

Lifestyles



Examining what the Bible says about daily living

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"The Bible is no ordinary book. Within its pages are hidden the answers to our every need, direction for our lives, and practical insights for living a life of fulfillment and joy. It is made up of living words from God Himself to guide us to the very meaning of life, love, and the relationships God originally intended for His children.

Yet, for whatever reason, far too many people in the world have failed to be gripped by the power of those words."

– Josh McDowell, "God-Breathed"

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Introduction

Many people blame religion for the world's problems and want nothing to do with the Bible, let alone God. They actually blame God, and the people who follow Him, for the wars, disasters, famine, hatred and general cultural uneasiness in the world. This was obviously never God's intention when he inspired His hand-picked human authors to dictate His message to the world.

The Bible, in case you don't know, is divided into two main parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. In short, the Old Testament is the story of a nation, and the New Testament is the story of a Man. The nation was God's way of bringing the Man—Jesus Christ—into the world. But the Bible actually has another level to it.

Spread throughout its 66 books and 1,189 chapters are guidelines on how we are to live, eat, drink, behave, work, play, treat others, and more. Not to speak for God, but I believe His intention for doing so was to help us avoid all of the problems occurring or have occurred by following them.

God not only suggests that we follow His words:

"My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them, and healing to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:20-22)

"And now, O sons, listen to me: blessed are those who keep my ways." (Proverbs 8:32)

He in fact commands it:

"The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandment, for this is the whole duty of man." (Ecclesiastes 12:13)

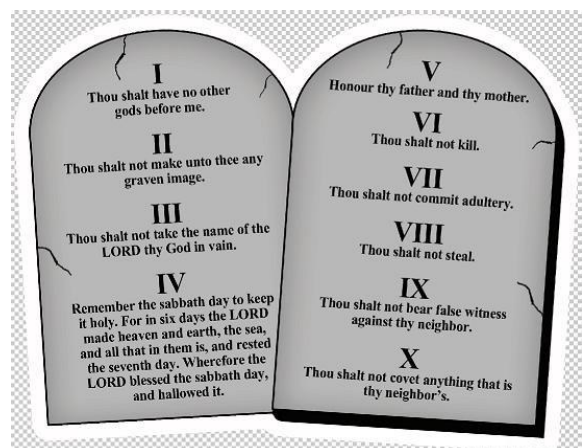
The Ten Commandments

So what are these "guidelines" God has written for us? The best known ones, of course, are the Ten Commandments. The first four pertain directly to God, while the final six to each other: thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, steal, lie, or covet (Exodus 20:1-17).

The New Testament introduces others that probably sound familiar as well: "turn the other cheek" (Matthew 5:39), "reap what you sow" (Galatians 6:7) and "love your neighbor as yourself". The last one is actually repeated 11 times in the Bible, which usually indicates a point of emphasis. The most popular reference is perhaps Matthew 22:37-39 as it comes directly from the mouth of Jesus. When asked what the greatest command was, Jesus replied:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Incidentally, this was originally ordered by God in the Old Testament back in Leviticus 19:18: *"...but you shall love your neighbor as yourself."* So I think He means it!



The Sermon on the Mount

The "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 5 is the location where Jesus gave what was perhaps His most popular teaching, called "The Beatitudes". In it, Jesus takes the torch and not only expands but adds to some of the Ten Commandments:

"Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."

Jesus goes on to elaborate on the following topics that originally appeared in the Old Testament, including in the Ten Commandments:

Murder

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment".

Adultery

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Divorce

"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

Eye for Eye

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you."

Love for Enemies

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor⁴⁴ and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..."

What God Loves/Hates

Before getting into specific topical guidelines, the Bible is very clear on what God loves and hates. Check out Galatians 5:17-24 and Proverbs 6:16-19:

Galatians 5:17-24:

"For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Proverbs 6:16-19:

"There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers."

The following sections contain just some of the guidelines that appear throughout the Bible, listed alphabetically. It would be interesting to see how different the world would be if everyone followed them!

Biblical Guidelines - Scriptural References

The following is an alphabetical list of moral guidelines found in the Bible with scriptural references and an example scripture. Some are aimed at ourselves, some at other people. The example scripture used is in **bold** under "Verses". I encourage you to look up the rest of the verses on your own time!

Topic	Example scripture	Verses
Adultery	<i>"You shall not commit adultery."</i>	Exodus 20:14 ; Proverbs 5:15-23; 6:24-29, 32-33; 7; Revelation 2:20-22
Advice	<i>"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice."</i>	Proverbs 12:15 ; Eccl. 4:13
Anger	<i>"Be not quick in your spirit to become angry, for anger lodges in the heart of fools." "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger..."</i>	Eccl. 7:9; James 1:19-21 ; Proverbs 16:32
Anxiety	<i>"Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down." "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."</i>	Philippians 4:6-7; Proverbs 12:25
Arrogance	<i>"Everyone who is arrogant in heart is an abomination to the Lord; be assured, he will not go unpunished."</i>	Proverbs 16:5 , 26:12
Avoid sinners/wicked/evil	<i>"... if sinners entice you, do not consent."</i>	Proverbs 1:10 ; 15-16; 4:14-15; 14:16
Child teaching/discipline	<i>"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."</i>	Proverbs 13:24; 22:6 ; 23:13-14

Topic	Example scripture	Verses
Conversing	<i>"Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble."</i>	Proverbs 15:1, 15:4, 17:27, 18:13, 21:23
Covetousness	<i>"But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints."</i>	Colossians 3:5; Ephesians 5:3
Cross dressing	<i>"A woman shall not wear man's clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God."</i>	Deuteronomy 22:5
Cruelty	<i>"A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself."</i>	Proverbs 11:17
Cursing	<i>"But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath..."</i> <i>"You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord."</i>	James 5:12; Leviticus 19:12
Deceit	<i>"Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan peace have joy."</i>	Proverbs 12:20
Dishonesty	<i>"A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends."</i>	Proverbs 16:28, 30; 17:20
Divorce	<i>"For I hate divorce," says the Lord, the God of Israel..."</i>	Matthew 5:31-32, 19:9, 1 Cor. 7:15; Malachi 2:16
Drunkenness	<i>"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery..."</i>	Ephesians 5:18 ; Proverbs 20:1, 23:20, 29-35; Galatians 5:19-21
Earnings/savings	<i>"Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it."</i>	Proverbs 13:11
Enjoy life with wife (spouse)	<i>"Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun..."</i>	Ecclesiastes 9:9
Envy	<i>"A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot."</i>	Proverbs 14:30
Eyes straight ahead	<i>"Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you."</i>	Proverbs 4:25-27 , Philippians 3:13
Fear	<i>"Do not fear, only believe."</i> <i>"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."</i>	Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 10:31-32; Mark 5:36; 2 Timothy 1:7 ; Hebrews 13:6; 1 John 4:18
Food, good	<i>"My son, eat honey, for it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste."</i> <i>"Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience."</i>	Proverbs 24:13; 1 Corinthians 10:25
Food, poor	<i>"When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you."</i>	Leviticus 19:9-10 ; Deuteronomy 24:19-21
Fools	<i>"Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."</i>	Proverbs 13:20
Forgiveness	<i>"For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."</i>	Matthew 6:14-15 ; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-13
Forgiveness	<i>"For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your</i>	Luke 6:37; Matthew 6:14-15 ; Ephesians 4:32

Topic	Example scripture	Verses
Fortune tellers/mystics	<i>trespasses.</i> "There shall not be found among you....who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord."	Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10-12
Gluttony	"Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat..."	Proverbs 23:20-21 , 28:7;
Good sense	"Good sense wins favor, but the way of the treacherous is their ruin."	Proverbs 13:15
Goodness	"Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it."	Proverbs 3:27
Gossip	"Argue your case with your neighbor himself, and do not reveal another's secret..." "I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak," "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."	Proverbs 20:19, 25:9 ; James 3:5-6, 8-10; 2 Timothy 2:16; Matt. 12:36; Eph. 4:29
Gracious words	"Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."	Proverbs 15:26, 16:24
Greed	"Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household."	Proverbs 1:19; 15:27
Handicapped	"You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God:"	Leviticus 19:14-15
Hatred	"Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses."	Proverbs 10:12
Healthy body	"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."	1 Corinthians 6:19-20
Honesty	"Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out. Whoever winks the eye causes trouble, and a babbling fool will come to ruin."	Proverbs 10:9-10 ; Leviticus 19:35-36
Inheritance	"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous."	Proverbs 13:22
Instruction	"Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future."	Proverbs 13:18 ; 19:20
Insult, ignore	"The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult."	Proverbs 12:16
Isolation	"Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment."	Proverbs 18:1
Jealousy	"For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice."	Proverbs 6:34-35; James 3:5-10, 16 ; Galatians 5:17-21; Romans 13:13
Judging	"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you."	Matthew 7:1-3 ; Ecc 3:17; James 3:1; Romans 2:3, 16; 1 Cor. 11-32
Kindness	"A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself."	Proverbs 11:17
Laziness	"The desire of the sluggard (lazy) kills him, for his hands refuse to labor."	Proverbs 6:6-11; 13:4; 15:19; 21:25

Topic	Example scripture	Verses
Lust	<i>"The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the treacherous are taken captive by their lust."</i>	Proverbs 11:6; Matt. 5:27-28; Romans 1:24; 2 Peter 2:10
Lust	<i>"Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!"</i>	Proverbs 11:6; 1 John 2:16; Matthew 5:27-28; Romans 1:24-25
Lying	<i>"Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD."</i>	Proverbs 4:24; 12:19; 22 ; 17:20; 21:6; Exodus 20:16
Marriage	<i>"But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."</i>	Ephesians 5:22-28; Malachi 2:14-15; Mark 10:6-9 ; Proverbs 18:22
Marriage, 1 st year	<i>"When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be happy with his wife whom he has taken."</i>	Deuteronomy 24:5
Meddling	<i>"Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears."</i>	Proverbs 26:17
Money	<i>"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs."</i>	Eccl. 5:10; 1 Timothy 6:10 ; Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 6:24
Parents, listen	<i>"My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck. When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you."</i>	Exodus 20:12; Proverbs 6:20-22 ; 10:1; 15:20; 20:20; 23:22
Parents, treating	<i>"Honor your father and mother." "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right."</i>	Proverbs 13:1; Exodus 20 ; 12 Ephesians 6:1-3
Peace	<i>"Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan peace have joy."</i>	Proverbs 12:20 ; Galatians 5:22
Poor, treating	<i>"Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed." "Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered."</i>	Proverbs 14:21 , 14:31, 16:19, 17:5, 19:17, 21:13 ; Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 11; Leviticus 25:35-38
Pride/humble	<i>"Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips."</i>	Proverbs 11:2; 16:18; 21:4; 27:2
Proud	<i>"It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud."</i>	Proverbs 15:25, 16:19
Quarreling	<i>"It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling."</i>	Proverbs 17:14, 20:3
Rejoice/joy	<i>"A joyful heart is good medicine..." "Rejoice always;"</i>	1 Thess 5:16 ; Proverbs 15:13, 17:22 ; Psalm 5:11, 32:11; Philippians 4:11; 1 Chron 16:31
Relatives, provide for	<i>"But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."</i>	1 Timothy 5:8

Topic	Example scripture	Verses
Restrain lips	<i>"When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent."</i>	Proverbs 10:19 ; 11:12; 13:3; 15:1
Revenge	<i>"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."</i>	Proverbs 20:22; Romans 12:19
Righteousness/Justice	<i>"Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life, righteousness, and honor."</i>	Proverbs 21:3, 7, 15, 21
Self Control	<i>"A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls."</i>	Proverbs 25:28
Sexual immorality	<i>"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous." <i>"Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body."</i></i>	Hebrews 13:4 ; Romans 1:21-27; Galatians 5:17-21; 1 Timothy 1:9-11; Jude 1:7; Revelation 2:20-22; Acts 15:20; 1 Corinth 5:1, 6:9-11, 13, 18, 10:8 ; Eph. 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; Jude 7
Stinginess	<i>"A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him."</i>	Proverbs 23:6; 28:22
Temper	<i>"A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention."</i>	Proverbs 14:17, 14:29, 15:18 ; James 1:19-21
Wise	<i>"Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."</i>	Proverbs 13:20
Work	<i>"Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys."</i>	Proverbs 16:31, 18:9
Worthless pursuits	<i>"Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits lacks sense."</i>	Proverbs 1:19; 12:11; 15:27

Conclusion

So, there you have it. Just a few of the guidelines for daily living spelled out in the Bible. Some people today follow a few, others a lot. But what would happen if everyone followed them all? We can only wonder. It is interesting to note that all of these guidelines were written over 2,000 years ago, many much longer than that. Yet they are still engrained in all of us, whether you believe in God or not. But choosing to follow them is another matter! And people who don't are apt to blame God for things they do. Proverbs 19:3 even states *"People ruin their lives by their own foolishness, and then are angry at the LORD."* (Proverbs 19:3). Pretty strong statement, eh? Kind of like God saying, "Hey, I've given you guidelines to follow. Don't blame me if you choose to ignore them!"

It is pretty evident based on Satan, a fallen angel, and Adam and Eve, that God has given us the option of free will. We're not always able to control what happens to us, but we do have control over how we react. And we certainly have control over the decisions we make. The guidelines included here, and others, are just God's way of helping us make the right ones.

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.”

– James 1:23-25