

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

The study and practice of MORAL CONDUCT, as set forth in the Bible. It has two divisions,

I Theoretical

II Practical

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS:

- A. The definition of Christian Ethics: the study and practice of moral conduct, as set forth in the Bible.
 - 1. With God, everything is right or wrong, black or white; there are no gray areas.
 - 2. Sin is sweet to the doer, but we cannot live by our natural instincts or conscience, we can only act by the Word of God.
- B. Ethics in general differs from Christian Ethics in that the Bible is not used and natural instincts and reason are relied upon.
- C. Christian Ethics has two divisions: theoretical and practical.
 - 1. The theoretical applies to fundamental principles of what is ethical (or right or wrong).
 - 2. The practical action to these principles in our conduct.
 - a. Both are important; neither are complete without the other.
 - b. The theory may be beautiful; but unless it is applied to our lives, it is useless.
- D. Christian Ethics differs from psychology.
 - 1. Psychology deals with the mind; how it works, and why we act the way we do.
 - 2. Christian Ethics -- deals with the right or wrong deeds, thoughts and actions: a matter of morality.
- E. Christian Ethics differs from religion. The chief world religions -- Animism, Mohammedanism, hinduism, and others -- contain little, if any true ethical element.

1. Religion is the service and adoration of God or a god, by expressing it through worship.
 2. Human conduct is not looked at as if it is morally right or wrong, but if it is offensive to their gods.
- F. Christian Ethics cannot “save” a man; for salvation comes only through repentance and the blood of Jesus.
1. Hebrews 9:22 says that “without the shedding of blood” a man cannot be saved.
 2. Ethics is the good “works” which a Christian must diligently perform. Titus 1:16; 2:7-14; 3:1,5,8,14.
- G. What is an “ideal” society?
1. There are many ideologies, or various systems of human thought regarding an ideal society.
 - a. Christianity: God rules; the people carry out his government.
 - b. Democracy: A system of man in which the people rule -- not God.
 - c. Socialism: A system of man’s mind which desires the same outcome as Christianity; but would revolution, rebellion, and nihilism to fulfill its purposes.
 - (1) Sir Thomas More’s “Utopia” is the pattern or plan of the Socialists along with that of the Greek philosophers.
 - (2) The Socialists were not “Born Again”: and could not “see” this Kingdom; so they set to copying one of their own.
 2. Communism is Socialism, but with a dictatorship.
 - a. Each of these plans or ideologies are trying to capture men’s minds and emotions through movies, music and books.
 - b. Christianity would change society by first changing the man through salvation and conversion to the things of God.
 - c. Socialism and Communism would change society first by destroying the existing society and rebuilding a new one.
- H. Moral intuition is that sense of responsibility that God puts within man to obey God.
1. Genesis 2:17 The Lord told the man he created: “Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.”
 2. Genesis 3:1-3 shows clearly Eve’s sense of responsibility to obey her creator’s command. She was created with that sense.
 3. I Timothy 2:14 points out she was deceived by Satan, but she was “in the transgression.”
 4. Man received a conscience to discriminate between right and wrong, after the fall. That this includes more than merely the

“moral intuition” he possessed at creation is shown by Genesis 3:5-7 coupled with verse 22. In the first portion, Satan promises the woman that, as soon as she and Adam would eat, their eyes would be opened and they would “be as gods, knowing good and evil’. That this was no lie, nor even an empty promise, is shown by the other passage, which says: “And the Lord God said, “Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil...their increased knowledge in the moral realm was not merely that they had sinned, for in that they would not be like God; but rather that they now were able to distinguish, objectively, between a sense in which they had not been able to do previously. These two qualities -- moral intuition and conscience...since man’s fall into sin, are identical...the blending of the two into onw quality took place before the first child was born.” So that all children born into the world possess this full equipment today. pp.18-19

J. Arthur Springer, Practical Christian Living.

III. Ancient Systems of General Ethics were developed before the birth of Christ.

1. He wrote a negative approach to the Golden Rule.
 - a. “Do not do unto others what you would not like done to yourself.(negative viewpoint)
 - b. This teaching falls short of Christ’s teaching “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do, do ye even so to them”.
 - (1) This law is a summary of the ethical teaching of the law and the prophets.
2. Confucius became the source of one of the oldest and most important Chinese religious traditions: Confucianism.
 - a. His teaching brought a strong moral code for Chinese thought until the 20th century: This is now superceded by Mao. “The Thought of Mao”
 - b. A religious movement developed by combining ancestor worship with the worship of heaven, and belief in two principles of nature called “Yin” (evil) and “Yang” (good).
 - c. This movement, called Confucianism, ranks with Taoism and Buddhism, among the “great” religious-ethical system of China.
3. Cofucius made no claim to divinity or supernatural knowledge.
 - a. Jesus Christ claimed to be the Son of God. John 14:7
 - b. Jesus told the woman at the wll that he was the Christ. John 4:25-26

- c. Jesus said, "If you had known me, you should have known my Father also." John 8:19
 - d. "I and the Father are one." John 10:30
 - e. "Believer that the Father is in me, and I in Him." John 14:11
 - f. Jesus came out from God. John 16:27
 - g. Doubting Thomas finally believed and said, "My Lord and My God."
 - h. We may know God and we are in him; "Even in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."
4. Confucius did not deny the existence of God; but he told his disciples he knew very little about such matters.
- a. He had no real understanding of death; his ideas were vague.
 - b. He reasoned: How could one be expected to understand death if he did not first understand life?
 - c. He mainly wanted to teach man to live with his fellowman with peace and to govern himself. (Self-discipline.)
 - d. Confucius advised obedience to authority.
 - e. His theories dealt with five important human relationships.
 - (1) ruler and subject
 - (2) parent and child
 - (3) husband and wife
 - (4) elder brother and younger brother
 - (5) friend and friend
- B. The Sophists: (derived from the Greek word: wisdom) During the 4th and 5th Century B.C., the Greek pagans in the west were the first to develop a system of philosophy of life.
1. Protagoras (481 B.C.) the first and the greatest of the Sophists' teachers was an originator of grammar; he gave us the parts of speech, the tenses and moods.
 - a. He taught the doctrine that "Man is the measure of all things", for he was skeptical of religion and the gods.
 - b. God says He, not man, is the measure of all things!
 - (1) "For I am God, and there is none else," and "unto me shall every knee bow, every tongue shall swear." (See: Jer. 17:5; Isa. 45:22-24)
 - (2) Jesus exclaimed, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev. 22:13
 2. Hippias: This man taught that the permanent element in morality is "the underlying principle of justice."

a. This falls short of God's Word and what Israel had 1000 years earlier.

(1) Deut. 10:12 - Moses wrote: "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart (mind, lips) and with all thy soul (emotions, personality).

(2) Micah, 200 years before Hippias wrote: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God.

(a) Our duty to God: is justice, mercy and humility.

3. Thrasymachus: This Greek philosopher taught that the permanent element in morality is "the interest of the strongest."

a. This is unChristian and unscriptural.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Rom. 15:1

C. Socrates: (Fifth Century) The earliest of the Greek philosophers; his ideas are known only through his students Plato and Xenophon.

1. Socrates was against the Sophists teaching because he placed his emphasis on logic not arguing.

2. He developed the Socratic Method of reasoning: he led them through an argument by carefully chosen questions.

a. He allowed them to discover their own errors and thus the answers to their won problems.

b. Jesus also used this method but he did it with love not "Socratic Irony".

3. The motto of Socrates was "Know Thyself". And knowledge is virtue and that ignorance is the only evil. "No man," he said, "willingly chooses evil."

a. Paul stated its easy to sin. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. With the flesh he serves sin. Rom. 7:15-25

He says it is a battle between the flesh and the spirit, but we are to have a renewed mind, the mind of Christ. Rom. 2:12-13

b. Those who are just before God are those that hear.

c. "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

d. Socrates said "Know Thyself" but Jeremiah 17: 9-10 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins..."

- D. Plato: A pupil of Socrates. He stated, "God is the highest good" this is practically the same truth as Deut. 6:5. Mt. 22:37 (the first and greatest commandment in the law of Moses and prophets and quoted by Christ.
1. He also taught: man's aim should be to know God and commune with Him and be as nearly like Him as possible.
 - a. God says man's wisdom can't know God. I Cor. 1:21
 - b. Unregenerated man cannot be like God unless he is saved by blood, is washed by the Word, and follows every doctrine of Christ. Plato did not know such a man. He lived before Christ.
 2. Plato taught that virtue consists of wisdom, courage, moderation and justice.
 - a. Christ gives us 9 fruit. I Cor. 13:13; Gal. 5:22-23.
 3. Platonism, the philosophy of Plato, had a disdain for knowledge gained through the senses, but they relied entirely on dialogue and discussion.
 4. Plato had a theory that the soul was our thoughts and the body is a hindrance in acquiring knowledge.
 - a. Sight and hearing and other senses are not accurate witness to what is reality.
 - b. True knowledge is revealed not to the sense but to the soul - that is to thought, in communion with the One, the universal Spirit. (Platinus Theory 3rd Century.)
 5. Justinian the Emperor of the Roman Empire in 529 A.D. closed down Plato's school "The Academy of Athens."
 - a. Later when the Roman Empire became weaker the NeoPlatonism became a popular religion and a rival for Christianity.
 6. St. Augustine, one of the fathers of the Christian Church mixes NeoPlatonism with Christianity.
- E. Aristotle: (a philosopher and scientist) A pupil of Plato, who possessed one of the greatest minds of all history.
1. He taught that happiness is the highest good.
 - a. Plato taught that, "God is the highest good".
 - b. God says he has shown us what is good. We are to love the Lord our God, Lev. 19:18, and love our neighbors as ourselves.
 2. In the 14th Century the Catholic Church adopted Plato as an authority infallible and unchangeable.
 - a. Experiments in science later proved many of his ideas in natural science were not true.
 3. Man's highest purpose is to imitate the action of the ultimate "Unmoved mover", God, whose only action is contemplation.

4. Another teaching of Aristotle is... “death is the greatest of all evils, for it is the end.”
 - a. Death is not the end. I Cor. 15:26
 - b. Neither is death the end for the unbeliever.
- F. The Stoics: (300 B.C.) A school of Greek and Roman philosophers which taught that one must subdue their feelings and considerations in order that the mind could successfully probe the way of nature.
1. The self-controlled, self-disciplined doctrines of the Stoics attracted Seneca, Marcus Aurelius.
 2. God says, “All things happen for good to them that love God and who are called according to his purposes. (Rom. 8:28)
Also rejoice and give thanks in all things for this is the perfect will of Christ Jesus concerning you. (I Thess. 5:18)
 - a. They believed that everything that happened to them was God’s will and they must accept their lot and adapt themselves to the laws of nature.
 - b. The law of nature based upon the divine and reasonable order of the world is the basis for all man’s conduct.
 3. They believed that to conform to the word of God (Which is the law of nature) was the highest goal of man.
 4. Their concept of a wise, virtuous man was one who strove to combat all his feelings and emotions in order to attain an acceptance of and conformity to the universal, reasonable law of nature.
 - a. He is indifferent to all outward things, finding the good entirely within his own character.
 - b. By mastering his passions and emotions, he overcomes the influences of the world around him.
 - c. This doctrine of “virtue for virtue’s sake”, led to an indifference to pain and pleasure.
 - d. It left out the concept of a personal God; but only nature’s divine God.
 - (1) “The Stoic concept of nature combined the theory of celestial fire, or a divine principle pervading all matter, with the doctrine of “Logos”, or world reason.” p. 459 New Standard Encyclopedia.
 - (2) This left a “life according to nature”.
 - (3) Eph. 2:1-3. He tells us the Gentiles are the “Children of disobedience” and “by nature the children of wrath.” Rom. 7:18
 - (4) Acts 17:18, Stoics are mentioned in the Bible.

G. Hedonism: (300 B.C.) This philosophy was divided into two schools, the Cyreniacs and the Epicureans.

1. They believed in the idea of seeking pleasure, personal pleasure is good.
 - a. The chiefest good pleasure would bring tranquility of mind, freedom from want and pain was taught by Epicurus.
 - b. These could only come through self-control and simplicity of life. (Same philosophy today in communes)
2. The Epicureans are mentioned in Acts 17:18.
3. Solomon took the Hedonistic argument of Atheism for arguments sake in Eccl. (See also: Isa. 22:13; I Cor. 15:32.)

H. Buddhism. A religion, the outgrowth of Hinduism, with ethics of “working out your own salvation.”

1. In early Buddhism there was no God as a personal being who controls man and no soul as an independent entity.
2. The core of the religion was ethics or a way of life the object of which was to reach a condition of “enlightenment” called Nirvana.
3. Nirvana is a blessed state of perfect life, where peace, harmony, and joy are attained.
 - a. They believe it can only be understood through experience.
4. They believe that all living things are reborn in new lives, and that all actions in this life will be compensated in the next.
 - a. This belief of causation and rebirth is called “Karma” or cause and effect.
5. The main ideas of Buddhism are contained in the “Four Noble Truths”.
 - a. There are sufferings in life.
 - b. Suffering is caused by ignorance.
 - c. Suffering ceases when ignorance is overcome.
 - d. “The Way” or “The Path”, to overcome the causes of suffering is the eight-fold path.
6. The eight-fold path consists of:

a. right understanding	right occupation
b. right thoughts	right effort
c. right speech	right mindfulness
d. right conduct	right meditation
7. The symbol of Buddhism is a wheel with eight spokes symbolizing the Eight-Fold Path or the “Middle Way”.
 - a. They had to avoid extremes as following sensuous pleasures on the one hand and self-punishment on the other.

- b. The Buddhist must at all times observe high moral principles, similar to those later taught by Jesus.

III. Modern Examples of Systems of Ethics since the Protestant restoration.

- A. Evolutionism: This is not the theory of organic evolution but a system of ethics based upon the theory of evolution.
 - 1. If man evolved from an ape: then he through an evolutionary process of learning experiences, now has the knowledge of what is harmful to society.
 - a. Those things that are harmful are lying, stealing, etc...
 - b. Those things that are helpful are truth and honesty.
 - c. The harmful things are wrong and the helpful things are right.
 - 2. The Bible has clearly stated what is right and wrong since the Ten Commandments.
 - a. This may be seen in the Scriptures. (Rom. 5:12-22) With the law people knew what to count as sinful.
 - b. Gen. 2:16-17 - "The Lord God commanded the man saying..."
 - c. Ex. 20:1-4 "Thou shalt..." Thou shalt not..."
 - d. John 15:10-14. In the Sermon on the Mount, Our Lord Jesus Christ continually repeats with emphasis, "I say unto you...This is my commandment...You are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."
- B. Utilitarianism: To do what is useful and needful, apart from what is right and wrong.
 - 1. If an action is beneficial, it is right, if not, it is wrong.
 - 2. The chief good is "the greatest happiness of the greatest number."
 - 3. Benjamin Franklin's statement "Honesty is the best policy" is an expression of utilitarianism.
 - a. Honesty is not a duty toward God or man; but it is the best policy for society as a whole.
 - 4. This doctrine of doing what is needful would bring about the theory of "any means to a desirable end," which is a Machiavellian Theory of "The end justifies the means."
 - a. "Let us do evil, that good may come" is condemned by Paul in Rom. 3:5-8. (See Eph. 6:6)
- C. Civil Authority: Whatever the state or government commands is right; what it forbids is wrong.
 - 1. The Nazism and Facism of World War II: men gave blind obedience to their government setting aside God's laws.

- a. Mt. 22:21. Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.
 - b. In case of conflict which takes precedence over the other? Acts 5:29 "We ought to obey God rather than men."
 - c. We are commanded to obey the state because it was set up as an authority over us by God. (Rom. 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13-17) Obedience to God comes first when the command runs counter to God's commandment. (See Daniel 3:17-18)
- D. Individualism: The individual does whatever he feels will gratify or bring him the greatest satisfaction. (Self-gratification: eat, drink, and be merry, tomorrow you may die.)
- 1. Rom. 14:7-8
 - 2. I Cor. 8:12-13
- E. Altruism: The interests of others should control one's conduct.
- 1. If a cake were cut and passed Johnny would take the smallest piece preferring his brother and sister first.
 - 2. Mt. 22:35-40
- IV. The Bible as the Basis for Christian Ethics
- A. The Bible comes from God; it is God-breathed, or inspired. Ex. 20:1 "And God spake all these words." II Pet. 1:31; Heb. 1:1
II Tim. 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (Ethics) (The reason God gave us His inspired Word.)
- 1. The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul.
 - 2. Able to give wisdom unto salvation. I Pet. 1:23.
- B. The conscience may have defects; can't depend upon it completely.
- 1. It may be ignorant. Acts 23:1; Acts 26:9.
 - 2. It may be defiled. Tit. 1:15
 - 3. It may be seared. I Tim. 4:2
(Sear - "to render callous or insensible")
- C. Reasoning out an action usually is the cause of sin. Can't depend upon reason alone for Christian ethics; but only the Word of God.
- 1. Eve sinned by reasoning; "saw that the tree was good for food". Gen. 3:6
 - 2. Gen. 1:27 - We were created in God's image; so we were created with intelligence and reason before the fall.
 - 3. Gen. 4:1-9 - Cain used his reasoning when he brought God an offering that he thought was good enough.

4. Cain also reasoned that he needed to kill Abel to get rid of his jealousy.
5. David reasoned how to get rid of Urriah. First he would put him in the forefront of the battle. Second David would make Urriah think the baby was his own by calling Urriah from the battlefield and go into his wife. Then he reasoned for Joab to arrange his final death.
6. The nation of Israel had "a seal for God," but not "according to knowledge"; they were "ignorant of God's righteousness," and were "attempting to establish their own righteousness." Rom. 10:1-3.
7. The Sadducees were guilty of false reasoning in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.
 - a. Two reasons: Ignorance of the scriptures;
Ignorance of the power of God. Mr. 22:29-32.
8. Unbelievers are mistaken in their reasoning for they are deceived by Satan himself. II Cor. 4:4; Mt. 24:5,11. (or by wicked men)
9. Paul says his reason did not give him a perfect knowledge of the truth, (I Cor. 13:12) or even a perfect knowledge of what to pray for. (Rom. 8:26)

D. What are we to do?

1. We are to have the mind of Christ so we can use our reason.
 - a. By reason we receive faith and understanding. Rom. 10:17; Mt. 13:23.
2. We are to be converted so we can use our conscience.
3. Then we are to apply the Word to our lives, mixed with faith in believing God's perfect grace toward us.
4. And do the Word to be called a lover of God.

E. What Value is there in applying God's Word to our lives?

1. We please and glorify God in just believing the word he has spoken.
2. The performance of good works pleases God and gives Him glory.
 - a. "Maintain good works" (Tit. 3:8,14)
 - b. Be "zealous of good works"... "A pattern of good works." (Tit. 2:7,14)
 - c. When others see our good works it causes them to glorify God. (Mt. 5:16; I Pet. 2:12)
3. We are to labour that we may be acceptable or well pleasing to God.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad. ...knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...made manifest in your consciences.” II Cor. 5:9-11

a. “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost? ...For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. I Cor. 6:19-20

4. Our acceptable service to God is to yield our bodies as a living sacrifice which is well pleasing to him. Rom. 12:1-2.

a. Our service to God is to show other (believers) a pattern of good works for them to follow. Tit. 2:6-8.

b. We are to “walk in truth”, so that we can cause those who have laboured over us to rejoice greatly. II John 3,4.

c. We are to win the unbelievers by our example of behaviour even more than our words. I Cor. 7:16 (wives...I Pet. 3:1,2)

5. We apply God’s Word to our lives so that we may be blessed:

a. Phil. 4:5-9. Blessed with - “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep “our” hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

b. Blessed with the fellowship with God; I Jn. 1:3-7 If we walk in the light we have that fellowship; if not we walk in darkness.

c. Blessed with his joy; Obedience brings joy. Jn. 15:10,11.

d. Blessed with future rewards and inheritance: We all have to appear at the judgment seat of Christ. The test of our good works or service whether it is hay, wood or stubble, or gold, silver, and precious stones will come at Christ’s appearing. The fire of his glory shall burn it to ashes. I Cor. 3:13-17 (see II Thess. 1:8 and Mal. 3:17)

V. Old Testament Ethics: Three different eras covering 4000 years must each be carefully distinguished in order to understand the ethics of the Old Testament.

A. Between Creation and Fall:

1. God gave Adam one negative moral commandment. “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.”

2. It was a simple commandment requiring simple obedience and no forethought.

3. It would be easy to keep; for this was the only tree from which he could not eat.

4. It was simple but very important; man would surely die if he disobeyed.
 5. Satan “the old serpent” of (Rev. 12:9) tempted Eve. It is rather strange that Adam being “perfect” allowed him in the garden.
 - a. Eve was deceived. (I Tim. 2:14)
 - b. She knew she was disobeying: but her human reasoning saw a “good evil” in gaining an advantage for herself and her husband.
 - c. Adam deliberately sinned; he was not deceived. He willfully disobeyed and knew the end result of that sin.
 - (1) If Adam did not follow Eve in the disobedience he would lose fellowship with his wife.
 - (2) He chose between God and Eve; he was guilty of deliberate disobedience to God. Gen. 3:1-6.
- B. Between the Fall and Sinai (the giving of the law)
1. After the Fall, man became “like God... to know good and evil.” (Gen. 3:22)
 - a. He could now discern between right and wrong, good and evil.
 - b. His inner voice or conscience guided him.
 - c. But their conscience didn’t prevent them from continuing to sin nor did it rid them of sin or guilt.
 2. Able evidently knew that animal sacrifice and the shedding of blood was necessary after his parents sinned for God put “coats of skin” on them. Gen. 3:21.
 - a. This is the first time an animal is killed: they had never known death.
 - b. This sacrifice covered their sin and allowed God to have some fellowship with Adam and Eve.
 - c. Abel by his conscience knew he needed an animal sacrifice to put him in a right relationship with God.
 - d. His sacrifice, (the firstlings of his flock) showed a recognition of his sin, a repentent heart, and faith that God would restore him through the death of a substitute.
 3. Cain also knew this but he brought “the first of the ground”, the efforts of his hard labor; “good works” before God as a substitute for his sins. He expected God to bless his offering: self-righteousness.
 - a. He ignored his sin.
 - b. God: “unto Cain and his offering he had not respect.”
 - c. Man at this time knew what was right as far as sacrifice.

4. The righteous man feared God and walked with a perfect heart towards him.
5. Enoch, “walked with God.” Gen. 5:22,24.
6. Noah, “was a just man and perfect, and he... walked with God.” Gen. 6:9
 - a. Perfect in a sense that he feared God and an honesty of heart meaning he wanted and tried to obey all of God’s commandments. Yet all men on earth were corrupt and violent. Gen. 6:9.
 - b. With Noah God will establish a covenant. Gen. 6:18.
 - (1) The only commandment of God: “Make thee an ark...” Gen. 6:14 and to take living creatures aboard with his family. (Part of this covenant is salvation.)
 - (2) Noah obeyed all that God commanded. Gen. 6:22; 7:5
 - (3) After the flood Noah built an altar (Gen. 9:20) and offered the right sacrifice than God made his covenant with Noah.
 - (4) Noah, after the flood, lies drunk and naked in his tent. (Gen. 9:20,21)
 - a. His son Ham is guilty of gross disrespect toward his father. v. 22.
7. Abraham, “believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.” Gen. 15:6.
 - a. God makes a 7 fold covenant with Abraham with part of it to be unfolded in the last day.
 - b. The Lord commanded Abram: To leave his country, his father’s people, and go to a land God would show him. If he obeyed, God said he would: Gen. 12:1-4
 - 1) make of him a great nation.
 - 2) make his name great.
 - 3) be a blessing to all families of the earth.
 - c. After Abram separated from Lot, God gave him a vision and a promise: Gen. 13:9 & 15-18.
 - 1) make his seed as the dust of the earth; so they can’t be numbered. (God promises him an heir.
 - 2) Only commandment: Arise and walk through the whole land.
 - 3) Abram obeyed; he removed his tent and started living in the land.
 - 4) He built an altat in Hebron. (The same place David sets up his Kingdom.)

- d. Abramham offers a tithe to Melchizedek (type of Jesus Christ) of all the spoil taken in the rescue of Lot. Gen. 14”16;15:18-20.
 - 1) No priesthood, no Levite has yet been established.
- e. God cuts covenant with Abraham so he knows he shall inherit the land of Canaan.
 - 1) For the first time, God lays down a command of a proper sacrifice: Gen. 15:9.
- f. God’s first commandment of ethics: “I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.” He changes his name to Abraham; which means a “father of many nations.” Gen. 17:1-6.
- g. God’s everlasting covenant would be established with Abraham’s seed whose seed we are. Gal. 3:14,16,29.
 - 1) He would be their God forever. Gen. 17:7-8.
 - 2) They would have an everlasting possession.
- h. The only stipulation: they also must keep the covenant as a token they were to curcumcise every male 8 days old, and every man including the stranger bought with money. Gen. 17:9-14.
- i. A contingency on the fulfillment of all that God had spoken is also meant for us: because parts of this covenant have never been fulfilled.
 - 1) Gen. 18:19. Command your children and your household to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment.
- j. An angel told Abraham, “I know that thou fearest God.” Gen. 22:12,17-18.
 - 1) Because Abraham obeyed God’s voice in not withholding his only son from sacrifice; God gave his blessing.
- k. James calls Abraham “a friend of God.” James 2:23.
- 8. The vast majority of men from Adam to Moses were wicked, and that every imagination of the thoughts of their hearts were only evil continually. Gen. 6:5.
 - a. Cain murdered his brother. Gen. 4:8.
 - b. Lamech of the lineage of Cain killed a man. Gen. 4:23.
 - c. In the days of Noah the earth was filled with violence. Gen. 6:12,13.
 - d. By the time of Abraham all men had become idolaters. Joshua 24:14,15.
 - 1) They served other gods in Egypt for 400 years.
 - 2) They served other gods later in Canaan Land.
 - e. “Rachel had stolen the images that were her father’s.” Gen. 31:19. (The household gods)

- 1) Laban was an idolater, worshipping images.
 - 2) Rachel also worshipped them or at least thought they would bring her “good luck” after 13 years of marriage to Jacob.
 - 3) Laban demanded back the idols and Rachel hid them under the camel saddle. She said she could not rise because of the time of all women had come upon her. Gen. 31:34-35.
- f. The Lord told Abraham that the “iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full.” Gen. 15:16.
- 1) This iniquity was permitted another 400 years, Deut. 20:17,18 until God allowed them to be utterly destroyed.
 - 2) The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was great and their sin grievous.
 - a) God could not find more than four righteous people in the whole city?
 - b) Just how great was the righteousness of the four? Lot’s wife looked back, her heart was in the world and she acted contrary to the Word of God through the angels.
 - c) Lot’s wife was consumed in the world; turned into a pillar of salt.
 - d) Lot’s daughters committed incest with their father by making him drunk.
 - e) Lot had parted company with Abraham because of strife between the herdsmen.

They chose selfishly “all the plain of Jordan”. Gen. 13 Then he pitched his tent toward Sodom; later we find him living in Sodom. He sat “in the gate of Sodom” meaning he helped to rule it a civil authority. The city was full of homosexuals who desired “to know” his visitors (angels). He offers his two virgins daughters for immoral purposes instead of having faith in God. The angels could have withstood and did destroy the whole city. Yet, II Peter 2:7 says: he was a just man, “vexed with the filthy conversation (conduct) of the wicked.” Genesis 19:19; But Lot found grace and mercy and God saved his life.

- g. Men who lived during this time had very little to guide them except their consciences and dreams. Gen. 20:3. With a few exceptions they were exceedingly sinful.

God held them accountable for:

- 1) failure to walk with God and to obey his voice.
- 2) failure to bring the right sacrifices.

No matter how perfect: the Bible says, “all have sinned, all have fallen short of the glory of God.” All have gone astray.

- h. Sarah proposed that Abraham get his heir by going into Hagar.
- i. Abraham and Isaac both lied about their wives for fear of being killed. Gen. 20:2
 - 1) God had said: through Isaac he would establish his everlasting covenant and with his seed after him. Gen. 17:19.

C. Between Sinai and Calvary

1. To fulfill the first part of Abraham's covenant, God raised up Moses to lead the people out of Egypt into Canaan Land.
2. They are to be a Chosen People, separated to God; a Kingdom of Priests.
 - a. But they are afraid to listen to God's voice to deal with God directly, so Moses is chosen as their intercessor the Aaron his spokesman or priest.
 - b. God gives them the law through Moses which is to be their guide until the seed (Abraham's) is raised up, which is Christ. Gal. 3:16 in whom all nations of the earth are to be blessed. Gen. 12:3, 22:18.
3. The Law, the Law of Moses is given only to Israel. (Ex. 19:3-6) This does not take away their conscience.
 - a. It added to their conscience and told them what is imputed as sin. Rom. 3:19-20.
4. God knew that people could never "walk with God" in good conduct until a right relationship was established.
5. This relationship can come only through an acceptable proper sacrifice. This is why God always put a right sacrifice at the top of his list of obedience. (If your having trouble with ungodliness: check your sacrifice!)
 - a. God knew man's reasoning so he left nothing to chance or popular opinion. He prescribed the type of sacrifices in detailed directions.
 - b. He prescribed a priesthood to offer these sacrifices.
 - c. It couldn't be just anyone. The sons of Aaron of the tribe of Levi and only the head of the family was the high priest to atone all Israel's sins.
6. Even then the priests failed in leadership causing the people to sin.
 - a. Before the people had a chance to receive the law, they, under the leadership of Aaron, made and worshipped the golden calf. Exodus 32:1-6, 19.
 - b. Less than a generation later, the people were guilty of wholesale idolatry and uncleanness. Numbers 25:1-3.

- c. Aaron made the golden calf pretending it was a type of worship to the Lord. Exodus 32. He said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord."
 - d. His sons Nadab and Abihu offered, "strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not." They tried to step into the High Priest's job and this being a serious offense; they died. Lev. 10:1-2.
 - e. Eli's sons were of "Belial" and they didn't know the Lord. I Sam. 2:12. They committed fornication in the temple.
 - f. In Isaiah's day, the priests were erring in vision and strong drink. Isa. 28:7-8.
 - g. In Jesus' day at the very end of the era of the giving of the law, even the high priests erred. They mocked Jesus at the foot of the cross.
 - h. The priests in the days of Hezekiah had not kept the passover in a long time. II Chron. 30:5.
 - i. Josiah's priest found the book of law and he knew God's wrath because the passover had not been kept every year as prescribed in the law. II Kings 22:13.
7. Proper conduct comes with the right sacrifice. All through Israel's history they made improper sacrifice. Therefore their conduct was also improper.
- a. In the wilderness Israel complained and murmured and wept against God; coupled with unbelief.
 - 1) Because of this they could not enter the promised land; the penalty was death. Num. 14:26-30; Heb. 3:17-19; I Cor. 10.
 - b. The next generation committed "whoredom with the daughters of Moab". Num. 25:1.
 - c. In Judges "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Jud. 21:25. Because of lack of leadership, they were like the Zidonians.
 - Judges 18:7. The pattern for 200 years followed this:
 - 1) They did evil in the sight of the Lord.
 - 2) They were sold into bondage.
 - 3) They repented.
 - 4) The Lord raised up a judge to deliver them.
 - d. The reason the 10 tribes went into captivity in Assyria (II Kings 17:16-17) is because "they left all the commandments of the Lord their God... and they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire; and used divinations and enchantments

and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.”

e. Isaiah wrote his nation was sinful, “a people laden with iniquity...” evildoers.

f. They served other gods after returning from the Babylonian captivity. They polluted the bread, sacrificed the blind, the lame, and sick. Mal. 1:7-8.

VI. Some criticisms of Old Testament Ethics.

A. Old Testament ethics are substandard to the ethics of the New Testament.

1. Did God change from the Old Testament times to the New? Is He the same God?

a. Ps. 90:2 God is “from everlasting to everlasting”.

b. The Lord is unchanging, unaffected by circumstances, immutable. Mal. 3:6 - “I am the Lord, I change not.” (see Heb. 13:8)

c. God is perfect from the beginning and perfection cannot be improved upon.

d. “The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.” Ps. 33:11.

2. Has the concept of God changed from the Old Testament to the New?

a. We only know from the Bible what God desires to reveal about Himself; what man conceives is not always true.

b. God reveals the things of himself by His Spirit.

1) “The world by wisdom knew not God.” I Cor. 1:21.

2) The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. I Cor. 2:10-14.

3) The Old Testament reveals the same thing. Deut. 29:29.

4) The emphasis in the Old Testament is on his justice, in the New, on His grace. Calvary is the reason.

3. We don't have one God in the Old and one God in the New; but what we know about God has changed.

a. First man was innocent; after the fall he knew the difference between good and evil. Finally under the Law, and because of the Law, Israel knew much more about God, his nature, and his standards.

b. Under grace, far more has been revealed to us about God. We are now given the ability through grace to keep His standards.

c. Jesus' sermon on the Mount furnished the most disciplined ethics in all literature.

"He made known unto us the "mystery of his will"...Eph. 1:9

d. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Mt. 5:48.

e. How different is this from what God asked of our Father Abraham? "I am the Almighty God' walk before me, and be thou perfect."

B. Polygamy:

1. Solomon had many wives; his downfall was "strange women".

2. Abraham had two wives: Sarah and Hagar, his concubine.

3. Isaac, the Son of the Promise, had only one: Rebekah.

4. Jacob had four: Rachael, Leah, Bilhah, Zilpah.

5. David had seven: II Sam. 3:2-5, 14; 5:13.

6. It was never commanded by God, nor was it ever approved by God. By implication, it was forbidden by God.

a. "Therefore, shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: (not wives) and they shall be one flesh." Gen. 2:24.

b. God made "a help meet" for man. The noun in singular.

c. "They twain shall be one flesh'. Mt. 19:5.

C. Lying

1. The best of God's people have it recorded forever, that they have lied. Lying is a sin; yet we often don't read where God immediately pointed a finger at their sin and punished them.

2. Under the Old Covenant, God judged the people by their outward actions; ie.: Did their conversation or action bring grief and hurt to others?

3. This is in sharp contrast to the New Covenant where people are judged by their thoughts, intents, and motives as well as their actions. Mt. 5:17-20, 27-28, 31-34.

4. Job 13:4, The earliest recording of the evil of lying: "But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value." Prov. 12:18 finishes the thought..."but the tongue of the wise is health."

5. David spoke against lying.

a. Ps. 31:18 "Let the lying lips be put to silence, which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

b. Remove from me the way of lying. Ps. 119:29.

c. I hate and abhor lying: v. 163.

6. David repented from lying.
 - a. Ps. 120:2 Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and a deceitful tongue.
 7. Solomon, the wisest man in history, wrote about lying lips. Prov. 10:18; 14:5,25; 19:5,9; 30:8.

“A lying tongue is but for a moment...Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.” Prov. 12:19,22.

 - a. I Kings 10:24 “All the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart.”
 - b. I Kings 11:4 Yet...”his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God as was the heart of David his father.”
 8. One thousand years after David, God reveals to Isaiah: “And of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied, and hast not remembered me, nor laid it to thy heart? Have not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not? ...but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.”
 - a. God reveals more of himself; that lying is a sin against God, because we do not fear him and remember his judgments.
 - b. There is also the promise of a holy inheritance to a people not yet fulfilled.
 - c. God holds his peace; he permits sin to go on temporarily, in order that he may show His mercy and grace. II Pet. 3:9 If he didn't, the world would suddenly cease to exist.
- D. War: GOD NEVER DESTROYED WITHOUT REASON OR A CAUSE.
1. Mt. 5:21-22 “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Ra'-ca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”

 - a. This verse plus Luke 3:14 are used by dissenters of war. But this verse is speaking of soldiers is speaking to Roman soldiers. They are compared to police brutality today. They were actually taking bribes and accusing others falsely. This verse has no bearing to war.
 - b. Jesus said render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. Mt. 22:21.

- c. Several times the scripture states that Civil authority and government is to be obeyed as long as it doesn't cause one to disobey God.
 - d. There is no scripture in the Bible to be interpreted that one may refuse to go to war.
 - 1) God orders war, saying "When thou goest to war against thine enemy..." It is mainly to come against anything idolatrous. Deut. 20:1.
 - 2) The only stipulations were that they be not afraid; the fearful were sent home. Those that had just been married could stay home, along with those that had just built a home, planted a vineyard; anyone with divided interests because they had not eaten of the fruits of their endeavors. Deut. 20:5-8.
 - 3) We too must go to war. We can't expect another to fight the battle for us. If any invading nation comes in, they end up refusing to allow us freedom of worship. These are the first principles of war down through history.
- E. Severity of Punishment: An answer for people who think that God is so cruel and vengeful in dealing with certain individuals or nations;
- 1. Saul was ordered to destroy every Amalekite and every living thing, including women, children and animals. I Sam. 15:3.
 - a. Because Saul refused to obey God in this matter, the kingdom was taken from him and given to David, a man after God's own heart. If kept alive the Amalekites would lead Israel astray and they would worship false gods.
 - 2. The heads of all the people were hung up before the Lord in the hot sun. Num. 25:4 For they had allowed the people to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. The people bowed down and sacrificed to their gods; the greatest sin man can commit is to worship another god. They also committed fornication. This sin then endangered all Israel; but especially the children. Deut. 4:1-4.
 - 3. Deut. 7:16-18 God ordered that when he delivered the enemy into their hand they were to utterly destroy all life. They were not to take pity. They were to remember what God did to Egypt.
 - a. They were exceedingly wicked.
 - b. Their practices included human sacrifice, astrology, clairvoyance, dealing with evil spirits: which was forbidden by law and the penalty was death. Deut. 18:9-14; Ex. 22:18; Lev. 20:27.

4. God never brings anything that he has not forewarned. He never is spiteful.

- a. Every Sabbath breaker is forewarned what will happen to him if he defies God's authority over him and despises God's Word. He will be stoned by all the congregation. Num. 15:35.
- b. We are commanded by God to keep the Sabbath a delight. We are not to think or speak our own thoughts, nor do our own pleasure. God promised us joy, blessing, and the ability to reach spiritual heights, ecstasy in God. Is. 58:13.
- c. God always with great compassion forewarned and gave time for the people to repent until he sent his wrath: only because there was no other remedy. II Chron. 36:15-16.
- d. God would not allow Abraham to take Canaan Land from the Amorites because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. Gen. 15:16.
 - 1) In Joshua 5:1, when the Amorites heard of the crossing of the Red Sea their heart melted, there was no more spirit in them, because of the children of Israel.
- e. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise (day of Judgement); He is not willing that any should perish. II Pet. 3:9.

F. In Summary:

1. The conduct of God and the conduct of His people are two entirely different things.
2. God makes perfect commandments, but man's obedience is not perfect.
3. Man may know precept upon precept as Solomon and still disobey.
4. What people say and what they practice are two different stories. Theory or the ideal is not the actual practice in most cases.
5. We must not forget the nature of sin which is aimed by Satan to overthrow God's government by rebellion.
6. We must remember the distinction between law and grace: Law tells us what is sinful but doesn't free the people of guilt or redeem them.
7. Only by blood is their redemption in grace through Christ. John 1:17 "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
8. The most important of all is the fact that in the Old Covenant God judged his people by their actions if it brought hurt to others. But

in the New Covenant, men are judged by their thoughts and motives as well as their actions.

- a. Jesus said he did not come to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill. Mt. 5:17-18 (The law would stay until judgment)
- b. Our righteousness must exceed the scribes and Pharisees. v.20
- c. Mt. 5:27-28 Jesus said, under the New Covenant: one could look after a woman with the wrong motive and commit adultery. vs. 31-32.
- d. Any communication in verifying the truth, beyond a plain yes or no, is from the devil. vs. 33-37.
- e. In the Old Testament: Murder means judgment. In the New Covenant: if anyone nurses anger against his brother, he is guilty of murder and faces judgment.
- f. We are to love our enemies. vs. 43-48.
- g. If we forgive others of the wrongs they have done to us, then our heavenly Father will also forgive us. Mt. 6:14-15.

BIBLE ETHICS FOR NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS

I. The relationship of Ethics to sin and redemption.

A. God cannot tolerate sin; His desire is that His people be all righteous. Is. 60:21.

1. God cannot look upon sin: When Jesus died on the cross, God had to turn his back on the sin and Jesus cried, "My God why hast thou forsaken me." Mark 15:34.

B. God requires natural and spiritual cleanliness in his people.

1. From the beginning of his dealings with man and the setting up of His principles through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the giving of the Law of Moses, this was primary.
 - a. They were to put away strange gods from among them and be clean and change their garments. Gen. 3:21-23; Gen. 35:2.
2. The Lord gave specific instructions to Moses and the children of Israel concerning uncleanness.
 - a. In the treating of leprosy (a type of sin) the main cure was cleanliness. Lev. 13:6; 14:8.
 - b. Also those with a running issue were to bathe in running water and wash their clothes. Lev. 15:4-13.
3. All the people and the camp itself was to be kept clean and holy before the Lord.

- a. Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not...when they defile my tabernacle that is among you. Lev. 15:31.
 - b. A man who is unclean and does not cleanse himself shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly. Num. 19:20,21.
 - c. The camp must be a sanctuary, especially in wartime; the enemy cannot come against a righteous camp. Num. 23:9-12.
 - d. Even the ashes of the heifer were deposited outside the camp in a clean place. Num. 19:9.
4. The Levites had a special charge and responsibility to be clean.
- a. The priest was to bathe himself in water before he put on the holy garments. Lev. 16:4.
 - b. His garments were to be pure linen: No mixture was allowed in the priests garments. Deut. 22:11.
 - c. The Levites who served their brethren in the tabernacle were to be extra clean. Num. 8:7, 13-16.
 - d. "...Go ye out of hte midst of her; be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." Is. 52:11.
5. The Pharisees were accused of making the outside of the cup clean but inwardly they were full of excess. Mt. 23:25-28.
- a. The Pharisees fulfilled all the law of body cleanliness, in eating and washing of animals and hands.
 - b. Jesus said we should exceed the Pharisees in natural and spiritual cleanliness.
- C. The Lord honors those who keep His principles of cleanliness and righteousness.
- 1. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart shall receive the blessing of the Lord and shall be permitted to ascend into His holy hill. Ps. 24:3-5.
 - 2. "He that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." Job 17:9.
- D. When we repent from our sin and uncleanness we are to turn our entire will and way over to God.
- 1. ...present your body as a living sacrifice unto God..., and be transformed by the renewing of your mind... Rom. 12:1,2.
 - 2. Rebellion against God's way is, in His sight, as the sin of witchcraft; stubbornness against God's divine principles He likens to iniquity and idolatry. I Sam. 15:23.

- E. Lucifer's sin was his failure to acknowledge God as eternally supreme and to desire to exalt himself to a position of equality with God. Ezek. 28:15; Is. 14:13,14.
1. I will ascend into Heaven.
 - a. Ambition, effort, desire to move into a more desirable environment by self-effort.
 - b. Social Climbing.
 - c. Robber & Thief.
 - d. Self-confidence.
 2. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.
 - a. Emulation: desire to excel.
 - b. Competition.
 - c. Ruthlessness. Pushing ahead of others, shoving.
 - d. Self elevation above others.
 - e. Drive to succeed.
 - f. Be bigger, better, higher.
 3. I will sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the North.
 - a. Cause others to look to.
 - b. Get attention from one or more persons centered upon self.
 - c. Desire for spot-light position.
 - d. Be look up to - catered to, flattered.
 - e. Force others to role of listener.
 4. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.
 - a. Propel self into rarified atmosphere of existence.
 - b. Desire to escape reality.
 - c. Live without effort or contribution.
 - d. Pink cloud existence - all bubble, no "feet on the ground" reality.
 - e. Given to the gratification of the five senses.
 5. I will be like the most high.
 - a. Be served.
 - b. Be worshipped.
 - c. Be obeyed - dominate.
 - d. Be yielded to.
 - e. Always get own way.
 - f. Be acknowledged right.
 - g. Get power by position or money.
 - h. Be under no authority.
- F. God's divine plan of redemption provided everything we need to live a righteous life before Him.

1. Our responsibility as new creatures is to yield our members to Christ. Rom. 6:11-13.
 - a. We must put off the old nature with its deeds and put on Christ. Col. 3:8-14.

II. The Christian's Duty to God.

A. In order to serve God in an acceptable manner our motivations must be pure.

1. The Lord wants us to serve Him out of a pure heart of love - not out of fear, or duty, or religious conscience.
2. Love is the first fruit of the spirit and should be the first product in our lives. Gal. 5:22.
3. Love is the greatest of all Christian characteristics. I Cor. 13:13.
4. Love is the primary way the world knows we are Christians. John 13:35.
5. Love will cast out all fear: fear of people, fear of the devil, and even an improper fear of God. I John 4:18.
6. The Lord had to reprimand the church at Ephesus because they had lost their first love.
 - a. The Lord's command to them was to render and do the first work.
 - b. He required an act of repentance in order to restore this first love. Rev. 2:2-5.

B. Once we are motivated correctly, this will affect our devotion, our obligations and our priorities - Col. 1:18; our conduct and the way we practice our service to God comes from our relationship with Him.

1. We have a responsibility to worship Him as Lord. (Worship means: bowing in submission to the will of God, in reverence, adoration, respect, honor and devotion.)
 - a. Give the Lord glory and come before Him in worship. I Chron. 16:29.
 - b. Worship Him in the beauty of holiness. Ps. 96:9.
 - c. O come let us worship and bow down. Ps. 95:6.
 - d. God is a spirit: worship Him in spirit and truth. John 4:24.
 - e. We are to worship Jesus as Lord and Christ. John 9:38.
2. We are to worship the Lord according to every thing that is written in the scriptures. Acts 24:14.
 - a. Our worship must not be according to our feelings or what we feel is acceptable to God, but according to the methods laid down in the Word. This is faith.
 - 1) By faith, Jacob, when he was dying, worshipped. Heb. 11:21.

- 2) By faith, Abraham and his sons worshipped the Lord. Gen. 22:5,8.
3. Our responsibility is to worship with the congregation. Jer. 33:11; Ps. 22:22; 35:18; 149:1.
- a. All the congregation worshipped together bowing their faces to the ground. II Chron. 29:28; II Chron. 7:3.
4. We are not to worship:
- a. The works of our own hands; Mic. 5:13.
 - b. The hosts of heaven; Zeph. 1:4-5.
 - c. The Queen of heaven - the workmanship of heaven - Mary. Jer. 44:16-19.
 - d. Angels - Col. 2:18.
 - e. Devils - Rev. 9:20.
5. Jesus is the creator. He is worthy of worship and if we will worship according to His pattern he will join us. Rev. 4:11; Rev. 5:9; Heb. 2:12.
6. Our duties and responsibilities to the Lord also include spending time with him in open communion and prayer.
- a. Prayer will keep us from yielding to temptaion. Mt. 26:41.
 - b. An effective fervent prayer will accomplish much. James 5:16.
 - c. Prayer will keep us from fainting and becoming weary. Luke 18:1.
 - d. In prayer the Lord can reveal His will and show us things to come. Jer. 33:3.
 - e. Making our requests known to the Lord gives Him the opportunity to grant requests and make us happy. John 16:24.
 - f. We should always be in an attitude of prayer with the channels open. I Thess. 5:17.
 - g. Prayer should be our first consideration in any circumstance - whether for ourselves or for others. I Tim. 2:1.
 - h. We should pray one for another and bear each others burdens. James 5:16; Gal. 6:2.
- 1) Our prayers for others should never be gossipy, but we should pray for them according to the scriptural pattern. Eph. 3:14-21.
 - a) that they be strengthened.
 - b) that their faith may increase.
 - c) that they be rooted and established and fruitful in the kingdom.

- d) that they may comprehend Christ's love and walk worthy of Him.
 - e) and that they be filled with all the fulness of God and the knowledge of his will.
 - i. Our prayers should always be centered around the furtherance of His kingdom. Mt. 6:10; 9:37,38.
- 7. Consistently studying the Word is also part of our responsibility to the Lord.
 - a. We cannot live up to God's standard if we don't know what it is; studying will give us this knowledge so that we can stand, approved, before God. II Tim. 2:15.
 - 1) Ezra was a good example of a man who felt a responsibility toward God's Word. Ezra 7:10.
 - b. The scriptures should be studied daily. Acts 17:11; John 5:39.
 - c. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Col. 3:1. Then, and only then can we fulfill the rest of the verse which is "to teach and admonish one another".
- 8. Submission and obedience will be a natural result of a proper relationship to the Lord. Heb. 13:17.
 - a. Discipline is a heavenly principle; "discipline" and "disciple" come from the same word meaning to train for orderly conduct; that which develops character, self control, orderliness and self-sufficiency. I Sam. 15:22.
 - b. This is often the acid test for Christians; being obedient to God. Heb. 13:7; Rom. 13:1.
 - c. True obedience is from the heart and not just actions; as people see and recognize our ability to obey the Lord by obeying those in authority, they will turn and follow our example. II Cor. 10:16.
 - d. As we climb God's ladder of authority, it is then that we will be qualified to honor and respect the submission of others. II Cor. 10:6.
 - e. Obedience should not thwart our zeal or creativity, but channel it.
- 9. We are responsible to the Lord for our attitudes.
 - a. We should do all things without murmuring and disputing. Phil. 2:14, 15.
 - b. Our service to the church and to others must be performed as though it was a direct ministry to the Lord...because it is. Mt. 25:40.

C. Our ministry before the Lord as faithful stewards is a great responsibility.

1. God owns everything by right of creation and all things belong to Him.

a. He is the possessor of heaven and earth. Gen. 14:22.

b. The earth is His and everything that dwells in it. Deut. 10:14.

c. The beasts of the forest and all cattle are His. Ps. 50:10.

d. All the silver and the gold is His. Hag. 2:8.

e. All riches, honor, strength and might, and glory come from Him and He reigns over it all. I Chron. 29:11-13.

f. All the land is His. Lev. 25:23.

g. Every soul is God's. Ezek. 18:4.

h. We are not our own - we are bought with a price. I Pet. 1:18-19; Mt. 23:10; I Cor. 6:20.

1) We all differ one from another. I Cor. 4:7.

i. He has delivered us from the powers of darkness. Col. 1:13.

j. He created all things. Eph. 3:9; Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11.

2. The Lord chooses out individuals in the body and delivers unto them a ministry. Mt. 25:14-23.

a. Fulfilling our responsibility in ministry gives great joy. vs. 21.

b. Fear of displeasing people, leadership, or the Lord, often keeps us from forging ahead in what the Lord has given us to do. vs. 24-30.

3. A steward has a great responsibility and he must be found faithful. I Cor. 4:1-3; II Tim. 1:14.

a. God has entrusted us with His great message of salvation. I Thess. 2:4; II Tim. 1:14.

b. As an entrusted servant and steward of the gospel, our character must be above reproach. Titus 2:7-8; I Cor. 4:2.

4. There are different types of stewards.

a. The good steward - in dispensing. I Pet. 4:10.

b. The wise steward - in discriminating. Luke 12:42.

c. The unjust steward - in wasting. Luke 16:1.

5. There are 5 cardinal points of stewardship:

a. First, he must acknowledge that God is the owner of all things. Gen. 14:22; Hag. 2:8.

b. We, as stewards are trustees and partners of all His possessions. Mt. 25:14; Acts 4:32.

c. We are stewards of money, time, and our bodies. I Pet. 4:10.

- d. We must acknowledge God by a separated portion. Gen. 28:20-22; I Cor. 16:1-3.
 - e. Our separated portion is the tithe.
6. A steward is accountable to God for everything entrusted to his care.
- a. The kingdom of heaven takes account of its servants. Mt. 18:23; Rom. 14:7-12.
 - 1) This includes accounting to Him for our wages - our time - our expending of ourselves - what we did with the ministry given to us by the laying on of hands.
 - b. We labor to be acceptable and well pleasing to God. Rom. 12:1; I Cor. 5:9.
 - c. Each of us must appear before the judgment seat to give an account. II Cor. 5:10; I Cor. 4:5.
 - d. To be a good steward we must be willing to forsake all.
7. The scriptures give us clear examples of faithful or unfaithful stewards; studying these can give us the Lord's requirements for stewardship.
- a. Gen. 43:19, 44:1-4 - The steward in Joseph's house followed all his master's directions even though to his natural mind they might have seemed illogical or even cruel - but it was to be through this means that Benjamin was brought forth.
 - b. I Chron. 28:1 - David appointed faithful stewards over all the substance and possessions of the king.
 - c. I Kings 16:8-10 Elah was killed in the house of his steward.
 - d. Mt. 20:8; Luke 12:42 There are wages earned and rewards received by every steward.
 - e. Luke 8:1-3 Joanna, wife of King Herod's steward ministered unto Jesus of her substance along with Mary Magdalene.
 - f. Luke 16:1-13 The rich man's steward wasted his goods and was required to give an account. (Faithfulness over another man's goods is required before we can be entrusted with our own.)
 - g. Titus 1:7 A steward must be blameless.
8. The Lord also expects us to be good stewards of our time.
- a. The time is short. We must live and work as if the Lord were coming back tomorrow. I Cor. 7:29.

- b. We are to redeem the time (make good use of it) and be wise. Eph. 5:16-17; Col. 4:5.
 - c. We are to be a sober, vigilant, steadfast and resist satan. I Pet. 5:8.
 - d. We are to be occupied willingly feeding the flock of God. I Pet. 5:2.
 - e. A man should work and labor until the evening. Ps. 104:23.
 - f. If we labor with our hands we will receive a blessing and a sense of well being. Ps. 128:2.
 - g. He that gathereth by labor shall increase. Prov. 13:11.
 - h. We are not to hate our labor, but our heart is to rejoice in all our labor. Ecc. 2:10-18, 24.
 - i. Every man will be rewarded according to his own labor. I Cor. 3:8-9.
 - j. Our good labor is not in vain in the Lord. I Cor. 15:58.
 - k. We are to work to show our faith, love, patience and hope in Jesus Christ. I Thess. 1:3.
 - l. The scriptures give us examples of those who labored:
 - 1) Mary bestowed much labor. Rom. 16:6.
 - 2) Phebe succored many. Rom. 16:2.
 - 3) Persis labored much in the Lord. Rom. 16:12.
 - 4) Paul labored day and night. I Thess. 2:9.
 - 5) The church at Ephesus was commended for their labor. Rev. 2:1-3.
 - m. We are to give time to the word and doctrine. I Tim. 5:17.
 - n. We are to labor to the saints in works of love. Heb. 6:10.
9. Work and stewardship are bound together.
- a. It is a great honor to be called as a steward of God. Titus 1:7.
 - b. We are to be good stewards of this high trust. I Pet. 4:10.
 - c. We are commanded to be faithful and wise. I Cor. 4:2; Luke 12:42.
 - d. We are God's partners, working in his name. III John 7.
 - e. We are to work faithfully and diligently while waiting for His coming. Mark 13:35.
10. The Lord has committed into our hands a portion of His substance; we are held responsible for our tithes, offerings, and alms.
- a. The love of money is the root of all evil. I Tim. 6:10.
A Christian steward makes money, not for himself, but to build the kingdom of God. (I Tim. 6:9-12)

- 1) We are not to seek money for ourselves but for greater giving and service. (Luke 12:16-20; 16:13; 12:15)
- 2) We must never make money at the price of others. (Prov. 14:31; Jer. 22:13-17)
- b. Money making power is an endowment from God. Deut. 8:18; Acts 14:17; Deut. 11:13-17.
- c. The basis of Christianity is found in one word "GIVE" and the Lord Himself set the example for us to follow.
 - 1) He gave His Son. (John 3:16)
 - 2) Jesus gave Himself. (Gal. 2:20)
 - 3) The Holy Spirit was given by the Father, through the Son. John 14:16; 15:26.
 - 4) He gives us all blessings. James 1:27; II Pet. 1:3.
 - 5) His gifts are:
 - a) free - Num. 14:8.
 - b) abundant - Rom. 8:32.
 - c) to be prayed for - Mt. 7:7,11; John 16:23,24.
 - d) to be used for mutual profit - I Pet. 4:10.
 - e) to be gladly acknowledged - Ps. 4:7; 21:2.
 - 6) His Spiritual Gifts are:
 - a) Christ - Is. 42:6; John 4:10.
 - b) The Holy Spirit - Luke 11:13.
 - c) Grace - Jas. 4:6; I Pet. 11:13.
 - d) Faith - Eph. 2:8.
 - e) Righteousness - Rom. 5:16-17.
 - f) Strength and Power - Ps. 68:35.
 - g) Rest - Mt. 11:28.
 - h) Eternal Life - Rom. 6:23.
 - 7) His Temporal Gifts:
 - a) Life - Is. 42:5.
 - b) Food and Raiment - Mt. 6:25-33.
 - c) Rain and Fruitful Seasons - Gen. 27:28; Is. 30:23.
 - d) Wisdom - II Chron. 1:12.
 - e) All Good Things - Ps. 34:10; I Tim. 6:17.
 - 8) His Gifts Are:
 - a) Partaken of by all Creatures - Ps. 136:25; 145:15-16.
 - b) To be used and enjoyed - Eccl. 3:13; I Tim. 4:4-5.
 - c) To cause us to remember Him - Deut 8:18.

- d. God's separated portion is the tithe (10%); it is not to be stored with man's possessions (Lev. 27;26-34) but it is holy unto the Lord. Lev. 27:30-34.
- e. The collections is the touchstone of service.
 - 1) Prepare for it on the first day. I Cor. 16:2.
 - 2) Everyone cooperate in it. I Cor. 16:2.
 - 3) Bring Tithes and Offerings. Mal. 3:8-10.
 - 4) Give a Willing Offering. Ex. 25:2.
 - 5) Donate your best toward the collection. Ex. 22:29-30.
 - 6) Let none come without an offering. Ex. 25:15.
 - 7) Make a freewill offering. Deut. 16:10.
 - 8) Place your silver and gold in the plates. Ezra 1:4.
 - 9) Bread cast thus will return. Eccl. 11:1.
 - 10) Give and get more in return. Luke 6:38.
 - 11) Give your offering proof of love. II Cor. 8:24.
 - 12) Always be ready to distribute. I Tim. 6:18.
- f. The Lord has designated a particular place for our tithes & offerings.
 - 1) Tithes and Offerings to be brought to the Storehouse; Mal. 3:8-10.
 - 2) The Offerings were required to be brought to the Place designated by God. Deut. 12:6; Ps. 27:6; Heb. 9:9.
 - 3) Offerings are to be laid before the Altar. Mt. 5:23-24.
 - 4) Offerings to be presented by priest (preacher). Heb. 5:1.
 - 5) Offerings are to be laid up in the Temple. II Chron. 31:12.
- g. The Lord had rigid requirements for Old Testament offerings. They were to be:
 - 1) Perfect. Lev. 22:21.
 - 2) The best of their kind. Mal. 1:14.
 - 3) Given willingly and without blemish. Lev. 22:19-21.
 - 4) Brought in love and charity. Mt. 5:23-24.
 - 5) Given in a clean vessel. Is. 60:20.
 - 6) Brought to a place designated by God. Deut. 12:6.
 - 7) Laid before the altar. Mt. 5:23-24.
 - 8) Brought promptly. Ex. 22:29-30.
- h. Here is a list of Old Testament Offerings:
 - 1) Burnt Lev. 1:3-17.
 - 2) Sin Lev. 4:3-35.
 - 3) Trespass Lev. 5:6-9.
 - 4) Peace Lev. 3:1-17.

- 5) Heave Ex. 29:27-28.
- 6) Wave Ex. 29:26.
- 7) Meat Lev. 2.
- 8) Drink Ex. 29:40.
- 9) Thanks Lev. 7:12.
- 10) Freewill Ex. 25:2.
- 11) Incense Ex. 30:8.
- 12) Firstfruits Ex. 22:29.
- 13) Tithe Lev. 27:30.
- 14) Gifts Ex. 35:22.
- 15) Personal Offerings for Redemption. Ex. 30:13-15.

i. We are commanded to give.

- 1) To the poor. Mt. 19:21; Rom 15:25-27.
- 2) To those in dire need. Eph. 4:28.
- 3) To saints in distress. Jas. 2:15-16; I John 3:3:16-18.
- 4) To the ministry. I Cor. 9:7-14; Gal. 6:6.

j. Christians are to give:

- 1) With specific purpose. II Cor. 9:7.
- 2) Not to be seen of men. Mt. 6:2-4.
- 3) Without begrudging it. II Cor. 9:7.
- 4) According to our prosperity. I Cor. 16:2.

k. The Lord has been careful to explain how we should give and our attitudes toward giving.

- 1) We are to give without ostentation. Mt. 6:3
- 2) Commanded to give cheerfully, not begrudgingly. II Cor. 9:7.
- 3) Must give with liberality. Prov. 11:25.
- 4) Make our giving systematic. I Cor. 16:2.
- 5) Giving to be proportional to our prosperity. I Cor. 16:2.
- 6) Our giving is to be sacrificial. II Sam. 24:24.

l. We are not to give out of impulse or feelings but according to the Word.

- 1) Because of our influence on others. II Cor. 9:2.
- 2) To benefit ourselves. Prov. 11:25; Mal. 3:10; Is. 58:10.
- 3) We are to lay it in store. I Cor. 16:2.
- 4) We are to give according to God's prosperity. I Cor. 16:2.
- 5) We are to give a certain percent. II Cor. 8:12-15; Mal. 3:8-10.
- 6) We are to give when we see a need. Eph. 4:28.

m. Systematic giving returns great blessing. Mal. 3:8-12; Mk. 10:29,30; Prov. 3:9,10.

- n. The Lord has given two very good examples of Christian giving in the scripture:
 - 1) Giving to furnish the tabernacle. Ex. 36:1-7.
 - 2) The Philippian church giving to Paul. Phil. 4:10-20.
- o. Jesus taught four important lessons on giving.
 - 1) We are to give all and he will return more. Mt. 19:28-30.
 - 2) We are to give to him that asks. Mt. 5:42; Lk. 6:34-38.
 - 3) We are to give unstintingly to the poor. Mt. 10:42; Mk. 9:41.
 - 4) The stingy rich man lost all. Luke 16:19-31.

III. The Christians Duty To Others

- A. We have a responsibility to maintain unity and love in the church. Ps. 133:1,2.
 - 1. Paul commanded the Corinthian Church to be in unity and that there were to be no divisions. I Cor. 1:10.
 - 2. Unity has always been a principle of God.
 - a. It was recognized in the upper room. Act. 1:14; 2:1.
 - b. It was recognized in the Corinthian church. I Cor. 1:10.
 - c. Jesus knew the value of this principle. John 17:21-22.
 - d. A church that strives for unity will be a church that enters into God's glory. Eph. 4:1-3,13,16; I Pet. 4:17-18.
 - e. We are to unite in prayer. Acts 1:14; in one place. Acts 2:1; 2:46.
 - f. There must be unity in God's army. Joel 2:7-11.
 - g. We are to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit I Eph. 4:3 (We keep the unity regardless of our personal viewpoint)
- B. We have a responsibility to show the proper respect for those in position of authority in the church.
 - 1. Pastors are given to us by the Lord. Eph. 4:11; Jer. 3:15.
 - a. He is the shepherd of the flock and works directly with God. Jer. 23:4.
 - b. We should be careful to build up the position of the pastorate to be that of "presidential importance" to our children.
 - c. Never make derogatory remarks against the pastor or his wife in the presence of your children. They play an important role in God's program.
 - d. Children usually receive divine healing through prayer by the pastor as they are taught to respect the pastor and other ministers.

- e. Children, as well as adults, show their respect to God as they respect their pastor.
 - f. Encourage teen-agers and young people to learn the value and wisdom of counseling with their pastor and his wife.
 - g. Continually instruct your children of the importance of cooperating and obeying all church departments and officers (deacons, ushers, elders, teachers, ministers, etc...)
2. We are to give our respect to the office of an Elder, Bishop and Pastor.
 - a. They are divinely called. Rom. 1:1.
 - 1) No one just decides to be a minister.
 - b. They are divinely made. I Tim. 1:12.
 - c. They are God-given. Eph. 4:11.
 3. There are five moral qualifications given for those in the position of Elder, Bishop and Pastor:
 - a. Blameless.
 - b. Temperate.
 - c. Sober.
 - d. Good Behavior.
 - e. Patient.
 4. God's Word says their ministry should be identified and recognized and worthy of double honor. I Tim. 5:17.
 5. Deacons are worthy of our respect and honor.
 - a. They are appointed to a position of authority by the Pastor and Elders. Acts 6:3.
 - b. They have specific qualifications.
 - 1) Domestic qualifications: husband of one wife, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.
 - 2) Moral qualifications: not double tongued, not given to wine, not greedy of money, blameless, first proved (not a novice). I Tim. 3:8-10.
 - 3) Spiritual qualifications: full of the Holy Ghost, full of wisdom, reverent, holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience (knowing and obeying the Word).
 6. The word deacon means servant which gives us an understanding of their area of work.
 - a. They must serve and rule their own families well. I Tim. 3:12.
 - b. They are also to minister to the body in physical labor in order to release the ministries from material duty. Acts 6:3.

- c. They are also to be able to minister the Word and be strong in the faith. A balanced ministry. I Tim. 3:13.
- 7. We have a responsibility to show the proper respect to every ministry in the church. Not considering one another after the flesh but giving proper honor to the God-given ministry and position they have been called to. II Cor. 6:16-19.
 - a. This includes training hour or Sunday School teachers.
 - 1) Our attitude towards this teaching hour is transmitted to those we influence.
 - 2) Insist that your children and every one under your influence give full cooperation and attention to their teachers. They should always be held in high esteem.
 - 3) Don't even take a child's side - or any one else's - against a teacher.
 - b. This also includes proper reverences and respect for those ministering during the services in song, instruments, prophesy, exhortation, etc.
 - 1) We must be careful to avoid that "Oh that's just 'so & so' " expression or attitude.
 - 2) We need to teach our children respect for the prophetic word.
 - 3) As the Lord opens new areas and realms of ministry keep an open heart. If you turn something off before you understand it you may later be able to accept it and flow with it but those you've influenced by your first response may take months or years to recover. We need to be as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves.
 - c. We must also be careful to set a proper example of respect to the position of fathers, mothers and the elderly.
 - 1) A father is the priest of his home.
 - a) We must never usurp or destroy that authority by council or siding with a child against his parents.
 - 2) A mother's duty is to train a child and set the boundaries of activities and behavior.
 - a) Again we must be careful not to destroy this.
 - 3) In our society there is very little reverence and respect paid to the elderly. In the body of Christ we must war against this. Lev. 19:32.

- a) The elderly need a great deal of love and attention. They need the support of the young and they need to be made to feel that they are important to the body.
- C. Someone is always watching us. We are building on each other. Eph. 2:21; 4:16. Therefore we must constantly be aware that our conduct is above reproach.
 - 1. This includes such practical things as:
 - a. attendance at every service.
 - 1) Sitting near the front.
 - 2) not visiting in the sanctuary.
 - 3) being cordial and friendly especially to visitors.
 - b. punctuality at all the services.
 - c. keep the church property neat and clean.
 - d. the treatment of church supplies.
 - e. being an example in our appearance.
 - 1) Realize that many people have different backgrounds concerning 'holiness'.
 - 2) We should esteem the body of Christ higher than our need for fashion.
 - 3) We must be especially careful not to offend the little ones (in the natural and in the spiritual).
 - f. Areas of questionable activities.
 - 1) Paul's position on his activities is the best rule to follow. Rom. 14:20-23.
 - 2) We are commanded by the Lord to love not the world. I John 2:15,16. Nothing should have us in bondage. I Cor. 10:23.
 - 3) With this attitude the Lord will help us to choose those activities which will only edify and build up the body.
 - g. Fellowship, socials and cliques.
 - 1) We must be careful to include everyone in each group whenever a social activity is planned.
 - 2) We are not to show partiality in church or church fellowship. James 2:1-4.
 - 3) One of Peter's greatest revelations was that God was no respecter of persons. Acts 10:34.
 - 4) Jesus died for all, let us have fellowship for all. (This does not mean that you can't have personal friends. However, many pastors have said that in their area of ministry it's not good to have one or two close friends in the church. In this

position of responsibility, fellowship and friendship must be given to all.

- 5) A clique is a small exclusive set of persons and this can be very detrimental to a church. Keep busy and involved with the whole body.
2. Every member of the body must be able to receive from your tree any and all of the fruit of the spirit at any time. Gal. 5:22,23. This is part of our responsibility to the body of Christ.
 - a. Our first should be always in season. Ps. 1:3; I Tim. 4:2.
 - 1) We should have:
 - LOVE - without partiality.
 - JOY - perpetually and everlasting.
 - PEACE - never anxious or worried.
 - LONGSUFFERING - patient.
 - GENTLENESS - full of kindness.
 - GOODNESS - distributing to every man's need.
 - FAITH - full of faith and a positive confession.
 - MEEKNESS - honoring our brothers and sisters above ourselves.
 - TEMPERANCE - moderate in all things.

D. We are also responsible to be effective personal workers around the altar.

1. We should always be able to lead someone to the next step in their spiritual experience. I Pet. 3:15.
2. However, we are not all necessarily called to altar workers.
 - a. There are definite qualifications for this:
 - 1) Genuine concern for people's spiritual needs and growth;
 - 2) Those whom the pastors feel are qualified;
 - 3) Must themselves be walking victoriously;
 - 4) Familiar with scriptural basis for spiritual growth. (Not one free with their own opinions).
3. Those that are called to this very important ministry should:
 - a. Let the pastor know of their desire to minister in this way.
 - b. Be in tune with God and the moving of the spirit in the service.
 - c. Be available and sit near the front.
 - d. Carry their Bible and be ready to direct the one seeking to the scriptural answer to their need.
 - e. Carry breath mints and be very aware of body odor so that you don't offend.

- f. Watch for the person's physical needs and comfort (i.e.: kleenex, awkward position, etc.).
 - g. Watch for embarrassing situations such as legs exposed, etc.
 - h. Men should pray with men and women with women.
 - i. Inquire for the need and pray specifically.
 - j. Don't pry for detailed information or confessions for which they might feel exposed or regret later.
 - k. Ask them to direct their confessions to Jesus.
 - l. Don't interrupt during this very important and intimate prayer.
 - m. Never argue. If you find you are over your head in knowing how to counsel turn it over to someone more qualified.
 - n. Refrain from giving advice in your counsel. Let the pastors give them direction if it's needed. Confine counseling to the Word of God.
 - o. One person should be directing the prayer but others may join for support.
- E. Every member of a local church has a responsibility to maintain a unified attitude toward discipline in the church.
1. There are seven points of unity in discipline:
 - a. Sin:
 - 1) Sin is everyone's responsibility. Go to your brother in the spirit of meedness and attitude of restoration. Mt. 18:11-14; Gal. 6:1.
 - 2) Sin cannot be tolerated in the church.
 - b. Doctrine:
 - 1) The church must be concerned about maintaining sound doctrine.
 - 2) Those who would undermine the teachings of the church in any area (i.e. repentance, salvation, water baptism, tongues, healing, perfection, glorious triumph of the Church, etc.) should be dealt with. Don't ignore this problem.
 - 3) We are not to fellowship with them. II John 10,11; Rom. 16:17.
 - c. Eldership:
 - 1) We are to esteem them highly.
 - 2) We are not to receive an accusation against them. I Tim. 5:19,20.
 - d. In attitude toward false doctrine:
 - 1) We are to withdraw ourselves from any who walk disorderly. II Thess. 3:6.

- 2) We are not to argue or debate with them. I Tim. 6:3-5.
- 3) We must not only refuse to listen but let it be known that we are willing to take further steps to see that it is stopped. Titus 1:10,11,13.
- e. In attitude toward a person who is rebellious.
 - 1) We are not to fellowship the rebellious but admonish them. II Thess. 3:14,15.
- f. In attitude toward a weak brother.
 - 1) We are not to judge but receive and teach. Rom. 14:1-4; 15:1.
- g. In attitude toward tithing and financial responsibility.
 - 1) Christians should be counselled not only in areas of marriage to an unbeliever but, business partnership with unbelievers.
- 2. God is a God of order and discipline.
 - a. He orders and maintains discipline in heaven.
 - b. He gave two clear Biblical examples of order and discipline.
 - 1) Old Testament - The children of Israel left Egypt and God immediately gave them order and discipline.
 - 2) New Testament - The early church received specific instructions on how to set up, organize and maintain bodies of people.
- 3. The disciplining of sinning members of the church is necessary for the spiritual health and strength of the body.
- 4. A member of the church who falls into sin or who teaches false doctrine should be dealt with according to the principle and procedure given in Mt. 18:15-17; I Cor. 5:1-6;11;13.
 - a. There must be witnesses.
 - b. Before bringing the matter before the church, two attempts should have been made privately to bring about the repentance of the sinning member.
 - c. In the bringing of a case for discipline before the church, the leadership is to take the initiative.
 - d. If the difficulty is between two brethren, the one who is in the right must initiate the restoration of fellowship.
 - e. If bringing the case before the church does not lead to repentance, fellowship must be broken and he is to be regarded as an heathen and a publican.
 - f. The leadership, under the direction of the Holy Spirit and prayer will determine any action to be taken and it is then the responsibility of the congregation to support this judgment.

- g. When fellowship is restored between a repentant sinner and Christ and those whom he has offended, then the church cannot refuse fellowship.
- F. We all have a responsibility in the Body of Christ to be a peacemaker.
 - 1. Many problems can arise in church groups.
 - 2. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God. Mt. 5:9.
 - 3. The peacemakers position is:
 - a. He is neutral - doesn't take sides.
 - b. He is careful in giving advice.
 - c. He helps to minimize problems.
 - d. He helps to unify and strengthen families.
 - e. He is no talebearer.
- G. The whole Body has a responsibility to support the outreach ministries of the church.
 - 1. Every member of the Body has a place and a duty to fulfill. However, we must never feel that we are the main hub around which the rest of the body must revolve. I Cor. 12:18-27.
 - 2. We must be careful to give support to every area of ministry either in time, prayer or giving.
 - a. We must continually pray for our missionaries.
 - 1) Missionary giving should receive equal importance with our tithe.
 - b. We must continually pray for other outreach areas such as:
 - 1) Dial Joy.
 - 2) Tape Ministry.
 - 3) Rest Home & Jail Ministry.
 - 4) Street-meeting & Visitation Ministry.
- H. We also have a responsibility to those outside of the church.
 - 1. Our first responsibility to others is to deliver to them the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Acts 4:33; Rom. 10:14,15.
 - a. We are an epistle, known and read of all men. II Cor. 3:2.

We are the only way people can be lead to Jesus. There are several ways we can deliver this message.

 - 1) By word of mouth, witnessing in testimony of what has happened to us.
 - 2) By demonstration; acts of kindness and love.
 - 3) By our ethical conduct. In this generation a truly honest person and one who has a high moral standard, stands out.

- 4) By doing good to all men. Not showing partiality in race or color or favoritism to one status group or another, but treating all men equally with Christ's love.
- b. Ye are the light of the world. Mt. 5:14,16. Be radiant!
- c. We must be an example of righteousness in every action and word. I Tim. 4:12.
 - 1) We must have a pattern of good works. Titus 2:7,8.
 - 2) We should not copy the behavior or customs of the world. Rom. 12:2.
 - 3) We are to live peaceably with all men. Rom. 12:18.
 - 4) We are not to avenge ourselves or take the law into our own hands. Rom. 12:19.
 - 5) We are not to take our brother to court to ask a heathen to settle our differences. I Cor. 6:1-4.
 - 6) We should make sure our speech is pure. Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:29.
 - 7) We should always be kind and not angry or quarrelsome. Eph. 4:31,32.
 - 8) We should not be greedy for this world's goods. Heb. 13:5.
 - 9) We should not be contentious or argumentative, but give a simple yes, or no. James 5:12.
 - 10) We should cheerfully share our home with those in need. I Pet. 4:9.
 - 11) We should show a good attitude when we're mistreated or cursed. I Pet. 4:14.
 - 12) We should be willing to lend what we have for no hope of return. Luke 6:34,35.
 - 13) We must be an example to the world in our appearance. I Tim. 2:9-10.
2. In our home, especially if there are unsaved members.
 - a. Jesus condemned the scribes and Pharisees for not honoring their father and mother by rendering to them what was due but saying "Corban", "I give what is due you, to God." Mk. 7:9-13.
 - 1) We should never be guilty of using our service to the Lord as an excuse for neglecting our home and family.
 - b. We must carry our share of the load in responsibility and in work.
 - 1) There is no area for the Christian to coast. A happy home is our responsibility.

2) Each duty should be performed with efficiency as unto the Lord.

c. Our attitude in the home is also important.

1) One of the greatest areas and training grounds for our attitude is in our home.

2) We should demonstrate Christ's:

- joy
- patience
- love
- gratitude and appreciation
- cheerfulness
- contentment
- honesty
- diligence
- kindness
- obedience
- sacrifice
- service
- forgiveness
- loyalty
- unity

3) The prophecy in Mal. 5:5,6 spoke of this day. The Lord is desiring to establish Christian homes that will be an example to the world and demonstrate his love and relationship between himself and his church.

a) General Parental Duty.

1. Be an example - I Kings 9:4; II Chron. 17:3.
2. To teach - Deut. 6:7; 4:9; 31:13; Prov. 4:3,4; Ex. 12:14; 26-27; Prov. 1:8.
3. To train - Prov. 22:6.
4. To provide for - II Cor. 12:14.
5. to nurture - Eph. 6:4.
6. To control - I Tim. 3:4.
7. To love - Titus 2:4.
8. To correct - Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13.

b) Father's Duty

1. To rule - I Tim. 3:12; 3:4.
2. To chasten - Prov. 19:18.
3. To correct - Prov. 22:15; 23:13.
4. To teach - Deut. 6:7; 11:18-21; 4:9,10; Prov. 4:1-4; 1:8.

- 5. To nurture; not to provoke - Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21.
 - 6. To provide for - I Tim. 5:8; II Cor. 12:14.
 - 7. To encourage - I Thess. 2:11.
 - 8. To command - Gen. 18:19.
 - 9. To tell - Ex. 10:2.
 - 10. To guide - Jeremiah 3:4
 - 11. To discipline - Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:56.
- c) Mother's Duty
- 1. To correct - Prov. 29:15.
 - 2. To have compassion - Is. 49:15.
 - 3. To comfort - Is. 66:13.
 - 4. To love - Titus 2:4.
 - 5. To teach - Prov. 1:8 - forsake not the law of thy mother.
 - 6. To be gentle - I Thess. 2:7.
3. To our society:
- a. Every Christian is a member of society in the sense that he is part of the community in which he lives.
 - b. The Lord has set us in our particular area to be a light even as he was. John 17:18.
 - c. We have a duty to our neighbors and our community to abide by the laws of that area - to minister to their welfare, to help them in trouble, and to do them good in any way we can.
 - d. Jesus is our example. He went about doing good to every man. He only crossed the grain of his society when it crossed the Word of God - and to show the people their hypocrisy. Luke 6:1-10.
4. To our governments:
- a. We are to faithfully pay our taxes. Rom. 13:6,7.
 - b. We are to obey and honor government leaders and officials. Rom. 13:1.
 - c. We are to obey all the laws and ordinances of our government. Rom. 13:5; Titus 3:1; I Pet. 2:13-17.
 - d. Again, Jesus is our example.
 - 1) He paid his taxes. Mt. 17:27.
 - 2) Gave honor to the government. Mark 12:16,17.
 - e. What about going to war at the request of your government.
 - 1) What many people don't understand is that the Lord commanded many to fight and kill.

- 2) Fortunately in our country there is a choice given. Many can serve in other capacities in the army...i.e. office work, medical duty, etc...
 - 3) There is always the possibility of filing as a conscientious objector if by personal conviction the individual cannot possibly become a part of the armed services.
 - 4) Every young man who faces this decision must come to his own personal conviction before the Lord - keeping in mind that the Lord is able to keep him and wants him to be a good citizen - and then his church should stand behind him in whatever that conviction is.
- f. In this country we are blessed with the opportunity to vote for our leaders. Therefore it is our duty as good citizens and our responsibility as Christians to acquaint ourselves with the candidates and issues and, with much prayer for guidance, vote at every election.
- 1) Many Christians are lop-sided in this area by either spending too much time and energy on political issues and causes and robbing the kingdom, or ignoring the responsibility altogether by assuming "it will all come out the way the Lord wants it anyway." Let's be balanced Christians!
- g. Loyalty to our country should be part of our lives and we should obey, with a heart of gratitude and respect all that our government requires of us as long as it does not conflict with the principles of God's Word.
5. To our employers or employees:
- a. Masters, or employers are to be considerate, reasonable and just. Eph. 6:9; Col. 4:1.
 - 1) They should not show favoritism. Philemon 16.
 - b. Employees or servants are to obey those who are over them. Eph. 6:5.
 - 1) They are to serve with good attitude recognizing that they are doing it as unto the Lord.
 - 2) John the Baptist gave strict instruction to the servants of that day in Luke 3:14:
 - do violence to no man
 - neither accuse any falsely
 - be content with your wages
 - 3) They are to suffer patiently when wrongfully accused or abused. I Pet. 2:18-20.

- 4) Four attributes should be found in every Christian employee or employer:
- Humility - freedom from pride and arrogance. Prov. 8:13.
 - Meekness - patience under injuries. Mt. 11:29; 5:5.
 - Respectful - inward respect brings outward results. Eph. 4:15.
 - Courtesy - the outward result of respect. Col. 4:6.
6. To our friends:
- a. The Lord will hold us responsible especially for those under our influence.
 - 1) A friend loveth at all times and a brother is born for adversity. Prov. 17:17.
 - 2) "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly..." Prov. 18:24.
 - 3) Our friends need us most in times of trouble. What an opportunity to show the grace and love of Christ. John 15:13.
 - 4) We don't condone any wrong. A true friend speaks the truth in love and admonishes to good works. Prov. 27:6.
7. To our enemies:
- a. We are to pray for them and seek earnestly and actively their welfare. Mt. 5:44-46.
 - b. We should never harbor grudges or seek their harm or hope for any calamity.
 - c. We are to feed them, give them drink, bless them and pray for God to prosper them. Rom. 12:14, 20-21.

SOCIALLY -

1. We need to be careful that we fulfill all of our social responsibilities that we don't offend. Eccl. 3:1,4; Rom. 12:15.
 - a. We need to learn to rejoice with those that are rejoicing and weep with those that weep. Rom. 12:15.
 - 1) It is our responsibility to attend weddings, funerals, showers, birthday parties, etc. if at all possible.
2. We have a responsibility to keep people posted as to our whereabouts or our intentions. We are responsible to each other as members of the body. Rom. 14:7; II Cor. 5:15.
3. Whatever responsibility we are given to do, the job should be followed through from beginning to end.

- a. If we are in charge of a social function it should be planned out from beginning to end - including clean up committee.

IV. Our Christian Duty to Ourselves:

A. Man is made up of body, soul and spirit. Each area must be sanctified unto the Lord. I Thess. 5:23.

1. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." We must take care of these temples. We are the only house that the Holy Spirit has to dwell in, and he can only minister effectively through them when they are in good health. Rom. 12:1.

a. Part of good health is eating correctly. "You are what you eat".

1) Make sure you have well-balanced meals so that you won't be short on any vitamins.

2) Take a multiple vitamin every day to make up for what our food processing removes.

b. Everything about us must be clean, spiritually and naturally. I Cor. 6:20.

1) The natural is the only thing that men of the world see. It should testify of the inward cleansing that has taken place.

2) The Lord has always been aware of odors. He did not want the smell of burning flesh from the sacrifices to fill his nostrils nor the perspiration of the priests, so he made provision for both.

3) Even our houses, cars, job area, etc..., should be clean and neat as a testimony to the world.

4) Our bodies should be bathed regularly, hair washed, nails cleaned and teeth cleaned. Amos 4:6.

c. The Lord hates nakedness. Our bodies should always be properly clothed.

1) Adam and Eve were naked and felt shame. Gen. 3:7.

2) We are to cover the naked. Is. 58:7.

3) Canaan was cursed for seeing the nakedness of his father and taking it lightly. Gen. 9:22-25.

4) Whenever Israel returned to idolatry it returned to nakedness, whoredom, and prostitution. Ex. 32:19 & 25.

5) Satan desires to strip people and make them naked. Acts 19:16 Beware of any desire to uncover your flesh. It's not of God!

6) We should not cause our brother to stumble by exposing ourselves or dressing improperly in any way. Rom. 14:21.

- 7) "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments lest he be naked and they see his shame. Rev. 16:15.
- d. We need to make sure that our clothing styles or hair styles don't identify with worldly groups or cults. I Cor. 11:6,14.
 - 1) Esther clothed herself with only that which Hegai (a type of Holy Spirit) chose for her and she obtained favor in the sight of all that looked at her. Esther 2:15.
- e. Many people are "turned off" to the kingdom because of sloppy advertising. The witness is soon forgotten but the memory of what we are, lives on in peoples minds. II Cor. 3:2.
- f. It is also the Christian's duty to regulate and control the appetites of the body. I Cor. 6:12.
 - 1) There are unnatural appetites, also the misuse of natural appetites, and excessive indulgence of natural appetites.
 - 2) It is God's order to keep every function of our bodies under control. I Cor. 10:31.
2. Our souls, (mind, will and emotions) must be transformed and conformed to the likeness of Christ. Rom. 12:1; Rom. 8:29.
 - a. Our mind must be trained in:
 - 1) Knowledge: of His Word, which is His will and in academic areas, as well, so that whatever information is fed into it, it can sort it out and use it effectively for the kingdom.
 - 2) Memory: to forget the things that should be forgotten and remember the things that should be remembered. It should be commanded to expand by storing up portions of God's Word.
 - 3) Reflection: To meditate on the Word, day and night and to digest the teachings that we hear.
 - 4) Emotions: to develop right feelings; Keep from reacting according to past feelings but according to our new nature.
 - 5) Will: to make the right choices according to the Word of God and not according to past habit patterns.
 - b. Our minds must be renewed in spirit (breath, rational soul, vital principles, disposition).
 - 1) We need to let the breath of the Holy Spirit blow (blast) away our old thinking patterns.
 - a) We need to think positively. Phil. 4:8.
 - b) We need a disciplined mind. I Pet. 1:13.
 - c) We need to put out of our minds every thought that would exalt itself (or take up our mind).

- c. Our behaviour patterns will change as our minds are transformed. We will no longer walk or behave ourselves according to the vanity (emptiness) of our own minds, but will have the mind of Christ. Eph. 4:17-25.
- 1) The Lord doesn't want us to use our inherited weaknesses as an excuse for not doing His will. Titus 1:12,13.
 - 2) Bad habits can no longer co-exist with the perfect spirit of Christ.
3. Any weaknesses in bodily control or mental discipline will be corrected as our spirits are yielded to the spirit of Christ. Rom. 6:13.
- a. Spiritually we are to clothe ourselves with the garments and vestures that Christ has provided to make us strong and eventually perfected into his image. Eph. 6; Ps. 18:34-37.
 - 1) Our armour:
 - Loins girded with truth - strength through the truth
 - Breastplate of righteousness - pure, clean heart
 - Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace - disciplined walk
 - Shield of faith - believing, trusting, a positive confession
 - Helmet of salvation - redeemed mind
 - Sword of the Spirit - skilled in the word and doctrine.
 - 2) We are to:
 - Put off: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, the old man with his deeds. Col. 3:8,9.
 - Put on: new man, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering,, forbearance, forgiveness, charity, peace, and thankfulness. vs. 10-15.
 - b. The Lord desires balanced characteristics in our spirit and personality. Rom. 12:9-21.
 - 1) There are strong characteristics such as abhorance of evil; generosity toward others, energetic.
 - 2) There are gentle characteristics such as love, kindness, hope, patience, humility...
 - 3) There should also be a balance between doctrine and practice i.e., justice and grace, firmness and kindness, faith and works, worship and service, herring and doing.
 - c. Above all we must accept ourselves as the Lord made us - with all our weaknesses and inadequacies - as well as our strength and abilities and be ye thankful.

FORMS OF PLEASURE

A certain amount of pleasure in its proper place is undeniably right and proper and has the approval of God. The Lord went to a wedding feast (John 2:1-10), mixed with people on a friendly basis (Mt. 11:19), and attended dinner parties (Luke 5:29; 10:38-40). Paul speaks with evident approval of attendance at dinner parties in I Cor. 10:27, even when believers are the guests of unbelievers.

We must not condemn all pleasure as ungodly. On the other hand, we must be exceedingly cautious and must exercise thoughtful and prayerful discrimination.

Some ethical problems which we face today are specifically and directly treated in the Scriptures. Other present day problems, such as smoking, are not treated specifically and directly. In these cases, the question should be solved by the application of principles which are stated in Scripture.

I. The question of drinking is of great concern today.

A. The problem or question of ethics here really lies in the area of "social drinking".

1. All Christians would agree that drinking to excess is wrong in the light of Scriptures. (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; I Cor. 5:11)
2. There are many who maintain that the Bible does not deal with drinking in moderation.
 - a. They say it is proper to drink beverages with low alcoholic content such as beer and wine.
 - b. When the water is bad in foreign countries, many believe it is all right to partake of beer or wine, but this discussion will be concerned with the ethical matter of drinking in America where good drinking water is available almost everywhere.

B. Drinking has an effect in two realms - on self and on others.

1. The effect on self is great.
 - a. To drink immoderately will have an adverse effect not only on the one drinking, but also on others and towards God.
 - b. It is argued that moderate drinking has little, if any, bad effect on the drinker.
 - c. More importantly, however, is the question, "Will the moderate drinker remain a moderate drinker?"
 - 1) There is a grave danger that moderate drinking may eventually lead to heavy drinking.

2. The effect upon others is also noticeable.
 - a. It encourages others to drink, even though no word of encouragement is spoken.
 - b. Drinking often takes money that is needed for food and other necessities of family.
 - c. It frequently tends to make the home unhappy.
 - d. If it becomes excessive it is likely to bring disgrace to the family.
 - e. It leads very often to separation or divorce.
 - f. It ruins the drinker's testimony for Christ.
 - g. The scriptures speak very clearly concerning our testimony to our brothers.
 - 1) Paul tells us in Rom. 14 that all believers have a definite responsibility towards others to avoid doing anything that might conceivably put a stumbling block before them or influence them in the wrong direction.
 - 2) I Cor. 8,9,10 deals with the limitations on Christians liberty, because of the possible adverse effect of our conduct on others. (See especially chapter 10, verse 31-33).
 - 3) From the point of view of effects, the Christian should leave all alcoholic beverages strictly alone.
- C. The scriptural teaching regarding drinking is examined.
 1. In I Tim. 5:23 Paul advises Timothy to "use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities...", teaching us that in illness or for the sake of health we ought to take medicine, perhaps even that which has alcoholic content.
 2. Prov. 31:4-7 does not encourage drink, but is a warning to every Christian to keep his mind clear, leaving wine and strong drink alone.
 3. In John 2:1-10, we read the account of Jesus' miracle at the wedding of Cana; His reasons for making wine there and the acceptability of wine drinking today concerns three aspects - customs, peoples, and public conscience.
 - a. Customs vary and in Palestine then it was customary to drink wine, however, in America we do not drink wine customarily as a people and especially this is true of Christians.
 - b. Peoples also vary, as the Israelites seemed to have been not highly susceptible to the effects of alcohol, (drunkenness was not one of their besetting sins) but this is not true of America where there are at least 4,000,000 "problem drinkers" today.

- c. Public conscience is another matter to consider and drinking is considered by unbelievers to be inconsistent with a Christian's testimony, but this was not so in New Testament days.
4. Therefore because of differences in custom, people, and public conscience, the Jews may have used wine without violating the standards of the Old Testament, but it would still be wrong for us today to use them, for the reasons stated above.

II. Dancing as a form of pleasure is in question today.

A. The modern dance in the world today has definite effects on those engaging in it.

1. Even after the new birth, the old nature is still not completely eradicated, but is ready to flare up into activity with given opportunity.
2. Many men and women would confess to adulterous thoughts and desires which were aroused by participation in the dance.
 - a. Often these thoughts lead to overt acts of sin.
 - b. Many can trace a life of sin back to the dance floor.

B. Participation in dancing also has an effect on others.

1. It encourages others to dance as an example has been set.
 - a. Those affected, then have set before them all the dangers of dancing.
2. Dancing ruins a Christian's testimony.

C. The Scriptures seem to speak with approval of dancing.

1. Dancing in the Scriptures was "before the Lord" or in praise to the Lord, whereas modern dancing is quite the other wise. (II Sam. 6; Ps. 149:3; Ps. 150:4)
2. There is no religious significance in the modern dance, but on the contrary, many times is linked to demon worship.
3. Dancing in the Old Testament was done men with men and women with women as a form of worship. (Ex. 15:20)

D. Social dancing of today is more or less a modern invention and is an instrument used effectively by Satan to lead many into sin.

III. Petting and kissing is a form of pleasure commonly engaged in today among young people.

- A. This is a past time common among young people today and it is feared that it is altogether too common among young Christian people.
- B. This is not to speak of the intimacy between married couples.

1. Engaged couples ought to exercise extreme caution to keep familiarities within
- C. Intimacies between young people who are not engaged is not a harmless pastime, but those who engage in them are actually playing with sexual fire.
 1. In many, many instances, it has eventually led to outright sin.
 2. Even though it may not lead to an overt act of sin much damage can be done to both persons involved.
 - a. Injury may be done to the nervous system.
 - b. The emotional balance of the individual may be upset.
 - c. The sexual purity of the individuals may be damaged.
 - d. In the spiritual realm, injury is apt to result.
- D. Kissing games ought also to be avoided as they treat lightly actions which should represent and stimulate the profound human emotions and love and affection.

IV. Other forms of pleasure are those of jazz, rock and roll and their relatives.

- A. It seem evident that some of the music and the dances that go with them today have come to America either directly or indirectly from the influences of African native superstitious rites and ceremonies.
- B. Much of this music has a tendency to inflame passions, either directly through the suggestive rhythm itself or indirectly through some evil dance with which it is accociated.

V. Movie going is a very common form of pleasure today in America.

- A. There is nothin evil merely in the "moving picture" itself.
- B. The place in which a picture is shown has no effect on the character of the picture.
- C. Motion pictures have constructive uses such as education, evangelism, and promotion of foreign and home missions, Bible institutes and the like.
- D. There are also thousands of movies shown in motion picture theaters which fall under the category of commercial movies.
 1. Should Christians attend such places and view the films shown there?
 - a. Many films shown in theaters deal with unwholesome themes and situations.

- b. The lead roles are often portrayed by those who as a class have a reputation for questionable and sometimes evil character and attendance at their movies helps in their support.
- c. By attending, one sets an example of movie going to others who may not consider that type of movie seen was a “good” picture.
- d. The test of effect must be applied here:
 - 1) Will attendance result in encouraging someone else who attends movies more or less indiscriminately?
 - 2) If the example set will not be likely to have such an effect, there would be no valid reason not to attend, provided the movie is of the proper sort.

VI. Gambling is a very prevalent form of pleasure today.

- A. Gambling often becomes an ungovernable habit.
 - 1. Those who find themselves in its grip begin to live to gamble, neglecting business and family.
 - 2. It then, very often leads to poverty as a result of neglect of employment for gambling or a great loss of money in gambling.
 - a. Gambling at this point may even lead to stealing, or even worse - murder or suicide - as passions burn high when considerable sums of money are at stake.
 - b. Family wants and unhappiness are frequent results of gambling.
- B. Gambling is commonly associated with many forms of vice.
- C. Gambling is wrong because it is getting something for nothing.
 - 1. This involves wrong principles.
 - 2. The economy of the world, as well as the economy of the Bible is built on the principle of a fair exchange of values.
- D. In winning prizes, the prize must be in porportion to the services rendered or our pinciples are threatened.
- E. “Innocent betting” (betting just a very small sum of money) is, in principle, betting just as much as though a hundred dollars were at sake.

VII. Care playing is another form of pleasure today:

- A. Card playing can be divided into three categories: ordinary playing cards, secular card games and Bible card games.
 - 1. It is unwise for Christians to use ordinary playing cards or even to have them in the house, because of their use in the world as the basis for gambling games.

- a. Card playing even without the gambling element is strongly habit forming and to be avoided on that ground.
 - b. It is a serious threat to the Christian's time.
 - c. It is easy to make the transition from playing cards without money to playing with stakes.
 - d. They are best left alone also for the sake of testimony.
2. There are many secular card games, the most common of which is "Rook".
 - a. If there is no danger of the formation of habits which will take the persons involved from their proper duties or being led into "card playing", it may be perfectly harmless.
 - b. The matter of testimony must also be considered, however, as the cards might give others the impression of "card playing".
 3. Bible card games have the advantage of teaching the players scriptural facts, but again, the questions of forming habits and testimony must be carefully considered.

VIII. Smoking is a problem involving a number of factors.

- A. It affects the smoker himself.
 1. It is strongly habit forming.
 2. Smoking is harmful to the nerves, making the smoker emotionally unsteady.
 3. It damages our lungs and "wind" system.
- B. Smoking is often quite objectionable to those around the smoker.
 1. To some the smell of tobacco is exceedingly distasteful.
 2. The smoke often will irritate the eyes and throat of those around, causing watery eyes and coughing.
 3. Smoking is apt to make the smoker selfish and careless of the comfort and welfare of others.
- C. In America, a Christian who smokes has weakened his testimony as there is a public conscience against smoking by a large percentage of Christians.

EXTREMES IN FASHION

- I. Whenever extremes of fashion come into being, the matter of ethics is apt to be involved.
- II. The problem of extremes in attire for women comes under two categories - overdressing and underdressing.

- A. It has been said that fashions in women's attire represent a compromise between an admitted desire to dress and an unadmitted desire to undress.
- B. To wear clothing which is so extreme in design or decoration so as to draw attention is hardly fitting for Christian women.
- C. Isaiah 3:16-24 condemns the daughters of Zion who were given to extravagant attire. (See also Jer. 4:30; Ezek. 23:40; and I Tim. 2:9)
- D. Today women may appear in public inadequately clad for decency without violating the prevailing fashions.
 - 1. Often the excuse of "everybody's doing it, it's the fashion" is given by many, especially regarding:
 - a. swim suit fashions.
 - b. short shorts
 - c. mini skirts
 - d. low neck lines
 - e. tight fitting clothes
 - 2. In Phil. 4:8,9 we are told to think on "whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report".
 - 3. In I Tim. 2:9 women are exhorted to adorn themselves in "modest apparel".
 - 4. To dress other than modestly may cause several things to happen.
 - a. A women's reputation for chastity is likely to be injured.
 - b. She may arouse passion or unwholesome thoughts in men around her. (See Rom. 14:13,21).
 - c. She runs a grave risk of ruining her Christian testimony.

III. Even hairstyles must not detract from our Christian testimony.

- A. Even in ancient days, women fixed their hair in grotesque and bizarre ways with the intent of attracting the attention of men and the same is true of some women today.
- B. In II Kings 9:30 we read that Jezebel "painted her face and tired her head...".
- C. In I Tim. 2:9 Paul exhorts Christian women to avoid "braiding hair", which seems to refer to a custom of braiding the hair and then coiling in fantastically high on the head. (I Pet. 3:2)
- D. Such practices are unbecoming for Christian women and as in all extremes of fashion, should be avoided.

- IV. The use of make-up or pigment on the face has been employed by men, women and children for hundreds of years.
 - A. In Christendom today its use is almost entirely for the purpose of making the wearer supposedly more attractive.
 - 1. That it fails to do so is only too often painfully evident.
 - 2. Sometimes the wearer appears to be almost a caricature of human being.
 - B. In II Kings 9:30 the first mention of make-up in the Bible is made in reference to Jezebel's "painted face".
 - 1. It is possible that this foreign queen introduced this practice into Israel, just as she introduced the worship of her Phoenician god Baal.
 - C. In Jer. 4:30 we also find reference to make-up in connection with the prophet's denunciation of the idolatry of Judah.
 - D. With respect to the use of make-up for the face and eyes in our modern age, when the wearer looks unnatural, it does nothing to strengthen the testimony for the Lord, but on the contrary, weakens it.

- V. I Tim. 6:6 says "Godliness with contentment is great gain". We must never confuse godliness with glamor.

- VI. Men's fashions are also important as a Christian witness.
 - A. Men should avoid clothes that are too tight or unbuttoned shirts with a "sex" emphasis.
 - B. The trend toward "unisex" dress styles crosses one of the highest principles in God. God created them, male and female. (See Deut. 22:5)
 - C. Hair styles of men should be in moderation. I Cor. 14:40 "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Dear Brother and Sister in Christ;

Someone once said, "if life is a bowl of cherries, how come I am always in the pits?" Well life, especially the Christian life and the church, is not

always a bowl of cherries. Nor do we have to grope around aimlessly ending up in the pits. It takes hard work, Godly wisdom, patience and vision to see the Church built according to God's plan. We are committed to having a Church that will win our area for Christ, assist in the evangelization of the Nations, and bringing glory to God.

The Word of God states that the Lord Jesus Christ would build His church. We are early stewards of the people of God that fellowship with us. Christ is the Head of the Church. The Church was designed by God to be a theocracy, not a democracy. He has placed a form of government in the local church which, when properly formed and followed, will produce eternal results.

Enclosed is the official church charter for Vision Christian Fellowship, our vision statement, organizational chart, and job description, covering the vital ministry areas of our local church. You have been judicially chosen to be in a place of leadership. I Tim. 3:8-13 speaks to the importance of your ministry, and the characteristics you are to exhibit in your Christian life. You are vital to the successful outreach and support ministries of our church.

We trust that you will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as we work together to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

Respectfully for the Lord,
The Ministry Team