

# Purposeful Living

## Introduction

1 Peter 1:13 Therefore **gird up the loins of your mind**, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ

1. In days past, when Americans were more nearly alike in their basic values, it might have been more possible to **"go with the flow"** and end up being a fairly decent person.
  - A. When one is surrounded by a society in which almost everybody's religious and moral ideas fall within fairly definite limits, one can give little thought to these issues and still *"get by,"* at least in terms of basic morality.
    - 1) It is the concept of **"herd immunity."**
2. Our world has changed, however, and Americans differ radically on even the fundamental questions of reality.
3. Today, the person who is not willing to work at forming responsible personal convictions will often see his life crumble into the moral chaos of our modern culture.
  - A. This has happened before!
    - 1) Edward Gibbon, author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has attributed the fall of the empire to the following:

**SEE CHART**

## "Going With the Flow"

1. Having a right relationship with God has always required more than "doing what comes naturally."
  - A. Even when – because of basically good influences of society and family, what comes "naturally" might have been right, there is still a lot to be said for having **one's own convictions.**
  - B. Others may give the right answer, but Jesus wants to know:

Matthew 16:15 "But who do you say that I am?"

Mark 14:31 But he spoke more vehemently, "If I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" **And they all said likewise.**

2. Preachers sometimes have people ask what "we" believe about some question – deferring to "our" convictions. Simply deferring to my **"convictions,"** would not get a person to heaven.
3. If one is where he is ONLY because he has let himself be carried there **by other people,** that does not constitute either "faith" or "obedience" in God's eyes.
  - A. Even when our direction has been generally good.
    - 1) (A puppet that hardly ever commits sin is still a puppet!)
4. We must learn to be governed internally so that we will do what is right no matter which way "the wind blows."  
**2 Timothy 4:2**

## Living by Default is Dangerous

1. To “default” on our convictions means that we take no action and merely let them be whatever others decide for them to be.
2. When serious issues of life present themselves to us, it is the height of folly to postpone wrestling with them.

Acts 24:25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."

3. We cannot be what we are passively — we must actively engage ourselves in building characters and lives that PLEASE GOD.
  - A. John Wooden – former UCLA Bruins basketball coach:
    - “Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”
  - B. D. L. Moody:
    - “Character is what you are in the dark.”

## Honoring Our Creator Requires Working At It

1. **In order to please God, it takes deliberate, concentrated thought and effort — it is something that we must work at.**

2 Timothy 2:15 **Study to shew thyself approved unto God**, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV)

2 Peter 1:10-11 Therefore, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your call and election sure**, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2. **In these “evil days” it is necessary that we walk “circumspectly.”**

- A. **Circumspect: “cautious or prudent,” to “look around”**

Ephesians 5:15-17 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools **but as wise**, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, **but understand what the will of the Lord is.**

- 1) **It requires study, thought, and prayer.**
  - 2) **It involves integrity, independence, and character**
3. **Only a careful, hard-working approach to living will allow us to “get by” in our age.**

1 Timothy 4:15-16 Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

## Conclusion

1. There comes a time in everyone's life that the "training wheels" of a godly family and moral society are taken away.
2. We must grow on our own and learn to be grateful for the growth that we have for the Lord.

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that **the testing of your faith produces patience**. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

3. While life continues, it is never too late to take matters into our own hands.
  - A. We can begin to live on the basis of convictions that are truly our own — based upon our study of God's Word.
  - B. We can begin to **be** what we are and **do** what we do **intentionally**.
4. We can quit living **"by accident"** — and start living **"on purpose."**

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1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, **steadfast in the faith**, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

