

How Should A Christian Behave?

Introduction; Does our speech betray us?

A. Our speech and behavior should tell others something about us.

1. *Matt 26:73 And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, "Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you." 74 Then he began to curse and swear, saying, "I do not know the Man!" Immediately a rooster crowed.*
2. Peter's speech betrayed him as a Galilean and a follower of Jesus Christ. In order to convince them he was not a follower of Christ he even curses and swears.

B. Our language and behavior often betrays us.

1. Our language may tell someone what part of the country we are from. Perhaps the mountains or perhaps the Northeast.
2. Our behavior also says something about us. It may say we are ladies and gentlemen or it may say we are worldly and wild.

C. It is important that our behavior properly tells people who we are.

1. *"We never get a second chance to make a good first impression."*
2. People do judge us by our language, behavior, actions and dress. We make a statement about ourselves in all these things.
3. Many wicked people try to look good before men. False teachers often try to look righteous –2 Cor 11:13-15. Scriptures often condemn hypocrisy.
4. *Matt 23:25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence."*
5. While many wicked people try to look good, many righteous seem to try to look bad. We need to be more careful with our appearance and behavior. We want to be sure others see Christ in us.
6. *Matt 5:16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*

D. In this lesson we will consider how a child of God should behave in order to show Christ in him.

I. We should recognize we are the 'elect of God.'

A. We will turn to Colossians, chapter 3 for our text.

1. Colossians 1 and 2 exalt Jesus as the creator and head of the church. He should have the preeminence in all things. We must serve and obey Him. Colossians 2 deals with some who were not following Christ as they should.
2. Chapters 3 & 4 are a practical application of this point. They tell us how to live as followers of Christ.

Since Christ is preeminent, how should we live if we are His followers.

3. **Colossians 3:1-11**; These verses tells us we are raised with Christ. We are 1) raised or resurrected with Him in baptism (Rom 6:3-7) and 2) we are raised to sit with Him in heavenly places —Eph 2:6.
4. We should then seek the things above, in heaven. We do this by setting our minds on things above and by living a certain way in this world —Matt 6:19-21.
5. **Vs 12**; We are the elect of God. We are chosen by Him. We are holy and loved by Him. This is a special relationship.
5. Since we have this special relationship we must develop a certain character. We must be a certain kind of person. We must be holy as Christ is.
6. **Vs 13** We must also treat others in a certain way. We must treat them as Jesus treats us. This is the character of a Christian.
7. **Vs 14 & 15**; Love must be the foundation or basis for what we do. It is **why** we behave as we do and treat others the way we do. We love God and all mankind. We have God's peace in our hearts because we know we are pleasing to Him.

B. As Christians we are very special —vs 12.

1. Colossians 3:12 says we are the '*elect of God.*' We are chosen by Him. We need to realize what a special blessing this is. This does not mean we have no choice in our becoming a Christian.
2. God did not choose us in the way some teach. Some say Jehovah **predestined** us to be saved whether we want to be or not. They say salvation is not a choice of man but only by God.
3. Scripture teaches we have a part in our being chosen by God. Jehovah gave His Son to die for the sins of mankind. He then offered salvation to all. Yet only a few respond. God chose to save all who would believe, repent and are baptized.
4. *Acts 2:37-38 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
5. The men on the day of Pentecost believed Peter's preaching and asked what they needed to do. Peter did not tell them they had no choice in the matter and they were already either saved or lost. He said to the believers to, "*Repent and be baptized...*"
6. *Acts 2:40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."*
7. Three Thousand responded that day and were added by God to the church. They responded from their hearts and God accepted them. They became the elect of God. God chose those who would obey Him.
8. Being elect is be chosen for salvation in heaven when this life is over. The world can offer nothing that compares to this.
9. *Phil 3:20—4:1 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. 4:1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.*

C. Paul calls the brethren '*holy and beloved*' in verse 12. This also shows what we are.

1. Christians are holy. They are set apart by God for His own use —study 1 Pet 2:4-10. They are also set apart for His special blessings and for a home in heaven when life here is over. Christians are to serve God and not the world.
2. *1 Pet 1:15-16 ...but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*
3. The elect of God are holy and beloved. They are loved by God. He loved them so much He gave His only Begotten Son to die for them —John 3:16. Being loved by God again makes us very special.
4. *Rom 1:7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and*

peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. All of this shows us ‘who we are’. We are God’s special people, elect, holy and beloved.

II. We should have the character of those *elect* or chosen by God.

A. As God’s special people we need to have a special type of character and attitude.

1. We need to act as if we are the elect of God. We need to show others who we are. Our attitudes and behavior should betray us as followers of Jesus Christ.
2. *Phil 1:27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,*

B. Paul mentions five things that characterize those chosen by God in verse 12.

1. **First**, children of God should put on *tender mercies* —a heart of compassion --NASV. We are to be a compassionate and caring people. We must be sympathetic and feel other people’s pain.
2. *Rom 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.*
3. We do not think only of ourselves but of others. We try to help others in any way we can.
4. **Second**, we are to clothe ourselves with *kindness*. This grows out of a heart of compassion. We see others suffering and in need and strive to be kind to them and cheerfully help them. Our hearts go out to them.
5. *Luke 10:33-34 “But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.”*
6. The Samaritan man had a heart of compassion. Because of this he showed kindness to the man who was beaten and left by robbers. We need to have this characteristic as well.
7. **Third** we are to have *humility*. Being humble means we think ourselves to be lowly. We do not trust in our own strength and power but in that of the Lord. We are modest and depend on God. We are ‘poor in spirit’.
8. *James 4:13-16 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.*
9. If we aren’t humble then we are arrogant. If we trust in ourselves to control the future we are not humble. We need to pray the Lord and leave things in His hands.

C. Lets look at the last two qualities of the elect person’s character.

1. **Forth**, we are to be *meek*. Meekness is gentleness and grows out of humility. Meekness is thinking of others and not just ourselves –Phil 2:3, 4. It is having our strength under control. Instead of people being afraid of us because we are harsh and mean, they trust us because we are gentle and meek.
2. *2 Cor 10:1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ; who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you.*
3. Jesus Christ was meek and gentle. Men could come to Him and talk to Him. His character was such that He loved men and wanted to help them. They could see this in Him. We are to plead with men with this same character of meekness and gentleness. We want men to know we want what is best for them and not to hurt them.

4. *Mat 11:28-30 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*
5. **Fifth**, we are to be *long-suffering*. This is an important quality that the world lacks. This can involve several things. It is just what it says, it suffers long with people. We do not quickly reject men and give up on them. We see many examples of God longsuffering with men in the scriptures.
6. *1 Pet 3:20 ...who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*
7. *1 Tim 1:16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.*
8. God suffered a long with the world of Noah's day —over a hundred years. He suffered a long time with Paul while he persecuted the church. We need to suffer long with men and not give up on them quickly.
9. A second condition of long suffering is to control our tempers and not get angry quickly. Many will not put up with someone long before getting angry with them. This is not the character of God. He is patient and long-suffering —1 Thess 5:14.
10. *James 1:19-20 This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.*
11. *Eph 4:26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath,*

D. We see then the unique character of God's elect.

III. We should behave as the '*elect*.'

A. We are special. We are chosen by God. We are holy and loved by Him.

1. Since this is true we have a special character of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and long-suffering.
2. Colossians 3:13 then tells us how we are to treat others since we have all these characteristics.

B. **First** we are to '*bear with one another*.'

1. There seems to have been some contention at Colosse. There was error being taught —see chapter 2. Some were not getting along Many do not seem to have been as kind and patient as they should have been in these difficult situations.
2. *Gal 6:1-2 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
3. *Eph 4:1-2 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,*
4. There does come a time to withdraw from a sinning brother. However we are to bear long with them until that time comes. Even after withdrawing we are to be happy to accept them back if they repent.
5. **Second**, we are to *forgive one another*. Many find it hard to forgive a sinning brother. They may repent and we do not believe them or we want to put them on probation. We must be forgiving because we love one another.
6. *1 John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.*

7. We see then how we are to treat one another. We love them. Therefore we bear a long time with them and forgive them.
8. *2 Cor 2:6-8 This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, 7 so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. 8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him.*

C. The basis of our forgiving one another is Christ's forgiveness of us.

1. Verse 13 points that the basis of forgiving the complaints we have against others is the forgiveness Christ gave us. We forgive the debt owed us just as God forgives us our debt of sin through Jesus Christ.
2. *Eph 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*
3. *Luke 7:39-43 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." 40 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." 41 "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged."*
4. We see the forgiveness of Christ when He forgives our sins. We need to be like Him and forgive others who sin against us. We need to realize how much God really forgives in us.
5. *Matt 6:12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.*

D. We see that the Lord's elect behave in a certain way.

Conclusion; Our behavior should betray who we are.

A. We influence others by 'who we are.'

1. Who we are is determined by our character and attitudes and behavior. Who we say we are is important. However our life must back up our words. Our works and deeds say a lot.
2. Christians do not follow the world but the example of Jesus Christ in their behavior.

B. If we want to become a follower of Jesus Christ we must obey Him.

1. We must believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God who died for us. We then repent of our sins and turn to righteousness. We turn from sin to Christ.
2. We are then baptized into Christ to become a child of God. Our sins are washed away by being immersed in water. This is an act of faith. God said to do it and we obey Him.
3. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
4. *Rom 6:3-7 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

5. See also Matt 28:18-20, Luke 24:44-48, John 3:3-6, Act 8:35-39, 17:30-31, 18:8, 22:16, Titus 3:4-7, 1 Pet 3:21, etc.
 6. Baptism is not a physical work that saves us. It is an act of faith. We submit to someone immersing us in water because we believe the words of Jesus Christ. The water does not save. Our faith and obedience does.
 7. If any are Christians out of duty and wish the prayers of the saints, we can pray for you.
- C. If the church can help anyone in their service to God today, please let us know how we can help.