

Hope Community Church

Week 8 - Statement Of Faith: Christian Conduct

Learning Objectives

- Understand the foundations of what it means to live a life of Christian conduct.
- Explore what those foundations look like practically in our lives (and what they don't look like).

Pray for your time together!

Christian Conduct

Statement Of Faith: Christian Conduct

We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that their conduct should be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity. 1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 12:1-3; Heb. 12:1-2; John 14:15, 23-24; I John 2:3-6; 2 Cor. 9:6-9; 1 Cor. 4:2; Col. 1:9-10

Foundation

Read Out Loud: Ephesians 2:1-10 (NIV)

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.



According to Paul, what were our lives like before we were “made alive with Christ?”

Possible Answers: We were dead in our transgressions, simply going along with the world. We were apart from God, and disobedient.



What does regeneration mean? What does it look like in a person's life?

Possible Answers: New birth, we have a real purpose, and should devote our allegiance to Christ who is worthy of honor and our savior.



Where are you tempted to boast (even to yourself) in your “good works”?

Possible Answers: in familial roles as spouse, son, daughter, mother, friend, etc. In career, academic or athletic accomplishments or health, finances, talents, or physical attractiveness. Any good gift of God can be twisted into self-worship rather than received humbly as a tool for blessing others.

Gut Reactions

Exercise: Pick some topics from the table below (or come up with your own) and discuss how different responses might look. You may want to work on this as a whole group or split up into smaller groups. It may be helpful to allow a moment for everyone to reflect individually before discussing with others.

Leaders' Note: We aren't fishing for "correct answers" here. Every situation is different and answers will vary. The purpose of the exercise is to think through practical, hypothetical situations and how we might react differently when our response is gospel driven. The questions are not meant to shame, but to help find joy and direction when living in response to what God has done.

	What does Sinful Reaction look like?	What does Duty-Driven Obedience look like?	What does Gospel-Centered Obedience look like?
<p>You are actively saving for a down payment on a house. You also recently heard from a missionary and would like to contribute \$100/month to support their ministry.</p> <p><i>Reference: Luke 12:18-21</i></p>			
<p>You are at work, and you go to ask for some help with a task. Your coworker snaps at you and blows you off.</p> <p><i>Reference: 1 Cor 13:4-7</i></p>			
<p>You are at home after a long day and don't want to go back out, but it's Small Group night!</p> <p><i>Reference: Heb 10:23-25, Ps 1</i></p>			

<p>Your coworkers are complaining about your boss. You agree with some of their points and want to fit in.</p> <p><i>Reference: 1 Tim 4:8</i></p>			
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Gospel-Centered Obedience

Read Out Loud: Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

? Examine the duty-driven obedience and gospel-driven obedience columns above? In what ways are your responses similar? How do they differ?

Possible Answers: the action (what you do) may look similar e.g. participating on a ministry team, showing up to small group, or responding patiently to a coworker. Yet, it is possible to do good things from both selfless (gospel-driven) or selfish (duty-driven) motivation of the heart.

? Can you share some examples from your own life where you respond sinfully or out of a feeling of duty? How might you have responded with gospel-driven obedience instead?

? How can we persevere from a standpoint of “I get to” rather than from a place of obligation or guilt?

Possible Answers: Focusing more on what God has done and what Christ did, rather than what I need to do. The power of the Gospel is no joke and when we truly understand it, it should spur us on to wilful lives of christian conduct.

? How might our day-to-day lives look different if we kept our eyes fixed on Jesus all the time? Practically, how would we do that?

? What are some examples of things you need to “throw off” as you follow Christ?

Possible Answers: sinful patterns of behaviors, relationships that lead you to sin, consuming certain types of media.

For Discussion and Accountability

? When are you prone to forget the *gift* of new life God has given to you? What steps can you take to remember those gifts daily?

? Is there anything entangling you right now? Where do you need to “fix your eyes on Jesus” and trust in his perfect salvation?