

as Jesus forgave those who treated him so badly. Even when he was crucified he asked his Father to forgive those who had done such a terrible thing to him.

How do we practically show love towards other people?

- By remembering that all the material things we have in life come from God and that we should share them with less fortunate people.
- By treating other people in a kind and caring way.
- By giving time to the poor and the lonely, by listening to them and comforting them.
- By helping people who are in need without demanding payment or a favour in return.
- Most of all by sharing the Gospel message with them.

Rewards in this life and the life to come

It is easy to see from the Bible that the reward for disciples who live in this way will be a place in God's kingdom. But they will also have a reward in this life, the Apostle Paul wrote:

“But godliness with contentment is great gain,

for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.

But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.” (1Timothy 6:6-8)

He also said that the benefits of being content like this will bring us love, joy and peace now whilst we await Jesus' coming.

God asks us to put him first in our lives and then other people before ourselves. If we show this by the way we live it will bring contentment and happiness now and a place in the Kingdom of God when Jesus returns.

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Christadelphian Bible Mission

BASIC BIBLE TRUTHS

Daily Living as a Disciple of Christ

When you have read this leaflet you will understand what the Bible says about:

- Principles for a disciple's life.
- What these mean in practice.
- God's reward in this life and the life to come.

A New Life in Christ

When we are baptised we begin a new life. We promise to leave behind the way we used to live and to follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ our saviour. This is a huge change and it is not easy as we decide to serve God and obey him rather than please ourselves. All of us fail but there is great comfort in knowing that God will forgive our failures if we humbly come to him in prayer.

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

Bible principles for the new life

The Bible gives us two principles about how we should live our new life. They are part of the commandments in the Old Testament and Jesus also emphasized them in the New Testament (Mark 12:30-31).

- We should love the Lord our God with all our hearts, soul, mind and strength (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)
- We should love our neighbour as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18)

Jesus said that everything else in the Old Testament depended on these two principles. He was speaking to a man who was used to living by rules and regulations and he would be startled by what Jesus said. The Lord did not tell the man about what he should *do* in his new life; rather he told him what sort of person he should *be* in in this new life. This is an important point, the way we live and act in our lives – what sort of people we are, must be influenced by our love for the God who has given us salvation through His Son and so, in turn, we love others as He loved us.

Putting the principles into practice.

The Apostle Peter wrote of these principles in a different way when he said;

“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.” (1Peter 2:21)

Every word and action of Jesus showed how he loved God and also his fellow men.

When we look at him in the Gospels we see these principles at work, practically, in his life.

So, as followers of Jesus, disciples try to put them into practice every day because they will influence and develop their thoughts, words and actions helping us to become Christ-like people.

If we love God with all our heart and strength we will want to:

- Read about him daily,
- Pray to him every day
- Think about him even when involved in in the tasks of our everyday lives.
- Be faithful to our husband or wife and live a moral life.
- Be honest in our dealings with everybody.
- Talk to people about the Gospel message and what it means to us and show, through our behaviour, that we really believe it.
- Remember that our bodies are given by God; we will not want to damage them by smoking or taking drugs or by drunkenness.
- Trust God so that whatever happens to us in life, even if bad things occur, we will always have faith in him and in the promise of his kingdom to come.

Our daily prayer

Jesus taught his disciples a daily prayer for their lives. In it he first of all told them to pray for God’s kingdom to come on earth so that God’s will and purpose can be

completed throughout the whole world. But when Jesus said ‘your will be done on earth’ he was also talking about the lives of his disciples. They practise living by God’s standards now so that they might be changed and made perfect at the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Jesus also told them to pray for what they needed each day for their lives, for their daily bread. He did not tell them they could pray for riches or material things and he made it clear in the words that followed that they should live their lives one day at a time, looking to God for just what they need for each day. This is difficult for all of us but this is how Jesus lived, praying to God each morning for God’s guidance during the day and this is part of that example he has left us.

Loving our neighbour as ourselves

But this prayer that Jesus gave us also tells us about our relationships with other people, our neighbours. Most of us want to get the best for ourselves and sometimes we do this regardless of the effect on other people. But, if we want God to forgive us when we fall short of his standards, we must learn to put other people first and think of them before ourselves. We must learn to freely forgive people who do or say wrong things against us. If we try to put God first in our lives, we will show it by the way we behave towards other people, trying to behave in a loving and caring way as Jesus did to people and trying to forgive them, even if they badly hurt or offend us,