



Life Principles Notes™

A Call to Godly Living

Summary:

God calls every believer to a godly life.

That means that Christians should obey, love, and serve the Lord on a consistent basis. A godly life isn't necessarily sinless. But eternal priorities should capture our hearts more than temporal, earthly pleasures.

Our culture places a tremendous amount of pressure on those who want to pursue a godly life. The doctrines of our faith are mocked and ridiculed in the public arena. Believers are tempted

to compromise spiritually and morally to fit in. If we aren't careful, the world's standards become our own.

How can we resist the influence of this godless age? We must surrender our lives to God and renew our minds daily with His Word.

Key Passage: Romans 12:1-2

Supporting Scripture: *John 14:6; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15, 17; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 3:3*

Scriptural Principles:

1 God calls us to godly living.

In the first 11 chapters of Romans, Paul writes about salvation, victorious Christian living, and the Lord's ultimate plan for Israel. In our key passage, Romans 12:1-2, the apostle essentially says that because of the rich mercies of the Lord towards us—described in the earlier chapters—each believer should answer the Father's call to live a godly life. Notice that Paul says "I urge you," which is a strong admonition. The apostle states strongly that each believer should present his or her body as a living and holy sacrifice. Paul doesn't just mean the physical body; he means a person's entire being. In other words, your mind, your will, and your emotions should be surrendered to God.

Believers no longer have a *right* to run our own lives. We were created for the Lord's purposes, and He has a plan for each individual. But we still must make the choice to surrender control to Him. That's why Paul refers to it as a "sacrifice." In the Old Testament, a sacrifice was usually a slaughtered animal that was burned during worship. Once the offering had been consumed by fire, the worshipper could not ask for it to be returned. In a similar way, if we want to call ourselves followers of Jesus, then we must let Him take charge of our lives.

Paul encourages us to be *living* sacrifices (Rom. 12:1). This means we must allow the Holy Spirit to live His life through us. As we surrender to His guidance and leadership, the Holy Spirit enables us to live righteously. The apostle also says that believers should be *holy* sacrifices. In Greek, this word meant "set apart" (as in, for a special purpose). In one of the paradoxes of our faith, sanctification—being made holy—happens immediately at salvation, but it is also a life long process. As believers grow, we are increasingly successful in overcoming sin, and we become more like our Lord.

The world is right to expect Christians to be different. Our goal should be to act as Jesus did. We should be forgiving, loving, and helpful—as well as truthful and uncompromising. Will believers sometimes fail to behave in a godly manner? Yes. Because we are human, you and I will never walk in perfect holiness. But we should never try to rationalize or excuse sin.

The truth is, when you seek to live a godly life, some will be drawn to you. Others will hate you for it. What I've noticed, however, is that some of the same people who resist the gospel will seek out a believer when life gets difficult. They recognize that Christians have the answers they seek.

2 Those who desire to live a godly life will face conflict with the world.

Many Christians today would rather compromise their convictions than deal with disapproval from those in the world. Some churches have abandoned the theological foundations of our faith, such as the virgin birth, the resurrection, and man's need for salvation. Or they approve of immoral choices and then congratulate themselves on being accepting and open-minded. As individuals, believers sometimes excuse their sin by telling themselves that they are “being a witness” by spending time in ungodly pursuits. Instead, Christians should make sure that our best friends are believers who are growing spiritually (2 Cor. 6:14-15, 17). Scripture says that “Bad company corrupts good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33). Rather than following the crowd, our highest priority should be to do what God wants us to do.

This is the type of danger Paul warns against when he says, “Don't be conformed to this world” (Rom. 12:2). In other words, don't let the world shape your value system and determine your priorities. The mainstream media tells us that the key to happiness and contentment is to be rich, attractive, and famous. But I've heard enough testimonies to know that wealth, beauty, power, and fame don't satisfy. They can never give us lasting joy and peace.

To resist conforming to the world's image, you must “be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). How can you do this? First, *fill your mind with the Word of God*. It is through the Bible that we learn God's perspective. Second, *focus on positive, righteous, and holy things* (Col. 3:3; Phil. 4:8). This should include choosing friends and entertainment wisely. Third, *apply Biblical truth to your heart*. As you go about your day, ask the Father to show you how to put into practice the principles of His Word. Fourth, *practice the presence of the Lord*. God is always with you. Ask Him to make you more sensitive to His presence. As you allow the Holy Spirit to live through you, He will enable you to withstand temptation and help you become more Christlike. Renewing your mind will allow you to resist conforming to the world.

Conclusion:

The key to living a godly life is *full surrender*. That means we must let God have complete control over us. Is there anything in your life that doesn't please the Lord? It may be a sinful habit, a pattern of ungodly thoughts, or a relationship that hinders your walk with Him. Or perhaps you simply need to make time again in your schedule for fellowship with your heavenly Father.

The Lord is looking for faithful men and women who will stand up for truth in a world that is increasingly hostile toward the gospel. Rather than basing your standards on popular opinion, allow Scripture to set your values. My prayer is that you will answer the Father's call to a godly life. 🙏

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