

# Applying the Bible to Your Life



Christopher News Notes

**DOWN THROUGH THE CENTURIES, WE MEN AND WOMEN HAVE MADE PROGRESS TOWARDS PEACE AND JUSTICE** when the basic truths of the Holy Bible have powered our thoughts, words and deeds. The spiritual values we learn from Scripture teach us to live with purpose, lead with kindness, and love without condition.

As reflections of the image and likeness of God, we are called to be like Him and bring light to the world. The Bible's timeless truths can help us grow in faith and do just that.

## Keep These Points in Mind

**1. The Bible is the inspired account of God acting throughout history.** From Creation through the formation of the Chosen People under Abraham, their liberation under Moses, and their preparation for the Messiah by the prophets, the Divine Plan finds fulfillment in the coming of Christ the Redeemer, Whose death and resurrection led to the outpouring of the Spirit on all humanity.

**2. The Bible is God speaking to you.** By reflecting on it slowly, attentively and in a spirit of faith, you will grow in appreciation of God's tender concern for all men and women. Moreover, a prayerful reading of the Bible will provide you with a divine incentive to express your love by a whole-hearted worship of God and by showing concern for the needs of others.

**3. The Bible is to be read regularly.** Even if you read only a few verses daily, you will find this habit eventually adds meaning and depth to everything you think, say and do.

**4. The Bible should be applied to the mainstream of modern thought and action.** As you grasp the profound lessons of the revealed word of God, keep asking yourself what you and others like you can do to apply them, not only to personal and private life, but also to solving the great issues that confront your community, your country and your world. The more you familiarize yourself with the Bible, the more you apply its changeless values to our changing times.

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**"I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people." (Luke 2:10)**

The word "joy" is mentioned in the Bible more than 130 times. God wants us to live lives that are truly joyous. As the Irish monk Dom Marmion once said, "Joy is the echo of God's life within us."

But the Lord's concept of joy is quite different from what the world calls "pleasure." Joy is of the heart, mind and soul. It has a deep and lasting quality that can carry a person through hardship and suf-

**"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)**

There is a depth of meaning in these few words of Christ. Note that He repeats "your" three different times:

- 1. "Let your light shine before others..."** Yes, the portion of divine light within you is truly yours. Much depends on your own decision to let it "shine" or to "hide it under a bushel."
- 2. "...that they may see your good works..."** People are often skeptical about noble plans that never get off the drafting board. But they are moved when they see a divine principle in action.
- 3. "...and give glory to your Father in heaven."** What a tribute to God's power working in you! Your actions, your deeds, your works at home, on the job, in school and in civic affairs can have a decisive effect in bringing God to man and man to God.

fering. Christ said, "You have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you." (John 16:22)

Pleasure, on the other hand, is usually connected with physical or material things. Helpful as it may be, it can be fleeting, elusive and even joyless when pursued for its own sake. Seek joy in the Lord, and you will never be separated from it.

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**"Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)**

Reasons to worry surround us. Then again, they surrounded the people in the Bible as well. Consider the Jewish people living under Egypt's oppression in the Old Testament and Roman oppression in the New Testament. Life was never easy.

Yet God tells His people, "Do not fear." In fact, that call to not be afraid occurs in the Bible over 300 times. That means that God is always at our side, guiding us in the way we should go if we trust Him. That level of trust and surrender may be hard to achieve, but if we bring ourselves to believe those holy assurances from Scripture, we will find comfort, joy, and peace in our souls, even in the midst of troubles.

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**"When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your**

**fingers, the moon and the stars that You have established; what are human beings that You are mindful of them, mortals that You care for them? Yet You have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of Your hands." (Psalm 8:3-6)**

These sublime words of the Hebrew Psalmist focus attention on the divine worth of each and every human being. And they testify that humanity's power to harness the potential of the universe is something that comes from God.

Stanford University scientists, for example, made an exciting breakthrough when they hurled radio waves to the sun and back for a record 184-million-mile journey. The waves traveled at the speed of light—186,000 miles a second—and took only 17 minutes to make radio contact with the sun and come back again. It is a tribute to the daring spirit and intelligence of man that he relentlessly pursues his search into the great unknown. Man's achievements are a tribute to the infinite majesty of God.

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**"If any want to become My followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me." (Luke 9:23)**

Tackling anything worthwhile usually involves trouble, risk and even apparent failure. But it is a small price to pay when one can be of service to others for love of God, especially in such spheres of influ-

ence as government, education, and media. Anyone who does this is winning, even when he seems to lose.

This spirit was reflected in a letter we once received at The Christophers. It read: "In September, I shall be leaving a comfortable position with 17 years seniority to become a school teacher in a vocational high school. I am 46 years of age and the father of seven children. I admit to being nervous about the change, but I have every confidence I can do a good job if I can once get off the ground. Please pray for me."

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**"Come, you that are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matthew 25:34)**

Science has done a great service in helping man to appreciate the marvels of nature. But at best, science can do little more than bring to light the handiwork fashioned by a loving Creator at the beginning of time. As wondrous as the universe is, it is only a faint reflection of the infinite wisdom and beauty of its Maker. He intended it as a constant reminder of the endless glory awaiting every person who uses his brief stay on earth for a good purpose.

The more you realize that the longest life is but a momentary stopover en route to heaven, the more you will appreciate the wonders of the universe.

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**"By your endurance you will gain your souls." (Luke 21:19)**

  
**"It's better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."**

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The word "patient" comes from the Latin "patior" meaning "to suffer." A patient person has been defined as one who "exercises quiet endurance or forbearance under distress, pain, injury, insult or surprise."

Patience comes in for special praise throughout the Bible. But as Thomas à Kempis wrote in 1450: "All men recommend patience, although few are willing to practice it."

You can do much good in your home, at work or in promoting good causes if you practice the patience of Job. Gentle but dogged perseverance, despite discouraging obstacles, can be convincing evidence of divine power working through a human instrument. Keep in mind the old Dutch proverb, "A handful of patience is worth more than a bushel of brains."

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**"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven." (Matthew 7:21)**

Members of a worthwhile organization were shocked when their president read a list of 46 resolutions they had passed during the year. No action had been taken on any of them. Little is settled by merely "passing resolutions," however excellent they may be.

For every minute you spend talking about how the world should be improved, devote 20 minutes to really doing what you advocate. God wants us to be "doers," not merely "talkers."

Recall from time to time the Christopher motto, "It's better to light one candle than to curse the darkness." Let it remind you that every "candle" that you light for God's love, truth and justice has a priceless value. It adds a tiny bit of light and removes a portion of the darkness. Insignificant as it may seem, it is at least one step in the right direction.

*This is an updated and edited version of a "classic" Christopher News Note, originally published in 1964 by The Christophers' founder, Father James Keller.*