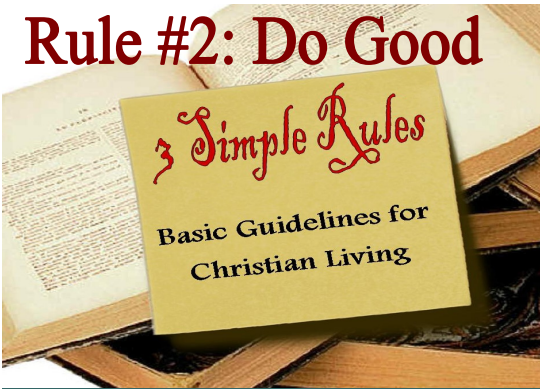


Rule #2: Do Good



“Paving the Road to Hell”

Life is complicated. Our airwaves, bandwidths and bookshelves are loaded with instructions aimed at making us prosperous, successful and fulfilled, not to mention fit and fabulous looking. Do you ever long for simplicity? A return to the basics? A clear, no-nonsense approach to living? John Wesley, the founder of Methodism and no stranger to complicated and chaotic times, originated three basic rules for the ‘People called Methodists.’

Sermon notes from January 13:

“Paving the Road to Hell”

Scripture reference:

James 1:22;27;14-18

1. Discipleship is not only about believing but also about acting on those beliefs

2. To love as Jesus loves we must:

A. Be prepared to sacrifice

B. Use our talents to lift and encourage others

C. Walk closely with God.

Daily Readings and Devotions for the Week of January 14-19

Monday, January 14 Read Psalm 103

Sometimes the “old testament” God is seen as a figure of wrath and destruction. What picture does this psalm give us of God’s nature and character? Look particularly at vv. 6-14. _____

What does it mean that God “remembers that we are dust (v.14)” and how does that shape the way He deals with us? _____

How should that shape the way we deal with others? _____

Tuesday January 15 Read Micah 6:1-8

The motivation for doing good is the response of a loving and grateful heart to all that God has done and will do. Since we cannot pay that back, what does God expect from you? _____

Reflect on some specific ways you are being called to live out v.8: _____

Wednesday, January 16 Read James 1:22;27;14-18

To do good is more than just performing a few nice acts. What does v.17 here say about the source of our good works? _____

How can serving others be seen as an act of worship? _____

Paving the Road to Hell

Thursday, January 17 Read Matthew 6:1-8; 16-20

Doing good for the sake of being seen and rewarded misses God’s point in calling for them! In what ways are acts of service not necessarily for the person for whom they are done?

Why is this aspect of doing good important for our faith and discipleship?

Friday, January 18 Read Proverbs 31:8-9

This is one of many passages reminded God’s people of their obligations towards the weak, poor, broken and powerless. Given your own experiences and your readings this week, what does this tell us about God and how do such attitudes and actions shape us and strengthen our relationship with God?

Doing good

Faith, according to James, requires hands on activity...doing good in emulation of Christ. Below are some possible activities to try in the coming week. Try one or more and share the results with a prayer partner or devotional group.

- **Make it a point to make a difference (for the good!) in someone’s life today. What can you do that will make that person thankful you passed by?**
- **Try some of these ‘random acts of kindness:’**
 - *pay the bill of the car in the drive through line behind you.*
 - *Rake the neighbor’s yard*
 - *Make a meal, or a batch of cookies or some other treat for a neighbor, your child’s teacher, or even a complete stranger.*
 - *send an encouraging card anonymously. Sign it: ‘someone who thinks you’re great!’*

Saturday, January 19 Read 1 John 3:17-24

We are called to ‘walk the walk’ not merely ‘talk the talk.’ John tells us that God’s very nature is love so why then is loving others so vital to our Christian faith? _____

Small Group Discussion Guide

1. **Read Psalm 103 aloud.** Share: “Sometimes the “old testament” God is seen as a figure of wrath and destruction.” Ask & Discuss:
 - What picture does this psalm give us of God’s nature and character? Look particularly at vv. 6-14.
 - What does it mean that God “remembers that we are dust (v.14)” and how does that shape the way He deals with us? How should that shape the way we deal with others?

2. **Have someone read Proverbs 31:8-9** Share: “This is one of many passages reminded God’s people of their obligations towards the weak, poor, broken and powerless. Given your own experiences and your readings this week, what does this tell us about God and how do such attitudes and actions shape us and strengthen our relationship with God?”

3. **Read 1 John 3:17-24** Say: “We are called to ‘walk the walk’ not merely ‘talk the talk.’ John tells us that God’s very nature is love so why then is loving others so vital to our Christian faith? Be as specific as possible.

4. **Read James 1:22;27;14-18** Say: “To do good is more than just performing a few nice acts. “ Ask and discuss:
 - What does v.17 here say about the source of our good works?
 - How can serving others be seen as an act of worship?

5. **Share and discuss these points from last Sunday’s sermon and discuss the questions that follow.**
 - A. **Discipleship is not only about believing but also about acting on those beliefs**

What is the connection between faith and works and is one more important than the other? Why or why not?
 - B. **To love as Jesus loves we must:**
 - **Be prepared to sacrifice**

What are some of the things we must sacrifice in order to ‘do good’ and obey Christ’s commandment to love (see John 14:15)?
 - **Use our talents to lift and encourage others**

Read Matthew 5:13-16. How is doing good a way to be salt and light?
 - **Walk closely with God.**

Read Micah 6:6-8. What does God demand of each of us and what would that look like in day to day terms?