

BE A MAN

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

8 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY MAN

FAITH

PERSEVERANCE

VIRTUE

GODLINESS

KNOWLEDGE

KINDNESS

SELF CONTROL

LOVE



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INTRODUCTION

Today, we have too many males who don't understand what it really means to be a man. The enemy has so infiltrated our society that being masculine or a real man is considered by many to be a bad thing. By masculine, I am not talking of an overbearing tyrant, but rather a man who properly understands the role that God has given him to lead in both his home and in society.

As Christian men, we need to be examples to those around us in how we live our lives. The Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:2, "You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men;"¹ An epistle is simply a written letter. You and I are written letters that people around us read every time we encounter them. If that's the case, may I ask you, "What is it that people are reading from your life?" Is it something that you would like published for all to read or instead, a letter that you'd rather hide and hope that no one reads?

The great news is that none of our letters are so bad that God can't change them, but it takes grace. That grace comes from God, but because of the grace He gives us, He expects some work on our part. No, I am not presenting a works-based gospel. We are all saved only by the blood of Jesus and His finished work on the cross, but because we are saved, we do good works. The works don't save, but God gives us the grace to discipline our lives. Discipline, a word we all love. I heard one person say, "We all love the results of discipline, just not the effort or the actual work of discipline." But without discipline and work on our part, we will never really become the mature men of God that He wants us to be.

During this "Be a Man" discipleship series, I want to share with you eight characteristics from God's word that exemplify a Godly Man. These are taken out of 2 Peter 1:5-9, which says:

⁵ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, *you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.²

There are 8 characteristics or disciplines that Peter mentions here—

1. Faith
2. Virtue
3. Knowledge
4. Self-control
5. Perseverance
6. Godliness
7. Brotherly Kindness

8. Love

These are the characteristics that we'll both discuss and work on putting into practice over these next several months. Peter says that if these characteristics live in you then, "*you* will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." However, he says if they aren't in you, that you are "shortsighted, even to blindness and have forgotten" that you were cleansed from your old sins. Peter obviously thought these disciplines were vital to the life of a believer.

Of course, this is not an exhaustive list of Godly characteristics, but they're a beginning to living a more God centered & Christ like manhood in front of those around you. Also, just because there are 8 characteristics, this does not mean this study will only be 8 Lessons, but rather some of these disciplines will entail a couple lessons each. As we start this journey to become the men, husbands, fathers & grandfathers that God has called us to be, I encourage you to find an accountability partner to help hold you accountable for putting these disciplines into action in your life.

Pursuing Christ,

Pastor Mike

CHARACTERISTIC ONE: FAITH

Lesson 1: Our Foundation of Faith

What is Faith? Faith is double faceted. It's like a coin that has two sides. There is firstly our faith, meaning the foundation of what we believe. Like when someone asks the question, "What is your faith?" And we respond by saying, "I'm a Christian." It's the basis or foundation on which all our other beliefs and values are established and that we endeavor by the power of the Holy Spirit to follow.

Secondly, faith is trusting & believing God for an answer to prayer without seeing the evidence of it. It's a belief and hope that God will come through in a situation, even when it seems impossible. The writer of Hebrews defines this aspect of faith in Hebrews Ch. 11 when he says in verses 1-3:

¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

² For by it the elders obtained a *good* testimony. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.³

In this Lesson, we will focus on the first aspect of faith- our Foundation of Faith.

The construction of every building, whether a home or a skyscraper starts with the foundation. Why? Because it's the most important step and without a solid foundation, the weight of the building itself will cause it to be unstable and eventually crumble to the ground. The same is true in our lives. Our faith must be built on Jesus and His words, they alone are that rock solid foundation. Jesus himself explains this in Matthew 7:24-27 when He says:

²⁴ "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

²⁶ "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."⁴

In this parable, Jesus talks about two men, one wise and one foolish. As we look at these two men what was the difference? Jesus explains that they both heard the same words that He spoke, they both had the same opportunity to build in the right place, the only difference was one chose to obey His words while the other didn't. Jesus said the only distinction between a wise man who builds his house on a solid rock foundation and a foolish man who builds on a weak sandy foundation is whether they choose to not only hear His words but also obey them. Jesus gives every one of us the same

opportunity to build the house of our lives on rock or sand, it all depends on your choices to obey His words or not. The question is, are you building your life on Jesus?

Your foundation of faith to follow Christ is not just in the moment of salvation, which is a completely free gift, but also in the decisions you make to follow Him every day. The foundation of a home is not just made up of a footer but also the blocks that are laid down individually and cemented together. In the same way, we lay the blocks to the foundation of our faith by the daily choices we make to obey God's Word and put Christ first in all our decisions. It's also essential to remember that even though we may have laid a good foundation, we must periodically check it. For just like in the natural a home settles and may show through in cracks in the walls, sometimes we can allow our spiritual foundation to become settled (comfortable), and cracks begin to appear in the walls of our life. Therefore, it's important to consistently reexamine our lives to ensure we are continuing to build it on Jesus alone and His Word.

So, if it's critical to build our lives on the right foundation, which Jesus says is obeying His words, how can we do that if we don't know His words? Simply put, we can't. This is why having a daily quiet time with the Lord is vital to our spiritual growth. You may be unfamiliar with the term "quiet time" but let me explain. A daily quiet time with the Lord is a preset, intentional time every day that you get away from any distractions to a quiet place that you have fellowship with the Father in prayer, meditation and reading the Bible. The whole purpose is to help you grow more intimate in your relationship with God and to help you grow spiritually.

I can tell you from personal experience, that my relationship with the Lord and my knowledge and understanding of His word grew tremendously when I implemented this practice in my life soon after I gave my heart to the Lord at 19 years old. For me, I started out with 10-15 minutes of quiet time, but it soon grew to over 30 minutes and now it is not uncommon for me to spend an hour or two in quiet time with the Lord. I count it as the most important part of my daily routine and I believe you will too, if you implement this fundamental discipline in your daily life.

Lesson 1 Questions

1. What does it mean to have a Foundation of Faith in your life?

2. What did Jesus say was the only difference between the wise man and the foolish man in Matthew 7:24-27?

CHARACTERISTIC ONE: FAITH

Lesson 2: Our Faith in Action: Part 1

In our previous lesson, we talked about the two aspects of faith. We elaborated on the importance of our foundation of faith, that it must be built upon Christ and His Words alone. In this lesson, we will discuss our faith in action. Our faith in action can also be broken down into two parts. First, how do we walk out our faith in our daily lives and second, how do we have faith to believe God in situations that seem impossible. Today, we'll discuss the first.

Faith is useless unless we put action behind it. One can say all day that they're a Christian, but if the fruit of the Spirit is not being shown in their lives by their actions it means nothing. Jesus said in Matthew 7:16-20:

¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.⁵

Fruit on a natural tree is something you can see, touch and taste, as well as something that brings nourishment to our physical bodies. In the life of a person, fruit is their character that is reflected in their works or actions. When people come around you and I, what fruit are they able to pull from our lives? Do they see, touch and taste "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."?⁶ If not, why? I think many believers, especially in this younger generation, have bought into the lie that says, "I'm saved, so it doesn't really matter how I talk, or act or what I do, because Jesus already paid the price for my sin," Basically, the thought is you can do whatever you want as long as you prayed a prayer. It's what is termed the hyper-grace movement. In other words, it teaches that God's grace is already there for us, therefore we can live how we want and still be blessed and make it into heaven.

However, there are major problems with this line of reasoning. First, it flies in the face of how Jesus, the Apostles and the early believers lived as examples for us to follow. Second, it goes against the heart and message of the teachings of Jesus and the writings of the New Testament authors. The Apostle Paul when confronting this very line of reasoning in the early church said in Romans 6:1-3:

¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.⁷

¹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 2 Co 3:2.

² 2 Pe 1:5–9.

³ Heb 11:1–3.

⁴ Mt 7:24–27

⁵ Mt 7:16–20.

⁶ Ga 5:22–23.

⁷ Ro 6:1–4.

⁸ Jas 2:14–24.

⁹ Mt 5:16.