

SERMON NOTES

From *In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley*



The Seven Habits of a Godly Life

KEY PASSAGE: Various Scriptures | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Deuteronomy 27:10; 28:1 | Psalm 37:1, 7-8; 63:6-8; 103:19; 119:133 | Proverbs 3:5-6 | Mark 1:35-37 | Luke 4:42-43; 6:38; 11:1; 24:49 | 2 Corinthians 9:7
Ephesians 1:13; 4:26-32; 5:18

► SUMMARY

What is a godly life, and how is it achieved?

These are important questions because as believers, we are called to live sanctified lives that are fully surrendered to Christ. Although we know that this is God's will for us and that He's working toward this purpose in our lives, we have a responsibility in the process as well. What we habitually do has tremendous influence on whether we will have a godly life.

► SERMON POINTS

There are seven habits that will help us in our pursuit of godly living. A **habit** is a recurring and often subconscious pattern of behavior that is acquired through frequent repetition. A **godly life** is one that is no longer seeking satisfaction through a sinful lifestyle but is now surrendered to God and His will.

The Seven Habits of a Godly Life

1. A life of prayer. We see this modeled by Jesus. Although the disciples and the crowds did not understand why He withdrew when there was so much good He could do, Jesus knew that prayer was an important priority of His life.

- **Mark 1:35** "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."
- **Luke 4:42** "When day came, Jesus left and went to a

secluded place; and the crowds were searching for Him, and came to Him and tried to keep Him from going away from them."

Prayer that promotes godliness is not merely occasional petitions offered in times of trouble or need but a daily conversation with the Father that springs from love for Him and gratitude for who He is and what He does. It's not a duty but a delight.

Jesus' disciples observed that His prayers were very different from the ritualistic prayers that were so common in that day. Seeing how He spoke so personally with His heavenly Father prompted them to ask Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1).

Since we live in a world filled with temptations, trials, heartaches, burdens, and sin, an intimate prayer life should be a priority because it keeps us connected to almighty God and sensitive to His will. Whatever we do will be accomplished on our knees as we submit to the Lord, give Him our time, and listen for His instruction.

2. Faith. Psalm 103:19 says, "The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all." God controls everything—not only what happens but why and how it happens as well. His sovereignty is our firm foundation for believing and trusting Him. Proverbs 3:5-6 offers this advice: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

The only other option to faith is fretting. A godly life is one that steps beyond worry and into trust. Each time a situation causes us to fret, we should stop and remember who's in charge. If God's sovereignty rules over all, we have no reason to worry. The evidence of our faith is the absence of worry.

Trust in the Lord also builds intimacy with Him. As we talk and listen to Him and respond in obedience, He guides us, and we develop closeness with Him both in our heart and in our thinking.

3. Meditation on the Word of God. The psalmist said, "When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches" (Ps. 63:6). Meditation includes reading Scripture, thinking about it, seeking to apply what God says, asking Him questions, and surrendering any issues He brings to mind. It's like looking in the mirror of God's Word to see what He says, but then looking beyond the mirror to see Him.

As we focus on the Lord, worries and concerns drift away, and our minds are freed from the contamination of the things that do us no good. Psalm 119:133 should be our prayer: "Establish my footsteps in Your word, and do not let any iniquity have dominion over me."

Meditation keeps us alert and sensitive to whatever God wants to do in our lives. That's why it's so important to set aside a time to be alone with Him in His Word. As we read and think about what the Lord says, He speaks to our hearts.

If we want God to fill our minds with His Word, we must guard against letting the world dominate our thoughts. It's easy to be occupied from morning until evening with the things of this world without giving much thought to God. However, taking time to be alone with the Lord to meditate on His Word is essential if we want to live a godly life. Each day we must choose whether to carry the Lord or the world with us.

4. Obedience. Moses told the nation of Israel, "If you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I commanded you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth" (Deut. 28:1). In a similar way, we walk on a higher level than the world when we live in obedience to God. It's not a matter of looking down on others but choosing to live by God's standards rather than following the world's lifestyle.

5. Dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Every believer in Jesus is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but the apostle Paul also tells us to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). The Greek verb signifies that this is a continuous action of filling. It means to live in obedience to Him, relying on Him to equip, empower, strengthen, teach, and guide us each day. Only as we depend on the Spirit will we be and do what God desires.

6. Giving to God and others. We have a promise in Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." We can never outgive God. But by not giving, we are claiming that we really don't need Him but can manage on our own. Only God can predict and provide for our future needs.

7. Forgiving other people. Forgiveness may not be easy, but it's what the Lord commands (Eph. 4:32). Even if someone betrays us, we must forgive them and trust God to take care of the situation.

► RESPONSE

- What changes would you have to make to cultivate these seven godly habits?
- Which areas are the most challenging for you? What obstacles will you need to overcome?

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