

## A SCRIPTURE GUIDE FOR THE CHRISTIAN WALK

It has been declared on innumerable occasions from the pulpit in the contemporary church that the Bible is not a book of *do's and don'ts*. But of course it is, and has to be, or else Christians would only have a Gospel of easy-believism to rely on for their salvation instead of prescribed Scripture guidelines – the *do's and don'ts* – that have to be obeyed by Christians in order for them to be saved and ensure their place in God's Eternal Kingdom. If Christians do not follow the Scripture guidelines laid down by God in the Bible they cannot and will not be saved (CP Psa 119:9-12; Pr 3:11-12; 15:9-12; Mt 28:19-20; 2Ti 3:16-17). Christians are warned throughout Scripture of the things they must do and must not do in order to be saved and ensure their place in God's Eternal Kingdom. This study highlights those Scriptures. The Scriptures are not exhaustive, but are sufficient for the purpose of this study.

The study consists of three segments: **What Christians must do according to Scripture; What Christians must not do according to Scripture, and Other truths according to Scripture for Christians.** The Scriptures subject of each segment are in Biblical order and form part of this author's book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament** where they are all commented on individually and can be studied in depth by readers.

**What Christians must do according to Scripture:** The first Scripture in this segment highlights the principles upon which the Kingdom of God is founded that Christians have to live out in their daily life in order to inherit the Kingdom (Mt 5:1-12). Next are Scriptures highlighting Christians' responsibility to bear much fruit for God's Eternal Kingdom in order to secure their own place in the Kingdom (Mt 5:13-16; 7:13-14; 7:21; Jn 15:2; 15:16). Scripture highlighting Christ's command to Christians to love their enemies (Mt 5:38-42). Christians are to forsake all for Christ (Mt 8:18-22; 10:37-38; 10:39; Lu 14:28-35; Php 3:7-11). Christians must love Christ above all else (Mt 10:28; Lu 14:26; 1Cor 7:26; Ga 6:14). Christians must be prepared to suffer persecution for the cause of Christ (Mt 10:37-38; Ro 5:3-5; 8:17; 2Cor 4:8-12; 2Ti 3:12; Jas 1:2-4; 1Pe 4:17; 5:8-11; Rev 2:8-11). Christians are to lay hold of eternal life; they must press in with ardent zeal and intense exertion to secure their place in God's Eternal Kingdom (Mt 11:12; 1Ti 6:14). Christians must constantly test the genuineness of their faith (Mt 15:15-20; 2Cor 13:5). Christians must resolve conflicts among themselves (Mt 18:15-17; 1Cor 6:1-8). Christians are to obey the law of the land unless it conflicts with God's law (Mt 22:21; Lu 20:22-26; Ac 4:13-20; Ro 13:1-2). Christians must share the Gospel with others and win souls to Christ, then baptise them (Mt 28:19:20(a); 28:19-20 (b); Lu 14:16-24; 19:11-17; Ac 11:19-21; 18:6; Ro 1:13; 2Cor 5:18-19).

Christians must hate the things God hates (Lu 16:14-15; Jas 4:1-4; 1Jn 2:15-17). Christians must unconditionally and self-sacrificially love one another as Christ loved them (Jn 13:34-35; 17:20-23; Ro 13:8; 14:1-9; 2Cor 6:11-13; Ga 5:1-8; 5:13; Jas 4:1-4; 1Jn 2:7; 3:15; 3:16-18; 3:19-22; 4:7-21; Rev 3:7-13). Christians must be totally consecrated to the service of God and completely yielded to the authority of Jesus (Jn 15:4-6). Christians are to test all things in the light

of Scripture and reject the things that do not conform (Ac 17:11; 1Th 5:21; 1Jn 4:1-6). Christians must always be ready and willing to help those in need, especially other Christians, whether financially or otherwise (Ac 20:35; Ga 6:7-8; 1Jn 3:16-18). Christians must walk in the Spirit, not after the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof (Ro 8:1-2; Ga 5:15; 5:17; 5:24-26). Christians must set themselves apart wholly unto God, totally consecrated to His service (Ro 12:1). Christians are to do everything possible to live peaceably with all men (Ro 12:18). Christians are to treat those with kindness who mistreat them (Ro 12:20).

When marrying, Christians must marry another Christian (1Cor 7:39). Christians must flee from idolatry (1Cor 10:14-22). Christians must examine themselves before partaking of communion (1Cor 11:20-22). Christians must only see others as God sees them (2Cor 5:16-17). Christians must abound in the grace of giving (2Cor 8:1-7). Christians must bear one another's burden and so fulfil God's law of love for one another (Ga 6:2-5). Christians must only speak wholesome words (Eph 3:5-4; Col 4:5-6; 2Ti 4:1-2; Tit 2:7-8). Christians must be submitted to one another (Eph 5:21; 1Pe 5:5-6). As employees Christians are to be faithful, diligent, and conscientious (Eph 6:5-9). Christians must remain steadfast under provocation (Eph 6:11-12; Jas 5:7-8). Christians are to take on themselves self-abnegation and humility, making themselves of no reputation, like Christ (Php 2:5-8; 1Pe 5:5-6). Christians must only think of things in harmony with eternal truths (Php 4:8).

Christians' love for one another must increase and abound (1Th 3:12). Christians must keep themselves pure (1Th 4:4). Christians must maintain a constant attitude of prayer (1Th 5:17). Christians must work to keep themselves (2Th 3:6). Christians must remain in fellowship with other Christians as a united body of believers stirring each other up to love and good works as the return of Christ draws nearer (He 10:24-25). Christians to please God must be continually exercising their professed faith (He 11:1). Christians must do everything possible they can to meet the practical needs of those suffering for their faith (He 13:3). Christians must be consistent in their faith-walk (He 13:8). Christians must be submitted to those whom God has appointed to oversee their Spiritual walk (He 13:17).

James admonishes Christians to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (Jas 1:19-21), to control their tongues (Jas 1:26-27), to consider God in all their plans (Jas 4:13-16). Peter admonishes Christians not to settle down in an earthly way of life as though it were permanent, but to live as pilgrims on earth, ordering their conduct with a wholesome fear of displeasing God (1Pe 1:17), to reverence Christ as Lord over every facet of their life (1Pe 3:15), to reflect the character of God (2Pe 1:4). Christians are duty-bound to financially support those who minister God's word and it must be done in a manner worthy of God (3Jn 1:5-8). Last but by no means least in this segment, Jude admonishes Christians to have compassion on the unsaved and pity for their unsaved condition. They must endeavour to get as many saved as possible (Jude 1:22-23).

**What Christians must not do according to Scripture:** The first Scriptures in this segment highlight warnings to Christians against coveting earthly riches and material possessions which will prevent them bearing fruit for God's Eternal Kingdom and securing their place in the Kingdom (Mt 6:24; 13:3-9; 19:16-22; 19:23-26; Lu 12:13-15; 12:16-21; 12:33-34; 16:19-21; Ac 2:44-45; 1Cor 10:14-22; 2Cor 12:14; 1Ti 6:6-10; He 13:5-6). Christians must not judge others self-righteously (Mt 7:1-5; Jn 8:3-11; Ro 2:5; 14:1-9; Jas 4:11-12). Christians must not try to impose Christian standards on non-Christians (Mt 7:6). Christians must not charge for dispensing Spiritual blessings (Mt 10:8). Christians must not worry about not having enough cash reserves or not having made sufficient provision for their future before venturing into the field of service. God will provide for those who trust in Him (Mt 10:9-14). Christians must not seek after, receive for themselves or refer to one another by title (Mt 20:20-28; 23:8-12).

Christians must not behave in a sectarian manner allowing differing viewpoints to separate them from other Christians (Mk 9:38-41; 1Cor 1:10; 3:18-20). Christians must not observe unscriptural so-called Holy days or ritualistic practices (Ac 12:4; Ro 14:1-9; Ga 4:9; Col 2:16-23). Christians must not have exaggerated opinions of who they are in Christ (Ac 14:8-18; Ro 12:3; 2Cor 10:12). Christians must not habitually sin (Ro 6:1; 6:6-11; 6:12-14; 6:16; 6:17-20; 6:21-23; 1Pe 4:1-4; 1Jn 3:6-9). Mature Christians strong in the faith must not force their faith on the weak (Ro 14:22-23; 15:1-3; 1Cor 6:12-14; 8:1-13; 9:1-2; 10:23-33). Christians must not sue one another in court (1Cor 6:1-8). Unmarried Christians must not engage in illicit sex; it is better to marry (1Cor 7:1-2). Married Christians must not defraud their spouse of their conjugal rights (1Cor 7:3-6). Christians must not instigate separation or divorce from an unbelieving spouse (1Cor 7:12-15), but neither should Christians prevent an unbelieving spouse from leaving (1Cor 7:14-16). Christians must not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2Cor 6:14). Christians are not to be anxious about anything but are to pray and let their requests be made known to God, thanking Him in advance for answered prayer and He will grant their request (Php 4:6-7).

Christians must not accuse another Christian of sinning without witnesses (1Ti 5:19). Christians must not allow themselves to be distracted from God's work; they are likened to soldiers called to battle not being caught up in worldly pursuits (2Ti 2:1-6). Christians must not engage in flippancy or any form of lighthearted jocularity when ministering God's word which is a sacred trust that must be ministered with reverence and dignity (2Ti 4:1-2; Tit 2:7-8). Christians must not take an oath to attest to their truthfulness anywhere, even in a court of law. Their *yes* means yes, and their *no* means no everywhere, without having to swear to it under oath (Jas 5:12). Peter warns Christians against yielding to fleshly lusts that will eternally damn their souls (1Pe 2:11). Christians must not take their salvation or their faith for granted but must be actively involved in their Spiritual growth (2Pe 1:10). Christians must not pray God's blessings on anyone they know is a false teacher or they become partakers of their sins (2Jn 9-11). That brings this segment of the study to a close.

**Other truths according to Scripture for Christians:** Christians are authorised and empowered to work miracles like Jesus did (Mt 16:19; 17:14-21; 21:17-22; Mk 16:17-18; Lu 10:18, 10:20; 24:49-50; Jn 14:12-14; 20:23; Ac 1:8; 2:1-4(a); 2:1-4(b); 28:3-6; 1Cor 12:1-11; 2Cor 10:3-5(a); 2Cor 10:3-5(b)). Salvation is a free-will choice for Christians; they are not individually chosen or predestinated for salvation by God (Mt 20:16; Jn 1:12-13; 3:36; 6:37; Ac 3:22-23; Ro 8:28-30; 9:1-3; 9:7; 9:10-13; 9:14-18; 9:19-21; 1Cor 1:24; Eph 1:3-6; 2:8-10; 2Ti 1:8-9; Rev 13:8). Christians will receive everything they ask for of God in line with His Word, conditional upon them abiding in Him and His word in them (Mt 21:17-22; Jn 15:7; 1Jn 5:14-15). Christians go straight to heaven when they die (Lu 16:19-31). Christians are not appointed to go through the Tribulation (Lu 21:36; Jn 14:1-3; Ro 5:9-11; 1Cor 15:51-58; Php 3:20-21; 1Th 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2Th 1:1-3; 2:6-8; Rev 1:19; 3:7-13). Christians are born again by the word of God and Spiritually renewed by the Holy Spirit (Jn 3:3; 3:5; Tit 3:5; He 10:22). The future resurrection of Christians is guaranteed by the resurrection of Christ (Jn 14:19). Christians are hated by the world (Jn 15:18-25; 1Jn 3:10-13).

Believers were first called Christians in Antioch (Ac 11:19-22). Christian women cannot teach or exercise authority over men in the New Testament church (Ac 18:18 (b); Ro 16:1-2; 1Cor 14:34-35; Ga 3:28; 1Ti 2:8-15; 3:1-7; 3:8-13). If Christians are unable to appropriate God's promises, the fault lies with them, not God (Ro 3:3-4). Christians are justified by faith (Ro 3:24-26 (a); 4:1-5; 4:3; 5:1; Ga 1:2 (b); 2:18-21; 3:29; 5:11). Christians have power over sin through being risen with Christ (Ro 6:1; 6:3-5; 6:6-11; 6:12-14; 6:15; 6:16; 6:17-20; 6:21-23; 7:7-23; 8:1-2; 8:11; 1Cor 10:13; 2Cor 2:14; Eph 6:11-12; Col 3:1-3; Jas 4:5; 4:7-10). Christians identify with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection by surrendering their lives to Him (Ro 6:3-5). The whole of creation awaits the glorification of Christians when they are taken up to Heaven at the Rapture to be with Jesus (Ro 8:19-21; Rev 20:4-6). Christians will all be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ in Heaven (Ro 14:10-12; 1Cor 3:12-15; 2Ti 1:12). It is not necessary that Christians agree on every point of doctrine (Ro 15:5; 1Cor 1:10). Christians are authorised to judge all things (1Cor 2:15; 5:9-13). Christians are the Temple of God (1Cor 3:16-17(a); 3:16-17(b)).

Christians can fail God's grace and forfeit their salvation (1Cor 10:1-5; 2Cor 6:1-2; Ga 5:1-8; Php 1:6; 2:12-13; 1Ti 4:1; 6:14; He 3:7-11; 4:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:12-15; 12:16-17; 12:18-24; Rev 21:3-8). Long hair on a Christian's wife is a sign of respect for her husband's authority over her (1Cor 11:3-16). It is dishonouring though for a Christian man to have long hair like a woman (1Cor 11:14). Christians are chastened by God's word – not by sickness or calamity (1Cor 11:31-32; He 12:5-11). Christians are all equal members of the Body of Christ regardless of their Spiritual gifts (1Cor 12:12-17; Ga 3:28). Christian wives must submit to their husband's authority in everything (1Cor 14:34-35; Eph 5:22-24; 1Pe 3:1-6). Christians who die beforehand will all receive a new body at the First Resurrection (1Cor 15:35; 15:51-58; 2Cor 5:1; 5:3-4). Christians walk by faith, not by sight; they do not have to physically see Jesus to know what they believe (2Cor 5:6-9).

Christians are not in a state of sinless perfection; they can and do sin, but are not habitual sinners as they once were (Eph 4:25).

Paul admonishes Christian women to dress discreetly and modestly – never in a way that draws attention to their body (1Ti 2:9-10). Christians can eat anything God created for food (1Ti 4:4-5). Christians can drink wine for medicinal purposes (1Ti 5:23). Paul bids older women in the church to teach young wives how to be good homemakers (Tit 2:3-5). Christians have entered into God's rest in Christ (He 4:7-10). Christians can come direct to God's Throne of Grace in Heaven and obtain mercy and grace in their time of need (He 4:14-16). Christians are all priests of God (He 8:10-11; 1Pe 2:5). Christians are tempted to sin when drawn away by their own lusts and enticed (Jas 1:13-15). Christianity demands works of Christians;

faith without works cannot save anyone (Jas 2:14-26). James also advises Christians against aspiring too hastily to be teachers in the church because the liability of teachers for judgment is increased (Jas 3:1-2). Christians can only overcome the Devil if totally submitted to God (Jas 4:7-10; 1Pe 5:8-11). John characterises Christians by their righteousness and love for one another (1Jn 3:10-13). Christians can be saved and know it; the assurance of their salvation is sealed by the witness of the Holy Spirit in them (1Jn 5:10-13).

That completes this study. As stated at the outset of the study Scriptures used are not exhaustive, but representative of the many in the Bible which teach Christians the *do's* and *don'ts* of Christianity. All are inspired by God and must be strictly observed by Christians in order that God's purpose for their lives be fulfilled.