

# THE BOOK TO LIVE BY



AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY



## Universal Bible Sunday

4. Doing to others as we desire to be done unto, and forgiveness of our enemies are two admonitions of the Bible that help tremendously in our dealings with others. In many of the Old Testament teachings, and in most all of the New Testament, is <sup>even</sup> more help for an individual's relationships with others. The tests of experience demonstrate that the Bible gives the best guidance for an individual's relationship and dealings with others.

Conclusion:

1. The Bible gives the best guidance for man's thinking about vital problems.

2. The Bible gives the best guidance for an individual's relationships or dealings with others.

3. These are the most important aspects of everyday life. There are other areas of life in which the Bible equally well is the best guide. Therefore it is true that the Bible is the best guide for everyday life.

With the psalmist we may say <sup>to God</sup> of the Holy Scriptures, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

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betrayed of the innocent, had sold the wife and daughter of his friend Glaucus into slavery and tried to kill him for his faith in Christ. Glaucus was one of those Christians who were covered with pitch, fastened to pillars, and then set on fire in the Vatican gardens for the amusement of Nero. As he drove down the lines of this human agony, Nero had by his side this wicked Chilo. Presently they came to the pillar where Glaucus was burning, but still alive and conscious. As the wind blew the smoke away for a moment, disclosing the face of Glaucus, Chilo was seized with sudden compunction of conscience and bitter remorse. Stretching his arms up toward the agonizing martyr, he cried out, "Glaucus, in Christ's name, forgive me!"

At that the head of the martyr moved slightly, and from the top of the pillar was heard a voice like a groan, "I forgive."

Those who stood about saw a strange light come into the face of Chilo. Turning toward Nero and lifting an accusing finger, he cried out, "There is the incendiary."

In the excitement that followed Chilo encountered in the crowds St. Paul, who told him of the infinite forgiveness of Christ and baptized him into the Christian faith. The next day when Chilo himself was in the hands of Nero's torturers, who demanded that he retract his Christian confession, Chilo asked that he might die in the way the Christians died. When his torturers were binding him with ropes and piercing him with iron tongs, Chilo kissed their hands with humility and forgiveness. Forgiven himself, he had learned to forgive -- and he died in peace.

The Bible puts the spirit of forgiveness and its value at its highest in the words of Jesus: "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Mt. 6:14). Jesus further emphasized the value of forgiveness by giving in his model prayer the words: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

It is true that the vengeful, unforgiving, hateful person is unhappy. Peace of mind and soul alone are worth the effort and cost of forgiving those who wrong us.

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MAIN POINT TWO

1. As far as everyday living is concerned, most of an individual's waking hours are spent in close proximity to others; in relationship with, or dealings with others. Regardless of one's philosophy of life, everyday dealings with others go on.

2. In most communities there are businesses which have the goodwill and respect of the people, and others which don't have so much goodwill but are patronized simply because the townspeople don't know where else to turn. Those businessmen who do have the good will of their customers are almost always the ones that practice both courtesy and honesty in dealing with their customers. Most people will even pay a higher price willingly to be treated nicely. The businesses which grow the most rapidly usually treat all alike, whether purchasers of large or small amounts. Chain stores like Penny's or Sear's have grown to such huge proportions by selling goods to all at one price, by selling at low margins of profit, by guaranteeing merchandise to be what they claim and replacing it or refunding the money if it isn't, and, not the least, because of ever-present courtesy and friendliness. Such stores, whether large chains or small local businesses, are the ones that stay in business and keep the trade when the competition gets keen and money gets scarce. Many businesses find that to be courteous in hard times and rude in prosperous times of scarcity doesn't work, for when plenty comes again such businesses lose out.

The Bible gives the practical, guiding rule in business transactions that experience shows best, the famous "Golden Rule." In Mt. 7:12 we have recorded the words of Jesus giving this famous and practical guiding rule, and telling us it is also in the Old Testament: "All things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

3. In Quo Vadis, that great tale of early Christian history, Chilo, a man of wickedness, thief, slanderer, panderer, and

## RESPONSIVE READING

Job saith, There is a spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

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John saith (unison), **But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.**

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4. The Bible guides us in thinking of life and its labors as being for God; as being in the nature of a school in which we are trained and tested for a life to come.

This Biblical guidance for our thinking about life gives to life more purpose than other approaches of thought. It takes the emptiness and meaninglessness out of life.

4. In his Farewell Address, Washington said: "Religion and morality are the indispensable supports of political prosperity. Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. Morality is a necessary spring of popular government. Who, that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?"

There is no reason whatsoever for good morals, or righteousness, unless one holds to a faith in God. In the Bible this truth is pointed out again and again, and in forceful manner, as nowhere else. For instance, in Proverbs 21:21: "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness and honour." Or, again in Proverbs, 11:8: "The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead." Or in Psalm 15:1-2: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness."

The consciousness that righteousness is rewarded and wickedness means eternal death is held out continually in the Bible. The love of God for the good and the fear that the wicked must have for him is pointed out again and again. That the wicked, even though perhaps prosperous, are not happy is just one bit of much observable evidence that the overall Bible view of righteousness is correct. In our thinking about morality the Bible gives the best guide or advice.

5. We could demonstrate the Bible's outstanding value as a guide in other areas of thinking. These two areas of thought, about the meaning of life and about morality, are sufficient to justify the statement that the Bible gives the best guidance for man's thinking about vital problems.

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2. It is especially in the realm of thought about vital questions that the Bible gives the greatest help. We cannot begin here to consider all such questions, but will conclude that the Bible is the best guide in our thinking about the vital questions of life if we can demonstrate the truth of this statement in relation to only a few of these questions.

3. The great Battle of Blenheim was fought at the village of that name on the Danube, August 13, 1704. The commander of the British and Austrian armies, which defeated the French and the Bavarians, was the Duke of Malborough, an ancestor of Mr. Winston Churchill. Many years after the battle, as related in Southey's famous poem, a little lad brought to his grandfather, Caspar, a round smooth object which he had found near the brook by which he had been playing. The old man exclaimed to the lad that this was the skull of a soldier who had fallen in the Battle of Blenheim. The boy wanted to know about the battle, and the old man took him on his knee and told him the story of the battle. When he was through with his tale, the lad questioned the old man:

"But what good came of it at last?"

Quoth little Peterkin.

"Why, that I cannot tell," said he;

'But 'twas a famous victory."

Often in ~~life~~ our thinking about life there comes to us that thought which startles, alarms, and haunts us. What if our labor should be in vain? What if no good came out of the long struggle of life? That is a question that goes to the very roots of existence.

In the Bible we find the most satisfying guidance for our thinking about life. We have Paul's great statement, based upon the truths which he has just been declaring, the Atonement, the resurrection of Christ, the life to come, and our own personal immortality: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:58)

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## Introduction:

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1. There is in Psalm 119 a noteworthy passion for the law of the Pentateuch, which the writer of this psalm takes as the very word of God. "O How I love thy law," and similar expressions indicate the ardor with which the psalmist went about obeying the law. It was to him no irksome task, no driving duty, but a passionate privilege that brought joy and comfort to him.

2. Throughout this, the longest chapter in the Bible, there is kept before the mind of the reader the personality of God. He is in the world which he has made, greater than it, yet moving in majesty amid his laws.

3. This psalm is really one long testimony to the writer's belief that obedience to God's laws, as revealed by his Scriptures, is the best way of life.

4. It is our purpose here to examine the belief or statement that the Bible is the best guide for everyday life, even as the writer of this psalm found that he could say to God of the Scriptures then existing: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." We might consider ourselves as thinking of "the Bible in everyday life," or, to put it another way, of "the value of the Bible."

## FIRST MAIN POINT

1. On a church bulletin board whereon was displayed one of these brief sayings calculated to arrest and impress the casual reader as he passes by, there was once this: "You are not what you think you are, but are what you think." In the Bible we find the same idea in Prov. 23:7, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." In the hidden realm of thought all disguise and pretense are thrown off. In the realm of thought all sorts of things are weighed and considered covering the whole area of life itself. Here each must have some solution to the questions of creation, the meaning of life and death, eternity, morals, etc.. The way we act is based on the way we think about the vital questions we face.

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Theme: The Bible in Everyday Life

Proposition: The Bible is the best guide for everyday life.

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Sources: Abingdon Bible Commentary, p. 584.  
Macartney's Illustrations, p. 391, 210, 299, 129.

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