

21 -- A TIME FOR HOLY LIVING (Living for Jesus)

Our sanctuary study of the judgment has revealed to us some fantastic events. We have discovered the tremendous truth that the judgment has been going on in heaven since 1844. What a solemn and yet joyful hour to be alive! We are living in the time when the closing scenes of the earth's history are transpiring! Is the news of the judgment in heaven simply good news for the Christian to know intellectually, or does the truth of the judgment have any implication on how the Christian ought to be living today? Should Christians who have the hope of the soon return of the Lord be living differently from those without this hope? In this lesson we will explore some of the practical ramifications of what it means to be living in the time of the end, while the judgment is going on in heaven.

1. What principle will a child of God live by who is waiting for Christ's soon coming?

Leviticus 11:44 For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy.... (See also 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 John 3:2,3).

Ephesians 5:10 proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Note: The Word of God makes it clear that those who have accepted Jesus and are preparing for His soon coming will be purifying their lives now through a relationship with Him. We have learned that the time just before the second coming of Jesus is to be used just as the Day of Atonement was used in the Old Testament, as a time for holy living, a time for God's people to get ready to meet Jesus when He comes. The serious times in which we live demand that Christians live holy lives.

“Therefore, whether you eat or drink...do all to the glory of God”

2. What was the original diet that God designed for humans?

Genesis 1:29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food."

Note: The original diet for the human race was a vegetarian diet of fruits, grains, and nuts. God added vegetables to Adam and Eve's diet after they sinned and could no longer eat from the tree of life.

3. Is God concerned with our physical health?

3 John 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

Note: The Bible teaches that our physical health is extremely important to God. Jesus spent as much time healing as He did teaching. There are several Bible principles we can follow to improve our health and lengthen our lives.

4. God promised the children of Israel that if they would serve and obey Him, He would remove all sickness from them [Exodus 15:26]. Did He keep His promise?

Psalms 105:37 He also brought them out ... And there was none feeble among His tribes.

Note: Just imagine! When God's people came into the promised land, there was not one sick or feeble person in the whole nation.

5. Why is our health so important to God?

1 Corinthians 6:19, 20 ... your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit ... therefore glorify God in your body. ...
Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Note: God wants our bodies to be His holy dwelling place. Therefore we must choose to make them a wholesome place for His residence. We should strive to live so that all of our habits--even our eating and drinking--will glorify God. The reason for this is simple: there is a direct connection between what we eat or drink and our mental clarity, ability to resist temptation, and capacity to distinguish between right and wrong.

6. Should Christians use alcoholic beverages?

Proverbs 20:1 Wine is a mocker, Intoxicating drink arouses brawling, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise."

Note: Alcoholic beverages are clearly forbidden by Scripture. The word "wine" in the Bible can mean either fermented or unfermented grape juice. The same is true of the word "cider" today. Proverbs 23:29-32 gives the Bible description of fermented wine, and God says that we should not even look at it! The only wine Christians should use is "new wine," which is unfermented, sweet grape juice. Isaiah 65:8 indicates that "new wine is found in the cluster."

7. What will God do to those who defile their bodies?

1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 ... you are the temple of God ... If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. ...

Note: Any substance or unhealthful practice that damages the body or shortens one's life must be laid aside. Suicide by degrees is still suicide. This, of course, includes harmful drugs (such as tobacco in all of its forms) and the many drinks that contain a popular yet highly detrimental drug called caffeine. God says that He will destroy people who knowingly wreak havoc upon their body temples.

8. What mammals does God permit humans to eat?

Leviticus 11:3 Among the beasts, whatever divides the hoof, having cloven hooves and chewing the cud--that you may eat.

Note: To make things simple for us, God has placed all living creatures into one of two categories: clean and unclean. He permits us to eat those that are clean but has declared the unclean creatures to be unfit for food. All mammals that are clean have two characteristics. They must: (1) have cloven hooves, and (2) chew the cud. For example, a pig has cloven hooves but does not chew its cud, so it is unclean.

9. What types of fish and seafood are clean?

Leviticus 11:9 These you may eat of all that are in the water: whatever in the water has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers--that you may eat.

Note: Most fish are clean for food. However, eels, sharks, and catfish are among the exceptions. All creatures in the water that do not have both fins and scales are unclean and should not be eaten. Examples include shellfish, turtles, frogs, shrimp, lobster, oysters, etc.

10. Which birds are unclean?

Leviticus 11:15, 16 ...every raven after its kind, the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; ...

Note: The list in Leviticus 11 indicates that birds of prey, carrion, and fish eaters are unclean. However, all the foraging birds such as quail, chickens, and turkeys are clean.

11. Are the laws about clean and unclean animals part of Moses' ceremonial law, which ended at the cross?

Genesis 7:1, 2 Then the LORD said to Noah, "Come into the ark, ... You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female."

Note: No, God's categories of clean and unclean beasts have existed since Creation. Noah was told to take clean beasts into the ark by sevens and unclean by two. This was long before Moses' law.

12. Does God say that eating unclean food is a serious offense?

Isaiah 66:15, 17 For behold, the LORD will come with fire And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, ... Those who sanctify themselves and purify themselves, ... Eating swine's flesh and the abomination and the mouse, Shall be consumed together, ...

Note: Yes! The Bible is too plain and clear to be misunderstood. At His second coming, the Lord will destroy those who know what His Word requires, yet choose to ignore and reject it.

13. How can I make diet and health changes that will please the Lord?

Ezekiel 11:18-20 ...they will take away all its detestable things ... Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them.

Note: When we decide to obey God's health laws, He puts a new spirit within us that will give us the power needed to live healthfully (John 1:12).

“Therefore, ...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”

14. What does the Bible say about our behavior?

James 4:4 ...Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

2 Corinthians 6:17 ...Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.

1 John 2:15 ... If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Note: The Lord has called His people today to live exemplary lives as they help others prepare for Jesus' second coming.

15. What should a Christian choose to think about?

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.

Psalms 101:3 I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; ...

Note: The inscription on the High Priest crown read “Holiness unto the Lord” reminding us that our thoughts are to be holy. Jesus taught that sins of sex and violence originate in the thoughts and attitudes (Matthew 5:22, 28). Therefore, a Christian should avoid any TV programs, videos, or reading material that would encourage impure thoughts. For us, this would include watching violence, or immorality as a form of entertainment.

16. What type of music will a true Christian enjoy?

Psalms 40:3 He has put a new song in my mouth--Praise to our God;

1 Samuel 16:23 And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.

Note: It is obvious that a great majority of the popular music in the world does not help us spiritually. Instead, it destroys our desire for heavenly things. However, music can be a tremendous power for good. When King Saul was tormented by an evil spirit, the soothing music from David's harp refreshed him and drove away the evil.

17. Is dancing good recreation for a Christian?

Titus 2:12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in the present age.

Note: Most of the popular contemporary dancing is associated with worldly music and has a very strong sexual emphasis. In almost any situation we should ask, "What would Jesus do?" I think we all agree that our Savior would not abandon His reason to swing body and limb to the beat of some syncopated rhythm.

18. Does the Bible discourage the wearing of jewelry and "showy" clothing?

1 Timothy 2:9 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,

1 Peter 3:3, 4 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Note: Modesty is a good pattern for Christians to follow. The popular, sexually suggestive fads and fashions of today encourage a great deal of temptation and debt. God does not intend for us to dress in burlap; however, unduly expensive, flamboyant, or ostentatious clothing should not be part of a Christian's wardrobe. Although the wearing of jewelry is widely accepted in the world, it has a negative image in the Scriptures.

19. Will a Christian play the lottery or gamble?

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Proverbs 28:20 ... He who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

Note: Gambling can be just as addictive as many drugs. Some have squandered entire family savings at casinos or on state lottery tickets. Most "get rich quick" schemes are associated with undue risk, unfair prices, and questionable ethics.

20. What should be the aim of God's people today?

1 John 3:22 ... we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 ... Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

Note: A person cannot live any way he wishes and finally be saved in God's kingdom. This is one reason Jesus came to earth--to give us an example of holy living (1 Peter 2:21).

21. What makes it easy to obey God in the matters of lifestyle discussed in this lesson?

John 14:15 If you love me, keep my commandments.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not burdensome.

Psalms 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God,

22. Why is the Christian life such a high calling?

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Note: As ambassadors for Jesus, Christians do indeed have a high calling! John the Baptist helped prepare people for Jesus' first coming, and God has called His people today to live holy lives as they help others prepare for Jesus' second coming.

Your Response

Are you willing to be part of God's "chosen generation," to walk in the footsteps of our loving Savior (1 John 2:5, 6), and witness through a godly lifestyle to prepare others for Jesus' second coming?

ANSWER: _____