

Valley Bible Church Growth Studies

Spiritual Growth and Christian Character

Lesson 7 – Character – Conduct

Introduction

Today we will continue to study about the character of the mature believer. We will continue with conduct.

¹²*For our proud confidence is this: the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have **conducted** ourselves in the world, and especially toward you. 2 Cor. 1:12 (NASB)*

¹³*Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, ¹⁵**but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior**; ¹⁶**because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."** 1 Pet. 1:13-16 (NASB)*

¹¹*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. ¹²Keep your **behavior** excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your **good deeds**, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1 Pet. 2:11-12 (NASB)*

¹¹*Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy **conduct** and godliness, ¹²looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! ¹³But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 2 Pet. 3:11-14 (NASB)*

Why is our conduct so important? *Jesus said, ¹⁶"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matt. 5:16 (NASB).*

Our conduct either brings glory to God or brings disgrace on His name.

What do we do good things? We do good things out of gratitude for what God has done for us (Heb 12:28-29) not in order to find favor with God and forgiveness from our sin (Eph 2:8-9). However, Jesus does give us some commands (do's and don'ts if you will). Some do's might be: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, (Gal. 5:22-23) truthfulness, compassion, forgiveness, thankfulness, stewardship, etc. Some don'ts might be immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these (Gal. 5:19-21).

But what do we do if the Bible does not give us a direct "thou shall" or "thou shalt not"?

Valley Bible Church Growth Studies

Principles for making decisions in the gray areas

Will the conduct glorify God?

³¹*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* 1 Cor. 10:31 (NASB)

Can I thank God in the conduct?

¹⁶*Rejoice always;* ¹⁷*pray without ceasing;* ¹⁸*in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.* 1 Thess. 5:16-18 (NASB)

Will the conduct cause a hindrance to the Gospel?

¹²*If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.* 1 Cor. 9:12 (NASB)

Will this conduct lead me into sin?

¹⁴*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.* Rom. 13:14 (NASB)

Can I do it with a clear conscience?

²²*The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.* ²³*But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.* Rom. 14:22-23 (NASB)

¹⁸*This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight,* ¹⁹*keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.* 1 Tim. 1:18-19 (NASB)

Is the conduct profitable?

¹²*All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.* 1 Cor. 6:12 (NASB)

²³*All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.* ²⁴*Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.* 1 Cor. 10:23-24 (NASB)

Will the conduct master me?

¹²*All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.* 1 Cor. 6:12 (NASB)

Will the conduct cause my brother or sister to stumble?

²¹*It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.* Rom. 14:21 (NASB)

Valley Bible Church Growth Studies

¹³*Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.* 1 Cor. 8:13 (NASB)

Will the conduct build up or tear down?

¹*Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.* ²*Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.* Rom. 15:1-2 (NASB)

¹⁹*So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.* Rom. 14:19 (NASB)

Is the conduct worth imitating?

¹*Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.* 1 Cor. 11:1 (NASB)

Does the conduct fit the Phil 4:8 pattern?

⁸*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.* Phil. 4:8 (NASB)

Homework:

Read Mark 8-16

Have you developed convictions in the "gray areas"? Think through various situations so you know how to apply the principles above.