all different. There has to be some *understanding*. You need to know how to positively relate to the members of your family.

Then it says, "*Giving honor*" to them. That means "*courtesy*". Treat every member of your family with courtesy. As a father and husband, you are to treat your family members with courtesy. It's an amazing thing that sometimes guests that come into the home are treated with more courtesy and politeness than the members of the family. Why would we treat guests in our home better than we treat the members of our home? The father has the responsibility to love his family. So there is to be courtesy.

Also it says, “*As being heirs together of the grace of life.*” There is to be this sense of grace in the family. Where we understand that God has put us together, and that we are to stand by one another, come what may. We are to comprehend the truth that every member of the family is vitally important and deserves to be loved, nurtured, cared for and honored. Men, love your families!

Guide Your Family

You are the spiritual leader that God has provided to guide your family. You are the one who sets the pace in your family. What is involved in a man being the leader of his family? Leadership rides on some *other ships*.

One of the other ships is *Lordship*. Look at Eph. 5:20, 22. Both of these verses speak of the lordship of Jesus Christ. This passage that has to do with family is written in the context of the lordship of Jesus Christ. I want you to listen very carefully. *You cannot exercise authority unless you are under authority*. If a man is going to exercise leadership in his family, he must understand the Bible principle of the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Now, the man has the hardest role in the entire family setting. It is the man's responsibility to yield himself to the lordship of Jesus Christ. That's why every man needs to accept Jesus as his Savior. Not only for his own sake, but also for the sake of his family. That's why every man needs to be totally dedicated to Jesus Christ as Lord of his life. You can't lead your family to the lordship of Jesus Christ unless you are under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Another ship is *Partnership*. Eph. 5:21 says, “*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*” Family is a

partnership between that husband and that wife. It is an amazing thing to me that some men can lead major corporations and yet they can't even run their own family

Let me read you some comments about what one writer said about it that I found helpful. He was talking about so many running companies and yet their families are a disaster. He said, *“The man is active, articulate, energetic, and really successful in his work. But he is inactive, inarticulate, lethargic, and withdrawn at home. They silently retreat behind newspapers, magazines, television, and highballs in the home. Or perhaps, not so silently, retreat in affairs, week night appointments, and weekend arrangements outside the house.”*

The absentee father! Did you know that there are one million children born in America every year out of wedlock? You know that means there are one million unwed mothers every year, but do you also know that means there are that many unwed fathers? Sir, it takes more than your contribution of a sperm cell to be a father. Of those children born out of wedlock, by the age of 13, they are 60 per cent more apt to be into crime, drugs, and illiteracy.

Marriage is a partnership. God wants children to have not only a mother, but also a father who is committed to the partnership of making that marriage work. It's a partnership.

A third ship is *Headship*. Eph. 5:23 says, *“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Savior of the body.”* Notice that it didn't say the head over the wife; it said the head of the wife. It is not dictatorship. A man is not the dictator in the family. He's the *“head-tater,”* but not the dictator. That means that the man is the source of protection and provision in his family. You, sir, are

responsible to protect and provide for your family. *“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,”* 1 Tim. 5:8.

God bless some of you parents. You provide for your families. You work and bring in the necessary resources. You get in your cars. You deprive yourselves of needed rest and relaxation and bring your sons and daughters here so they can be taught the Word of God and taught to love the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to encourage you to carry on! Some of you men make sure your family is your pew when church time comes.

You are the head of your family. That means you are a source of protection. You should never allow anything to come into your home that would entice your family to sin and fill them with the wrong kinds of things. Don't bring anything in that would be unwholesome.

You are responsible for where your children go. You are responsible for what they do. You are responsible for the priorities in their lives. The spiritual nurture and development of your children is your responsibility dads. It is up to you to get that family in the car and to bring them to Sunday School and preaching. We are talking about Sunday morning, evening and Wednesday night too. We are talking about youth meetings. We are talking about revivals and Bible conference. We are talking about taking advantage of every opportunity help them learn about Jesus Christ and to grow in their relationship with Him.

Some of you are going to reap a bitter harvest one day because you are teaching your children that homework is more important than church on Wednesdays. You are teaching them that their extracurricular activities at school are more

important than the Lord. You are teaching them that excelling at sports is more important than excelling in the things of God. You are missing the boat with those children and there will come a day when they will show you just how well they have learned the lessons you have taught them.

The man is the head of the family also because he is the source of direction and decision for the family. Some of you men need to get a little steel in your backbone and make godly decisions for your sons and your daughters in your family.

Help Your Family

Look at verses 25-27. It says for husbands to love your own wife *“as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word.”* Watch this. *“That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.”*

See how Christ helps the church. Men, that's the way you are to help your family. You are to help them grow in their gifts. Find out how God has gifted your family members and encourage them to develop those gifts and help to be everything God wants them to be.

You should want your children to be all that God wants them to become. Ill. Eph. 6:4 – *“nurture”* – *“The education of the mind and the morals”* – *They are trained in the ways of God;* *“admonition”* – *“exhortation”* – *They are led in the will of God.*

You must help them become what He wants them to be. If God wants them to be a Christian truck driver, that's what you

should want them to become. If God wants that daughter to be a homemaker, help her achieve that goal.

Whatever God has planned for your sons and daughters, that's exactly what you should want them to become. Help them to grow in grace. Help them to grow in their gifts. Help them to become the people God saved them to be and to fulfill the purpose for which they were created.

Don't be guilty of living vicariously through your children. Don't force them into activities that do not interest them just because it's what you wanted to do. Help them to become who God designed them to be and help them grow in their walk with Him. That is the intent behind Pro. 22:6, which says, "*Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*"

It is a good thing to help your children get an education. It is a good thing to help them become financially secure. It is a good thing to leave them resources to live on when you leave this world. But, if those things are all you give them, you have failed them! If all you give them is knowledge and wealth, you have let them down. Sir, give them Jesus! Give them a spiritual heritage. Give them godliness and teach them that the things of God are the most important things of all!

Being a father and family man can be frustrating. It is full of unexpected hazards and dangers. There will be bad decisions and you will get many things wrong along the way. The hard fact is fatherhood and godly manhood can really never be mastered. You don't ever graduate from the School of Fatherhood or Godly Manhood. But it is wonderful and fulfilling on those occasions when you get it right.

If you become the kind of man and the kind of father and the kind of husband God wants you to be and if you lift your family to be everything God wants them to be, one of these days you will reap a good harvest in your children. You will see them used of God for His glory. You will see them flourish spiritually. There is nothing better than that!

You might just get a letter from that boy. *“Dad, I want you to know I tested you a lot. Dad, I want you to know I did some things you weren't happy with. I know I gave you some difficulties. But, dad, I want you to know as I look back on it now, I want to thank you for how you raised me.”* One of these days you may get a phone call from that girl. *“Dad, I just want you to know that I thank you so much for being a real man in our family.”*

Conclusion: Men, it all starts in the family. If your faith doesn't work at home, it doesn't work it doesn't work anywhere. The family is either like a sand dune or a sculpture. A sand dune has no shape or design to it. It just comes about by whatever environmental forces play upon it. It has no real foundation. Tomorrow's wind will change the shape and the look of the sand dune. But a sculpture has design. There is intention. There is a goal. There is a purpose.

Your family will either be a sand dune swept and blown around the winds of culture and circumstances, or your family will be a sculpture with design and purpose and goal to it. I think it all comes down to what kind of man you decide to be.

A Not-So Godly Teacher

Text – 3 John

Introduction: There are many great leaders in the Bible. We often look at their lives to learn from and exemplify their godly character. There are also wrong examples from which we can learn. Let's consider the example of one such man in Scripture, a man named Diotrephes. Here is how one authority described Diotrephes:

1. Sometimes he is a man who never had his will broken. As a Church member, he expects the household of Christ to give way to him. He is willful and headstrong,

2. Sometimes he is a man of wealth. His riches give him authority in the world; and he takes it for granted they ought to do so in the Church.

3. Sometimes he is a man of some learning and much volubility (characterized by a continuous flow of words;), who fancies that his capacity ought to give his opinion authority. The Biblical Illustrator: By Rev. Joseph S. Exell, M.A.

From the poor example of Diotrephes, we can examine some positive leadership characteristics we should have present in our lives if we desire to have a Christ-like influence.

A Godly Teacher Is A Servant.

We see in vs. 9 that Diotrephes desired to have the preeminence. A good servant knows his place and is not concerned about receiving the recognition.

A Godly Teacher Is Teachable.

We are told in vs. 9 that Diotrephes did not receive John's writing. Do you have the attitude that you already know it all, or do you have a spirit of receiving correction? The truth is that if a teacher does not have a teachable spirit, it can sometimes be absent in the life of his students.

A Godly Teacher Is Just.

Diotrephes was a man who unjustly used malicious words against the church leaders.

A Godly Teacher Is Content.

The great enemy of contentment is *comparison*. 2 Cor. 10:12b warns us, "*...but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*" Simply stated, Diotrephes was a malcontent (grouch, complainer).

A Godly Teacher Is Hospitable.

Perhaps that is why Diotrephes was not hospitable. We read in 3 John 10b: "*... neither doth he himself receive the brethren....*" Do not be so busy meeting your own needs that you miss the opportunity to serve others.

Conclusion: How is your influence? Is it godly? Let's take an inventory of our leadership characteristics and determine if we need to stock up on some *godly* leadership characteristics.

A Godly Vision

Text - Proverbs 29:18

“Where there is no vision, the people perish:”

Introduction: Vision here is the word commonly used of the revelation of God's will made to the prophets. This indicates that the phrase, *No vision*, does not merely mean a loss of sight or inspiration but a deficiency of instruction in God's truth, which was by prophets, through visions (1 Samuel 3:1). *People perish* - without divine instruction and revelation, the people are deprived of moral restraints and thus pursue sin to its inevitable end, which is death (Rom. 6:23; James 1:15)

A Godly Vision: *"A divine instruction and revelation that creates a compelling picture of the desired state of affairs divine instruction and revelation that inspires people to respond; divine instruction and revelation that which is desirable, which could be, should be; that which is attainable."*

A Godly Vision is:

- Right for the Times
- Right for the Church
- Right for the People

A Godly Vision Promotes Faith Rather Than Fear.

A Godly Vision Motivates People To Action.

A Godly Vision Requires Risk-Taking.

A Godly Vision Glorifies God, Not People.

A Godly Work Ethic

Text - Proverbs 10:16

"The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin."

Introduction: Some people hate it. Some love it. Some go to great lengths to avoid it. Some do it too much. While there are many different attitudes toward *work*, one thing remains constant: *work must be done*. Since the Garden of Eden everyone has worked or depended on someone else's work for their continued existence. Work sets a person's lifestyle—where you live, when you sleep and eat, the time with family, even your dress.

Another constant about work is the fact that God has a clear point of view on it, and we are to line up our thoughts with His. As you reflect on your own attitude toward work, consider the following principles from God's viewpoint:

1) Work Is Ordained By God. It was His original intention from the beginning. The Bible states that *God worked* (Genesis 1). By working we are similar to God. Like God, you have the capacity to work, make plans, execute them, and be creative. Furthermore, God gave us the assignment of ruling over and taking care of His creation (Genesis 1:28, Genesis 2:15).

2) Work Is For A Lifetime. Genesis 3:19 *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.* God intends that human beings are to work as long as they live. Meaningful activity plays a vital role in being a human being - whether compensated or doing volunteer work. The *retirement* age of 65 shouldn't end meaningful, purposeful work.

3) Work Is Not A Punishment. God did not create work as drudgery, but as a reward for accomplishment in life. A human being can do nothing better than...find fulfillment in his work. This too is from the hand of God, for without Him, who can eat or find enjoyment?

Ecclesiastes 2:24-25 *There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God. For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto, more than I?*

4) Work Has Three Purposes: to provide resources and assets to supply the necessities of life; to provide for a quality of life in the *doing* a job well; and to serve God.

5) Work Calls For Obedience. Even when the boss isn't looking, a good worker is consistent and diligent to the task and loyal to the organization (Colossians 3:22). The real boss is Jesus Christ. See your job as service to Him - not simply your employer. Employers should treat employees with respect and fairness.

6) Work Should Be Done With Excellence. We are to provide service, as to the Lord, and not to men **Ephesians 6:6-7** *Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.;* God's standard of excellence needs to be our standard.

7) Work Is Honorable. All professions and all kinds of work, assuming they are lawful and ethical, are honorable before the Lord. There is no division between *sacred* and *secular* work. All work brings glory to God and fulfillment to you, if it is done to God's glory **1 Corinthians 10:31** *Whether therefore*

ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

8) Work Provides An Opportunity For Witness. When we work properly we manifest a powerful message, both verbal and nonverbal. The world today needs this influential witness to the reality of Christ and the difference He makes in His followers. (Matthew 5:16)

Conclusion: Before God there is no small job, no little job. If you are where God wants you, serve him faithfully. If you are a farmer, work hard at farming. If you are a truck driver, work hard delivering our groceries. If you are a teacher, work hard preparing students to pursue the American dream. If you work for a utilities company, work hard at keeping on the power and gas. If you are a banker, work hard helping us when we get in over our heads. If you are a public servant, work hard! If you are a parent, work hard rearing your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Colossians 3:17

A Godly Character

Text - Proverbs 10:16

"The labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin."

Introduction: Godly character can be defined as *"the ability to discern God's right way from the wrong, and to voluntarily surrender one's own will to do what is right in God's sight and, with the promised supernatural help, to resist the wrong even under pressure and temptation."*

A shorter definition is: *"Godly character is consistently doing the right thing at the right time in the right way for the right reason."*

Character can be good or bad. Godly character is a life of decisions that leans one towards God and away from self. Ungodly character is a life of decisions that lean one away from God and towards self Your character is the real you!

Your character is who you are when no one sees you...Your character is what you do when no one is around.

Your character is what you choose when you know that there is no way anyone will know what choice you make!

Here are three key verses from God's Word that relate to developing character.

1. Hate evil and love good.

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good," Amos 5:14-15

2. Don't let bad company corrupt your character.

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." 1 Corinthians 15:33

3. Persevering builds character.

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:" Romans 5:3-4

How Is Character Built? *Character is built through the choices we make which set a precedence and path for the future choices we will make.*

A single poor choice is not just a single poor choice, but the creation of character that will necessarily lead to another poorer choice. Character is not built in one day, yet every choice of every day shapes your character. Character is built daily through specific choices and decisions in the little and private areas of life

Where Is Character Built? Character is built in our heart of man, which is the dwelling place of emotions, thoughts and will. *"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" Proverbs 4:23.*

God looks at the state and quality of a person's heart, the real internal reality of you, to determine. His approval of you and your life. *"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7*

It is *'out of the heart'* that the mouth speaks...the real you. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." **Luke 6:45**

How Do I Work On Building Godly Character?

1. Seek The Lord For A Clean Heart.

Psalms 51:10: "*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*" Beyond the sin of David's deep issues was his UN-yielded heart. To build godly character we must exchange our sinful heart for one that is yielded to God.

2. Value God's Word In Your Heart.

Psalms 119:11: "*Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*" When the word of God is prominent in your heart, it acts as a filter to all your emotions, thoughts, and will. Therefore If we value His Word, then His Word will give value to our character.

3. Allow God's Joy To Radiate From Your Heart

Proverbs 17:22: "*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*" When the joy of the Lord is in your heart it will help the pain of your problems until the Lord heals them.

Nehemiah 8:10: "*...for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*"

A List of Character Quotes

Text - Proverbs 13:20

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. "

Introduction: What is it to walk with wise men? It is to choose persons of character for our close friends, and voluntarily join in their company and conversation. Great men have always realized the value of walking with the wise. The following quotes are by famous men who are known for having an extraordinary level of character. I want to apply each of these thoughts to my life.

"To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge. To find the will of God is the greatest discovery. to do the will of God is the greatest achievement."

Dr. George W. Truett

"Happy is the man who dreams dreams and is willing to pay the price to make them come true."

Unknown

"True character, when it is instilled in the lives of young people, will find the talent necessary to perform the task."

Dr. Jack Hyles

"The measure of a man's real character is what he would do if no one would find out".

Unknown

"Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life, but by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed."

Booker T. Washington

"I don't care how loud a brother shouts and how high he jumps, just so he walks straight when he comes down."

Uncle "Bud" Robinson

"The what of the will of God is most important."

Dr. Jack Hyles

"I am only one, but I am one. I can't do everything, but I can do something. And what I can do I ought to do, and what I ought to do, by the grace of God, I will do".

D.L. Moody

"The test of your character is what it takes to stop you."

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.

"What you do before sunup determines whether you have victory before sundown."

Brother Lester Roloff

"You can borrow brains, but you can't borrow character."

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.

"I've never seen a man made by a crisis. The crisis exposed the man for what he already was."

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.

"Character is doing right without regard to inward desire, outward pressure, or eventual outcome."

Dr. Bill Rice

"There are two freedoms: the false- where one is free to do what he likes; and the true- where he is free to do what he ought to do."

Unknown

"The yoke of Jesus is always easy for the true sheep, but it will rub a goat's neck raw."

Joe Henry Hankins

"Christians are the only people in the world who know where they came from, where they are going, and what they are supposed to be doing while they are here."

Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.

"Character is more important than talent, for character will seek talent, and talent oftentimes will flee character."

Dr. Jack Hyles

"A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you, and were helped by you will remember you. Carve your name on hearts, not marble."

Charles Spurgeon

"If I take care of my character, my reputation will take care of itself."

D. L. Moody

"No man can climb beyond the limitations of his own character."

John Morley

"The test of your character is what you would do if you knew no one would ever know."

Bob Jones, Sr.

"Commitment in the face of conflict creates character."

Unknown

"Character is being, doing, and pursuing what is right simply because it is the wise thing to do."

Unknown

"What you are tomorrow, you are becoming today."

Unknown

“Character is made by what you stand for; reputation by what you fall for.”

Unknown

“I’ve always thought the actions of a man were the best interpreters of his thoughts.”

Unknown

“It is far more impressive when others discover your good qualities without your help.”

Unknown

“A man has not more character than he can command in a crisis. His character comes from his practices of godliness and his closeness to the Lord.”

Unknown

“Sow a thought, reap an action. Sow an action, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a destiny.”

Unknown

A Godly Behavior For Teens

Text - 1 Timothy 4:12

Introduction: Christian teenagers hear a lot about "Godly behavior," but often wonder what it actually means. As Christians we are asked to live to a higher standard, because we are representatives of God on Earth. So striving to live a God-centered life is important, because when we exhibit Godly behavior we are providing a good witness to those around us.

What God Expects

God expects Christian teens to live by a higher standard. This means that God wants us to be examples of Christ rather than living by the world's standards. Reading your Bible, praying, and doing regular devotions are helpful ways to know God's expectations and live a life focused on God.

Romans 13:13: *Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*

Ephesians 5:8: *... walk as children of light:*

Don't Use Age As An Excuse

1 Timothy 4:12: *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

One of the greatest witnesses to non-believers is the Christian teen setting a *godly* example. Unfortunately most people have little faith that teens can make good decisions, so Christian

teens exemplifying godly behavior are a powerful representation of God's love.

Romans 12:2: *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Let Others See Godly Behavior in Your Everyday Life

Everything a Christian teen does influences what people think of Christians and God. Taking time to ask how your behavior and appearance are perceived by others is an important part of being a Christian. You are a representative of God, and your behavior is part of demonstrating your relationship with Him. Does this mean you will be perfect? No. We all make mistakes and sin. However, it is important to keep striving to walk in Jesus' footsteps as best we can.

Matthew 5:16: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

1 Peter 2:12: *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, ...*

John Wooden, the famous UCLA head coach would tell his players: *“Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”* Remember, you cannot fix other people. You can fix yourself but that takes character!

God wants us to use the good things in our lives for His glory.

A Godly Influence

Text - 1 Timothy 4:12

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

Introduction: There is someone in your church or on your job that watches you:

- Children and teens (yours or someone else’s)
- Parents of your children’s friends
- Employer
- Fellow Employees
- Co-Workers
- New Christians
- School parents
- People in your Sunday School class
- People who sit near you in church

Are you a good example? A godly influence is one who moves others toward God. Before we can influence others toward godliness, we ourselves must be under God’s influence—seeking God’s direction, obeying His impulses, and being where we’re supposed to be so God can use us. If you are moving toward God, someone is probably following you.

1. A Godly Influence Means A Closer Walk With God

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth

his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” Psalm 1:1–3

Promote wise choices—encourage others to be faithful to the Lord and His church. Encourage “*God-ward*” thoughts—remind others of God’s love; intertwine godly subjects into your conversations. Encourage Bible study and prayer.

2. A Godly Influence Means We Care Enough To Act

A dear friend of mine is Dr. Raymond Hancock, author of *I Think I'll Just Go On Anyway*. I have heard him say on many occasions, “*It's not enough to care, you have to care enough...*” So often we are guilty of not noticing enough to really care. Instead, we need to stop, look, and ask questions. This is where love steps in—do you love *enough* to act or just have pity or sympathy?

Influence grows when we show genuine concern. We must do as the Lord did in Luke 10:37, “*And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.*” Genuine compassion powerfully affects those who receive it, those who provide it, and those who watch it.

3. A Godly Influence Means We Can Be Trusted

Maintain the confidence of those who trust you with their personal information. Be careful about giving out news. Be careful not to gossip, both men and women. Repeating things, even what may be factual things, can lead to gossip (**James 3:6; Proverbs 26:20–22**).

1 Timothy 5:13 *And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.*

Gossip is to be "...*speaking things which (you) ought not*"
Gossip is to habitually retell information that should be kept behind the scenes. Gossip is to make idle talk about others, regardless of facts. Gossip is to say something about someone that you know he/she wouldn't want said—regardless of whether or not it is true. Be extremely loyal, and always give others the benefit of the doubt.

4. A Godly Influence Means Be A Real Example

"...*but be thou an example of the believers, in word...*" – our words should build up, not tear down: "*Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*" **Colossians 4:6**

"*For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.*" **James 3:2**

"*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*" **Ephesians 4:29**

"...*but be thou an example of the believers, ...*" – **in conversation**, In conversation meaning lifestyle: "*Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;*" **Philippians 1:27**

"...*be thou an example of the believers, ... in charity....*" In charity means compassion. Do you love enough to do something?

"...be thou an example of the believers, ...**in spirit**," - In spirit means attitude. Attitude is infectious. Is your attitude: "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" **Philippians 4:8?**

"He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." **Proverbs 25:28**

"...be thou an example of the believers, ... **in faith**, ..." - In faith: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." **Romans 10:17**

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." **Hebrews 11:6**

"...be thou an example of the believers, ...**in purity**." - In purity, in particular when dealing with the opposite gender, but maintaining it in all areas of life: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." **Philippians 4:8**

Let's resolve to be a constructive friend, counselor, and person of influence in our positions and relationships.

A Godly Living Plan

Texts – Phil. 4:1-8 & Romans 12:1-2

Introduction: We need to build up our faith with godliness, which has much to do with a reverential, dedicated fear of God and love for God. Being godly means being pre-disposed toward God in thinking, decisions, and all of life. There is a need for real, genuine faith. We need to identify ways to godliness and continue it. We need a plan of action.

1. Preparation For Godly Living – Thinking

- True - “*unconcealed*” meaning “*true as to fact or reality.*”
- Honest - “*honorable or noble*”
- Just - “*equitable or fair*”
- Pure - “*clean & modest*”
- Lovely - “*acceptable & lovable*”
- Good report - “*well-spoken of; having a good reputation*”
- Virtuous - “*excellence or valor*”
- Praiseworthy - “*commendable*”

Proverbs 23:7, “*...As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he...*”

2. Practice Of Godly Living – Trying

What You Have Heard: “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” **Romans 10:17**

What You Have Learned: “*Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing*” **Phil. 3:16**

What You Have Received: *“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand”* **1 Corinthians 15:1**

What You Have Seen Modeled: *“Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample”* **Phil. 3:17**

3. Promise Of Godly Living – Trusting

The God Of Peace

Peace with God - *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: ”* **Romans 5:1**

Peace of God - *“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* **Philippians 4:7**

- Be Careful - vs. 6
- Be Prayerful - vs. 6
- Be Thankful - vs. 6
- Be Thoughtful - vs. 8

Conclusion: A number of years ago, the news media picked up the story of a woman known as “*Garbage Mary.*” She lived in a smelly Chicago tenement amid mounds of garbage. She spent her time rummaging through trash cans. Police picked her up and found she had stock certificates and bank books indicating she was worth at least a million dollars. She was the daughter of a wealthy Illinois lawyer.

It’s a pathetic story, but it pictures the lives of many professing Christians, who could be immersing their thought

life in that which is true, dignified, right, pure, lovely, of good repute; that which is virtuous and worthy of praise. But instead, they surround themselves with moral filth, wallowing daily in raunchy TV programs, polluting their minds with the sordid stories of this condemned world, rather than focusing their thought life on the things of God and Christ.

The Apostle Paul is saying something like this, "*Godly living is about thinking, trying, and trusting!*" **Think** right, **try** out what you have heard, learned, received, and see (put it into practice), and **trust** God to guide and provide. You will be glad you did!

