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Keys to Living for the LORD



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #203 ~

I often think about the future, specifically that most wonderful moment when Jesus Christ returns to rapture the church and take us to our heavenly home. I also think about what leads up to that moment, that most difficult time when the Antichrist is on earth and Christians are going through great tribulation. And to think that God wants us to be alive at this time in history and be part of His end-time's plans should both excite us and sober us. John 15:16, Acts 17:26

With this God-planned future in view, what should you do? First, you need to know what will be happening. Jesus says, *"Behold, I have told you everything ahead of time"* (Mark 13:23). That means you need to study prophecy passages like Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, 1 and 2 Thess., and Revelation. I also encourage you to read the posts and articles found on this blog site. Second, read His word and do what He has told you to do. Last week I went over seven key Bible truths about

how you are to live: your relationship with Christ, your identify, faith, humility, prayer, purpose, and thankfulness. Today I will look at seven more.

Obedience. The main way you fulfill God's purpose for your life is by obeying His commands, many that are very basic, but so, so important. Mark 12:30 – *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart."* John 15:17 – *"This I command you, that you love one another."* 1 Pet. 1:16 – *"You shall be holy, for I am holy."* Prov. 3:5-6 – *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart."* Eph. 5:18 – *"Be filled with the Spirit."* Matt. 6:33 – *"Seek first the kingdom of God."* Matt. 28:19 – *"Go make disciples of all the nations."* When you carry out these commands God will be glorified, His purposes will be fulfilled, and you and the church will be forever blessed. Psalm 119:1-8

Holiness. As a Christian, you are perfectly righteous in God's sight, you have been forgiven of all your sins, and you are a saint, which means a holy one. And now you are to live like a saint – you are not to be worldly or sinful, you are not to be angry, bitter, proud, lazy, selfish, dishonest, covetous, impure, or immoral. The main way this happens is by the work of God's word and the Holy Spirit in your life. "*Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You."* (Ps. 119:11). Some wonderful results of being holy are peace, a close relationship with God, spiritual growth, and being useful to God. 1 Jn. 5:5-9, 2 Tim. 2:21

Promises. The Christian life isn't just doing what God wants you to do, but also knowing what He is doing for you. And much of what God does is seen in His promises to you, and the church. Here are some of them: Ps. 23:6 – *"Goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life."* Ps. 32:8 – *"I will lead you in the way that you should go."* Ps. 46:10 – *"I will be exalted among the nations."* Matt. 16:18 – *"I will build the church."* 1 Cor. 1:8-9 – *"God will keep you strong to the end so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."* Heb. 13:5 – *"I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you."* Rev. 22:20 – *"I am coming*

soon." These promises about the future, the hope God has for you, are crucial, for they help you get your eyes off yourself and onto God, and what He is and will be doing. 2 Peter 1:3-4

Church. The church, comprised of those who are true Christians, is the body of Christ, the spiritual family of God. It is primarily by the church that God's truth is taught, His purposes are fulfilled, disciples are made, and there's spiritual growth. And so you need this family, and by being part of it, there's real love, joy, fellowship, and encouragement. Be assured, Christ will build His church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. Matt. 16:18, Eph. 1:3-14

Relationships. God does not want you to be a loner – which is another reason why you need the church. God's desire is that there are Christians you can be close to, spend time with, talk to openly, give you counsel, pray for you, care for you, and who you can share your life with. But good relationships are godly friendships that go both ways. That is, there must be mutual concern, care, and love. In all this, we are talking about relationships that are committed to Christ, that are focusing on Christ and fulfilling His purposes. Then there will be real blessing, unity, fellowship, and progress for the Lord. Rom. 1:11-12, Col. 4:7-14, 2 Tim. 1:3-4

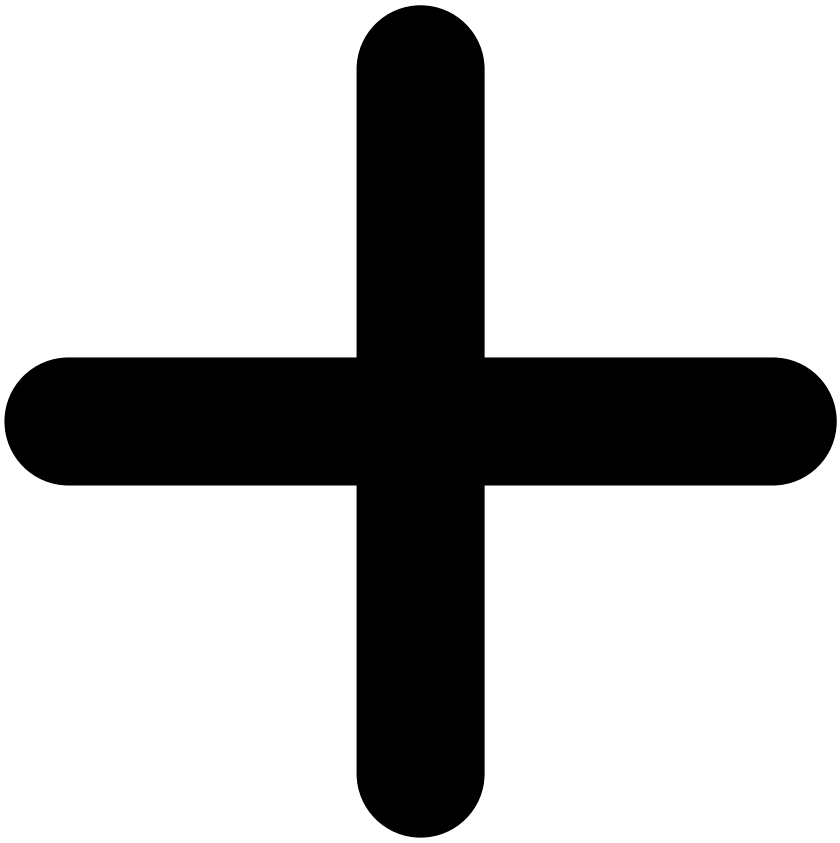
Character. Life is not just about what you do – it's also about who you are, that you have godly character. This means being loving, kind, forgiving, patient, truthful, thankful, faithful, hopeful, courageous, rejoicing, loyal, diligent, persevering, a hard worker, and a fighter for what's right. Of course, only God can build this godly character in your life. By His word, by the Holy Spirit, by prayer, through trials, and by learning from others, you will surely grow in character, you will be more Christlike, you will be effective for God. Rom. 5:3-5; 1 Tim. 4:11

Sacrifice. God did not save you and leave you on earth so you could make a name for yourself. Jesus sacrificed His life to save you from your

sins, and so you could sacrifice your life and make a name for Him (Ps. 23:4, Eph. 5:1). When you love people, when you are kind, giving, and patient, then you are sacrificing your life for them, and for Him. Yes, sacrifice can be extremely difficult, but it's worth it, for the glory of Christ, the good of others, and for your eternal blessing. And it may be that you will sacrifice your life by dying for Christ, that you are a martyr, but remember, He died for you (Rev. 6:9). "*I urge you, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God."* Rom. 12:1. Luke 9:23

Each of these truths are vital if you are to live successfully for God. Ask Him to help you spiritually grow up so you can *"walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called"* (Eph. 4:1). As you know, we presently live in a very sinful, troubled, divided, and changing country, and this means great challenges and pressures. But what does not change is who God is, what He plans to do, who you are in Christ, and how you are to live for Him. Never forget that! And so no matter what's happening now or will be happening in the future, keep looking to Christ. And if you are still on this earth when the Antichrist is revealed and devilishly ruling, don't be afraid, don't stress out, just remember to keep doing what God has taught you to do. This is the secret to success! *"This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. Have I not commanded you! Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."* Joshua 1:8-9

P.S. Here is an article that also tells us how God wants us to live: *"Spiritual Survival Food for the Coming Tough Times."* My plan for the future is to put up a post every other week, which means the next one will come out on January 22 – it will be all about our magnificent brand new body! But if events come up necessitating a post more often, I will do so.



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